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Few American feminists in the 1960s and 1970s looked kindly on psychiatry and psychoanalysis. In *Sexual Politics*, Kate Millet described Freud as "beyond question the strongest individual counterrevolutionary force in the ideology of sexual politics."¹ She and many other feminist critics accused psychoanalysts and their popularizers of trafficking in spurious theories that legitimated women's subordination. Yet despite such hard-hitting critiques, feminists' stance toward psychological expertise cannot be characterized as one of straightforward repudiation. As both Ellen Herman and Eva Moskowitz have shown, the movement was also indebted to psychological thinking and enmeshed in the ambient therapeutic culture. The practice of consciousness raising, for instance, may have diverged widely from therapy in its ultimate goal—political change—but both were predicated on a belief in the value of self-exploration. To a significant extent, feminists seized the conceptual tools of therapeutic culture to critique the restrictive definitions of femininity that it so often and insidiously promoted.²

Building on these insights, this essay argues that psychological experts in the twentieth-century United States inadvertently helped to clear the path for liberal feminism by reshaping the culturally dominant ideal of motherhood. A protracted and contested process, the translation of motherhood into therapeutic terms entailed the dismantling of an ideal of "moral motherhood" that dated back to the antebellum period. By the early twentieth century, and increasingly after World War I, psychological experts began to challenge this ideal's fundamental precepts, including the notion that motherhood was an all-encompassing, lifelong identity and that selflessness was its very essence. Associating its duties with a particular life stage, they instead reenvisioned motherhood as a source of immense personal fulfillment and a single component of a more multifaceted self. By the post-World War II era, their efforts had done much to discredit

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the iconic, self-sacrificing mother and to validate the young, fun-loving mom who understood the need to rein in maternal impulses and the importance of emotional autonomy.³

At first glance, the notion that therapeutic culture helped to prepare the way for a feminist critique of motherhood (and gender roles more broadly) seems counterintuitive. Scholars who have analyzed psychological authorities' pronouncements on motherhood in the 1940s and 1950s have understandably emphasized their often quite breathtaking sexism. According to most midcentury psychological experts, only neurotic and maladjusted women would defy their natural role by avoiding marriage and motherhood. These very same experts, however, placed little faith in women's allegedly natural maternal abilities. Harping on the dangers of both maternal overprotection and maternal rejection, they pointed to poor mothering as the cause of everything from homosexuality to autism to schizophrenia.⁴

How such critiques and prescriptive literature affected actual mothers is difficult to determine. Even when speaking of the comparatively privileged women who were the primary audience for advice literature on mothering, it would be wrong to assume that readers embraced experts' precepts in a wholesale manner. Yet such literature should not be entirely dismissed, for it both shaped and reflected cultural norms, and its influence can often be detected in women's personal correspondence and private writings. Those who internalized psychological experts' contradictory messages often suffered in ways that remain difficult to articulate. Nonetheless, an overweening emphasis on the repressive aspects of postwar therapeutic culture has obscured some of its less immediately apparent implications. Because such experts viewed maternal overprotection and dominance as so pernicious, and because they placed such a high premium on the cultivation of emotional autonomy (particularly for boys), they in effect opened up cultural and psychic space for some mothers to conceptualize themselves in more individualistic terms.

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In other words, they promoted new ideas about motherhood that helped to make the maternal role more compatible with liberal individualism.

The women who embraced therapeutic messages about motherhood tended to be overwhelmingly white, well-educated, and middle- to upper-middle-class mothers. Prior to marriage and motherhood, many had experienced satisfaction in the workforce and had acquired skills that had earned them a certain degree of recognition. Exposure to psychological thinking encouraged these women to think of themselves as individuals as well as mothers, to value self-fulfillment, and to view their unhappiness as a problem to be solved. In this manner, it prepared them to respond favorably to the indictment of suburban motherhood and domesticity that Betty Friedan would level in her groundbreaking 1963 bestseller, *The Feminine Mystique*.

The Origins and Ideology of the Moral Mother

The early nineteenth century witnessed the flourishing of a veritable cult of motherhood, particularly in the industrializing North.⁵ As mobility increased, extended familial networks grew more strained, and artisanal households declined, middle-class Americans increasingly elevated the home into an arena of private retreat, removed from the corrupt worlds of commerce and politics. Clergymen and domestic writers portrayed the mother as the "angel of the house" who eschewed corporal punishment and instead used the power of her love to instill self-discipline and lead her children to Christ. A mother's duties were "time-consuming and exhausting": she had to maintain "constant moral vigilance" until that hazardous moment when her children left the parental home.⁶ Even then, the importance of maternal influence did not diminish, for affective ties to the mother served as a rudder, guiding the adult throughout his or her life course.

From a contemporary perspective, several aspects of the ideology of moral motherhood are particularly striking. Foremost among these is the notion that mothers should seek to emotionally bind their children to them by forging a "silver cord." This process was deemed particularly essential with boys, since their greater freedom meant that they would eventually be exposed to the sins and temptations of the public realm. The mother's ultimate goal was to raise a son who would strive to be "the man my mother thinks I am"—a son who would never disappoint or hurt her. The popular late-nineteenth-century poem, "Like Mother, Like Son," which continued to appear in popular poetry anthologies through the 1930s, perfectly expressed this sentiment:

Do you know that your soul is of my soul such a part,
That you seem to be fibre and core of my heart?
None other can pain me as you, dear, can do,
None other can please me or praise me as you.
Remember the world will be quick with its blame
If shadow or strain ever darken your name.
"Like mother, like son" is a saying so true
The world will judge largely the "mother" by you.⁷

This mother was not interested in fostering her son's emotional independence or cultivating his individuality; on the contrary, she sought to impress herself indelibly upon him, so that his emerging character would incorporate her loving yet admonishing voice.

A second notable aspect of moral motherhood is its unabashed celebration of impassioned, even romantic mother-son relationships. Middle-class Americans did not perceive maternal influence as a threat to emergent manhood; instead, they viewed mother love as the substance from

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which manhood was forged. Thus, a mother might unself-consciously call her son "lover boy," while a son could refer to his mother as "my best girl" without fear of mockery.⁸ Such practices persisted well into the twentieth century. For example, when the future Supreme Court justice Frank Murphy served overseas during World War I, he signed his effusive letters to his mother with a string of x's. "I will be home with you in a few days and we will walk and talk just like the lovers we are," he wrote in one, while in another he pined, "Tonight if I could sit near you or brush your hair or stroke your forehead or just feel your presence I would be in paradise."⁹

Murphy's devotion to his mother may have been unusual even by the standards of the time, but the cultural milieu clearly condoned such sentiments. Consider the following lines from "The Little Mother," a poem that appeared in 1918 in *Stars and Stripes*, the Army's main newspaper:

How I long for your smiles of gladness
That are haunting my mem'ry still,
And the love in your eyes beseeching
Even now makes my pulses thrill. . . .
The caress of your hair, soft silver,
On my cheek how I fain would feel,
And from lips that are soft as roses,
A sweet kiss I would like to steal.¹⁰

The poet could express this frank desire for physical contact with his mother because he retained a pre-Freudian sensibility, unaffected by the increasingly prevalent belief that an unusually strong mother-son attachment signaled an unresolved Oedipal crisis.

A final component of moral motherhood that marks its distance from contemporary views is the positive valuation it placed on self-sacrifice and martyrdom. Today, the mother-as-martyr

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is often a figure of exasperation or comic relief, the implication being that she engages in transparent emotional manipulation to gain her children's attention or compliance. But the maternal martyr did not always elicit such reactions. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, countless paeans glorified mothers' willingness to sacrifice and suffer for their children, as did an 1867 *Godey's Lady's Book* when it characterized mother love as "chiefly a sorrow bearing love."¹¹ This conception of motherhood reflected Victorian Americans' belief in the redemptive nature of suffering more broadly, but it was grounded in an appreciation of the physical perils of motherhood. As late as the 1930s, a majority of women in the United States still endured childbirth without pain relief, and high rates of maternal death continued to shame the medical profession.¹² These realities lent weight to the religious and martial analogies that many Americans employed to describe motherhood in general and childbirth in particular.

Historians have tended to assume that the ideology of moral motherhood fell victim to the rise of "scientific motherhood" and an assault on Victorian cultural ideals that began near the turn of the century and reached full swing by the 1920s.¹³ Yet traditional and modern conceptions of motherhood vied for dominance in mainstream American culture throughout the interwar period and beyond. Even as psychological experts denounced cloying and overbearing mothers, popular culture continued to draw audiences with highly sentimental dramatizations of maternal self-sacrifice. In the long run, however, the moral mother could not withstand the rise of therapeutic culture. Her martyrdom was too much at odds with the modern quest for self-fulfillment; her intense identification with her children posed too great a barrier to individuation; her sentimentality and uncompromising morality proved too easy a target for sophisticated modernists. Censuring displays of "smother love" and promoting new theories of child rearing, psychological experts led the charge to reform maternal ideals and practices.

Dismantling the Moral Mother

After World War I, experts of various stripes displayed an almost reflexive suspicion of maternal influence. Psychoanalysts and behaviorists alike developed a "stinging critique of American motherhood" during the interwar period that practitioners in child guidance clinics readily embraced.¹⁴ They routinely indicted a certain type of woman: the "overprotective" or possessive mother who stymied her son's psychological development while relegating her husband to the sidelines.¹⁵ Whereas intimate mother-son relationships had previously been thought to facilitate the development of a self-governing, manly character, by the 1920s, numerous experts identified failure to separate from the mother as the primary threat to nascent manhood.

According to behaviorists, who dominated child-rearing advice in the 1920s and early 1930s, the solution resided in strict schedules and limited physical contact. In the best-known child-rearing manual of the era, *Psychological Care of Infant and Child*, behaviorist John B. Watson depicted sentimental mother love as "a sex-seeking impulse" and shrilly decried mothers who coddled their children. "Treat them as though they were young adults," he urged. "Never hug and kiss them, never let them sit in your lap."¹⁶ Watson's matrophobia was extreme, but most experts in the 1920s and 1930s agreed that greater distance and rationality should improve the mother-child relationship. As the psychologist and early childhood educator Ada Hart Arlitt put it, the home should be governed not by mother love but rather by the "kitchen time-piece."¹⁷ Of course, behavioral norms change slowly, and attempts to restrain maternal affection struck many Americans at the time as quite novel. But middle-class women who fashioned themselves "modern mothers" could not easily shake off experts' admonitions. "It is to [many mothers] the most astonishing thing that mother love has been found by science inherently dangerous," noted

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one 1928 advice book, "and some of them grow panicky as they let the significance of the new teaching sink into their thoughts."¹⁸

This new wariness toward sentimental mother love is evident in society's mounting anxiety over male homosexuality. The belief that domineering or seductive mothers, coupled with passive fathers, caused homosexuality took root in a cultural landscape altered by Freudian views of female sexuality and children's psychosexual development. Acknowledgment of female desire went hand in hand with a more suspicious attitude toward impassioned mother love. As a result, maternal attitudes and behaviors that had once seemed praiseworthy began to appear disturbing or unnatural. Increasingly, a grown man's intense attachment to his mother signaled effeminacy, homosexuality, even political subversion.¹⁹

Finally, just as psychiatrists sought to temper effusive mother love, so they tried to puncture the ideal of maternal martyrdom. Advice literature urged mothers to "Take Off the Halo," warning that, "Self-made martyrs are unnecessary, tiresome people" who did "untold harm."²⁰ Psychiatrists and their allies not only jettisoned the concept of maternal self-sacrifice, they all but reversed the trajectory of indebtedness by emphasizing the fulfillment women derived from motherhood. "Every honest woman will tell you that she has been repaid in full every hour of her life for the so-called 'price of motherhood,'" asserted a writer for *Literary Digest* in 1932. "The obligation is all on the other side. How to pay the debt we owe to the young people who bring joy and hope into our lives is the mother's chief problem."²¹

The assault on moral motherhood reached its apex in Philip Wylie's 1942 best-selling polemic, *Generation of Vipers*, which introduced the word "momism" into the American lexicon. Picked up by psychiatrists and social scientists, "momism" signified both a familial and a social pathology. It referred to the supposedly archetypal American mom who henpecked her

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husband and dominated her children, as well as a societal condition, in which the nation's irrational idealization of motherhood had drained it of masculine vigor. Wylie's mom was a monstrous creature determined to keep children trapped in emotional bondage. "Her boy, having been 'protected' by her love . . . is cushioned against any major step in his progress toward maturity," he wrote. "Mom steals from the generation of woman behind her . . . that part of her boy's personality which should have become the love of a female contemporary" and "transmutes it into sentimentality for herself."²²

The momism critique can be viewed as an overwrought articulation of the by-then familiar arguments about maternal dominance advanced by psychoanalysts, psychiatrists, and other experts.²³ But it should also be understood as an emphatic repudiation of a maternal style that had once enjoyed widespread acceptance in mainstream American culture. By discrediting an older maternal style already fast becoming anachronistic, the momism critique helped to restrict the ways in which maternal influence could be celebrated in the postwar era.

The Therapeutic Mother

The political upheavals of the 1940s dramatically influenced attitudes toward mothering. Intent on curbing human aggression and irrationality, numerous experts began to focus on the mother-child relationship as the cornerstone of a peaceful and democratic order. Though their anxieties about overprotective mothers did not diminish, they increasingly turned their attention to the problems of maternal deprivation and rejection. Works such as Anna Freud's wartime studies of orphans and John Bowlby's influential World Health Organization report, *Maternal Care and Mental Health*, contributed to the growing belief that infants and young children flourished best when they received intensive, uninterrupted maternal care.²⁴ The scheduled withholding of such

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solicitude, previously regarded as a sound approach to the irrational impulses of mother and child alike, was reinterpreted as a denial of legitimate need—a denial that actually produced the dependent tendencies that it sought to prevent. Moreover, in the wake of fascism, the behaviorist view of infants as blank slates ceased to appear like a positive good; the notion that parents should “condition” their children’s “reflexes” seemed all too compatible with a totalitarian agenda that sought to press individuals into a common mold.²⁵ Most psychological experts in the postwar era instead conceptualized the infant as an already nascent individual who would naturally develop into a reasonable, democratic citizen, so long as his or her physical and emotional needs were lovingly met.

Thus, the mother’s most important role, psychological experts of various schools agreed, was to equip her children with a sense of security by providing warm and loving physical care. This particular conception of mother love privileged neither the mother’s intellect—her conscientious acquisition of the knowledge and skills of a “scientific” mother, nor her personal character—her ability to use the power of mother love to ensure her children’s moral rectitude. Instead, the model that emerged in the 1940s and 1950s tended to reduce maternal love to the expression of psychological and biological drives; commentators portrayed it as a force so natural that it all but secreted from the maternal body. “Mother love is a good deal like food,” the psychoanalyst Margaret Ribble explained in 1943. “It has to be expressed regularly so that the child expects it; a little at a time, and frequently, is the emotional formula. When it is given in this way, independence, rather than dependence, is fostered.”²⁶

As scholars have shown, this new permissive child-rearing ideology—articulated most famously in 1946 by Dr. Benjamin Spock—actually intensified maternal obligations by requiring mothers to provide care “on demand” rather than following a schedule.²⁷ What has been less

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noted is that the same prescriptions simultaneously diminished the maternal role by deeming the benefits of mother love as concentrated in the earliest years of life. Take, for example, Ferdinand Lundberg and Marynia Farnham's 1947 bestseller, *Modern Woman: The Lost Sex*, a work often cited as a particularly egregious illustration of oppressive postwar gender ideology. Whereas the authors waxed lyrical about motherhood as women's natural destiny, their characterization of the ideal mother reveals that they actually sought to delimit the maternal role after a child's first few years:

Is she so very wise? No, hers is not wisdom in the sense of intellectual knowledge. She just likes her children. . . . Being in balance, she feels no need to inquire into every detail of their lives, to dominate them. Instead, she watches with somewhat detached interest to see what each one takes to. . . . She does not fuss over them. If they are too cold, too hot, too wet, hungry or lonesome, they let her know it and she meets the need. Otherwise she leaves them pretty much to their own devices, although keeping a watchful eye on them.²⁸

This was a far cry from the moral mother who sought to bind her children with cords of love to scrutinize the state of their souls. In fact, Farnham and Lundberg avoided any reference to love—their ideal mother merely liked her children—presumably because they regarded maternal love as potentially so fraught.

Some experts went so far as to argue that mothers should cultivate identities beyond the home to prevent them from overidentifying with their children. The woman with a "strong" personality needed "larger worlds to conquer than her home and family," wrote psychologist Anna Wolf in 1941, if only because "[h]er energies need deflection."²⁹ Similarly, a 1945 radio show urged listeners to guard against "too much mother love" by leading "a full, normal life"

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that included outside "interests" and "friends her own age."³⁰ A psychoanalyst quoted in *American Weekly* even argued that the woman who felt confined and depressed by homemaking should seek full-time employment. "She can't try to please friends, neighbors or relatives. She has to please herself *first*, then try to please others."³¹

Such advice suggests that the widespread discontent among white, middle-class women that informed the reception of *The Feminine Mystique* cannot be attributed solely to a gender ideology that exiled women to the domestic realm. The dilemma confronting such women is more accurately described as a double bind. Although largely denied career opportunities and still expected to view themselves primarily as mothers and housewives, these women now found themselves immersed in a therapeutic culture that emphasized the importance of fostering independence and individuation—which in turn meant viewing themselves as autonomous beings.

Betty Friedan and Her Readers on Motherhood

Friedan argued that the postwar feminine mystique "derived its power from Freudian thought," and she devoted an entire chapter to portraying Freud as a "prisoner of his time" when it came to women. Yet she also praised the "basic genius of Freud's discoveries," and her contempt for popularized Freudianism never translated into a wholesale rejection of psychoanalysis. As she explained, "I question its use, not in therapy, but as it has filtered into the lives of American women through the popular magazines and the opinions and interpretations of so-called experts."³²

This careful parsing likely reflects Friedan's own positive experiences with psychoanalysis or psychoanalytic therapy. At two crucial points in her life, therapy allowed her

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to affirm an independent identity that felt threatened by the intensity of the mother-child relationship. As a recent college graduate in the 1940s, it helped her separate from her own mother and renounce her mother's bourgeois values. Then, as a young mother in the early 1950s, it allowed her to acknowledge and pursue her ambitions as a writer amid the relentless demands of child rearing. In one session, her psychoanalyst, William Menaker, interpreted a dream about a male journalist not as evidence of "penis envy" but rather "as a message to take my own writing more seriously."³³ Friedan's experiences proved so positive that in 1958, after signing a contract for what would become *The Feminine Mystique*, she sought Menaker out again to propose a collaboration. Had her editor not nixed the idea, the name of an "eminent male psychoanalyst" might have graced the cover of *The Feminine Mystique*—a jarring and little-known detail that confounds her reputation as an ardent foe of psychoanalysis.³⁴

Friedan's immersion in therapeutic culture is also apparent in her critique of suburban motherhood. Appropriating Abraham Maslow's theory of self-actualization, she argued that motherhood and homemaking could not serve as the basis for a mature and independent identity and that women who confined their energies to the mother-housewife role ultimately harmed both their loved ones and themselves. In advancing this argument, she cited numerous works by psychological experts and social scientists. What she did that they did not, however, was draw out the logical implications of their findings in a forceful and systematic way: If suburban mothers had become mired in psychopathology, then for everyone's sake, they should be liberated from the all-consuming demands of domesticity. "The only way for a woman, as for a man, to find herself, to know herself as a person, is by creative work of her own. There is no other way."³⁵

Friedan famously received hundreds of letters from women who thanked her for writing *The Feminine Mystique*. Less well known is the fact that she also received hundreds of critical letters from women who encountered her ideas in popular women's magazines that ran excerpts of the book. Both groups of women appear to have been overwhelmingly white and middle-class; as bell hooks has observed, Friedan wrote as if working-class women and women of color "did not exist," making "the plight of white women like herself synonymous with a condition affecting all American women."³⁶ But despite similar demographic profiles, the two groups differed markedly on key issues, including the attitudes they expressed toward psychological expertise and therapeutic culture.

Fans of *The Feminine Mystique* frequently referred to psychological concepts and employed psychological language in their letters. Some even recounted how their feelings of emptiness and unhappiness had led them to seek out therapy. As former journalist and mother of two young children wrote,

I had even resorted to a psychiatrist, who kept asking me if I was sure there wasn't "Another Man" involved, and whether I really loved my children! All I knew was that I had to be ME . . . but when I took time off to be myself—writing occasional feature articles or going to New York by myself for a weekend, I was enough brain-washed by the wretched feminine mystique to feel rather defiant and guilty about it. Reading your book has given me a whole new zest for life.³⁷

This woman clearly received no help from her clueless psychiatrist; she needed Friedan's feminist message to realize that she should start "taking my writing seriously, instead of reconciling myself to being an amateur." But her basic therapeutic orientation—evident in the

license she felt to express her need "to be ME"—had prepared her to be receptive to Friedan's feminist critique.

Women who embraced Friedan's message questioned the assumption that a "good mother" had to be a selfless nurturer, always available to meet her children's physical and emotional needs. Like Friedan, they argued that the imperatives of full-time homemaking actually prevented women from cultivating the healthy individualism that effective mothering required. "Becoming a person one's self [*sic*] is a big step in recognizing the uniqueness in others," wrote one woman. "If your only reason for living is that 'somebody needs me' this can be pretty dreadful in the family setting," another opined. "You have to shift over to 'I need me,' if you want to stop swallowing others in your need to be needed."³⁸ These women argued, in essence, that women had an obligation to focus on their own self-development, lest they wreak havoc on their children's emotional lives.

In contrast, Friedan's critics viewed her emphasis on personal fulfillment as appallingly self-centered and incompatible with good mothering. They did not wholly reject psychological authority; in fact, some buttressed their defense of full-time motherhood by referencing experts who claimed an association between maternal absence and juvenile delinquency. However, when they felt discouraged or restless, they did not turn to therapy; they sought sustenance in God or tried to summon a sense of duty. "It seems to me that if these trapped, frustrated women would put as much faith in God as they put in their psychoanalyst, their problems would be greatly reduced," ventured one woman. The "frustrated neurotic . . . usually has no one but herself to blame," wrote another. "She feeds her discontent by asking, 'Who am I?' and 'What shall I do with *my* life?' Never wondering, 'What can I do for my husband, family, community?' or 'How can I serve my God?'"³⁹ These women eschewed therapy not so much because they questioned

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its efficacy, but because they considered the pursuit of self-realization as a frivolous and self-centered goal that diverted people from familial, civic, and religious obligations.

The disdain with which Friedan's critics regarded therapeutic culture is reflected in their discussions of the mother-child relationship. They referred more frequently to maternal "responsibilities" and "duties" than did Friedan's fans, while placing less emphasis on the importance of "enjoying" their children. They also appeared more willing to accept the notion that a child's deepest needs might sometimes conflict with his or her mother's deepest desires. Indeed, they scoffed at the notion that a child benefited most from a mother who was happy and fulfilled, even if this required her to be away from home most of the day. "A child cannot live on all this great education from his mother or appreciate her great talents," wrote one young mother. "He cannot survive without warmth, love, understanding and a secure home life. And no one can convince me that with a mother home only a few hours of the day she can provide this love and secure home."⁴⁰ Believing that children needed and deserved their mothers' loving presence, Friedan's critics argued that women should master or repress their frustrations rather than seek outside employment, especially during their children's early years.

Feminist critiques of the late 1960s and 1970s portrayed the psychological professions as such powerfully oppressive forces that one might reasonably conclude that those women most engaged with psychological thinking and practice would have been, from a feminist perspective, most in need of consciousness-raising. Yet Friedan's correspondence suggests the reverse was true: familiarity with and openness to therapeutic culture correlated closely with a willingness to criticize prevailing gender ideology. Midcentury psychological experts supported a restrictive ideal of womanhood, to be sure, but they also encouraged individuals to adopt a therapeutic orientation toward the self—toward one's private problems and needs—that would ultimately

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lead many women to take their feelings of dissatisfaction seriously, even when that meant violating the tenets of well-adjusted femininity.

It is instructive to remind oneself that the most ardent critics of psychiatry and psychoanalysis during the 1950s and early 1960s were not left-wing intellectuals, feminists, gay rights activists, and antipsychiatrists, as would later be the case. Rather, they were traditionalists who opposed the rise of therapeutic culture because they believed that it threatened religious authority and traditional gender roles. In regard to the cultural construction of motherhood, these critics were clearly on to something. The ideology of moral motherhood never effectively restricted white, middle-class women to the home—many in fact deployed it to exercise moral authority in the public realm through church groups and voluntary associations—but it did sharply limit how these mothers could define themselves and the activities they could pursue. The demystification of motherhood that psychiatrists and psychologists spearheaded was not without cost, but it was a necessary precondition for the rise of a popular feminist movement that would gain women greater equality by championing their individual rights.

¹ Kate Millet, *Sexual Politics* (New York: Doubleday Press, 1970), 178.

² Ellen Herman, *The Romance of American Psychology: Political Culture in the Age of Experts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), chap. 6; and Eva S. Moskowitz, *In Therapy We Trust: America's Obsession with Self-Fulfillment* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), chap. 4.

³ Rebecca Jo Plant, *Mom: The Transformation of Motherhood in Modern America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

⁴ Jennifer Terry, "'Momism' and the Making of Treasonous Homosexuals," in *"Bad" Mothers: The Politics of Blame in Twentieth-Century America*, ed. Molly Ladd-Taylor and Lauri Umansky (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 169–90; Laura Ellen Schreibman, *The Science and Fiction of Autism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), chap. 4; and Carol Eadie Hartwell, "The Schizophrenogenic Mother Concept in American Psychiatry," *Psychiatry* 59 (Fall 1996): 274–97.

⁵ Ruth H. Bloch, "American Feminine Ideals in Transition: The Rise of the Moral Mother, 1790–1815," *Feminist Studies* 4 (June 1978): 100–26; Jan Lewis, "Mother's Love: The Construction of an Emotion in Nineteenth-Century America," in *Social History and Issues in Human Consciousness: Some Interdisciplinary Connections*, ed. Andrew E. Barnes and Peter N. Stearns, (New York: New York University Press, 1989), 209–29; Mary P. Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790–1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); and *The Empire of the Mother: American Writing about Domesticity* (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1982).

⁶ Ryan, *Empire of the Mother*, 57–8, 45–6.

⁷ Hazel Felleman, "Like Mother, Like Son," in *Best Loved Poems of the American People* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1959), 370.

⁸ Peter N. Stearns, *American Cool: Constructing a Twentieth-Century Emotional Style* (New York: New York University Press, 1994), 34–8, 79–80, 164–71; and John C. Spurlock and Cynthia A. Magistro, *New and Improved: The Transformation of American Women's Emotional Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), chap. 5

⁹ Sidney Fine, *Frank Murphy: The Detroit Years* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1975), 6–7.

¹⁰ "The Army's Poets," *Stars and Stripes*, May 10, 1918, 3.

¹¹ "A Mother's Love," *Godey's Lady's Book* 74:1 (January 1867): 39.

¹² Plant, *Mom*, chap. 4.

¹³ Ann Douglas discusses the cultural assault on the "late-Victorian matriarch" in *Terrible Honesty: Mongrel Manhattan in the 1920s* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1995).

¹⁴ Kathleen W. Jones, *Taming the Troublesome Child: American Families, Child Guidance, and the Limits of Psychiatric Authority* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 175.

¹⁵ Julia Grant, "A 'Real Boy' and Not a Sissy: Gender, Childhood and Masculinity, 1890–1940," *Journal of Social History* 37, no. 4 (2004): 829–41.

¹⁶ John B. Watson, *Psychological Care of Infant and Child* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1928), 81–82.

¹⁷ Quoted in Henry Jenkins, "The Sensuous Child: Benjamin Spock and the Sexual Revolution," in *The Children's Culture Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 213–14.

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