Today, I rushed from one grocery store where the organic whole milk was sold out to another grocery store rather than buying organic 2% milk or non-organic whole milk. The milk was for my two very young daughters, one only recently weaned. It has to be whole milk for brain development, you see. And it has to be organic to protect their endocrine systems, which may enable them - if they choose - to carry children of their own one day. When I got home, I could hear them upstairs with their father. I listened to the muffled footsteps from that other part of the house to gauge whether or not it was necessary to swoop in with the hard-won milk in sippy-cups or whether I could afford to get dinner started first.

This scene, like many others in my daily life, slots so tidily into the patterns of maternal anxiety historicized by Dara Rossman Regaignon that reading this engaging, important book made me...anxious. Maternal anxiety, Regaignon argues, is "historically if not personally...a rhetorically catalyzed and perpetuated affect" (3). In examining childrearing advice literature, memoir, and domestic fiction, the book shows how early nineteenth-century genres collaborated to teach middle-class white women that anxious management of their children is a "'natural' expression of maternal love" (5). Just as I worry about how different types of milk may affect my children's future, and as I hyper-sensitively monitor them even when they are not directly under my care, the maternal management that Regaignon defines is both proleptic ("apprehending dangerous futures in the present") and paraliptic ("manifesting here dangerous or disruptive possibilities that are potentially occurring there") (94). The proleptic and paraliptic motions of maternal anxiety reflect the role of mothers as middle-class managers in industrialized capitalism and as (re)producers of racialized, imperial power.
Marrying literary and cultural studies to rhetorical genre theory and its understanding of "genre as a category of social action," this book mines histories of medicine and theories of narrative, affect, feminism, anxiety, and Things--to name some key players. With their aid, it aims to build a three-dimensional sense of the "schematic ecology of genres" that makes maternity and anxiety co-morbid. (17.3). A particular influence is the work of Sara Ahmed, who has sought to show how anxiety is relational, "how social norms become affective over time," and how "signs' become sticky...with affect" (qtd. 4, 20). Also significant is the work of Mikhail Bakhtin and -- I think -- Michel Foucault, though she mentions the latter explicitly just twice.

Overall, Regaignon is remarkably precise in teasing out the wide-ranging theoretical contexts and concepts that undergird her argument as a whole. But in individual chapters, the conceptualization of key points can sometimes seem haphazard. On one hand, the chapters thoroughly survey infant mortality rates in the Victorian period as well as British opium trade and use. On the other hand, they needed more specificity on the intersection of religion and maternal anxiety, more situating of the work of governesses in the field of medical history, and--beyond fascinating readings of *The Life of Mrs. Sherwood*--more focus on the relationship between race/empire and maternal anxiety.

Nonetheless, the chapters work together very effectively. Chapter 1 treats the rise of advice literature as a genre and rhetorical genre theory as an interdisciplinary field with particular tools-- notably the concept of uptake affordances--for thinking about the emergence of affective scripts across genres. Particularly helpful is Regaignon's gloss of "Two Acquaintances Running Into One Another" as a rhetorical situation "of a recurrent type...[in which] typified or codified categories of utterances" respond to an exigency (18).

In chapter 2, which surveys a wide range of childrearing advice texts from the 1820's and 1830's, Regaignon reads for "affective uptakes," showing "how the genre sought to interpellate motherhood as an anxious subjectivity" (30). Through unusually consistent advice often repeated verbatim across different sources, these texts reflect, imagine, and forge a rhetorical relationship between knowing doctors and unknowing mothers. Analyzing "two of the genre's most common rhetorical strategies - lecture and question-and-answer," Regaignon critiques examples from the surgeon Pye Henry Chavasse and the physician Thomas Bull (44). Their texts on childrearing, she observes, prompt the reader to feel anxiety as synonymous with care itself. Even though two childrearing advice texts authored by women, Margaret King Moore and Mrs. J. Bakewell, put more emphasis on maternal authority, they still subordinate it to medical opinion and ground it in the affect of anxiety.

Chapter 3 analyzes the relationship between rhetorics of maternal anxiety and data on high rates of infant and child mortality; the reader should be warned that child death features prominently. After first exploring seriality and the long-anticipated, long-deferred death of little Nell in Charles Dickens's *The Old Curiosity Shop*, Regaignon closely reads the memoirs of Mary Martha Sherwood and Catharine Tait. Given the possibility - sometimes likelihood -- that an infant or child might die, maternal attention in these memoirs focuses on managing a present in which that potential future is always palpable. When such deaths do occur, they re-create the past as a time in which the bleak future was always unavoidable, though the mother's job was to focus all her care on its avoidance. Regaignon thus shows how the rhetoric of maternal anxiety collapses temporal distinction.

While Chapter 3 highlights the temporality of maternal anxiety, Chapter 4 shows how it is also spatialized. In reading the paraliptic movements of maternal anxiety, Regaignon demonstrates that responsible mothers were expected to pay heightened attention not only to present actions that could threaten a child's future but also to sites of childcare offered in the mother's absence. This expectation for nineteenth-century motherhood, Regaignon argues, was couched in a rhetoric of
capitalist management. The white, middle-class mother was told that she must vigilantly manage the domestic threats posed by paid non-white and/or working class care providers. Like the temporal battle against child death, however, such management could never overcome the inevitable influence of these employees. Analyzing The Life of Mrs. Sherwood as well as Anne Brontë's Agnes Grey and Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre, the chapter treats employees of two kinds in particular: wet nurses and governesses.

Chapter 5 considers the panic caused by caregivers who dosed infants with opiates. Drawing on scholarship in Thing theory and commodity culture, Regaignon shows how the use of opium bound together "the temporal anxiety of child death and the supervisory anxiety of paid childcare" to reveal "the impossibility of adequate supervision" (128). The only truly "good" mother available to the rhetoric of maternal anxiety is a dead one overseeing from above or, perhaps, a global empire that relies for its expansion on slave trading and addictive substances. Upper and middle class persons were thought to have used opium very differently from the way it was used by people of the working class. While its use by the middle/upper classes was considered medicinal, or at worst a personal problem, its use among the working classes was called a social ill that threatened the very fabric of British society. For managing mothers, Regaignon writes, "the danger of opium is not simply that it might kill children but that it - like a governess or a wet nurse - might fundamentally change them and thereby change the national future" (138). Regaignon demonstrates this point by returning to The Life of Mrs. Sherwood and by an excellent reading of Charlotte Yonge's The Daisy Chain.

Linking her study of nineteenth-century maternity to our own time, Regaignon prefaces this book with remarks on maternal anxiety in the 21st century and closes chapter 5 by noting her "hope that we can...shift maternal attention away from its fearful, threatened sense of obstructed agency and toward the planful, anticipatory logics that can enact revolutionary change" (158). Though I very much share this hope, Writing Maternity gives so few glimpses of alternatives to anxiety that its call for "revolutionary change" seems unfocussed. In this present, we are somehow responsible for building a better future, but how we are to do that remains elusive.

Much more substantive, however, is the concise but specific vision of the Coda, which clarifies the book's most significant intervention as a revised understanding of "genre as a species of advice." This understanding requires interdisciplinary approaches to genre and affect like those modeled by Regaignon. Understanding genre as advice that each individual user will take differently and sometimes resist opens space for revising and resisting genres of maternal anxiety. To better capture -- and perhaps revise -- cultural and scientific discourses, Writing Maternity shows why we should bring rhetorical studies into closer conversation with literary studies. This book is also a significant contribution to the study of maternity and care.

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