

Choice Reads: A Book-of-the-Month Club

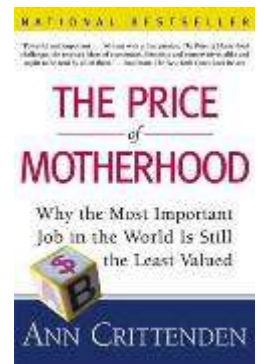
JULY 2009:

The Price of Motherhood: Why the Most Important Job in the World is Still the Least Valued

by Ann Crittenden

Description:

This provocative book shows how mothers are systematically disadvantaged and made dependent by a society that exploits those who perform its most critical work. Drawing on hundreds of interviews and the most current research in economics, history, child development, and law, Ann Crittenden proves that although women have been liberated, mothers have not. College-educated women pay a "mommy tax" of over a million dollars in lost income when they have a child. Family law deprives mothers of financial equality in marriage. Stay-at-home mothers and their work are left out of the GDP, the labor force, and the social safety net. With passion and clarity, Crittenden demonstrates that proper rewards for mothers' essential contributions would only enhance the general welfare.



Reader's Guide:

1. Crittenden compares how middle-class women fare (including the glass ceilings they encounter) in various fields. Were you surprised by the similarities or differences?
2. Do you think Crittenden's description of the devaluation of a mother's work (both raising children and housework) is correct? Why haven't mainstream economists been more willing to address this work?
3. There are numerous "high profile" divorces described in the book – what is the impact of divorce on middle- and working-class women? How is their "home work" valued? Does Crittenden address this?
4. When so many working families are demanding quality child care, why are professionals who care for children still so undervalued? How does that impact the quality of paid child care?
5. Overall, *The Price of Motherhood* was written by a middle-class woman, about middle-class women, for middle-class women. How are the lives of poor and working class women similar? How are they different? How does society view them as mothers?

If you would like to recommend a book, receive book suggestions directly, or meet to discuss books, please contact Pem at pem@prochoicemass.org or 617-556-8800 x14.

Learn more about *Choice Reads* at www.prochoicemass.org.