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# THE IMPORTANCE AND EFFECTS OF CHILDHOOD MEMORY AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS IN THE POETRY OF ADRIENNE RICH AND SHARON OLDS

AMY SPEARS '98

*It is hard to write about my own mother. Whatever I do write, it is my story I am telling, my version of the past. If she were to tell her own story other landscapes would be revealed.*

—Adrienne Rich (Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution 221)

*I have never left. Your bodies are before me at all times, in the dark I see the stars of your teeth in their fixed patterns wheeling over my bed*

*.....  
You think I left—I was the child who got away, thousands of miles, but not a day goes past that I am not turning someone into you.*

—Sharon Olds ("Possessed," The Dead and the Living 33)

In the above passages Adrienne Rich and Sharon Olds write as adult women reflecting upon their childhood lives. Rich writes of a problem associated with personal memory: the child's interpretation may differ drastically from that of the parent. Olds asserts the importance of the parents in a child's life and their lingering influence in adulthood even when they are separated.

These two influential poets have written and spoken much relating to the subject of family, specifically the importance which memories of childhood and family life hold in our lives. Both poets explore questions and themes related to family relationships, the development of children throughout their lives, and the problems of traditional family structure. Rich seems to be focused chiefly on the importance of parent-child connections and the great deal of influence which parents have on their children. Her prose and much of her poetic work deals with motherhood and the sacrifices which women in desperate situations must make for the sake of their chil-

dren; however, it is her more personal poetry that focuses on her relationship with her father. In her actual life it seems that Rich's father had a very strong influence on her, perhaps because of the way her family was organized with him at its center. This influence is evident in her poetic work on the subject of family.

The majority of Olds' poems deal with one family's life as the child moves from her early life in the family, into marriage and then into her own experiences of motherhood.<sup>1</sup> The family which she describes is also very father-centered in its nature; however, the situation is much more abusive than the families that are discussed in Rich's poems. Olds is also interested in the structured relationships between parent and child but seems not to discuss the importance of these in as much depth as Rich does, preferring to focus on how events occurring as a result of parent-child relationships affect the child in adult life.

Both poets employ memory as a tool for exploring childhood experiences and assert the importance of remembered events in the act of defining an adult person. Many of the poems are written from the adult's point of view as the speaker recalls childhood events and then comments on how these have influenced her as she moves into her life outside of the family. Both Rich and Olds comment on the traditional roles of family, in which the father fills a dominant role and has control over the lives of both his wife and children. Olds' father-figure is clearly abusive, while Rich writes of a man who is dominant mentally rather than physically. The poems by both women with such a focus often seem to call for a change in traditional family structure.

Many of Olds' poems describe specific episodes of child abuse, but perhaps her most powerful description of a father's actions is in "Saturn" (*The Gold Cell* 24). This poem is one of several in which the speaker calmly observes her father while he is in a pas-

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sive state and it is safe for her to do so.<sup>2</sup> Often she appears amazed at the beauty of his physical appearance which contrasts his otherwise overbearing demeanor. She seems to use her observation as a way of searching for good in an otherwise horrible man.

"Saturn" describes this father in both active and passive terms. He lies "inert," "passed out" and "heavily asleep, unconscious" yet some part of him remains active even in this serene state, as he exercises total control over his family. Their lives "slowly / disappeared down the hole of his life." His complete domination of his wife and children is effectively demonstrated here via the imagery of "eating" the speaker's brother. In this figurative act he is totally involved in fulfilling his own goals with no compassion for his family's needs or wants, exactly like in his actual deeds.

Olds continually describes this father as a being whose sole function is to consume, to take, and he derives a great deal of pleasure from this action. His mouth is "open, darkness of the room / filling his mouth" as he sleeps and he is trying to put his family in this dark, empty place. The entire process of "eating" the child is shown in a manner very similar to that of a connoisseur eating a gourmet meal; every bite is savored and the meal is an elaborate affair with much attention drawn to it. He "sucked at the wound / as one sucks at the sockets of a lobster"; he snapped her brother's head "like a cherry off the stem." The child's bones are "like the soft shells of crabs," his genitals "delicacies." Clearly he draws great pleasure from the process of taking his child apart piece by piece figuratively, which suggests the equal pleasure which he obtains from the actual abuse.

Even though he is asleep, Olds makes it clear that the father is entirely and even happily aware of his heinous actions. Inside his unconscious mind his eyes are open: "He knew what he was doing and he could not / stop himself, like orgasm." This sexual or pleasurable connotation is but one piece of evidence supporting her father's addiction to hurting those near him—which is in itself most likely a result of his other addiction to "the glass," a reference to his alcoholism.

Another poem in which Olds describes a father's abuse is "San Francisco" (*The Gold Cell* 29).<sup>3</sup> This time the abuse comes in the form of sadistic teasing as he purposely drives the car up the steepest streets of the city in order to watch his daughter squirm and plead for him to stop. She offers him "a month's allowance" if he will stop but "he would sit behind the wheel and laugh with love." This "love," however, is not described tenderly but rather in terms

of violent actions: "his face / red as a lobster / . . . / after they drop it / . . . / into boiling water," his eyes like "seeds popping from a pod." The pleasure he obtains from the abuse in this situation comes from causing his daughter to lose control of her own body and do something considered "dirty":

As we neared the  
top he went slower and slower and then  
shifted into first, trying not to smile,  
and in that silence between gears  
I would break, weeping and peeing, the fluids of my  
body bursting out like people from the  
windows of a burning high-rise.

She is completely aware of the perverse pleasure that he gets from her reaction and feels totally powerless in the situation. She knows she cannot take control of the situation but does not believe that her father has total control over himself either.

In her book, *Sources*, Rich explores much of her early personal life and the events which were instrumental in the creation of her political consciousness. One section specifically addresses her relationship with her father throughout her life ("VII" 15). She reflects upon him as the dominant figure in her family and writes:

For years I struggled with you: your categories,  
your theories, your will, the cruelty which came inex-  
tricable from your love. For years all arguments I  
carried on in my head were with you.

Rich's father made sure that she received more intellectual training than most girls her age during the 1930s in which she grew up and he closely supervised her studies, so it is not surprising that she views him as responsible for her in many ways. But when she reviews her childhood from the vantage point of adulthood, she becomes aware that she was "the eldest daughter raised as a son, taught to study but / not to pray." She is realizing how tightly controlled her education was. Later in the poem, she recognizes in her father the elements of "patriarchy / . . . / the kingdom of the fathers" and sees in him the "power and arrogance" which she most likely paid little attention to as a child. Beneath it was hidden "the suffering of the Jew, the alien stamp [he] bore, / because [he] had deliberately arranged that it should / be invisible to me." This denial of his (and her) Jewish heritage has not only caused her suffering, but it has taken some part of his identity as well. She realizes that if this part of him had been acknowledged, he would have lost some of that patriarchal power and she would be much different as well.

Like Olds in "Saturn" and several other poems, Rich's speaker in "After Dark" (*Collected Early Poems* 227)<sup>4</sup> observes her father while he is in a passive state, nearing death. Again, she remembers his negative behavior toward her as a child, which stemmed from his domineering control of her. She imagines a phonograph needle on a record, whose sound is now faint as his life fades, playing the phrase she heard over and over during her childhood: "I know you better / than you know yourself." This seems to evoke the claustrophobic feeling of that child, who then leaves her family and experiences a sort of rebirth as she moves into adulthood, but not without some damage to herself. "Self-maimed," she "limp[s] off, torn at the roots," breaking ties with her family and then claiming a new life for herself:

[I] stopped singing for a whole year,  
got a new body, new breath,  
got children, croaked for words,  
forgot to listen

This breaking off from the family almost seems violent in its nature, but this seems necessary in order for the speaker to escape the influence of that family, primarily her father. In this way she truly learns to possess herself. She seeks a "new breath" to rid herself of the suffocation she felt in childhood. However, she still seems to place importance on her childhood and expresses the negativity of ignoring such an importance. When she "forgot to listen" it seems she forgot some part of her make up as well.

However, just as Olds sees reminders of her father in her own body and mind later in life<sup>5</sup>, Rich also realizes she can never totally sever all connections with her own father. In "After Dark," she realizes that she will always have some part of him when she "woke up one morning / and knew myself your daughter. / Blood is a sacred poison." The word "sacred" is used to demonstrate the undeniable importance of family relationships, while in the same line the word "poison" suggests that these relationships can also have damaging or negative effects on those involved.

These poems about abuse and domination view the father in similar ways: he is powerful in appearance and attitude towards his children and imposes many punishments or restrictions on them. While these parental actions range from physical child abuse to overly cautious control of a child's intellectual development, they all have specific effects on the children involved. All of the adult personas looking back on their experiences seem to feel as if they were being stifled or restricted in some way, but they have varying

opinions on how they have been affected by these situations. It is obvious that a child who is physically abused will have a much different reaction toward the parent responsible than a child who is controlled emotionally. It is also clear, that these have been events that have had a lasting impact on the individuals involved because of the long-lasting importance which the individuals have at some point assigned to such memories.

The concepts of traditional family structure and prescribed family roles are deeply connected to these episodes of child abuse and control which Olds and Rich describe. Each person in a family has a certain role or capacity to fill, and often these become stereotyped according to gender or the family member's status of parent or child. These roles do seem to be important to the survival of the idea of family in general or to the protection of its individual members, although they are often described as harmful as well.

A poem which seems to point out the strength of the relationship between Olds' speaker and her mother is "Parents' Day" (*The Wellspring* 17) in which she describes the way in which her mother's appearance does not seem to fit any stereotype:

I remember her being  
much bigger than I, her smile of the highest  
wattage, a little stiff, sparkling  
with consciousness of her prettiness—I  
pitied the other girls for having mothers  
who looked like mothers, who did not blush.  
Sometimes she would have braids around her head  
like a  
goddess or an advertisement for California raisins—

While in many other poems by Olds about childhood, the mother appears as a broken down woman, the event in this poem occurs before the "long souring of her life." She herself still appears child-like because of her blushing innocence, and this may indicate her status as the typical young wife who has not yet fully accepted her mother role in the way that society generally expects.

Unlike some of Olds' other poems which demonstrate a bond between the persona and her mother because of their common status as victims within their abusive family, "Parent's Day" seems to take place before most of the horrible events they would encounter. Here, instead of calling herself the possession of her mother, the speaker claims her for her own: "my heart would bang and my lungs swell / . . . / to see that woman arriving / and to know she was mine." There is a certain pride in being associated with her



mother which seems to disappear as she grows older, similar to the shame many adolescents feel about their parents.

In "A Woman Mourned By Daughters," (*Collected Early Poems* 159-160)<sup>6</sup> Rich shows her readers how women can become defined not just solely as wives and mothers, but also in terms of the domestic tasks associated with these roles within traditional family organization. The mother in this poem is not really grieved for; no real sadness for the loss of her as a loved person seems to be expressed. Instead, we are shown what she has left behind: physical objects which seem to suggest her own existence as a mere object. These are described as "solid assertions of [her]self" and seem to inspire some sort of feeling of dread or awe in her daughters, rather than the respect, love or affection which would be expected to stem from the memory of the deceased in such a situation.

This poem also shows how these domestic roles are passed on from mother to daughter. The daughters seem to feel a great deal of guilt for the lack of respect with which they may have treated their mother while she was alive. Now it seems as if "nothing could be enough." They are given the household tasks which were formerly hers alone, including the care of their father, who is described as "an old man in an adjoining / room to be touched and fed." Through this inheritance of tasks reserved only for female family members, the daughters are forced into the exact place or role in which their mother existed.

The mother is also portrayed as constantly concerned with the tidiness of the household and the appropriateness of the actions of her daughters. This is indicative of the stereotype of the domineering, overly concerned mother and the feeling this imposes on her daughters is clear in the following passage:

And all this universe  
dares us to lay a finger  
anywhere, save exactly  
as you would wish it done.

These lines imply that the daughters are still under some sort of unspoken control exercised by their mother, possibly more so after her death than while she was alive. They now also seem to possess a new respect for the wishes and opinions of their mother, which appears to be something they did not have while she was alive. They may be realizing for the first time what kind of restricted life their mother actually led, as they are now forced into a very similar one.

While they were young, Olds and Rich (and their poetic personas) no doubt realized that their fathers were the more powerful parents, but they did not yet have an understanding of what this meant. These small bits of memory evident in these poems seem to be important to naming the father's power and determining its importance. Very minute details contained in these remembered events seem to point out the problems which result from the prescribed roles that each family member fills almost instinctively.

While fathers are clearly dominant in the families discussed by Rich and Olds, they do not completely overshadow the importance of the mother. In fact, in many of the recounted memories the mother is looked upon much more fondly due to the attitude held toward the father, sometimes even as the more important or more loving parent. Many of the poems which have already been discussed here have pointed out the close bond which exists between mother and child, especially when that child is very young. The close relationship seems to wane around the time the child leaves the home, but resurfaces again in adulthood. In any case, the mother-child bond, or more specifically, the mother-daughter bond, seems very influential to both poets.

In "The Forms" (*The Dead and the Living* 35) Olds examines this relationship with the mother, once again as she functions in an abusive family. The persona defends the mother's actions during the time of her marriage by showing all the ways she would have protected her children, had the situation been different:

In disaster, an animal  
mother, she would have died for us,

but in life as it was  
she had to put herself  
first.  
She had to do whatever he  
told her to do to the children, she had to  
protect herself.

It seems as if the mother is still making some sort of sacrifice for her children by staying with them in this situation. She is a fellow victim here and is doing all that is currently within her power in order to protect them.

The last lines compare the atrocities of war to "all the forms / in which I have experienced her love." These lines demonstrate the acts of violence that the mother has been forced to perform upon her children which she would never have done otherwise because she does truly love them and is not motivated in the ways

her husband is.

Later on in the speaker's life, the mother attempts to make amends with her daughter concerning her behavior and her inability to leave her husband sooner in "After 37 Years My Mother Apologizes for My Childhood" (*The Gold Cell* 43). This situation causes many conflicts within issues that the speaker had already dealt with and is now forced to revisit. It seems that the speaker interprets this apology almost as an admission of her mother's guilt. The mother does indeed speak with "true regret" which may be some acknowledgment of her responsibility for these previous actions. She is also extremely distraught over the events and this seems to further compound her feelings of guilt.

The speaker wishes that her mother had not brought the subject up again, as she has made her judgements already; her mother, in her apology, forces her to rethink her conclusions, leaving her confused. This revisitation of the past is destroying her sense of identity and leaving her with a great deal of confusion about her sense of self:

I could not see what my  
days would be with you sorry, with  
you wishing you had not done it, the  
sky falling around me, its shards  
glistening in my eyes, your old soft  
body fallen against me in horror I  
took you in my arms.

Since the daughter had already come to terms with her childhood and accepted the ways in which she was defined by it, her mother's apology seems to have disrupted her life and sense of self. She cannot envision who she will be from now on. Since the mother is now accepting responsibility for her actions she is taking on some part of the identity of the abuser. She existed on both sides of the situation but now seems to be removing herself from the victims somewhat and placing herself on the side of the criminal. This may be the majority of what the daughter cannot bring herself to accept and why she says, "I hardly knew what I said / or who I would be now that I had forgiven you."

Rich's explorations of the mother-daughter connection have the privilege of existing outside such an abusive atmosphere, but the effects of patriarchy in general can still be observed, especially those which pigeonhole women into being defined solely by motherhood.

Rich explores the mother-child bond as it is inherently related

to the female body and the condition of women in a patriarchal world. In "Sibling Mysteries" (*The Dream of a Common Language* 47-52) she writes:

Remind me how we loved our mother's body  
our mouths drawing the first  
thin sweetness from her nipples

our faces dreaming hour on hour  
in the salt smell of her lap Remind me  
how her touch melted childgrief

how she floated great and tender in our dark  
or stood guard over us  
against our willing

This earliest bond between mother and child creates something between them which lasts forever and this sort of intimacy can only be found again in having children of one's own. Bearing children renews the bond with one's own mother through a shared experience.

The mother also seems to be more protective of her daughter. She will most likely encounter experiences much like the ones which the mother has, and so she not only stands guard over them, but again shares her experiences with her daughters. They are bound together as women surviving within a male dominated world. It seems that men would destroy these female bonds, but women strive to keep themselves connected in many different ways.

And how we ate and drank  
their leavings, how we served them  
in silence, how we told

among ourselves our secrets, wept and laughed  
passed bark and root and berry  
from hand to hand, whispering each one's power

This suggests that there are certain feminine secrets, "mother-secrets," or a female knowledge which are shared by mothers, daughters and all women alike, passed from generation to generation, but which would be misunderstood or threatened by men.

The daughters never were  
true brides of the father

the daughters were to begin with  
brides of the mother



then brides of each other  
under a different law

These last lines reiterate the strength associated with female connections, especially female connections between relatives. She shows the primary connection between mother and daughter and the secondary connection between sisters. These leave no room for a father-daughter connection with the same strength, no matter what societal assumptions may say about the daughter "belonging" to the father.

Early memories of the mother-daughter bond seem just as important to the adult as memories of the relationship with the father. Often these memories resurface as the woman has children of her own and draws on her relationship with her own mother in learning how to treat and care for her own family, something Rich explores in depth in *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution*.<sup>7</sup> Childbirth seems to further strengthen the bond with one's own mother because both women have been through the experience.

Both poets have also written poems dealing specifically with the concept of memory. One of these is Olds' "My First Weeks" (*The Wellspring* 8-9). The poem recounts the events of the first few weeks of the speaker's life, when almost her entire world was made up of her mother's body, which provided everything she needed. This early time is obviously very important to her now; she writes: "Sometimes, when I wonder what I'm like underneath, / I think of my first two weeks, I was drenched / with happiness."

The birth is described in terms which make it seem an easy, simple experience; the child "soared gently, turned, squeezed out / neatly into the cold illuminated / air and breathed it." After sleep, the child is awakened to find the mother offering all those things needed for life:

Washed off, wrapped,  
I slept, and when I woke there was the breast  
the size of my head, hard and full,  
the springy drupelets of the nipple. Sleep.  
Milk. Heat.

These necessities are associated solely with the mother, who is the entire life for the child at this point—nothing else in the world exists yet. Complete happiness and bliss is expressed in the memory of these weeks and the speaker's relationship with her mother during that time: "I have known heaven."

After the blissful hospital stay, mother and child go home where

Paradise  
had its laws—every four hours and not  
a minute sooner I could drink, but every four  
hours I could have the world in my mouth.

Forcing the denial of this early "clock of cream / and flame" is the parents' way of making the child learn the real world in some way: "They knew it would build my character, / to learn to give up, and I learned it." The speaker doesn't seem to look upon this negatively at all, but it doesn't seem to be an excessively positive event either, merely something overshadowed by that first "fortnight of unlimited ration."

The poem places a large value on that early, ultimate closeness of the child with her mother. In these events she knows both "paradise" and denial, and it is these concepts perhaps that prepare her most effectively for the range of events existing in adult life. This also seems to make her appreciate her life now, just as she did when she "lay and moved my arms and legs like / feelers in the light. Glorious life!" The memory also gives her a sense of stability in her life, for "it would always be there."

Olds comments further on how her parents and her memories of them have shaped her in "Possessed" (*The Dead and the Living* 33). In this poem, written for her parents, she recounts many details of them that she remembers and remarks upon how she sees them everywhere, even though she is geographically removed from them.

I can look in the eyes of any stranger and  
find you there, in the rich swimming  
bottom-of-the-barrel brown, or in the  
blue that reflects from the knife's blade,  
and I smell you always, the dead cigars and  
Chanel in the mink, and I can hear you coming,  
the slow stopped bear tread and the  
quick fox, her nails on the ice,  
and I dream the inner parts of your bodies, the  
coils of your bowels like smoke, your hearts  
opening like jaws, drops from your glands  
clinging to my walls like pearls in the night.

This nearly obsessive attitude that the speaker holds toward her parents effectively demonstrates the incredible impact they have had on her life. She cannot escape the influences that they have had upon her, and finds hints of them everywhere.

The title of the poem demonstrates another important aspect of the parents' effect on their daughter. It seems that she will always belong to them in some sense; she will always be their daughter. This obviously shows the extreme importance of them in her life and how they do much to define who she is as well. Yet she herself will never be able to possess them in the same manner, so she tries to hold onto these small remembered details of them, writing: "Never having had you, I cannot let you go."

Rich's poems dealing with memory are also written from the safe vantage point of adulthood. In "For Memory," (*A Wild Patient Has Taken Me This Far* 21-22) the speaker is speaking to her lover about the importance of talking about and remembering childhood events:

I fell through a basement railing  
the first day of school and cut my forehead open—  
did I ever tell you? More than forty years  
and I still remember smelling my own blood  
like the smell of a new schoolbook

And did you ever tell me  
how your mother called you in from play  
and from whom? To what? These atoms filmed by  
ordinary dust  
that common life we each and all bent out of orbit from  
to which we must return simply to say  
this is where I came from  
*this is what I knew*

The association of the smell of blood and the smell of schoolbooks is but one example of a detail of memory which can persist throughout life. Without the memory of the surrounding event, the speaker would be confused regarding the source of this combination of seemingly unrelated smells. The "atoms" seem to indicate the importance of the origins of individuals and their knowledge.

"Sibling Mysteries," contains themes related to mother-daughter associations as discussed before and is also filled with references to memory. Each section begins with a phrase such as "Remind me," "I know, I remember" or "Tell me" which demonstrate an underlying theme pertaining to remembered knowledge. This conversation between sisters is filled with references to previous events and the importance of reminding each other of them: "I know by hear, and still / I need to have you tell me, / hold me, remind me."

The poems discussed here only scratch the surface in demon-

strating the countless subtle comparisons that can be made between Rich and Olds in both their subject matter and writing styles. One can begin to draw conclusions as to the messages which these poets seek to deliver. Many questions pertaining to the motivations and final effects upon the poets and their speakers also emerge in the poetry as a close reading is undertaken.

In the vast majority of the poems discussed in this paper, it seems that the childhood events and experiences that the speakers recall have very negative connotations. It seems unlikely that these are the only events which they are able to remember from this period of their lives, but it may be important to note that these types of occurrences definitely leave a most indelible impression which lasts into adulthood. These negative events comprised of abuse or punishment may actually be more important in shaping the perceptions and attitudes of the child than positive experiences, since they serve to more forcefully define fears and outline the appropriate boundaries for behavior.

Evidence supporting the significance of these events is clearly demonstrated in the way the speakers treat their own children and the connections these actions have with those of their own parents. Many times the speaker consciously acts in direct opposition to the way in which her parents would have acted in the same situation. Again, it is interesting to note that this is a negative response to childhood memory; it is less often that we witness the speaker acting in a manner similar to that of her parents.

In studying the works of these two important poets of the twentieth century, we can clearly see precise comments on the structure of our society as it relates to family structure, within the stories of how these poets and their speakers have been affected on an individual basis. The careful reading and interpretation of these effects could do much to impart a societal change in addition to a change in family structure which Sharon Olds and Adrienne Rich so clearly call for.

It seems that in many ways, the incredibly powerful effects of the poetry written by these women have yet to be fully realized. Their comments on the far-reaching effects of childhood memories in adult romantic relationships, parenting styles and political beliefs can be incredibly valuable in helping us to realize what large portions of our beliefs and personalities are comprised of the experiences of youth.



ENDNOTES:

1. Sharon Olds has declined to comment on whether these poems are autobiographical. (See Pearlman, *Listen to Their Voices*, p. 204: "I don't talk about my personal life or my personal relationship to these poems.") Whether or not she is actually speaking of her own life, the events described in these poems suggest that she is documenting the everyday lives of *one particular* family, and the style she employs is autobiographical in nature. Brian Dillon writes, "Whether deliberate or not . . . Olds' poems allow readers to construct a plot, a linear progression from abuse to expulsion of the abuser to the apparent death of the abuser . . ." (Dillon 108) I will attempt as much as possible to clearly differentiate between Olds and her speaker.
2. Also see: from *The Gold Cell*: "Looking at My Father (31-32) and "This" (63); from *The Dead and the Living*: "My Father's Breasts" (43); and from *The Father*: "The Picture I Want" (10) and "My Father's Eyes" (31).
3. Similar themes are also found in "The Chute" (*The Gold Cell* 36) and "Natural History" (*The Father* 59).
4. Originally published in *Necessities of Life*, 1966.
5. In poems such as "This" (*The Gold Cell* 63).
6. Originally published in *Snapshots of a Daughter-in-Law*, 1963.
7. "Mothers and daughters have always exchanged with each other—beyond the verbally transmitted lore of female survival—a knowledge that is subliminal, subversive, preverbal: the knowledge flowing between two alike bodies, one of which has spent nine months inside the other. The experience of giving birth stirs deep reverberations of her mother in a daughter; women often dream of their mothers during pregnancy and labor." (Rich, *Of Woman Born*... 220)

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