Contents

Preface ix

- 1. Why Can't a Mother Be More Like a Businessman?
- 2. From Rods to Reasoning: The Historical Construction of Intensive Mothering 19
- 3. "What Every Baby Knows": Contemporary Advice on Appropriate Child Rearing 51
- 4. Sorting the Mail: The Social Bases of Variations in Mothering 71
- 5. Intensive Mothering: Women's Work on Behalf of the Sacred Child 97
- 6. The Mommy Wars: Ambivalence, Ideological Work, and the Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood 131
- 7. Love, Self-Interest, Power, and Opposition: Untangling the Roots of Intensive Mothering 152

Appendix A: Interview Questions 179

Appendix B: Survey Questionnaire 182

viii Contents

Notes 195

Bibliography 227

Index 245