

Delve Deeper into *Motherland*

A film by **Ramona Diaz**

This list of fiction and nonfiction books, compiled by Robert Surratt of the San Diego Public Library, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the POV documentary *Motherland*.

***Motherland* is an absorbingly intimate, vérité look at the busiest maternity hospital on the planet, in one of the world's most populous countries: the Philippines. Women share their stories with other mothers, their families, doctors and social workers. In a hospital that is literally bursting with life, we witness the miracle and wonder of the human condition.**

ADULT NONFICTION

Kristof, Nicholas D., and Sheryl WuDunn. *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*. Vintage, 2010.

Half the Sky is a passionate call to arms against our era's most pervasive human rights violation: the oppression of women and girls in the developing world. With Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn as our guides, we undertake an odyssey through Africa and Asia to meet with extraordinary women struggling there. Among them is a Cambodian teenager sold into sex slavery and an Ethiopian woman who suffered devastating injuries in childbirth. Drawing on the breadth of their combined reporting experience, Kristof and WuDunn depict our world with anger, sadness, clarity and, ultimately, hope. They show how a little help can transform the lives of women and girls abroad.

Schein, Virginia E. *Working from the Margins: Voices of Mothers in Poverty*. ILR Press Books, 1995. Schein shatters the stereotype of mothers on welfare. The women she interviewed in cities, towns, and rural areas talked to her about their deep commitment to the children they are raising in

poverty, about the abuse they have endured, about their eagerness for meaningful work, and about their inventiveness in stretching scarce dollars. In a policy debate increasingly dominated by shrill, punitive voices, Schein argues that the experiences and collective wisdom of these women cannot be ignored.

Hrdy, Sarah Blaffer. *Mother Nature: A History of Mothers, Infants, and Natural Selection*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1999.

Maternal instinct—the all-consuming, utterly selfless love that mothers lavish on their children—has long been assumed to be an innate, indeed defining element of a woman's nature. But is it? In this provocative, groundbreaking book, renowned anthropologist (and mother) Sarah Blaffer Hrdy shares a radical new vision of motherhood and its crucial role in human evolution.

Hrdy strips away stereotypes and gender-biased myths to demonstrate that traditional views of maternal behavior are essentially wishful thinking codified as objective observation.

Salamon, Julie. *Hospital: Man, Woman, Birth, Death, Infinity, Plus Red Tape, Bad Behavior, Money, God and Diversity on Steroids*. New York, NY: Penguin Press, 2008

A warts-and-all exploration of the struggles suffered and triumphs achieved by America's health-care professionals, *Hospital* follows a year in the life of Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn, which serves a diverse multicultural demographic. Unraveling the financial, ethical, technological, sociological, and cultural challenges encountered every day, bestselling author Julie Salamon tracks the individuals who make this complex hospital run—from doctors, patients, and administrators to nurses, ambulance drivers, cooks, and cleaners.

Cornog, Martha and Timothy Perper. *For SEX EDUCATION, See Librarian: A Guide to Issues and Resources*.

Greenwood, 1996. At long last, here is the definitive practical guide to sexuality materials in libraries and an annotated bibliography of nearly 600 recommended books for school and public libraries. Cornog and Perper, the preeminent experts on sexuality materials for libraries, provide guidelines for materials selection, reference, processing, access, programming, and dealing with problems of vandalism and censorship. The bibliography, organized into 5 topics and 48 subtopics, annotates a collection of recommended books and nonprint materials on sexuality information for children and adults, most published since 1985. Recommended works represent a wide variety of views, including Christian and conservative.

ADULT FICTION

Chai, Arlene J. *The Last Time I Saw Mother*. New York, NY: Fawcett Columbine, 1996.

Caridad, a Filipino woman with an 18-year-old daughter, is called home from Australia to Manila by her aging mother and told that she was adopted as an infant. She learns that her real mother is her aunt Emma and that her cousins are really her sisters. Long-buried memories of early confusion resurface as Caridad's relatives help piece together the puzzle of her past. This absorbing first novel relates the lives of four women in one Filipino family against a tumultuous historical backdrop ranging from World War II through the fall of the Marcos regime.

Diamant, Anita. *The Red Tent*. New York, NY: Picador USA, 1998.

Her name is Dinah. In the Bible, her life is only hinted at in a brief and violent detour within the more familiar chapters of the Book of Genesis. In the *New York Times* bestseller, *The Red Tent*, Anita Diamant brings this fascinating



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biblical character to vivid life. Told in Dinah's voice, the novel reveals the traditions and turmoils of ancient womanhood—the world of the red tent. It begins with the story of Dinah's mothers—Leah, Rachel, Zilpah, and Bilhah—the four wives of Jacob. They love Dinah and give her gifts that sustain her through a hard-working youth, a calling to midwifery, and a new home in a foreign land. Dinah's story reaches out from a remarkable period of early history and creates an intimate connection with the past.

Manning, Kate. *My Notorious Life: A Novel*. New York, NY: Scribner, 2013. Meet the incomparable Axie Muldoon. Axie's story begins on the streets of 1860s New York. The impoverished child of Irish immigrants, she grows up to become one of the wealthiest and most controversial women of her day. In vivid prose, Axie recounts how she is forcibly separated from her mother and siblings, apprenticed to a doctor, and how she and her husband parlay the sale of a few bottles of "Lunar Tablets for Female Complaint" into a thriving midwifery business. Flouting convention and defying the law in the name of women's rights, Axie rises from grim tenement rooms to the splendor of a mansion on Fifth Avenue, amassing wealth while learning over and over never to trust a man who says "trust me."

Weiner, Jennifer. *Then Came You*. New York, NY: Atria Books, 2011. Jules Strauss is a Princeton senior on a full scholarship who plans on selling her "pedigree" eggs to help save her father from addiction. Annie Barrow, a struggling Pennsylvania housewife, thinks that carrying another woman's child will help her recover a sense of purpose and will bring in some much-needed cash. India Bishop, thirty-eight (really, forty-three) and recently married to the wealthy Marcus Croft, yearns for a baby for reasons that have more to do with money than with love. When her attempts at

pregnancy fail, she turns to Jules and Annie to make her dreams come true.

NONFICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Jimenez, Gidget. *All About the Philippines: Stories, Songs, Crafts and Games for Kids*. Rutland, VT: Tuttle Publishing, 2015. *All About the Philippines* takes you on an incredible journey across the colorful island nation of the Philippines with Mary, Jaime and Ari—three Filipino cousins who look totally different and yet are the best of friends. You'll visit their homes, their schools, their families, their favorite places, and much more. They'll show you how kids in different parts of the Philippines come from many different ethnic groups and have very different cultures—each with its own traditions, languages and beliefs...and yet, they are all 100% Filipino!

Rodriguez, Gaby. *The Pregnancy Project: A Memoir*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2012. Growing up, Gaby Rodriguez was often told she would end up a teen mom. After all, her mother and her older sisters had gotten pregnant as teenagers; from an outsider's perspective, it was practically a family tradition. Gaby had ambitions that didn't include teen motherhood. But she wondered: how would she be treated if she "lived down" to others' expectations? Would everyone ignore the years she put into being a good student and see her as just another pregnant teen statistic with no future? These questions sparked Gaby's high school senior project: faking her own pregnancy to see how her family, friends, and community would react.

FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Cushman, Karen. *The Midwife's Apprentice*. Clarion Books, 1995. The girl known

only as Brat has no family, no home, and no future until she meets Jane the Midwife and becomes her apprentice. As she helps the sharp-tempered Jane deliver babies, Brat—who renames herself Alyce—gains knowledge, confidence, and the courage to want something from life: "A full belly, a contented heart, and a place in this world." Medieval village life makes a lively backdrop for the funny, poignant story of how Alyce gets what she wants. A concluding note discusses midwifery past and present.

Galang, Evelina M. *Angel de la Luna and the 5th Glorious Mystery*. Minneapolis, MN: Coffee House Press, 2013. Angel has just lost her father, and her mother's grief means she might as well be gone too. She's got a sister and a grandmother to look out for, and a burgeoning consciousness of the unfairness in the world—in her family, her community, and her country. Set against the backdrop of the second Philippine People Power Revolution in 2001, the contemporary struggles of surviving Filipina "Comfort Women" of WWII, and a cold winter's season in the city of Chicago is the story of a daughter coming of age, coming to forgiveness, and learning to move past the chaos of grief to survive.

Lazo-Gilmore, Dorina K. *Cora Cooks Pancit*. Walnut Creek, CA: Shen's Books, 2009. Cora loves being in the kitchen, but she always gets stuck doing the kid jobs like licking the spoon. One day, however, when her older sisters and brother head out, Cora finally gets the chance to be Mama's assistant chef. And of all the delicious Filipino dishes that dance through Cora's head, she and Mama decide to make pancit, her favorite noodle dish. With Mama's help, Cora does the grown-up jobs like shredding the chicken and soaking the noodles. Cora even gets to stir the noodles in the pot carefully—while Mama supervises.

