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# Autonomous Motherhood?: A Socio-Legal Study of Choice and Constraint

*Susan B. Boyd, Dorothy E. Chunn, Fiona Kelly, Wanda Wieggers*  
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**Susan B. Boyd, Dorothy E. Chunn, Fiona Kelly, Wanda Wieggers : Autonomous Motherhood?: A Socio-Legal Study of Choice and Constraint** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Autonomous Motherhood?: A Socio-Legal Study of Choice and Constraint:

Since the end of the Second World War, increasing numbers of women have decided to become mothers without intending the biological father or a partner to participate in parenting. Many conceive via donor insemination or adopt; others become pregnant after a brief sexual relationship and decide to parent alone. Using a feminist socio-legal framework, *Autonomous Motherhood?* probes fundamental assumptions within the law about the nature of family and parenting. Drawing on a range of empirical evidence, including legislative history, case studies, and interviews with single mothers, the authors conclude that while women may now have the economic and social freedom to parent alone, they must still negotiate a socio-legal framework that suggests their choice goes against the interests of society, fatherhood, and children.

*Autonomous Motherhood* is a wonderful and welcome contribution to feminist socio-legal literature. It raises provocative, timely, and important questions, and will provide the basis for future scholarship on single motherhood, relational autonomy, and legal regulation. (Brenda Cossman *Canadian Journal of Family Law* vol 30:01:2017) Written by leading socio-legal scholars, *Autonomous Motherhood?* is an important work that will also be of interest to scholars in sociology, anthropology, politics, and public policy whose focus is families and family life. (Mary Jane Mossman, Osgoode Hall Law School, York University) Enriched by its mixed methods, this book invites us to understand a range of family situations as examples of autonomous motherhood. It presses us to think harder about autonomy, the neoliberal context in which family making unfolds today, and the judgments we assign to different kinship forms. (Robert Leckey, Faculty of Law, McGill University) *Autonomous Motherhood?* offers a nuanced understanding of the trickiness of conceptions of autonomy and choice and provides important new data on women's experiences of lone motherhood in the post-war and more recent era. (Hester Lessard, Faculty of Law, University of Victoria) About the Author Susan B. Boyd is a professor and holds the Chair in Feminist Legal Studies in the Faculty of Law at the University of British Columbia. Dorothy E. Chunn is a professor emerita of sociology in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Simon Fraser University. Fiona Kelly is a senior lecturer in the School of Law at La Trobe University. Wanda Wieggers is a professor in the College of Law at the University of Saskatchewan.