

Acknowledgments

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Working on this project through the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic brought the labor of care into relief in unexpected ways.

This pandemic has laid bare how precarious the balance of work and caring labor is for professional women in most of the world. In the US particularly, where bars and shopping malls were reopened long before schools were, where nursing homes became dangerous places for the elderly, necessitating home care arrangements by relatives, and where workplaces demanded continued productivity “in these challenging times,” with the assumption that working parents (read: working moms) would somehow pick up the slack of demanding and under-stimulated children while cleaning up after and catering to a family who is always home, the appeal of outsourcing the burden of domestic maintenance was never more palpable and added much-needed nuance to my understanding of my interlocutors’ choices. I was able to move this project forward amid lockdowns, family health crises, and school closures only with the help of Kira Deshler, Marta Zarzycka, William Verheul, Rachel Hannaford, Justin Lerer, and Stephen Hannaford, as well as the miraculous Facetime babysitting services of Janie and Eric Rosenthal.

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