



CALL FOR PAPERS

Demeter Press

Seeking submissions for an edited collection entitled
Mothers as Keepers and Tellers of Origin Stories

Editors: Dr. Kerri Kearney, Oklahoma State University, USA,
and Dr. Lee Murray, University of Saskatchewan, CANADA

Extended Deadline for Abstracts: August 1, 2016

As Elizabeth Stone (1988) captures eloquently,

The particular human chain we're part of is central to our individual identity. Even if we loathe our families, in order to know ourselves, we seem to need to know about them, just as prologue.

This collection will provide safe space for diverse critical perspectives and discussion about the keeping or telling of children's origin stories as a part of contemporary mothering labor. Emotions including shame, blame, guilt, as well as fear of the child's reaction or impact on the relationship, may disrupt disclosure to children of some origin stories. Based within feminist scholarship, this anthology's premise rejects the idea that there is an essential, real mother to be discovered; indeed, we assume that the desire to know origin is separate from the desire to be (or not to be) in relationship to other actors in the origin story. We want to explore the considerations, responsibilities, and work of mothers whose child's origin story includes a diverse set of other actors and/or complex issues. This collection encourages dialogue about a mothering issue that is often unaddressed, in part due to remaining patriarchal expectations about what makes a family and/or a mother. It is an interdisciplinary work, and contributions including creative and scholarly works, as well as new imaginings, are encouraged from diverse fields and disciplines including authors, scholars, researchers, and mothers who may speak to the struggles, decisions, actions, considerations, and outcomes related to origin storytelling decisions.

Topics may include (but are not limited to):

We are particularly (but not exclusively) interested in narrative approaches (autoethnography, narrative inquiry, etc.); all should discuss the narrative's connections to cultural, political, social and/or research understandings. "Child"/"children" may refer to young through adult. Works may focus on decisions to tell/not tell, how/how much/when to tell, and implications, outcomes, and responsibilities of telling/not telling decisions; child's right to know; methods, contexts, and descriptions of mothers' carrying out decisions to tell; social prescriptions, influence of extended family members/friends', and/or the child's mental/physical health; and influence of faith/spiritual beliefs. Mothers may be foster/ step-/birthmothers, adoptive or group home mothers, grandmothers, and others acting in a mothering role. Mothers via science (IVF, embryo adoption, sperm donation, etc.) may have particularly complex origin stories to explain, as may mothers raising children conceived through sexual violence and incest. Origin stories may be about conception but also about secrets that may include drugs/alcohol/sexual abuse, other biological siblings/family members' circumstances. Photos and illustrations may be included.

Submission Guidelines:

Abstracts/Proposal (300-500 words) with a short biography due **August 1, 2016**

Invitations to submit complete papers expected to be made by **September 30, 2016**.

Completed papers (15-20 pages double-spaced, not including references in MLA format), creative works may be shorter; due **March 30, 2017**.

Please note that acceptance will depend on the strength and fit of the final piece. Please send inquiries, abstracts, and final works to the editors at: kerri.kearney@okstate.edu and lee.murray@usask.ca

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