



Demeter Call for Contributions

Maternal Subjectivities

Eds. Lynn Deboeck, Sami Harb, and Ana Carolina Coelho

ABSTRACTS DUE August 31, 2024.

We are currently seeking contributions for an edited volume that will consider maternal subjectivities (understood broadly). This volume aims to explore and theorize maternal subjectivities and how they have been influenced by lived experiences of mothers (biological, adoptive or otherwise), children (since we all come from a mother) and members of society who directly affect and are directly affected by maternity or motherhood in some way. Our understanding of maternal subjectivities is understood through a wide range of lenses beyond firsthand experience and representations of mothers in media or literature, though is informed by such. We are especially interested in investigating the intersections of maternal subjectivity with race, class, gender and ability.

Current scholarship suggests that socially-constructed ideas about motherhood remain a limiting force in how we understand maternity. Often defined solely through the context of their relationship to living children, and further constructed, defined or limited by gendered distinctions from fathers, mothers—in their myriad of forms and identities—are less understood than the traditionally understood universal of man. Nonetheless, a rich history of feminist theoretical lenses has provided ways of thinking about social scripts, identity, power, feminist ideology and the maternal that continue to bear productively on feminist scholarship.

Contributions, including (but not limited to) scholarly essays of roughly 3,000-5,000 words, might engage with contemporary representations of mothers (including those persons whose identity politics expand the typically limited notions of ‘mother’) from a range of critical perspectives. **It must be noted that we will accept a broad range of submissions from artistic formats, to manifestos, interviews, and other forms of scholarship.** We ask that you delineate whether you feel your piece would fit into the first section of the book, which concerns narratives directly from those who identify as mothers; or if you would think your piece would better fit in the second part, which is engaging with the maternal from positions outside the mother herself. Contributions should engage topics that address the performance of maternity in its many different stages, guises and constructions. Possible topics include (but are not limited to):

- Representations of maternal identities, race, class, power and/or resistance, and social myths.
- Motherhood and borders
- Queer motherhood
- Maternal communities and kinship structures
- Eroticism, sexuality and fetishization in maternal representation
- The invisibility/visibility of mothers and pregnant bodies
- Childbirth
- Adoption and Surrogate mothering
- Matriarchal metaphors (the Motherland, Mother Nature, Mother tongue)
- Monstrous mothers
- Postpartum experience, transition and loss

- Nursing mothers, bonding, abjection and the body's ambiguous borders
- Maternal identity and terminated pregnancies, miscarriages, stillbirth and infertility
- The role of medicine and science in pregnancy, birth and motherhood
- Patriarchal power and 'Post'-motherhood
- Motherhood as disabling, disfiguring, disqualifying
- Shifting of maternal identity in culture and in historical time
- Motherhood in Indigenous, cultural, and postcolonial studies
- Arts-based representations of motherhood
- Motherhood, emotions, and embodiment
- Motherhood and imagination
- Not only about what is happening in motherhood, but what is possible in Motherhood

Demeter Press has commissioned this volume and so we do not anticipate needing further support to go to press once we receive the contributions. Please send abstracts of 300-500 words as well as a 100-150 word bios and any affiliations to Lynn Deboeck (lynn.deboeck@utah.edu), Sami Harb (harb@yorku.ca) and Ana Carolina Coelho (hanaakif@hotmail.com) **by no later than August 31, 2024**. Please include your name, affiliation, e-mail and phone number, as well as indicate whether you are submitting for the first or second book section. Questions? Contact Lynn Deboeck, Sami Harb and/or Ana Carolina Coelho (contact info above).