



## Call for Chapters

Demeter Press is seeking submissions for  
an edited collection tentatively entitled:

### Families of Choice

**Editors:** Alys Einion and Rachael Williams

Please submit 400-500 word abstracts by: July 1st, 2024

The notion of 'family' has evolved to encompass multiple terms and definitions, moving beyond the entrenched norms of the Global North and the concept of the 'nuclear family' with its definition of two parents raising children, to something more fluid and more self-defined. Family and kinship can be biological, legally-defined (as through marriage, legal partnership or adoption) or socially defined according to social and cultural expectations. In this book, we wish to explore how individual agency, culture, collective intention, need, and/or social, economic and political drivers define and contribute to 'chosen families', and what these are variously defined as. We wish to explore the history, experiences and perspectives of families of choice, through academic, auto/biographical, artistic, creative and hybrid contributions that are centred in the critical juncture of social and cultural inter-relations that constitute our complex world. In this, we also wish to explore migrant families, changing families, family structure, the breakdown and/or (re)forming of families, and the problematic definition of 'choice'.

The nature of mother, parent, childrearer, father or any other 'parental' or caregiving position or in families by choice forms part of our exploration. The nature of family, extended family, inter-generational familial ties and relationships and the lifespan of families, including the formation and dissolution of familial relationships, the loss of family and the social and other impact and recognition of these experiences. We wish to include therefore reflections on families of choice determined by any and all social and personal factors, including migration, social pressure, economic factors, cultural factors, queer and same sex families and any and all choices and decision-making in forming, creating, discovering or imagining 'family', however that term may manifest itself. The emotional, spiritual and physical nature of 'the family' is also included in our endeavour, as is the concept of 'belonging' in and being outside of families.

As co-editors, both academics and midwives, we are inspired to expand our shared lexicon and ways of knowing around families of choice. Alys Einion is a published writer of fiction, the editor of an international midwifery journal, and an academic who has researched and written about queer families and has lived experience of families of choice.

Rachael Williams is a lecturer in midwifery, practising midwife and a qualified nurse who has worked in various roles in the NHS since 1997. As a staunch proponent of woman-led (rather than medical/midwifery-led) models, and as a mother of a six-year-old, she has interests in mothers' experiences and midwives' wellbeing and happiness.

We both subscribe to the view that understanding families of choice enhances the capacity of professionals and society overall to expand its vision of whatever we define as 'family.'

We are seeking submissions from academics, artists, activists, writers, mothers/fathers, parents, grandparents, anyone with kinship ties (however defined) and those with lived experience. Submissions might include: personal essay/reflection, academic essay, academic research, memoir,

creative non-fiction, narrative, poetry, art, photography, and hybrid genre (ie any combination of the above). We are interested in the experience of being within and without families, and the effects of family belonging or exclusion, as well as what brings about the definition or adoption of a family of choice, and are particularly keen to include those whose cultures and histories have been marginalised or affected by colonialism and coloniality. We also welcome new readings of definitions of families, texts and artefacts around families, 'the family' in art, literature, politics, sociology and social policy, health, public services and public policy, anthropology, human rights, religion, faith and belief, spirituality and spiritual practice, philosophy, culture, and the history of the family through a decolonising lens and through a lens of diverse gender and sexuality.

### **Submission guidelines**

Submission Guidelines: Abstract (400-500 words) with a 75-word bio (single document) by June 30, 2024. Acceptance will be made by 31 August 2024. Completed works (up to 6,500 words double-spaced pages, 12-point font, in MLA reference format for citation) are due January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025. Please note that acceptance will depend on the strength and fit of the final piece. Also please note that papers will be received and reviewed in English. Prospective authors and artists who may have limited experience with publishing in English are strongly encouraged to seek the assistance of a technical editor before submitting proposals and papers, as language difficulties may be raised as a concern during the external review process. Please send inquiries and abstracts to:

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