

strangers, and even change minds. She also shows us the racism her speaking partners and friends faced, and she provides details of the sexism she faced on the many campaigns she worked on. But the most important moments are the details we only get because she was travelling. If she wasn't a traveler than Steinem never would have learned of the fight for stewardesses to have workers' rights, or been told by taxi drivers about white supremacist groups she had thought were not around. Her travelling and journalism led her to not only work on women's rights, but all rights, from profiling James Baldwin to working with Wilma Mankiller.

As Steinem says, the road leads you "out of statistics and into stories" which is exactly what *My Life on the Road* has done for the women's movement. Steinem has done what she promises with this work. She brings the personal into the political and provides not only a detailed story of her own life, but the stories of the women's rights movement as a whole.

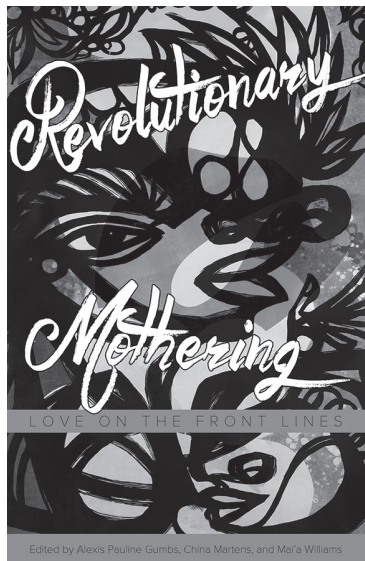
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REVOLUTIONARY MOTHERING: LOVE ON THE FRONT LINES

Alexis Pauline Grumbs, China Martens, and Mai'a Williams, Eds.
Toronto: Between the Lines, 2016

REVIEWED BY MELINDA
VANDENBELD-GILES

In the powerful and evocative *Revolutionary Mothering: Love on the Front Lines*, co-editor China Martens



writes, "Actions and words, practical deeds and dreams, this is how we build tomorrow." Indeed, *Revolutionary Mothering* is a testament to life and love. It is a book filled with words that brim with hope and rage and love that can change the world. After spending days immersed within the words and images produced through this inspiring edited volume, I have run through the emotional rollercoaster and have come out the other side feeling my spirit renewed with expansive love, hope, and a lot of productive anger.

The editors of this volume reveal the multiplicity of mothering voices often marginalized and not given priority in a deafening world of racism, sexism, classism, ageism, and ableism. These are the voices of strong mothers of colour, queer mothers, young mothers, poor mothers, mothers who will not be pushed to the sidelines but who show us through their words and actions that they will not only persevere, but thrive, and fight for a more inclusive world—one in which we need not be afraid of our rage but can use our emotions to create social change. Productive rage and love co-exist and *can* and *should* provide the needed tools for revolution.

Bringing forward a powerful

theme of love and the bridging of humanity, the book is divided into six sections in which the personal narratives of mothering voices are heard. Whether the discussion is intergenerational connection, everyday radical mothering practices and revolutionary home-making, the violence of poverty, the feminism of everyday life and the queering of mothering, the beautiful and fighting stories of birth, and the powerful potential of words, the multiple voices of these mothers—oppressed and marginalized by a homogenizing society—become centralized and in their starkness reveal the potential of the human spirit.

In "The Creative Spirit," June Jordan writes, "Love is life force... Love is opposed to the delimiting of possibilities of experience." Such a powerful beginning to this collection creates a strong message of optimism while still acknowledging the everyday structural violence marginalized mothers must face. Co-editor Mai'a Williams describes it well when she discusses the "bureaucracy of every day life." All of these narratives reveal the revolutionary message of social change alongside the everyday and visceral realities of mothering, showing how it is time we recognize the powerful political potential within those everyday acts of caregiving and love.

Returning to the rage and passion of the radical and queer black feminists of the 1970s and 1980s, this edited collection shows how the power of words can be harnessed, and how we need to remember the politics of the home place as a site of love, resistance, and hope for the future. Framed primarily within an American context, we need to see more writing that comes from this powerful place of love, rage, and hope: writing that breaks free from standardized ideals and definitions and seeks to define itself. Taking this

revolutionary potential and creating a global mothering force is where our voices need to go. In an era of hate, fear, and divisiveness, this collection reveals how love can create the unifying bridge. We can move away from scarcity thinking and toward abundance. As Autumn Brown writes in *Scarcity and Abundance*, “Abundance ignites the imagination.” But there are no mythical illusions, no false claims of utopia. In reading this book, we must all ask ourselves, how can we acknowledge injustice while also maintaining hope? How can we fight for change and use the rage of love without being consumed by it? *Revolutionary Mothering* provides a starting point, but it is now up to all of us to continue this fight collectively.

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MOTHERS, MOTHERING AND SEX WORK

Rebecca Bromwich and Monique Marie DeJong, Eds.
Bradford: Demeter Press, 2015

REVIEWED BY LAURA BRIGHTWELL

One romanticized, one abjected, motherhood and sex work are identities both constructed in limited and damaging ways. The new collection,

Mothers, Mothering and Sex Work explores the intersections of two identities that are often seen to be mutually exclusive and challenges societal assumptions about both types of work.

Mothers, Mothering and Sex Work refuses to reproduce a simplistic understanding of mothers engaged in sex work. Its contributors produce an image of sex work that is both joyous and harmful, safe and dangerous. Editors Rebecca Bromwich and Monique Marie DeJong’s intention is to curate a collection that renders “imaginable and speakable the messiness of divergent perspectives and experiences” about mothering and sex work. The anthology claims that it does not to adhere to either a criminalization or legalization position, arguing that the polarization of viewpoints framed by the ‘sex work debate’ leaves out many aspects of sex workers’ experiences. Centred on the Canadian context, the anthology nevertheless references global issues and challenges, particularly through its emphasis on the effects of globalization and colonization.

Despite its proclaimed editorial intention, *Mothers, Mothering and Sex Work* leans generally towards the decriminalization argument, with many of the works illustrating the harmful effects of Canadian policy, and punitive policing, on sex workers. Its intersectional approach highlights that the most vulnerable sex workers are those who are societally marginalized in other ways. Those who have the societal mobility to choose sex work as a profession are more likely to have a positive experience of it, and work under safer conditions. The overall effect of the book is therefore to align it with a legalization framework, that emphasizes the importance of sex workers’ agency and control over their own working conditions, a control that is disallowed in the paternalistic and moralizing legal framework of

criminalization.

However, the most striking and enjoyable aspect of this book is its employment of diverse storytelling mechanisms to tell the stories of sex workers. In addition to academic papers, the collection features photographic essays, poetry, and long-form creative writing. Well-known writers are included, with an excerpt from the second of Maya Angelou’s autobiographies, *Gather Together in My Name*, and a short story by Alice Munro. The work of these celebrated authors sits alongside the voices of anonymous sex workers describing their experiences, a juxtaposition that refuses to privilege one voice over the other. The inclusion of multiple perspectives demonstrates the limitations of both sides of the criminalization/legalization debate and forces readers to reconsider their own position.

The academic articles in the book cover a range of topics, such as the use of intergenerational support networks in African American mothering, the effective state incarceration of adolescent sex workers permitted by the policy of “secure care,” and the racist construction of migrant sex workers as innocents in need of rescue and repatriation. The effect of its multimedia approach is to provide first-person perspectives and refuse the othering effect often generated by academic analysis. By holding these various media in tandem, the collection offers a comprehensive approach to the topic of mothers who are sex workers and refuses to pitch these fraught and complicated identities against each other.

Mothers, Mothering and Sex Work collects and holds diverse voices, perspectives, and experiences together in order to produce a holistic examination of the intersections of mothering and sex work. By refusing the polarizing debates of victim/agent, criminalization/legalization,