



# Mother-Texts: Narratives and Counter-Narratives

*Marie Porter and Julie Kelso*

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Every day, human beings tell and are told stories, sometimes in obvious ways, sometimes not. Most of our communication with each other, direct or indirect, involves narrative production and reception. Narrative is constitutive of human being. However, whose narratives are heard? Feminists argue that the relations between language, knowledge, gender and power, particularly the question as to whether man-made and controlled language is a material fit to receive and convey woman's stories, are critical issues, because historically, patriarchy has worked to silence women's dialogue. Male knowledge, unsurprisingly, created and continues to create unrepresentative maternal narratives which lead to unreal expectations of mothers and motherwork. It is, therefore, disconcertingly significant for mothers that neither mothers nor their motherwork have been considered worthy of historical record; nor are historical records usually written from a mother's perspective. Hence, the narrative research in this book, which gives recognition to motherhood, mothers and/or the work they do, is valuable. It adds to the rapidly accumulating maternal research - research that is now available for the historical record. Mothers are speaking up, developing a canon of literature/research narrated in maternal language and claiming maternal knowledge and power.

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