

Editorial

This issue is about mothers. It's about the work we do, the changes we've been making and the choices that are opening up for us as individual women — who just happen to be mothers too.

The list of new lifestyles for mothers may sound impressive — we do double duty in the workforce and in the home; we bring up our children on our own or perhaps with the help of another woman; some of us have even decided that mothering is out, we simply don't want children. But has there been any basic change in our attitude towards *Motherhood* itself?

We know the myth would have us all as born mothers — selfless, loving, supportive, understanding — wiping out the woman-in-us. Many of us say we know the myth for what it is and that we've felt its stranglehold for too long, but are we ready to cry, 'enough'? Do we perpetuate the myth because it's our last refuge, perhaps our only claim to power? Are we ready to take the risk of mothering without the protection of the myth?

To be a mother is a fine thing — some of the time — and there are men who are good at it too. But mothering must be called by its right name: it's a learned craft for which none of us has been adequately prepared. It's a complex chaotic experience in which survival is often the real name of the game. The myth of Motherhood and all the illusions gathered under its title needs to be exploded. And we must do it for ourselves and for our daughters because none of us will be free until all of us admit that although mothering may be tough — it can be learned. It can be learned by any man or woman who is willing to make an investment of time in another person's life. And let's not forget that mothers need mothering too.

Mères, nous sommes en butte à toutes les attaques.

On nous a obligées hier à enfanter dans la douleur; aujourd'hui on nous culpabilise si nous souffrons de la moindre crampe.

La mode de l'allaitement maternel change comme la longueur de nos jupes. If faut, il ne faut pas. Et si moi je peux ou ne peux pas? Et pendant combien de temps? Trois mois, c'est bien? Ah, neuf mois, c'est maladif? Où est la date miracle?

Si je ne m'occupe pas de mon enfant, tout petit, je suis dénaturée. Si je m'en occupe plus grand, je suis encore dénaturée; pire — je suis possessive, dévorante, voire schizogène pour certains analystes. Y a-t-il encore une date miracle?

Si je me sacrifie pour mes enfants, il ne fallait pas. Si je ne me sacrifie pas pour mes enfants, il le fallait.

Eve, Pandore, féministe, femme tout court, nous sommes causes toujours de tous les maux. Si le sexisme (comme si nous l'avions inventé!) se transmet de génération en génération, c'est encore nous qui n'avons pas su nous transformer et transformer l'éducation de nos enfants.

Il faut que cela cesse, que mères nous reprenions en main notre maternité, que nous nous disions, que nous nous écoutions, que nous posions nous-mêmes les premiers jalons d'une maternité construisante et épanouie. Qui sait ce qu'elle sera. Mais elle sera à nous.

Bonne lecture, et n'oubliez pas de nous écrire!

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