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Titolo Essential breakthroughs: conversations about men, mothers, and

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"Mothers, daughters and mothering have been a longtime focus of research and study in various academic disciplines, and common topics of interest in mainstream press and popular culture, yet the realities and experiences of sons, men, mothers and mothering have been less explored. In her 1980 article "Maternal Thinking" Sara Ruddick theorized. "although some men do, and more men should acquire maternal thinking, their ways of acquisition are necessarily different from ours (women's)". Feminist scholars during the 1990s and early 2000s, such as Audre Lorde (1993), Robin Morgan (1996), Babette Smith (1995), Robyn Rowland and Alison M. Thomas (1996), and those appearing in Andrea O'Reilly's 2001 edited collection Mothers and Sons address the role and struggle of mothers raising sons. And while Andrea Doucet directly explores the question of whether men mother in her book Do Men Mother (2006) and Gary Pelletier reflects on the role of internalized patriarchy and the lens of feminist maternal theory in understanding his relationship with his own mother (2012), we still have much to discover, learn and theorize about men, mothers and mothering. The purpose of this collection is to explore the meanings and effects of the relationships among men, mothers and mothering from the perspective of sons, men, mothers, and parents across an array of identities, interests, perspectives, and geographical areas. The fruitful intersections of men and care work, masculinities and feminisms, and fatherhood and maternal theory inform our investigation. In her article "Taking Off the Maternal Lens" (2010), Doucet expands upon her earlier theorizing and has "come to believe that studying fathers' caregiving through the lens of men and mothering ultimately limits our understandings of fathers' caring." Although, as Doucet suggests, "fathers are reconfiguring fathering and masculinities and what it means to be a man in the twenty-first century," the stance of this collection affirms there is still substantial insight to be gained from the use of a maternal lens with respect to fathering and masculinities, and to sons, men, mothers, and mothering more generally"--