



Between Mothers and Sons: Women Writers Talk about Having Sons and Raising Men

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The challenge for mothers of sons is to realize that because we do not share a sexual identity, that because we have not grown up in a male body, we cannot presume to understand everything there is to know about our sons' worlds.

-- Patricia Stevens

In this absolutely superb collection of mothers' personal narratives, some classic writers, as well as exciting new voices, ponder the conflicts and joys of raising sons. Patricia Stevens's *Between Mothers and Sons* is the first anthology in which women writers attempt to answer the question that all mothers have contemplated in the course of mothering the opposite sex: "Who is this male child who came out of my body?"

After all, the mother/son relationship is the foundation of all male/female connections. Yet in our culture, it's a relationship that has been far less closely observed than the relationship between mother and daughter.

From the earliest days of nursing to the good-byes as college and adulthood appear on the threshold, from adoptive families to biracial, from Native American to African-American mothers, these pages cover a broad range of experience. These writers collectively explore the delights and frustrations, the deep and often-conflicted emotions they feel in their roles as mothers to their male children.

"Diamonds are forever, but love can easily get lost...I picture the broken pieces of my heart inside me like the shrapnel of a war." In Jo-Ann Mapson's heartbreaking "Navigating the Channel Islands," we read of the intense pain that appears in the wake of her adolescent son's rebellion. On a more comical note, Deborah Galyan's "Watching *Star Trek* with Dylan" is a must for any mother who has wondered about a young son's love of things mechanical. And Valerie Monroe's bittersweet "Feet" will touch every mother on the planet: "As I unwrapped the slippers and carefully placed them on this rug, I thought, they're his feet, after all. And step by step, they will take him away from me."

Between Mothers and Sons resoundingly, if unflinchingly, celebrates this new journey that we are all making with our boys.

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