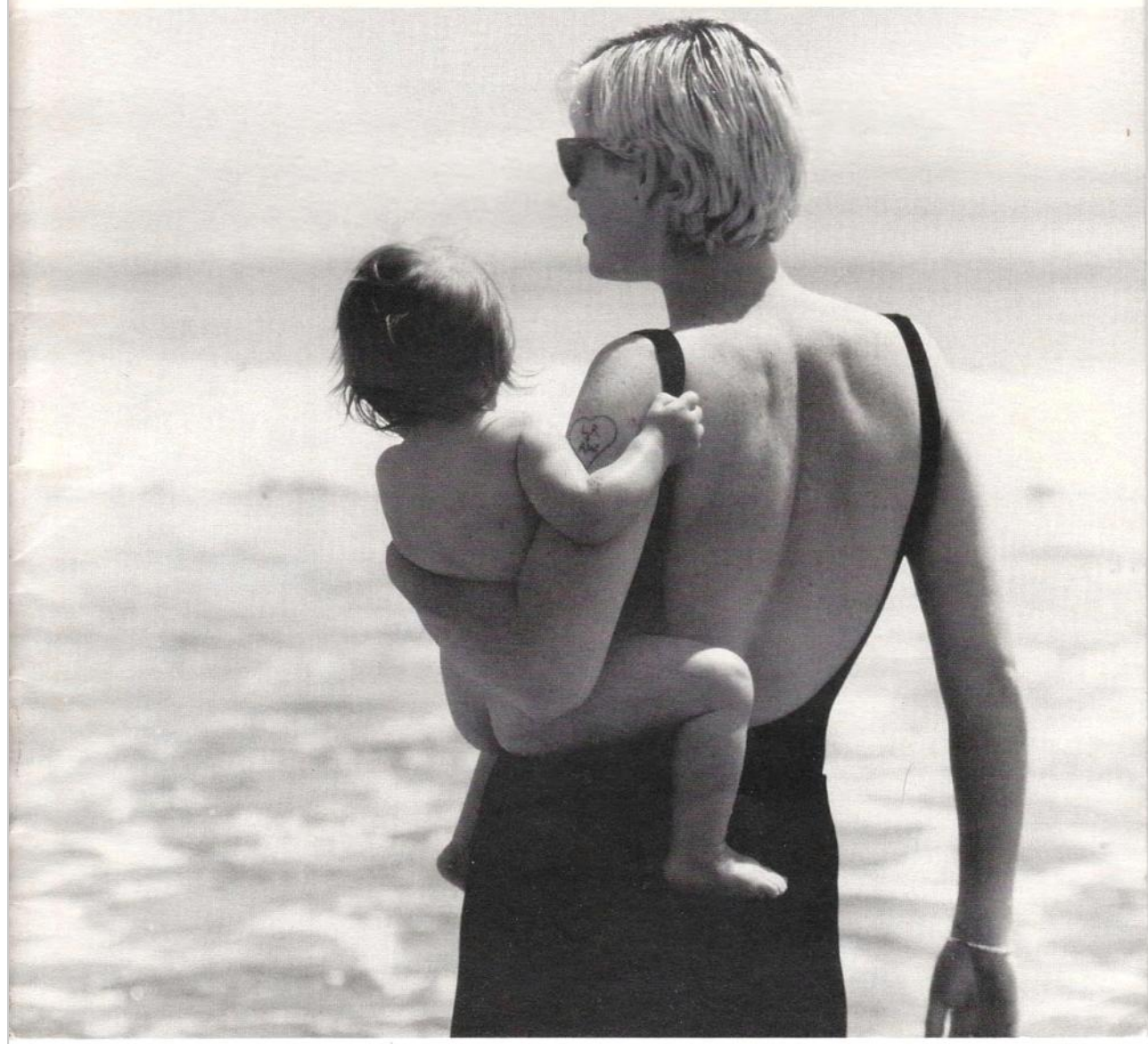


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The MOTHER IS ME

profiling the cultural aspects of motherhood

Number 38



LETTERS

Accolades

Dear Amy,

I am thrilled with your magazine and don't know where to start to give you my specific appreciations. I was struck first by the picture of the mother with SHORT hair on the cover. How novel, how unique, how un-mainstream, how affirming. Then to find you actually using words like "empowerment of women" and "feminist" in the same paragraph describing a magazine for mothers was outright revolutionary! When I read the articles, I knew there was no putting the magazine down, until I had given copies to all my friends. Which brings me to the real purpose of my letter. Instead of copying my favorite article(s) and sending them to all of my friends with a subscription form, could I get 5-10 copies of your Winter 1997 for a reasonable price? I don't have any experience in distribution, but I would love to help you get the magazine out.

Feminist mothers dittos to you,

Lynn Maverick

Note from Amy-- As a new magazine, The Mother is Me welcomes all help in getting the word out about our publication! If you would like to have additional copies of TMIM, these are available for subscribers at a discounted price of \$2.95 per issue. We're also happy to send flyers and brochures. Thanks so much for your support!

Dear Amy,

Thanks so much for speaking to me last week and for so promptly sending off copies of your publication. The Mother is Me is a breath of fresh air. I became completely absorbed in it, and so easily identified with many of the stories. Best of luck with the remainder of your pregnancy!

Regards,
Janet Mazur
Ocean Grove, NJ

Dear Amy,

This morning you returned my call in regards to The Doula/The Mother is Me readership. Later today I received my first The Mother is Me. I experienced somewhat of a shock that my subscription, and those that I have gifted friends with, have without my knowledge changed into subscriptions for a magazine that until now I was unfamiliar with. However, after reading Michele's and your letters/editorials, I'm convinced this will be a "zipperless" takeover. Keep up the great work! I hope to send in something in the future. Please send me new guidelines. I'd also like to buy the 1996 Summer issue which contains "Kevin's Life."

I thoroughly enjoy your upbeat and energetic voice. Good luck!

Judith Van Praag
Seattle, WA

Dear Amy,

What a wonderful publication! I was surprised to see it arrive in the mail, since I'd never seen it before and hadn't subscribed-- so, it was a real joy to open it up and read it cover to cover-- like a gift I hadn't even thought to ask for! Please sign me up for a two-year subscription, though given the nature of the mothering role, a lifetime subscription would probably make more sense! I'd appreciate a copy of your manuscript submission guidelines.

Wishing you all the best,
Jean Sullivan
Weston, MA

I am a freelance writer living in Austin, TX. I found your magazine by lucky chance at Bookpeople bookstore. It is really a fine production and very thought provoking. Once I sat down with it I couldn't put it down until I was finished. I am now in the midst of my first pregnancy and have an essay I would like to submit for publication. Thanks again for your fine publication. I look forward to hearing from you.

Bernadette Noll

In Response To...

Hi Amy!

I have been sitting here for the last half hour sipping tea and listening to my daughter Grace wrestle with taking a nap (strains of "Gullah

A note for our subscribers...

I had planned to have this issue out before Ruby's birth, which was on April 12; however, my assertive fetus had plans of her own! Due to a more exhausting final trimester than I had anticipated, this issue is coming to you now rather than last Spring-- this will not affect your subscription, as each year's subscription is based on four issues. Also, now that *The Doula* and *The Mother is Me* have merged, we are adapting a new editorial calendar and issue numbering system. For example, this issue is coming out in June and is #38; the next issue will be published in September and will be #39; and so forth (until your subscription runs out!) Your mailing label will indicate the number of the last issue you are slated to receive. So, hopefully this should clear up any confusion. I would also like to thank the many readers who have offered their support and encouragement during my (seemingly endless!) pregnancy-- your kind words have cheered me immensely! Also, please notice that **we're moving**-- our new address is on the contents page.

*** Overdue credit (and praise!) for **Kerry Estey**-- the beautiful portrait of the mother and child that accompanied "The Most Worthwhile Person I Know" in our Winter issue was contributed by Kerry Estey. We hope to publish more of Ms. Estey's work in future issues!

LETTERS

Gullah Island" coming from her crib!) while reading your latest issue. The piece by Ann Michael ("Who's That Woman Behind the Labels") was a description of my life! What a great article on the trials and tribulations of being both a mother and a feminist. I loved the line about labeling: "I feel a bit sticky under all that adhesive." And the story of her daughter watching her to learn how to be a mama-- how sweet, and how scary. Don't we all just hope that our children peacefully coexist but don't pay attention sometimes? "Teaching Creativity in a World of Plastic" hit home for me as well. We just finished celebrating two birthdays in January and there is truly enough plastic to start a small garbage dump. I am amazed at what is touted as "art stuff". Ugh. It is true that my kids just reject most of this junk after one sitting. I really would love some suggestions for birthday party gifts that inspire creativity and don't look stupid or cost a fortune. The essay "The Most Worthwhile Person I Know" wins the heart-touching award this time. She said it so beautifully, "She's also the greatest blessing in my life and the most worthwhile person I know." What a tribute! Of course Meg Wise-Lawrence's fiction was great as usual. My favorite line is, "They'd made it through another day in the city, in their life, in their marriage." Sometimes just that is enough. Simply existing. So, great job, oh pregnant one. I grovel at your feet! You are sure fire proof that those pregnancy hormones don't suck up all the grey matter... it just feels like it sometimes!

Love to you and yours...

Ann Allen
Rochester, MN

Dear Amy,

I love The Mother is Me. Thank you for taking over at a time when Michele need more time for her family. I especially loved Sue Senese's article, "The Most Worthwhile Person I Know." What a wonderful attitude-- and one I share completely. I, too, was bursting with pride when my son was born and couldn't understand the "we're so

sorry" attitude from others because he wasn't perfect in their eyes. I only wanted sympathy if he had died-- but he was alive and I was euphoric. I wish you all the best with the magazine, and much love to you and your family.

Molly Davis
Shohowish, WA

Dear Amy Condra-Peters,

Thanks for sending a copy of The Mother is Me. I was a Doula subscriber and uncertain whether my subscription with Doula expired or transferred to your magazine. Let me know this as well as your writers' guidelines. Many articles were moving and inspirational, yet there was one that was written for me to read now: "On Boo". I am the opposite of Elizabeth's friend who knew writing first and then learned mothering. Seventeen years and five children later, I chose to "transfer my sure touch with children to a sure touch with words." I am "finding my place in the picture" and the place includes the page. "Accidental Inspiration?" Wonderful intent!

Warm regards,
Debbie Westheimer
Batavia, OH

Dear Amy,

I want to welcome you and thank Liz and Michele for the wonderful years of The Doula. I was glad to see a short article in the Eye on Washington page about only buying products made in the U.S.A. It is important that we both refuse to purchase products not made in the U.S.A. and that we support all legislation which forbids the use of child labor in other countries. Senator Tom Harkin's bill would ask manufacturers to voluntarily label products made without the use of child labor. Please support this bill.

As parents and adults, we must be advocates for children because they cannot be advocates for themselves.

child laborers are physically, sexually, and emotionally abused by the adults in factories forcing them to work long long hours. Whenever you shop for clothing, toys, rugs, and other items, please take the extra few seconds required to find the label which tells the country in which the item was manufactured. If it does not say MADE IN THE U.S.A. (of U.S. components) I urge you to put the item back on the shelf. Take this very important stand for the children who cannot speak out to help themselves.

Katy Greenwalt
Boulder Creek, CA

Dear Amy Condra-Peters,
I so enjoyed Liz Koch's piece in Mother's Forum. It's an issue mothers struggle with and I certainly am right now (leaving my 14 year old and "baby") with my husband as I go work for a year, in Guatemala. Once again, I think the Mother is Me is great. I'm proud to be included.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Houston
Catskill, NY

Amy--

Received your winter issue today. Am fairly disappointed that The Doula is gone. Although I am an intellectual, feminist mother, the two issues that I have seen of "the Mother is Me" have, quite frankly, left me cold. I have come to terms with motherhood years ago (oldest of my four is 12) and I only support radical mothering perspectives. Although you have the right ads, your articles are much too mainstream (babies in cribs and walkers-- yeech!!) and indicative of detached parenting for my taste. Many of your authors seem to regret being mothers and are on a self-pity trip for how hard it is. I don't know if this perspective is illustrative of baby-boomer angst or general x'er selfishness but I don't pay for the privilege of listening to this sort of whining. Please refund the balance due on my Doula subscription.

Lori Collner
Westerville, OH

LETTERS

Dear Ms. Condra-Peters

I was so pleased to open my mailbox and find your acceptance in it, though, for the life of me, I couldn't recall sending you a submission. I went to my trusty old computer, the holder of my fragile ability to stay organized, and checked my list of pieces that are out looking for a home. Nada. I was puzzled. Acceptances without submissions are rare, I assume. I pick up the magazine you thoughtfully enclosed and see Doula's name. I laughed out loud-- it wasn't quite as mysterious as I thought, but for a while I felt like Sherlock Holmes! Thanks for the fun! I did receive the issue you sent me beyond seeing Doula's name. It is a lovely magazine and I feel privileged to be a part of it. I especially loved Sue Senese's piece, "The Most Worthwhile Person I Know" and Talia Carner's "A Girl Named Tomm." Both were beautifully written.

Sincerely,
Holly J. Fuhrmann
Erie, PA

Requests

You left out an important resource from your list. The International Cesarean Awareness Network (ICAN) is an important resource for women and men who are concerned about birth. ICAN provides information and support for women and their partners who are pregnant and are seeking a more natural birth even after one or more caesareans. Local chapters provide support for women who are healing from negative childbirth experiences and ICAN actively supports VBAC birthing whenever possible. This is a grassroots effort by women who have been there. ICAN's address is 1304 Kingsdale Ave., Renondo Beach, CA 90278 (310) 542-6400. Please update your readers as to this wonderful resource. ICAN helped me to have a cathartic home birth after caesarean that was truly amazing.

Karen Libman, Assistant Professor
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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