Foreword

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This co-edited book engages with biographical research approaches as applied to mothers’ lives, and the notion of mothering, and critically analyses key questions associated with economic and social inequalities, intersectionality, gender and identity, engaging with cultural discourses of what mothering means in different cultures and societies. The book engages with changing attitudes and approaches to mothering based on women’s individual biographical experiences, illuminating how socially anticipated tasks of mothering shaped through interlinking state, media, religious beliefs and broader society are reflected in their identities and individual life choices. Through consideration of trust, rapport, reflexivity and self-care, this collection advances methodological practice in the study of the lives of mothers, carers and childless women.

This book extensively applies biographical and narrative research methods to mothering from international perspectives. The book also critically examines issues pertaining to biographical research methods—what it means to undertake biographical research in studies on mothering and mothers’ lives, demonstrating novel methods in international methodological practice.

The chapters throughout this book engage with issues that are critically important in biographical research, including self-care, rapport, trust, reflexivity and self-reflection, showing how these processes shape and reflect narratives of mothering and research encounters with women in various social contexts.