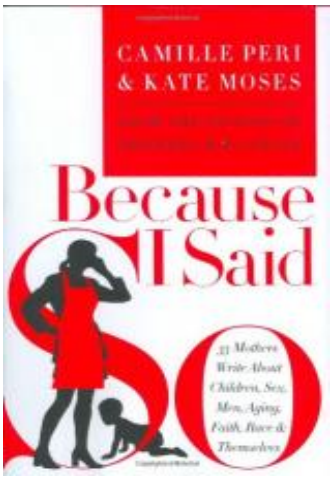
Because I Said So: 33 Mothers Write About Children, Sex, Men, Aging, Faith, Race, and Themselves

by Kate Moses and Camille Peri



About the Book

In June 1997, Camille Peri and Kate Moses launched the daily website Mothers Who Think on Salon.com for women who, like themselves, were starved for smart, honest stories about motherhood -- personal and intimate stories that went beyond tantrum control and potty training to grapple with the profound issues that affect women and their children. Like the online site, their bestselling, American Book Award-winning anthology **Mothers Who Think** struck a nerve across the country not just with mothers, but with all those who shared a vested interest in the raising of the next generation.

Because I Said So gives readers even more to think about. This new collection of fiercely honest essays edited by Peri and Moses captures the challenges of motherhood in the twenty-first century as no other book has. Writers such as Janet Fitch, Mariane Pearl, Mary Roach, Susan Straight, Margaret Talbot, Rosellen Brown, Beth Kephart, Ariel Gore, and Ana Castillo delve into the personal and the political, giving passionate expression to their relationships with their children and to their evolving sense of themselves. Provocative, candid, witty, and wise, their stories range from the anguish of giving up child custody to the guilt of having sex in an era of sexless marriages; from learning to love the full-speed testosterone chaos of boys to raising girls in a pervasively sexualized culture; from facing racial and religious intolerance with your children to surviving cancer and rap simultaneously.

Told in prose that is as unabashedly frank as it is lyrical, this is the collective voice of real mothers -- raised above the din -- in all their humor, anger, vulnerability, grace, and glory.

Discussion Guide

1. Which of the essays spoke to you the most and why? Did you disagree with any of the essays or have you had an

opposite experience?

2. Do you find it hard to juggle family, work, and time for yourself? How do you (or don't you) do it? Do you feel that one or two areas of your life suffer for the sake of another?

3. Several of the essays deal with various cultural backgrounds and their importance in the authors' lives. Do you find that you draw strength from your cultural history? Do you try to make sure that your own children grow up with both knowledge of and pride in their family's history?

4. The Ayelet Waldman essay has received a lot of media attention, both negative and positive. How did her essay make you feel in terms of your own family?

Author Bio

Kate Moses was born in San Francisco in 1962 to a British father and an American mother and grew up in various parts of the United States before returning to California to attend college. She subsequently worked as an editor in publishing and as literary director at San Francisco's Intersection for the Arts. In 1997 she became one of the two founding editors of Salon.com's Mothers Who Think Web site, which led to the American Book Award?winning anthology **Mothers Who Think**, coedited with Camille Peri. She lives in San Francisco with her husband and their two children. **Wintering** is her first novel.

Critical Praise

"A searing collection of essays from 33 women facing the challenges of motherhood in the 21st century...from a terrific lineup of first-rate writers."

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