"Women's Writing for Peace: Maternal Voices, Domestic Spaces, and Caregiving"

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Abstract:

This study explores women's writing about peace, expressing peace from the mother's voice, the home, and the care of others. The study takes a qualitative and descriptive approach by drawing on secondary sources, which relies on feminist peace theory, the ethics of care and maternal thinking to examine the literary constructions of peace beyond the political definition of peace. As revealed by the analysis, peace is often understood as more than the non-existence of war; it is a state of dignified existence that is built on empathy, relationships, social justice, and peace. Maternal stories are strong counter-narratives to militarism, and involve themes of protection, preservation, reconciliation and healing. Domestic spaces, typically considered private and apolitical, are demonstrated as important sites of everyday peacebuilding, as domestic care, talk and work with emotions create social stability and communal harmony. The research also emphasizes the potential of women's writing as a tool for social change, as it disrupts the patriarchy, gives voice to the marginalized, and imagines a different future through cooperation and compassion. Women writers bring the conversation of peace into a more intimate sphere, highlighting lived experiences of conflict, resilience, and care, and bringing a greater emphasis on interpersonal healing, community support, and the dismantling of structural inequalities. The paper concludes that women's literature is vital to an understanding of peace as a political process and a relational process, and to the recognition of the transformative nature of care, domesticity and the maternal approach in the creation of a more peaceful and inclusive society.

Introduction:

Women's writing has long been a powerful voice in the expression of experiences of conflict, suffering, resilience, and reconciliation. Women writers rarely define peace in terms of political treaties, diplomatic negotiations, or the end of armed conflict; instead, peace is most commonly envisioned as a way of life, as personal relationships, as caring for one another, as building community, and as striving for social justice. Peace is not simply defined as the non-existence of violence in literary and cultural narratives, but as harmony, dignity, equality and human well-being. The contribution of feminist scholars has led to a recognition that women's views deepen the definition of peace to incorporate inter-personal relationships, emotional healing and the removal of structural inequalities that contribute to violence (Ibarra & Flores-Rabasa, 2026).

Women's writing and peace are linked to the past experiences of women, who are often the ones to suffer social and emotional impacts of war, displacement, poverty, and

discrimination. Women writers across the globe have captured the impact of violence on families and communities and have imagined a different future based on compassion, cooperation, and mutual care in novels, memoirs, poetry, essays, and autobiographies. These literary expressions break the cycle of glorification of militarism and conflict in the patriarchal narratives, providing an alternative narrative on human relationships and collective survival. Feminist peace scholars argue that women's contribution to peace discourse has been very significant in redefining women's security in terms of human welfare and social justice rather than military strength.

One thing that is crucial to women's peace writing is the focus on mothers' voices. Maternal experiences can inform or shape the sense of vulnerability, protection and responsibility for others. The so called "maternal thinking" has been pointed out by scholars like Sara Ruddick, who equate skills of caring and values of preservation, empathy, conflict resolution. These values are often represented in literature where mothers and care takers are seen as symbols of resistance to violence and of peaceful co-existence. But modern feminist research also warns against the narrow focus on women's peace contributions as limited to the role of mothers and notes the differences in women's experiences according to their race, class, culture, and geography (Cohn, 2014).

The representation of domestic spaces is another key aspect. Homes and households have long been considered private spaces, but in women's literature they are becoming important areas of peacebuilding and resistance. An everyday description of domestic life exposes the female writers to the reader and brings to light how nurturing, caring and sustaining relationships serve to maintain social stability and communal harmony. These stories show that peace is fostered in families, neighborhoods and communities as well as in political spaces.

Scope of the Study

This research examines the concept of peace in women's writing, focusing on the voices of mothers, the spaces of the home, and the act of caring. It looks at women authors' perspectives on peace based on everyday experiences and interpersonal relationships. The study is based on feminist literature that looks at the traditional, male-dominated conception of peace and seeks to uncover other conceptions which focus on care, empathy and social justice.

The scope of the study will entail a review of the literature on feminist peace theory, ethics of care, maternal narratives and women's literary representation of peace. Explores the depiction of mothers, caregivers and home as reconcilers and transformers in literary texts.

Moreover, the research examines how women's writing is a means to dialogue, trauma healing, resistance to violence, and envisioning equitable social relations.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the concept of peace as represented in women‟s writing.
2. To analyze the significance of maternal voices in peace-oriented literary narratives.
3. To explore the role of domestic spaces as sites of peacebuilding and resistance.
4. To investigate how caregiving practices contribute to feminist understandings of peace.
5. To study about Women's Writing as a Medium of Peace and Social Transformation

Research Methodology

The present study is qualitative and descriptive research which is done using secondary data. Secondary research is ideal for the study of literary and theoretical works as it enables the researcher to use previous scholarly works and critically examine different points of view. The study draws on published academic literature, such as peer-reviewed journal articles, books, book chapters, literary criticism, feminist theory literature, as well as literature in the field of peace studies.

The information for the study comes from a comprehensive literature search of scholarly works pertaining to women's writing, feminist peace theory, maternal narratives, ethics of care, and caregiving. The academic databases used to identify relevant literature are JSTOR, Taylor & Francis Online, Sage Journals, Cambridge University Press, Google Scholar, as well as other reputable scholarly databases.

Theoretical Perspectives on Women's Writing and Peace

Women's writing and peace has been a subject of a large number of feminist theories that have challenged the conventional understanding of conflict, security and social relations. Feminist Peace Theory, Ethics of Care, and Maternal Thinking are three key frameworks that help shed light on how women writers depict peace as related to themes of motherhood, care, empathy and domesticity.

According to Feminist Peace Theory, the relationship between war and violence is tightly bound up with structures of domination, militarism and hierarchy that are privileged by patriarchy. According to feminist scholars, traditional peace models are about the lack of violence, while feminist models are about social justice and equality, human security and eradication of structural violence. These issues are often addressed in women's writing and can be seen in the day-to-day impact of conflict on families and communities, including women and children. Personal narratives and lived experiences by women writers challenge militaristic

ideologies and call for more inclusive and sustainable ways of peace. Feminist peace scholarship emphasizes the value of the voices of those on the margins in peacebuilding and conflict transformation (Carter, 2016).

The Ethics of Care, a feminist framework, builds on the principles of relationships, interdependence, empathy and care for others, with Carol Gilligan and others extending this model to care. Care ethics is not a moral philosophy of abstract principles, but one that calls for emotional understanding and human connections. As for women's literature, taking care is often recounted as a moral and social action, which is capable of promoting healing, reconciling and the well-being of the community. Domestic spaces, which are often considered private and apolitical, become important spaces that are used to cultivate peace through acts of compassion, support and mutual care. This view goes beyond the political aspects of peace to the everyday practices that help maintain human relationships.

A similar idea is Maternal Thinking, which Sara Ruddick created. Mothering practices, according to Ruddick, create unique modes of thinking which involve the characteristics of preservation, nurturing, and social responsibility. Maternal thinking is not exclusively about the biological mother/child relationship, but is about caring and protecting others. These values foster non-violence, collaboration and sensitivity to vulnerability. Ruddick proposes that mothers' practices can be seen as a good resource for peace politics and social change. Later scholars have linked maternal thinking to peacebuilding, grounding it in the cultivation of inclusive relationships, restorative justice and the understanding of human vulnerability (Radosh, 2008).

These theoretical perspectives in combination reflect how women's writing is related to the discourse of peace in a way that foregrounds care, empathy, relationality and everyday experiences. They expose that peace is not simply a political reality, but also a way of life based on human relationships and caring practices.

Maternal Voices as Narratives of Peace

Maternal voices are important in women's writing on peace because they provide different views on war, violence, loss and reconciliation. Maternal stories frequently break the maxim of "military is the only solution" and call for social healing, compassion, nonviolence, and caring. Literary depictions of motherhood, particularly by women, expose the human impact of war and the need for cultivating relationships for the purpose of peace.

Motherhood and Anti-War Discourse

Motherhood has been linked to anti-war speech in many instances as armed conflicts tend to bring emotional and social suffering on the mother. Women's writings include experiences from mothers who see their families, communities and children die in the struggle of war. These stories reveal the ravages of violence in the lives of ordinary people and raise doubts about the celebration of war. The maternal voices are those that stress the importance of preserving, caring for, and protecting human life instead of its destruction and conquest. Women writers view motherhood as a force of resistance against militarism and a platform for peaceful co-existence by highlighting both individual and communal suffering. These images reflect the contribution of the maternal perspective to social and peace movements (Lovin, 2021).

Maternal Experiences of Conflict and Reconciliation

Mothers are frequently depicted in women's literature as people who suffer the direct and indirect effects of conflict. Mothers are often physically challenged, but also emotionally traumatic, displaced, insecure and responsible for their families when in crisis. These experiences offer a unique perspective to the understanding and remembrance of conflict. Maternal narration often transcends victimization to draw attention to reconciliation and healing. Mothers are represented as 'holders' of family ties, 'pammers' of cultural memory and 'sustainers' of dialogue between divided communities. Mothers are portrayed as 'holders' of family ties, 'pammers' of cultural memory and 'sustainers' of dialogue between divided communities. Maternal figures play a role in rebuilding trust in societies affected by violence through the acts of forgiveness, resilience and emotional support. They show that one's healing and one's peacebuilding are linked (Laurén & Malinen, 2021).

Mothers as Agents of Healing

In many literary works, mothers come across not as a passive victim of conflict, but rather a healing agent. They can offer emotional support, foster resilience, and help to repair social connections harmed by violence through their caring activities. Maternal characters have a way of creating safe places that offer people a sense of belonging, a sense of safety, in which they can heal from trauma, a sense of community to which they can return. Mothers promote reconciliation at family and societal levels by empathy, compassion and real-world assistance. Healing is not only a medical or psychological journey for women; it is a journey of relating--of caring and mutual responsibility. These stories highlight the power of motherhood to change

lives, and thus the need to foster empathy, understanding, and human connection for sustainable peace (Winfield et al., 2024).

For this reason, maternal voices in women's writing, can be used as a powerful narrative of peace, as motherhood can encourage women's resistance to violence, promote reconciliation and contribute to healing individuals and communities impacted by conflict.

Domestic Spaces and Everyday Peacebuilding

Domestic spaces often are shown as meaningful arenas for the building and sustaining of peace in women's writing. Feminist writers and scholars, however, begin to unravel the distinction between the public realm of politics and the private sphere of the home as they illustrate how peace is produced in daily relationships, caring routines, and feelings of "work" inside the house. The house is not just a place, it is a social and cultural context in which values of empathy, cooperation and resilience are cultivated and maintained (Dijkema et al., 2024).

Often, in literature, the house becomes a place where the struggle against violence, oppression, and social upheaval takes place. Women in the home may take advantage of these spaces to keep family members safe, to hold on to cultural traditions and a sense of normalcy during conflict and uncertainty. Their acts of caring, nurturing and emotional support lessen the negative impact of war and social turmoil. Women's writing puts attention on the ways in which every day domestic practices can be acts of resilience and survival. The house is depicted as a place of compassion, solidarity and mutual support versus violence and fragmentation. In this way, domestic peace and security is an important foundation for sustaining peace at individual and community level.

Domesticity is often a prominent aspect in women's stories of how to solve problems and maintain harmonious relationships. In the family and community sphere, women are frequently mediators, helping to bridge the communication gaps and foster understanding and harmonious

relationships between members. In a domestic setting, there is opportunity to dialogue, negotiate and reconcile conflicts in a cooperative way rather than confrontational. The family dynamics portrayed in literature demonstrate the importance of daily activities like listening, caring and offering emotional assistance in maintaining peaceful coexistence. Women's writing expands what we know about peace beyond the official political accords and underscores the contribution of informal conflict management in the establishment and maintenance of social harmony (Porter, 2003).

In women's literature, private places are often represented as arenas in which peace is actively negotiated and maintained. Women handle complex social expectations, family responsibilities and power dynamics and work to create stable and supportive environments. They balance a variety of needs, manage conflict and promote trust and respect in relationships. These bargains allow women to assert agency and resilience in creating peaceful homes. Literary narratives show that peace is not a state to be achieved and maintained but a process to be cultivated, negotiated and emotionally worked. These works highlight women's experiences in private spaces and emphasize the importance of common actions in fostering a sense of social harmony and sustainable peace (Sana Qazi et al., 2025).

Domestic Spaces as Sites of Peacebuilding

Domestic spaces are important places in women's peace discourse as they are sites where values of care, empathy, cooperation and resilience are developed and passed on from generation to generation. As traditional views of peace building tend to emphasize the political, legal and international dimensions, feminist researchers and women writers propose that peace is also built in everyday encounters in the home and community. Women's literary narratives bridge the public/personal dichotomy by showing how domestic spaces are not removed from the social/political context. Rather, they serve as significant points for people to learn, practice and uphold the values of peaceful coexistence (Blomqvist et al., 2021).

In a number of texts of women's literature, the home is described as a safe haven where they find protection, comfort and emotional stability in the face of conflict, violence and social instability. Women are traditionally portrayed as keeping the family together and maintaining normalcy during a period of disruption. They provide stability and resilience through care activities like caring for children, assisting family members and/or handling household tasks. Such acts of care are not just responsibilities of individuals, but are meaningful contributions to peacebuilding by assisting individuals to manage trauma, uncertainty and loss. The house gradually turns into a healing place and the groundwork for harmonious relations is laid.

Domestic spaces are also a key topic in women's writing in the context of resolving conflict and reconciling differences. Conflict and difference are natural components of families and households; in the literary world, however, women often use dialogue, patience, understanding and compromise to resolve conflicts. Women often play a role of a caregiver, mediator and emotional support to improve communication among family members and to promote co-operative problem solving. These daily habits show that peace isn't just the lack of violence, it's the presence of healthy relationships and mutual respect and trust. This means

that women's stories of such interactions extend the notion of peacebuilding beyond the formal sphere and show its applicability in everyday life (Kumar, 2026).

Passing on values and cultural practices is another important part of domestic peacebuilding. Women are frequently the main figures in educating children and influencing their moral values in families. They learn values of compassion, tolerance, responsibility and respect for others through stories, care and everyday life. These values are important to building peaceful individuals and communities. In this manner, the domestic environment becomes an educational space where future generations are taught skills and attitudes for living in harmony and solving conflicts in a non-violent way.

What's more, women's writing challenges the notion that being at home is uninvolved and unimportant politically. Rather, domestic settings are presented as active sites of agency, leadership and resistance by women. Women's roles are important in supporting families, and maintaining cultural memory and emotional health, which in turn helps to promote social cohesion and community resilience. They are showing that peace-building is not just a matter of government actions, but of daily life practices of caring and relating.

Domestic spaces in women's literary texts show how peace is fostered in everyday activities of caring, communication, and mutual support. Women's writing foregrounds the role of the home as a place of healing, education and reconciliation and attends to the importance of the domestic sphere as an integral part of the process of building a just, compassionate and peaceful society (Udenigwe et al., 2026).

Women's Writing as a Medium of Peace and Social Transformation

The voices of women writers have become a strong force for the promotion of peace, challenging systems of violence, and creating new social transformations. Throughout history and different cultures, women authors have cherished literature as a means to understand and express their own experiences of struggles, marginalization, survival and hope. Women's writing opens up the concept of peace to look beyond the lack of conflict towards justice, equality, human dignity, and a compassionate social relation. Women writers are important participants in the conversation of peacebuilding and social change, through their novels, poems, memoirs, essays and autobiographical writings (Choudhury et al., 2021).

Women's writing has been one of the most significant efforts to highlight the human toll of violence and war. Traditional war narratives tend to be more about winning and losing the war and carrying out the strategies, whereas women writers tend to pay more attention to the everyday life of ordinary people, and especially women, children, and families. These

stories are about the emotional, psychological and social impact of war, displacement, poverty and oppression. These embodied experiences are documented in women's literature, such that the reader cannot fail to acknowledge the necessity for peaceful alternatives to the normalization of violence (Leksana et al., 2022).

Another way of writing is resistance [in the name of women] against the structures of patriarchy that create inequality and conflict. Feminist writers challenge society's systems which devalue women and limit their access to decision making. Their works challenge dominant narratives that promote aggressive, militaristic and power-based ideals, and promote ideals of empathy, cooperation and mutual respect. Literature thus becomes a place where other visions of society can be imagined, and articulated. Women's writing has the potential to challenge oppressive norms and to promote gender justice, which has the potential to spark larger movements for social change (Medina, 2023).

An additional quality of women's writing is the importance of care, compassion, and interconnections amongst human beings. Women's stories often include themes of motherhood, caregiving, support of others, and emotional strength. These messages emphasize the need for relationships and collective welfare in the quest for peace. In women's literature, peacebuilding is frequently depicted as a daily activity of caring, talking, reconciling and understanding. These images invite the reader to consider peace as not only a political goal, but also a social and moral responsibility that should be cultivated in everyday life.

Moreover, women's writing is an integral part of the process of remembrance of conflict and reconciliation. Literary narratives create opportunities to offer a voice for marginalized experiences of suffering, survival, and healing. Using story, women writers engage their communities in reckoning with troubling pasts, in recognizing injustices, and in imagining future possibilities for healing and living together. Literature provides a means of empathy, allowing readers to access the viewpoint of another person or group, and to gain insight and understanding, with a view to building social solidarity.

Women's writing today continues to shape the discourse on peace, human rights, and social justice. Women writers discuss themes of gender violence, displacement, environment, and inequality on traditional and digital media. They stimulate reflection and action within their societies to build more inclusive and peaceful societies (Singh, 2017).

Writing by women creates a transformative power that questions violence, gives a voice to the voiceless, fosters empathy, and imagines other futures. It also helps to spread its message of peace and social change, fostering a more peaceful and equitable society.

Conclusion

This research has examined the maternal voice, intimate spaces and the care-giving modality as the tri-fold themes that allow the voices of women to participate in the discourse of peace in their writing. This use of feminist peace theory, ethics of care and maternal thinking shows how the women writers provide a more comprehensive vision of peace than do more conventional political approaches, which tend to focus on military violence or diplomatic negotiations. Peace in women's literary representations is a lived condition, a condition of relationship, empathy, social justice and daily practices of care.

The analysis of the maternal voice shows that motherhood is often depicted as a moral and emotional perspective that challenges violence, war, and militarism. Mothers are not just experiencing conflict as victims, but also as healers, conciliators and community restorers. Their stories of loss, resilience and caring are a testimony to the human toll of violence and the need for building trust and social cohesion through caring relationships.

Additionally, the study reveals the importance of domestic spaces in peacebuilding. Compassion, dialogue, negotiation, and mutual support are envisioned in homes and households as lively places. Domestic spaces are no longer private but rather places where peaceful values are acquired, passed on and maintained from generation to generation. Instead, women's writing disrupts the dichotomy of public politics versus private life, as it shows how peace is made and nurtured through the routine relationships and relationships of care.

Last, the paper highlights the role of women's writing as a tool of social change. Women writers, writing outside the mainstream, challenge the patriarchy, imagine new ways of organizing society, and join other movements for peace, equality, and justice. Their stories remind the reader that a durable peace is not just about agreements, but also about caring, empathizing, healing from emotions, and the fostering of human relationships.

In general, the study suggests that women's literary depictions of peace provide useful insights into the social, emotional and ethical aspects of peacebuilding. Maternal perspectives, family lives and childcare enrich our understanding of the creation and maintenance of peaceful societies. It is vital to value such contributions in order to have a more inclusive peace studies approach, and to understand the changing ways in which women's voices can contribute to the discussion of conflict, reconciliation and social justice in today's world.

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