

Foreword Review LITERARY COLLECTIONS

Infertilities, A Curation

Elizabeth Horn Maria Novotny Robin Silbergleid Wayne State University Press (Sep 19, 2023) Hardcover \$39.99 (256pp) 978-0-8143-5065-2

After their experiences with infertility, Elizabeth Horn, Maria Novotny, and Robin Silbergleid put together *Infertilities, A Curation*, a collection of essays, art, and poetry on the subject.

Prior to the COVID-19 shutdowns, the ART of IF (a play on Artificial Reproductive Technologies of Infertility) put on pop-up exhibitions of work by people experiencing infertility. Expanding those exhibitions from live events into a lasting one, this book counters the silence around infertility, which suggests that the issue is less pervasive than it is. With pieces from over 60 contributors from diverse backgrounds, the book captures myriad ways of expressing feelings surrounding infertility.

These contributors visualize and relate their feelings with compelling rawness. They correct words in use in the public sphere, including "implanting" and "embryo," in the context of personal experiences, raising awareness around misconstrued concepts. And the book's delicate page layouts, with art and poetry placed between essays and blank pages between sections, gives space to each piece's unique sensitivities. There are artist statements alongside the book's sculptures, mixed media projects, comics, and paintings too.

Herein, personal anecdotes become objects for public witness. As they are treated seriously as art, the pieces issue serious messages and demand empathetic responses. Many feature eggs, wombs, and children, but several make use of the equipment and medication used in in-vitro treatments to comment on the experience of loss and feelings of displacement. There's coverage of mistreatment in doctors' offices and in encounters with pregnant women. While many of the entries are raw, angry, and sad, comics and poems are present to lightening effect too. The result is a developed dialogue between the viewer and their own body and thoughts, in harmony with the self-reflective works presented.

Grown out of support groups, *Infertilities, A Curation* is an interactive artistic collection that nurtures healing and acknowledges pain.

MARI CARLSON (September / October 2023)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The publisher of this book provided free copies of the book to have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. No fee was paid by the publisher for this review. Foreword Reviews only recommends books that we love. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.

Source: https://www.forewordreviews.com/reviews/infertilities-a-curation/