



**MOTHERS, MOTHERING, MOTHERHOOD IN TODAY'S WORLD:
GALA CONFERENCE CELEBRATING MIRCI'S 20TH
ANNIVERSARY**

October 14-16, 2016
3rd Floor, Pantages Hotel, 200 Victoria Street
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

For conference booklet with abstracts/bios please visit:
<http://motherhoodinitiative.org/conferences/>

Internet Login for Conference:
both username and password are Skyline16

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2016

8:00 am-9:00 am REGISTRATION: CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

**9:00 am-10:15 am WORDS OF WELCOME & KEYNOTE PANEL ONE: MOTHERS &
MOTHERING: POLITICS & HEALTH**

CHAIR – Shira Richter

- Simone Bohn, “Mothers and Politics: A Research Agenda”
- Judith MacDonnell, “Considering Equity in a Context of Scholarly Inquiry on Mothering: The Value of a Critical Gender and Intersectional Lens to Foster Canadian Maternal Health”

10:15 am-10:25 am BREAK

10:25 am-11:55 am CONCURRENT SESSION A1-A5

SESSION A1: MOTHERS IN THE ACADEME

CHAIR – Kryn Freehling-Burton

- Crystal Clark, “Mothering Academics: Women’s Perception of the Intersectionality of Academic Leading and Rearing Underage Children in a Midwestern Urban Community College”
- Jennifer Heisler, ““I Didn’t Know What to Say to Her...” The Academic Department Chairperson’s Role and Impact on Work-Family Issues Within Academic Motherhood”

- Kristin Marsh, “Age and the Timing of Career and Life Experiences: The Matter of Motherhood in Academia”

SESSION A2: REPRESENTING MOTHERS & MOTHERING #1

CHAIR – Nancy Peled

- Diane Shoos, “Abused Mothers in Contemporary Hollywood Film: Dilemmas, Risks, Stakes”
- Danielle Hedke, “Now You See Us: How Media Portrayals Affect the Experience of Student Mothers”
- Manon Niquette, “Constructing the Millennial Caring Mothers through the Facebook Pages of Children’s Pain and Fever-Relievers”

SESSION A3: HEALTH, ADVOCACY & ACTIVISM #1

CHAIR – Riikka Homanen

- Laurel O’Gorman, “The Impact of Childhood Obesity Discourses on Mothering Work for Single Mothers who live in Poverty in Northeastern Ontario”
- Linda Hunter and Emerson LaCroix, “The Next Generation, The Next Strategy: Women, HIV Stigma, and Education”
- Anna Dion, “Supporting Shared and Informed Decision-Making Between Patients and Maternity Care Providers to Improve Maternal Health Outcomes Among Hard-to-Reach Groups in Canada”

SESSION A4: CRIMINALIZED MOTHERS & MOTHERING

CHAIR – Deborah Byrd

- Melinda Vandenberg Giles, “Motel Mothers: Families Experiencing Homelessness in Toronto”
- Sarah Benbow, “Mothering at the Intersections: A Critical Narrative Analysis of Social Exclusion and Homelessness Among Mothers”
- Lucy Baldwin, “Working Positively with Mothers in Criminal and Social Justice Settings”
- Sinéad O’Malley, “Supporting Incarcerated Mothers in Ireland With Their Familial Relationships; A Case for the Revival of the Social Work Role”

SESSION A5: MOTHERHOOD STUDIES

CHAIR – Tatjana Takševa

- Andrea O’Reilly, “Teaching Motherhood Studies: From Normative Motherhood to Empowered Mothering”
- Nicole Willey, “Mothering, the Academy, and MIRCI”
- Clare Harvey, “The Return of Kristeva’s ‘Abject’: Mothering a Child With a Physical Disability”

11:55 am-12:05 pm BREAK

12:05 pm-1:45 pm KEYNOTE PANEL TWO: CANADIAN WOMEN'S WRITING

CHAIR – Andrea O'Reilly

- Laurie Kruk, "My Mother Did Not Tell Stories"
- Tricia McCallum, "What Can Poetry Really Do?"
- Frances Greenslade, "The Way Home"

1:45 pm-2:45: pm LUNCH: ON YOUR OWN

2:45 pm-4:15 pm CONCURRENT SESSION B1-B5

SESSION B1: MOTHERS, MOTHERING & WORK

CHAIR – Linda Hunter

- Karen Christopher, "'You are Angry at the World': Job Demands and Work-life Conflict Among Mothers in the Nursing Profession"
- Erin Elizabeth Bell, "Make Me Good, God—But Not Yet:" Nurse Jackie, Working Mothers, and Post-Feminism"
- Elena Neiterman, "Blurring the Boundaries of Public/Private: Embodied Motherhood in Workplace"

SESSION B2: MATERNAL PRACTICES & EXPERIENCES #2

CHAIR – Anna Kuroczycka Schultes

- Sara Hamed, "'The Mother is a School': Muslim Mothers and Their Religio-Educative Roles"
- Lucia Davis, "Mothering in Inter-Ethnic Relationships"
- Helen Valliantos, "Mothers, Movements, Meals: Perspectives on Meanings of Motherhood"
- Nancy Peled, "Kibbutz Mothering in Transition: Bringing the Children Home"
- Anna Kuroczycka Schultes, "Foreign Mothers - Native Children: How Polish Immigrant Women Reproduce Language and Culture in Chicago"

SESSION B3: MATERNAL STORIES #1

CHAIR – Denise Ferris

- Myrel Chernick, "Paris in Light and Shadow"
- Carly McAskill, "Mothers, Mothering, Motherhood in Today's World: Experience, Identity, Agency, and Institution"
- B. Lee Murray, "My Mother's Secrets"
- Summer Cunningham, "How Mothers are Made: Post-Post Partum Document"

SESSION B4: MOTHERS, MOTHERING & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

CHAIR – Kandee Kosior

- Jessica Pinto, “Mothering in the Domestic Violence Shelter”
- Emily Colpitts, “Complicating the Narrative: Mothering and Domestic Violence”
- Pat Breton, Eva Kratochvil, & Paula Lang, “Hear Our Collective voices!: Survivor Moms Organizing Around Domestic Violence In Ontario”

SESSION B5: MATERNAL POWER & CARE

CHAIR – Crystal Clark

- Lorna Turnbull, “Power and Care: The Agency of Mothers when Carework is Valued”
- Anastasia Valassis, “Models for My (Greek-American) Mothering: Lessons From the Immigrant Family”
- Crystal Whetstone, “Motherhood as Power”
- Nargis Ara, “Mothers Self Efficacy Refers the Abilities: To Perform Diverse Tasks, Lessen Stress and Increase Children School Success”

4:15 pm-4:25 pm BREAK

4:25 pm-5:55 pm CONCURRENT SESSION C1-C5

SESSION C1: MOTHERS & DAUGHTERS #1

CHAIR – Myrel Chernick

- Mary Thomas, “Mothers Leading Daughters: Transformational Leadership and the Mother-Daughter Connection”
- Lesley Bunnell* and Heather Jackson, “Untitled”
- Asli Aygunes, “Like Mother, Like Daughter”: Mothers’ Perspectives on Virginity in Turkey
- Lena Richardson, “Singing Through: Songs from my Mother: A Performative Inquiry”

SESSION C2: MATERNAL PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES #2

CHAIR – Kirsten Goa

- Leesa Streifler, Kathryn Bracht*, Lynn Gidluck, & Sonya Corbin Dwyer (*Presenting), “International and Transcultural Adoption: Navigating Home to Homeland: Highlights From an Interdisciplinary, Creation-Based Symposium Held at the University of Regina”
- Alison Quaggin Harkin, “The Ever-Nestling: Mothering an Adolescent or Adult With an Intellectual Disability”
- Huma Ahmed-Ghosh, “Contradictions of Mothering Amongst the Somali Community in Southern California”
- Shira Richter, “Visionaries Need Visuals-Creating Online Campaigns for our Messages—a Real Story”

SESSION C3: MATERNAL STORIES #2

CHAIR – Laurie Kruk

- Freema Elbaz-Luwisch, "Writing Mother as Immigrant: Body, Memory and Fiction in Understanding Lives"
- Robin Silbergleid, "'We Talk about Our Pregnancies, Not Our Miscarriages': Motherhood and The ART of Infertility"
- Sarah Sahagian, "Representing Mothers Fairly in Fiction: How I Worked to Avoid the Mother-Blame Trope While Writing *Good Girls*"
- Sheila Rabillard, "Mothering and the Drama of Replacement—Diski and Lessing"

SESSION C4: MATERNAL ADVOCACY AND ACTIVISM #1

CHAIR – Andrea O'Reilly

- Regina Edmonds, "Using Images of Traditional Mothering to Oppose Gun Violence in Contemporary Culture"
- Debbie Byrd, "Agents (and Agencies) of Change: How Undergraduate Students Can Support Non-Profits Addressing Issues of Hunger and Homelessness."
- Reena Shadaan, "Mothering and Maternal Activism amongst Indigenous Women and Women of Colour on the Frontlines of Environmental Justice: Essentialist or Revolutionary?"

SESSION C5: MATERNAL STRATEGIES: ATTACHMENT, AMBIGUITY & AMBIVALENCE

CHAIR – Fiona Green

- Abby Palko, "Compulsive Mothering in an Age of Compulsory Motherhood"
- Eric Taggart, "Don't Code the Mother": The Strange Situation Experiment and the Aesthetics of Attachment"
- Julie Lane, "Mothering and the Poetics of Failure"
- B. Lee Murray and Kerri Kearney, "'Giving Up" and Taking In": Challenging the Assumptions around Adoption"

5:55 pm-7:15 pm

DINNER: ON YOUR OWN

7:15 pm-9:15 pm

KEYNOTE PANEL THREE: MOTHERS, MOTHERING & POPULAR CULTURE

CHAIR – Andrea O'Reilly

- Martha Joy Rose, Museum of Motherhood, "'Mothers Who Rock: Mother Musicians/Mothers in Music and the Arts"
- Elizabeth Podnieks, Ryerson University, "'The Change in Mother": New Woman Fiction, New Modernism, and Motherhood"
- Asma Sayed, "Interesectional Interventions in Global Cinema: The Maternal on Screen"

- May Friedman Ryerson, University, ““Mom’s Got Mail: Exploring Communication Modalities Through my Family Tree”
- Marcelle Soviero, Brain, Child, “Perspective and Diversity in Publishing Communities”

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2016

8:00 am-9:00 am REGISTRATION: CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

**9:00 am-10:20 am KEYNOTE PANEL FOUR: MOTHERING & MOTHERS:
RESILIENCY, RESISTANCE & EMPOWERMENT**

CHAIR – Laurie Kruk

- D. Memee Lavell-Harvard, “Forever Loved: Exposing the Hidden Crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada”
- Adwoa Ntozake Onuora, “Socializing Reproductive Labour: Towards the Emancipation of Women's Unpaid Care Work”

10:20 am-10:30 am BREAK

10:30 am-12:00 pm CONCURRENT SESSION D1-D5

SESSION D1: MOTHERS & DAUGHTERS #2

CHAIR – Regina Edmonds

- Tania Grinberg Twena, “Mother-Blame: An Exploration of Motherhood for the Prevention of Eating Disorders
- Laura Lewis, “Mothering Adolescent Females: The Unique Challenges of our Times”
- Michelle Hughes Miller, “The Constructions of Mothers in Female Circumcision Eradication Efforts”
-

SESSION D2: EMPOWERED MOTHERS & MOTHERING

CHAIR – Linda Ennis

- Kerri Kearney, “Feminist Ideals and Mothering at Middle Age”
- Lynn O’Brien Hallstein, “But, Didn’t I Choose This?: Empowering Mothers by Closing the Choice Gap between Women and Men Before becoming Mothers and Fathers”
- Karla Knutson, “The Rhetoric of Breastmilk Supply”
- Pamela Courtenay-Hall, “The Philosophical Significance of Breast-Feeding”

SESSION D3: MOTHERS & ART #1

CHAIR – Barbara Kutis

- Bianca Williams, “More than just a Novelty Keepsake?: Pregnancy Belly Casting from a Transnational, Feminist Perspective”

- Rachel Epp Buller, “Knock, Knock; Who’s There? Maternal Humor in Contemporary Art”
- Kathy Mantas, “ART-i-facts (Phase VII): An Artful Inquiry on/into/through the Experience of Becoming a Mother by Way of ART (Assisted Reproductive Technologies)”
- Jennie Klein and Myrel Chernick, “Representing Maternity: Artists, Artwork, and the Maternal”

SESSION D4: MOTHERS & SELF CARE

CHAIR – Angie Deveau

- Ashley Teodorson, “Mothering the Mother: Maternal Traces and the Doula”
- Katerine Wardi-Zonna, “Art Therapy and Mindfulness: Tools to Alleviate Anxiety and Depression in Expectant Mothers”
- Judith Mintz, “A Labour of Love: Care Work, Mothering, and Teaching Yoga”
- Mari Rossi, “Radical Self-Care for Mothers: Resisting a Neoliberal Agenda”

SESSION D5: GENDER-FLUIDITY & GENDER DIVERSITY: PARENTING PRACTICES AND IDENTITIES

CHAIR – Fiona Green

- Karleen Pendleton Jiménez, ““Dear Mom, I Am Happy With Being a Tomboy Because You Are My Role Model”: Mothering for Gender Diversity”
- Fiona Green, “Mothers' Lives Today: Lessons from Intersectionality, Trans Feminisms and Trans Parenting”
- Michelle Walks*, Trevor McDonald, Diana West, Mary Lynne Biener, and Alanna Kibbe*, “To Be or Not To Be... a “Mother”: Trans Masculine Parental Identities”

12:00 pm-12:10 pm BREAK

12:10 pm-1:00 pm KEYNOTE ONE: ANDREA O'REILLY, “THE BABY OUT WITH THE BATHWATER: THE DISAVOWAL AND DISAPPEARANCE OF MOTHERHOOD IN 20TH AND 21ST CENTURY ACADEMIC FEMINISM,” CHAIRED BY REGINA EDMONDS

1:00 pm-2:00 pm LUNCH: ON YOUR OWN

2:00 pm-3:15 pm KEYNOTE PANEL FIVE: MOTHERS & MOTHERING: ART & CREATIVITY

CHAIR – Helen Vallianatos

- Sheena Wilson, “Creatively Conceiving Motherhood”
- Natalie Loveless, ““Maternal Mattering: The Performance and Politics of the Maternal in Contemporary Feminist Art”
- Laura Endacott, “Birthing My Identity”

3:15 pm-3:25 pm **BREAK**

3:25 pm-4:55 pm **CONCURRENT SESSION E1-E4**

SESSION E1: MOTHERS & DAUGHTERS #3

CHAIR – Regina Edmonds

- Natalie Morning, “‘Like a Tattoo’: Motherless Daughter, Memorial Tattoo Art, and the Conjuring of a Performative Space Through the Body”
- Miriam Schaer, “Biasing the Non-Maternal & Reverse Mothering”
- Kandee Kosior and Emily Powers, “Feminist Mother / Feminist Daughter”

SESSION E2: REPRESENTING MOTHERS & MOTHERING #2

CHAIR – Judith Mintz

- Kryn Freehling-Burton, “The 21st Century Television Mother”
- Victoria Jane Bailey, “Stereotypes and Stigma: Representation of Single Mothers in Canadian Newspapers”
- Terri Hawkes, “Prams in Motherhouse: Mother-Artists Acts of Resistance in the UK”

SESSION E3: HEALTH, ADVOCACY & ACTIVISM #2

CHAIR – Michelle Hughes Miller

- Dorit Redlich-Amirav, “In the Midst of a Conflict Area: Mothers’ Experiences of Hope alongside Adult Children Struggling with Mental Illnesses”
- Riikka Homanen, “Becoming a Mother in Finland: Enabling and Controlling Motherhood in Publicly Provided Maternity Healthcare”
- Neda Maghbouleh, Jamilah Dei-Sharpe and Maleeha Iqbal, “Where Are the Mothers’ Groups? A Pilot Study in Toronto”

SESSION E4: THE GIFT ECONOMY & MATRIARCHY #1

CHAIR– Anna Dion

- Kirre Koivunen & Kaarina Kailo, “Finno-Ugric Guardian Spirits and Animal Mothers - Pohjola Mythology and Ecological Knowledge” Short Documentary, 37 min. 2015
- Lin Daniels, “Mixed Blessings: A Matriarchal Perspective on Older Women Raising Children”
- Genevieve Vaughan, Gift Economy, “Interpersonal Neurobiology and the Maternal Gift Economy”

4:55 pm-5:05 pm **BREAK**

5:05 pm-6:35 pm **CONCURRENT SESSION F1-F5**

SESSION F1: MOTHERS & LITERATURE

CHAIR – Deborah Byrd

- Andrea O'Reilly, "We Need to Talk about Patriarchal Motherhood: Essentialization, Naturalization and Idealization in Lionel Shriver's *We Need to Talk about Kevin*"
- Anissa Wardi, "Maternal Ecocriticism and the Ecology of Motherhood in Jean Toomer's *Cane*"
- Naomi Mercer, "Give Me Children or Else I Die": Motherhood and Religious Fundamentalism in Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*"

SESSION F2: MATERNAL PRACTICES & EXPERIENCES #3

CHAIR – Lori Chambers

- Kinga Pozniak, "Negotiating Neoliberal Pedagogies of Motherhood: The Case of Ontario Early Years Centres"
- Nancy Sinclair, "Social Exclusion From Gestational Surrogacy as a Fertility Treatment in Ontario: An Autoethnography"
- Tatjana Takševa, "Oppression and Empowerment: The Range of Maternal Experiences in Bosnian Women Rape Survivors"

SESSION F3: MOTHERS & ART #2

CHAIR – Summer Cunningham

- Denise Ferris, "On Mother's Memories, Others' Memories: Expression and the Art of Experience"
- Kate Greenway, "Motherhood and Adoption as Experience and Identity: An Exploration Through Glass Art"
- Nané Jordan, "Red Thread Projects: Motherhood Studies as Feminist Praxis and Poiesis"

SESSION F4: MATERNAL ADVOCACY & ACTIVISM #2

CHAIR – Angie Deveau

- Georgina Jung, "Family Law, Disability and Education: One Mother's Appeal Experience in the Ontario Superior Court of Justice"
- Marcy Paul, "Mother Justice Activism: Conversations with Mothers and Others about Child Loss"
- Iain Hay, "'Clearing Them for Learning': Exploring the Critical Factors for Success in School-Based Young Mothers' Education Programs"
- Julie Chami, "The Return to Work Following Maternity Leave and the Implications of Policy in Both Canada and the U.S."

SESSION F5: THE GIFT ECONOMY & MATRIARCHY #2

CHAIR – Genevieve Vaughan

- Kirre Koivunen, “Women At Risk: The Gift Economy’s Possibilities and Patriarchal Social System Worldwide,” Extracts from the Film by Koivunen
- Angela Miles, Gift Economy, “Mothering and the Gift Economy: Escape from ‘Gender’”
- Kaarina Kailo, “From Primal Ma to Money and the Bitch Goddess of Success—The Ecosocial Impact of Non-Patriarchal Maternal Images”
- Barbara Mann, ““Woman Is the Mother of All”

6:35 pm-7:55 pm **DINNER: ON YOUR OWN**

7:55 pm-8:40 pm **KEYNOTE TWO: MARILYN WARING, “30 YEARS OF COUNTING FOR NOTHING: REFLECTIONS, STRENGTHS & STRATEGIES,” CHAIRED BY ANDREA O’REILLY, ROOM 1**

8:40 pm -10:40 pm **LAUNCH AND RECEPTION**

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2016

8:00 am-9:00 am **REGISTRATION: CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**

9:00 am-10:15 am **KEYNOTE PANEL SIX: REDEFINING/QUEERING MOTHERHOOD**

CHAIR – Angie Deveau

- Andrea M. Doucet, “Fathering: The Unfinished Business of Feminism”
- Margaret F. Gibson, “Queering Institutionalized Motherhood”

10:15 am-10:25 am **BREAK**

10:25 am-11:55 am **CONCURRENT SESSION G1-G4**

SESSION G1: MOTHERS, MOTHERING & FEMINISM

CHAIR – Kirsten Goa

- Tracy Cassels, ““How Liberal Feminism and Patriarchy Work Together to Create the Detached Mother”
- Kaila Adia Story, “Not Your Mama’s Feminism: Beyoncé, Motherhood, and What To Do With #FlawlessFeminism”
- Jane Chelliah, “A Proposal for a Matricentric Feminism for Mothers of Colour”

G2: MATERNAL PRACTICES & EXPERIENCES #4

CHAIR – Crystal Whetstone

- Betty Baba, “Mothering and Poverty: The Socio-Economical Factors as Indicators of Persistent Poverty”
- Patricia Hamilton, “Back to Africa? Examining Black Mothers’ Engagement with Attachment Parenting in Britain”
- Linda Rose Ennis, “Is Fatherhood Undermining and Further Disempowering Motherhood?”

SESSION G3: MOTHERS & ART #3

CHAIR – Carly McAskill

- Sarah Irvin, “Home Studio: Blending Artistic Practice and Mothering”
- Kirre Koivunen, “FORGET-ME-NOT Photo Exhibition”
- Barbara Kutis, “Artist-Mothers: Self-Portraits at the Intersection of Art, Society, and ‘Ideal’ Mothering”

SESSION G4: MEN & MASCULINITIES

CHAIR – Deborah Byrd

- Tifanie Valade, “Playing With Boyhood”
- Tola Olu Pearce, “Motherhood and the Construction of Masculinity in Africa”
- Andrea O’Reilly, “From Clytemnestra and Orestes to Thetis and Achilles; From Estrangement to Connection: The Mother-Son Relationship in Anglo-American Feminist Theory”

11:55 pm-12:55 pm LUNCH: ON YOUR OWN

12:55 pm-2:25 pm CONCURRENT SESSION H1-H4

SESSION H1: BAD MOTHERS/WOMEN

CHAIR – Rebecca Bromwich

- Rebecca Bromwich, “Still Wearing Scarlett? Discursive Figures of the Unfit Mother as Pervasive Phantoms Active in Governing Mothers Through Ontario’s Child Protection Regime”
- Mandi Danielle Veenstra, “The Mother Next Door: Marginalization within the Ontario Child Welfare System”
- Rachel Ewan, “The Cultural Production of Problem Baby Mamas: What do Baby Mamas Mean To and For Our Society?”
- Miranda Leibel, “Incapable of Care: Public Discourse and Colonial Continuity in the Case of ‘The Unfit Mother’”

SESSION H2: MATERNAL PRACTICES & EXPERIENCES #5

CHAIR – Clare Harvey

- Florence Pasche Guignard, “Survival Moms. Motherhood, Mothering, and Emergency Preparedness”
- Viki Peer, “Similar Stories, Different Contexts: Transnational Discourses Among Media Representations of Mothers”
- Lori Chambers, “Adoption and the Rights of Gestational Mothers”
- Valerie Andrews, “Motherhood Denied: Canada’s Maternity Homes”

SESSION H3: MATERNAL ADVOCACY & ACTIVISM #3

CHAIR – Deborah Byrd

- Caroline McDonald-Harker and Joanne Minaker, “The Role and Influence of Mother-Care In Environmental Disasters”
- Kirsten Goa, “Emotional Labour and Public Life: Invisible Mothering in Community Organizing”
- Linda Hunter and Emerson LaCroix, “Twenty-Five Years Later -Same Song, Different Lyrics: A Critical Commentary on HIV Awareness Posters Targeting Women”
- Erica S. Lawson, Crystal Gaudet* & Patricia Hamilton*, “Girl/Mom: Analysing Young Motherhood Through the Lens of Girlhood Studies”

SESSION H4: MOTHER, MOTHERING, LOSS AND BEREAVEMENT

CHAIR – Andrea O’Reilly

- Angelina Avedano, “Raging Grief and the Dual Descent”
- Vanessa Reimer, “Sharing the Weight of Pregnancy and Infant Loss: A Liberation Theological Perspective”
- Linn Baran, “Memento Mori Maternal: Memories of My Mother Outlaw”

2:25 pm-2:35 pm **BREAK**

2:35 pm-3:50 pm **KEYNOTE PANEL SEVEN: MATERNAL NARRATIVES & EXPERIENCES**

CHAIR – Sinéad O’Malley

- Jowita Bydlowska, “The Bottle in the Stroller: Mommy Drinks Because You Cry”
- Gillian Demeyere, “Third Wave Mothers at Work: Rethinking the Law of Family Status Discrimination in Canada”



Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MIRCI MEMBERSHIP FOR 2017

<http://motherhoodinitiative.org/memberships/>

This conference commemorates and celebrates *MIRCI'S* 20th anniversary and the 10th anniversary of Demeter Press.

In this time, MIRCI has hosted 50 international conferences and published 38 JMI issues; and Demeter has published more than 80 titles!

We have done this with only one small annual journal grant for *JMI* and one small governmental grant for Demeter Press in the last three years.

With our conferences, journals, and books, *MIRCI* and Demeter have established motherhood studies as a vibrant and autonomous scholarly discipline.

In order for us to continue the necessary and essential work of sustaining motherhood studies, *MIRCI* and Demeter require more memberships and book sales.

If you believe in the importance of *MIRCI* and Demeter Press (and recognize that motherhood studies would not exist without *MIRCI* and Demeter; and that they have supported your work as a motherhood scholar/activist), we ask that you take a moment during the conference to renew your membership via our website. Please consider joining at the SUSTAINING MEMBER LEVEL: www.motherhoodinitiative.org.

As well, please purchase books at the conference and ask your library to purchase Demeter titles and subscribe to *JMI* (please take home with you a Demeter catalogue and/or JMI and Demeter postcards).

Please also consider purchasing a membership for a friend or family member, an ideal gift for mothers in your life.

We hope to be celebrating *MIRCI'S* 25th anniversary and Demeter's 15th anniversary in five year's time, BUT we can only do this if the people that we serve support our organization and press.

Thank you so very much for your sustained and sustaining support!

Enjoy the celebration of *MIRCI'S* 20th anniversary and Demeter Press's 10th!

Dr. Andrea O'Reilly,
Director, MIRCI,
Editor, JMI
Publisher, Demeter Press

MIRCI GALA CONFERENCE ROOM SCHEDULE

ALL KEYNOTES: BANQUET ROOM 2/3

SESSION A1: MOTHERS IN THE ACADEME, BANQUET ROOM 1
SESSION A2: REPRESENTING MOTHERS & MOTHERING #1, BANQUET ROOM 2
SESSION A3: HEALTH, ADVOCACY & ACTIVISM #1, BANQUET ROOM 3
SESSION A4: CRIMINALIZED MOTHERS & MOTHERING, DRAMA ROOM 5
SESSION A5: MOTHERHOOD STUDIES, DRAMA ROOM 6

SESSION B1: MOTHERS, MOTHERING & WORK, BANQUET ROOM 1
SESSION B2: MATERNAL PRACTICES & EXPERIENCES #2, BANQUET ROOM 2
SESSION B3: MATERNAL STORIES #1, BANQUET ROOM 3
SESSION B4: MOTHERS, MOTHERING & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DRAMA ROOM 5
SESSION B5: MATERNAL POWER & CARE, DRAMA ROOM 6

SESSION C1: MOTHERS & DAUGHTERS #1, BANQUET ROOM 1
SESSION C2: MATERNAL PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES #2, BANQUET ROOM 2
SESSION C3: MATERNAL STORIES #2, BANQUET ROOM 3
SESSION C4: MATERNAL ADVOCACY AND ACTIVISM #1, DRAMA ROOM 5
SESSION C5: MATERNAL STRATEGIES: ATTACHMENT, AMBIGUITY & AMBIVALENCE, DRAMA ROOM 6

SESSION D1: MOTHERS & DAUGHTERS #2, BANQUET ROOM 1
SESSION D2: EMPOWERED MOTHERS & MOTHERING, BANQUET ROOM 2
SESSION D3: MOTHERS & ART #1, BANQUET ROOM 3
SESSION D4: MOTHERS & SELF CARE, DRAMA ROOM 5
SESSION D5: GENDER-FLUIDITY & GENDER DIVERSITY: PARENTING PRACTICES AND IDENTITIES, DRAMA ROOM 6

SESSION E1: MOTHERS & DAUGHTERS #3, BANQUET ROOM 2
SESSION E2: REPRESENTING MOTHERS & MOTHERING #2, BANQUET ROOM 3
SESSION E3: HEALTH, ADVOCACY & ACTIVISM #2, DRAMA ROOM 5
SESSION E4: THE GIFT ECONOMY & MATRIARCHY #1, DRAMA ROOM 6

SESSION F1: MOTHERS & LITERATURE, BANQUET ROOM 1
SESSION F2: MATERNAL PRACTICES & EXPERIENCES #3, BANQUET ROOM 2
SESSION F3: MOTHERS & ART #2, BANQUET ROOM 3
SESSION F4: MATERNAL ADVOCACY & ACTIVISM #2, DRAMA ROOM 5
SESSION F5: THE GIFT ECONOMY & MATRIARCHY #2, DRAMA ROOM 6

SESSION G1: MOTHERS, MOTHERING & FEMINISM, BANQUET ROOM 1
SESSION G2: MATERNAL PRACTICES & EXPERIENCES #4, BANQUET ROOM 2
SESSION G3: MOTHERS & ART #3, BANQUET ROOM 3
SESSION G4: MEN & MASCULINITIES, DRAMA ROOM 5

SESSION H1: BAD MOTHERS/WOMEN, BANQUET ROOM 1
SESSION H2: MATERNAL PRACTICES & EXPERIENCES #5, BANQUET ROOM 2
SESSION H3: MATERNAL ADVOCACY & ACTIVISM #3, BANQUET ROOM 3
SESSION H4: MOTHER, MOTHERING, LOSS AND BEREAVEMENT, DRAMA ROOM 5

KEYNOTE PRESENTERS

9:00 am-10:15 am

WORDS OF WELCOME & KEYNOTE PANEL ONE: MOTHERS & MOTHERING: POLITICS & HEALTH

CHAIR – Shira Richter

- Simone Bohn, “Mothers and Politics: A Research Agenda”
- Judith MacDonnell, “Considering Equity in a Context of Scholarly Inquiry on Mothering: The Value of a Critical Gender and Intersectional Lens to Foster Canadian Maternal Health”

Mothers and Politics: A Research Agenda

Simone Bohn

Even though in most nations women are at least almost half of the population, in very few countries do they occupy a similar space in the formal institutions of political power. They are said to lack a key element for a successful career in public life: time. From this perspective, no one is worse off than women who are mothers. From another perspective, however, motherhood is thought to help politicize women, as this life-changing experience makes them aware of the limitations of some specific public policies (such as child-care, parental leave, gendered labor practices etc.) as well as more conscious of the centrality of more encompassing public policies, such as education, health care, and social assistance. This study analyzes both the factors that are deemed to trigger the involvement of mothers with electoral politics, and the elements that help explain their rare presence in some polities.

Simone Bohn is Associate Professor of Political Science at York University, where she coordinates the Brazil Chair and the Brazilian Studies. Dr. Bohn’s research focuses on political parties in South America, gender and politics in Brazil, and the study of political tolerance and attitudes towards corruption in Latin America. She is currently working on a SSHRC-funded research project entitled “Evaluating strategic political partnerships: The case of the women’s movement and the state in contemporary Brazil”. Her articles have been published in scholarly journals, such as *Politics and Government*, *Latin American Research Review*, *International Political Science Review*, *Journal of Latin American Politics*, and *Comparative Governance and Politics*.

Considering Equity in a Context of Scholarly Inquiry on Mothering: The Value of a Critical Gender and Intersectional Lens to Foster Canadian Maternal Health

Judith MacDonnell

In this paper I draw on over 15 years of equity-focused research including work explicitly focused on motherhood to consider the value of a critical and intersectional lens in undertaking scholarly inquiry on mothering. My academic research program emerged from critical inquiry on the institution of motherhood and its impacts for health service access. Engagement with formative studies that used critical feminist methodologies led to my

research focus on issues of equity and minority health, especially in relation to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) health and racialized women. Several critical feminist approaches are addressed including feminist ethnography and community-based participatory action research and topics ranging from mental health promotion for racialized immigrant women to lesbian intimate partner violence. Reflections on these inquiries point to dimensions of emancipatory research practice that include reflexivity, transformative learning, interdisciplinarity, praxis, and situated privilege. Commonalities across methodologies illustrate the potential for emancipatory outcomes/goals.

Judith MacDonnell is an Associate Professor in the School of Nursing, York University. Dr. MacDonnell has a background in public health nursing and is involved in research related to equity for LGBTQ, racialized and other communities in health and education, participatory policy processes and health promotion. Current projects include a focus on LGBTQ access to home care, career/work dynamics for trans health providers, generational dynamics in nursing activism and mental health promotion for diversely situated immigrant women. She was co-chair of the Rainbow Nurses Interest Group of the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, and currently holds a Co-Policy and Political Action position within this group.

12:05 pm-1:45 pm KEYNOTE PANEL TWO: CANADIAN WOMEN'S WRITING

CHAIR – Andrea O'Reilly

- Laurie Kruk, "My Mother Did Not Tell Stories"
- Tricia McCallum, "What Can Poetry Really Do?"
- Frances Greenslade, "The Way Home"

My Mother Did Not Tell Stories

Laurie Kruk

In this talk, Laurie will read from *My Mother Did Not Tell Stories*, the first literary work produced by Demeter Press, as well as some new works in progress, poetry or prose, including work for *Borderlands and Crossroads: Writing the Motherland* (co-edited with Jane Satterfield, Demeter 2016).

Laurie Kruk, PhD, teaches at Nipissing University in North Bay, Ontario. She has published *The Voice is the Story: Conversations with Canadian Writers of Short Fiction* (Mosaic, 2003) and *Double-Voicing the Canadian Short Story* (Ottawa UP, 2016). She is also the author of three books of poetry: *Theories of the World* (Netherlandic 1992), *Loving the Alien* (YSP 2006) and *My Mother Did Not Tell Stories* (Demeter 2012). Her latest book is described as weaving "tales that powerfully uncover the necessity of vocalizing that which is learned, experienced, and traditionally unshared" (*ARC Poetry Magazine*). This September 2016 saw the publication of *Borderlands and Crossroads: Writing the Motherland* (Demeter, 2016), a literary anthology co-edited by Jane Satterfield and Laurie Kruk.

What Can Poetry Really Do?

Tricia McCallum

I see this presentation (tentatively) as a celebration of all that poetry can give us. How it can sustain us in the dark, lift us higher into the light, and make sense of our lives when nothing else seems to. At its best it can be a shared language like no other.

I do feel – and I’ve learned – in reading my work to audiences over the past few years – that poetry has an underappreciated value for not just women but for everyone. We simply extract the things we need, a process that to me is not at all gender-defined or determined.

To that end I’d read some of my own pieces and a few of my favourite poets.

Tricia McCallum, a Glasgow-born Canadian, is an award-winning writer and poet and prolific Huffington Post Blogger.

She is the author of two books of poetry: *The Music of Leaving* published in 2014 by Toronto’s Demeter Press, and *Nothing Gold Can Stay: A Mother and Father Remembered* (2011). She has just completed her third manuscript of poems entitled *Icarus Also Flew*.

McCallum recently participated in the Eh List Canada Author Series sponsored by the Toronto Public Libraries, both reading her work and introducing her fellow authors.

In her career as a Toronto freelance writer she has written for many of Canada’s major corporations, been featured as a guest columnist in the country’s major newspapers, written for Flare magazine, and lectured on writing at Toronto’s York University.

McCallum also publishes fiction. Her short story “Clutter” won a Toronto Star award for fiction writing. But her unrivalled passion is poetry. She is particularly proud of twice winning the member-voted poetry competition at goodreads.com.

She says her poems are about commonplace things, but stresses that they are not necessarily simple.

“The abstract never drew me,” McCallum explains. “I don’t think in those terms. The day-to-day world and all its presumed mundane detail provides me more than I need.

“To me it is not mundane. To me it is magic.”

Born in St. Catharines, Ontario, **Frances Greenslade** has since lived in Winnipeg, Regina, Vancouver, Chilliwack and now Penticton. She has a BA in English from the University of Winnipeg and an MFA in Creative Writing from University of British Columbia. *By the Secret Ladder* and *A Pilgrim in Ireland* (Penguin) are her first two books, both memoir. Her novel, *Shelter*, was published in Canada by Random House in 2011, in the US by Free Press and the UK by Virago in 2012. It has been translated into Dutch, German and Italian. She has taught English and Creative writing at Okanagan College since 2005.

7:15 pm-9:15 pm

KEYNOTE PANEL THREE: MOTHERS, MOTHERING & POPULAR CULTURE

CHAIR – Andrea O'Reilly

- Martha Joy Rose, Museum of Motherhood, ““Mothers Who Rock: Mother Musicians/Mothers in Music and the Arts”
- Elizabeth Podnieks, Ryerson University, ““The Change in Mother”: New Woman Fiction, New Modernism, and Motherhood”
- Asma Sayed, “Interesectional Interventions in Global Cinema: The Maternal on Screen”
- May Friedman Ryerson, University, ““Mom’s Got Mail: Exploring Communication Modalities Through my Family Tree”
- Marcelle Soviero, Brain, Child, “Perspective and Diversity in Publishing Communities”

Mothers Who Rock: Mother Musicians/Mothers in Music and the Arts

Martha Joy Rose

In 1898, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, the author of *Suffrage Songs and Verses* wrote, “Slow advancing, come the woman to the hour!- She walketh sleeping, for she knoweth not her power.” Gilman sought to challenge women’s human rights in the private and public arena. Throughout the next century, Harry Pace of Black Swan Records, Nina Simone, and Joan Baez leveraged music to break barriers and create social change. In 1997, an underground Mom-Rock movement burst onto the scene aimed at highlighting the unpaid and marginalized work of American mothers. This movement spread to four continents and resulted in an ongoing burgeoning arts initiative. However, the success of such activism is tempered by mainstream ideology and capitalist constructs. Such campaigns end up being controlled by the same systems they attempt to displace. This paper examines recent challenges to patriarchy and mainstream ideologies of motherhood as well as their subsequent successes and failures.

Martha Joy Rose is a scholar, artist, and activist. She has served as an adjunct faculty member at Manhattan College and as the Director of the Museum of Motherhood, an education and exhibition center located in St. Petersburg, Fla. In addition, she is the President and Founder of MaMaPaLooZa, Inc., an international arts and music festival. She has been organizing the Annual Academic M.O.M. Conference in New York City since 2005, and been performing professionally as a musician with her mom band, Housewives On Prozac since 1997.

“The Change in Mother”: New Woman Fiction, New Modernism, and Motherhood

Elizabeth Podnieks

“She was called ‘Novissima’: the New Woman, the Odd Woman, the Wild Woman, and the Superfluous Woman in English novels and periodicals of the 1880s and 1890s. A tremendous amount of polemic was wielded against her for choosing not to pursue the

conventional bourgeois woman's career of marriage and motherhood. Indeed, for her transgressions against the sex, gender, and class distinctions of Victorian England, she was accused of instigating the second fall of man" (1). So Ann Ardis opens her influential study *New Women, New Novels: Feminism and Early Modernism*. Relatedly, in *Other Mothers: Beyond the Maternal Ideal*, Ellen Bayuk Rosenman and Claudia C. Klaver explain that, "Sanctification of motherhood gained its full ideological force in the nineteenth century and the successful or failed performance of maternity became the ubiquitous subject of social debate and textual representation." And yet, "maternity is one of the least studied aspects" of the period (1). New Woman writers, grappling with convention, present protagonists like the career-driven, single, or unhappily married mother who register often radical maternal experiences and desires. Representations like these anticipate and highlight continuities between the *fin de siècle* and the early- and mid-twentieth century. Taking my cue from scholars like Ardis and others who assert that New Woman stories are central, not marginal as traditionally held, to modernism's genesis, I argue that Ezra Pound's 1928 urge to "make it new" was already heralded in New Woman texts where motherhood itself was becoming "new." I elucidate these claims through the novels of Mona Caird and Dorothy Canfield, focussing on the exilic mother who flees the institution of patriarchal motherhood. In showcasing the overlap of Victorian and modernist maternal discourses, my paper points to the ongoing relevance of such a study to twenty-first-century debates about work-family balance.

Elizabeth Podnieks is a Professor in the Department of English and the Graduate Program in Communication and Culture at Ryerson University, Toronto. She is **the** Chair for the Popular Culture Association's Motherhood/Fatherhood Area. Her publications on motherhood include chapters on celebrity mothers in magazines and blogs, academic motherhood, modernist mothers, and entries in the *Encyclopedia of Motherhood*. She is the co-editor of *Textual Mothers, Maternal Texts*, and the sole editor of *Mediating Moms: Mothers in Popular Culture*. Her latest edited collection is *Pops in Pop Culture: Fatherhood, Masculinity, and the New Man*, for which she contributed a chapter on paternal memoir.

Intersectional Interventions in Global Cinema: The Maternal on Screen

Asma Sayed

In the last two decades, motherhood has increasingly become a mainstream issue around the world, as family dynamics shift due to rising pressures that families face under the growing disparity between the rich and poor in most countries, exacerbated by global capitalism and neoliberal economics. These shifts, combined with the postmodern era's interest in popular culture, have drawn attention to critical and academic inquiry about exemplifications of motherhood in popular culture in general. Film, in particular, as a cultural document, has captured socio-cultural desires and fears around these transitions, either by foregrounding the issues or erasing them in the public sphere.

This keynote will focus on representations of motherhood in various cinematic traditions including Canadian film. Mothers, to this day, rarely play leading roles in film-blockbuster or otherwise. Still these women, populating the backdrops of cinematic intrigues circulating around family and family dramas, are noteworthy for both what they reflect

about culture and for the ways that they impact cultural attitudes and ideas about the roles, relationships and potentialities of women and mothers. Applying a feminist lens to the study of these tropes helps uncover many political, historical as well as cultural transferences.

Asma Sayed, Ph.D., is a scholar of Comparative Literature and Film Studies, whose interdisciplinary research focuses on Indian cinema, South Asian diaspora literature, postcolonial mothering, and Islamicate cultures. She writes regularly on issues of social justice in film and media. Asma's work has appeared in leading academic journals and various anthologies. Her latest edited book, *Screening Motherhood in Contemporary World Cinema*, published by Demeter Press, Toronto, in January 2016, discusses the maternal on film and in women's lives and looks at the cross-cultural representations and realities of motherhood. Her piece on 'Muslim mothering' – "Who I Really Am: Communicating Islam Across Generations" – was published in 2015. In her current research project, she addresses the ways the figure of the Muslim woman in literature has evolved within post-9/11 geopolitics. Her article "Postcolonial Mothering in South Asian Canadian Literature" will be published in an anthology on Canadian Literature in 2017. Her books include *M. G. Vassanji: Essays on His Work* (2014), and *World on a Maple Leaf: A Treasure of Canadian Multicultural Folktales* (2011). Currently, she teaches English and Comparative Literature at MacEwan University, Canada.

May Friedman blends her passion for social work with exploration of other fields including motherhood studies, fat studies and analyses of popular culture. She examines the ways that social work discourses intersect with other dominant discourses. Pedagogically, May has focused on social work field practice and has taught the third year practice course for many years. Her publications include writing on digital media, transnationalism, motherhood, non-normative bodies, gender fluid parenting and many other interests and topics.

Mom's Got Mail: Exploring Communication Modalities Through my Family Tree

May Friedman

Studies of communication have often focused on mass communication and the ways that shifts in communication culture have shifted movements and policies. In this presentation, I aim to expose micro communications, the means by which a family is pushed together and pulled apart. By focusing on the themes of identity, dialogue, language, and archive, I will examine the history of my own family as one example of the effects of shifting communication technologies on individual and familial identities as well as on national and transnational subjectivities.

May Friedman's research looks at unstable identities, including bodies that do not conform to traditional racial and national or aesthetic lines. She also looks at diversity of identity in terms of gender, sexuality and weight, including research which considers the impact of fat-phobia on queer subjectivities.

Recent publications consider the ways that digital media engages with transnational family formation (Click and Kin, UTP 2016, with Silvia Schultermandl) and the impact of fat shaming on mothers (Reproducing fat-phobia: Reproductive technologies and fat women's right to mother, Journal of Motherhood Initiative 2015) May also looks at the ways that non-normative bodies and subjectivities are taken up in the context of popular culture (Here comes a lot of judgement: Honey Boo Boo as a site of reclamation and resistance, Journal of Popular Television 2014). May is especially intrigued by reality television.

Marcelle Soviero is the owner and Editor in Chief of Brain Child: The Magazine for thinking mothers, which was founded in 2000. She has more than 20 years' experience as an editor, online marketer, content developer, content licensor. She is an award winning essayist. Her award winning essays have been published in numerous publications and radio programs including *The New York Times*, *Salon.com*, *Eating Well*, *New York Metro*, *Babble.com*, *Brain, Child: The Magazine for Thinking Mothers*, *Literary Mama*, *Upper East Side*, *Wilton*, *StepMom*, *Anderbo*, *Tiny Lights: A Journal of Narrative Nonfiction*, and featured on *The Story* on National Public Radio. She is also the Host of [Carousel](#), a 22-year running interview style TV and Internet radio show.

**9:00 am-10:20 am KEYNOTE PANEL FOUR: MOTHERING & MOTHERS:
RESILIENCY, RESISTANCE & EMPOWERMENT**

CHAIR – Laurie Kruk

- D. Memee Lavell-Harvard, "Forever Loved: Exposing the Hidden Crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada"
- Adwoa Ntozake Onuora, "Socializing Reproductive Labour: Towards the Emancipation of Women's Unpaid Care Work"

Forever Loved: Exposing the Hidden Crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada

D. Memee Lavell-Harvard

The hidden crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada is both a national tragedy and a national shame. In their ground-breaking new volume, as part of their larger efforts to draw attention to the shockingly high rates of violence against our sisters, Jennifer Brant and D. Memee Lavell-Harvard pulled together a variety of voices from the academic realms to the grassroots and front-lines to speak on what has been identified by both the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the United Nations as a grave violation of the basic human rights of Aboriginal women and girls. Linking colonial practices with genocide, through their exploration of the current statistics, root causes and structural components of the issue, including conversations on policing, media and education, the contributing authors illustrate the resilience, strength, courage, and spirit of Indigenous women and girls as they struggle to survive in a society shaped by racism and sexism, patriarchy and misogyny. This book was created to honour our missing sisters, their families, their lives and their stories, with the hope that it will offer lessons to non-Indigenous allies and supporters so that we can all work together towards a nation

that supports and promotes the safety and well-being of all First Nation, Métis and Inuit women and girls.

Socializing Reproductive Labour: Towards the Emancipation of Women's Unpaid Care Work

Adwoa Onuora

According to the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights “unpaid care provision by women and girls is still treated as an infinite cost-free resource that fills gaps when public services are not available (UNHCR, 2013).” Since men continue to exercise inordinate control over women's reproductive labour and the state and capital are spaces in which men dominate, we must extend this discourse of power over women's bodies beyond the personal. This paper explores the practical issue of institutionalizing care work within the community. Here, I strip away the emotional wrapping of the production of children and point out the material basis of the state and capital's interests in children as the future waged slaves. I attempt to raise the awareness of people on the question of demanding from society the full payment of the cost of raising children for the capitalist class and state. In forwarding this position, the family, as we know it, would lose its principal social function since the preparation of children would now be done in the public realm. The consequence of this would be that the productiveness and value of women's unpaid labour becomes evident when socialized and moved outside of the home. This new socialization process would allow the people to move beyond blood ties in exchange for the bond between the people being based on shared social values and ethics of care.

Dr. **Adwoa Onuora** is a Lecturer within the Institute for Gender and Development Studies Mona Unit UWI. She holds a Ph.D. from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto (OISE/UT). Dr. Onuora has worked in formal and informal educational settings and has established expertise in community situated-learning, equity and social change. As a facilitator of knowledge, she brings to life critical equity frameworks, narrative/storytelling inquiry and indigenous methodologies. She has taught and published on critical pedagogy and educational transformation, de-colonizing practices and indigenous epistemologies, the intersection and impact of gender, sexuality/sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, class, abilities, and culture on women's lived experiences.

2:00 pm-3:15 pm

KEYNOTE PANEL FIVE: MOTHERS & MOTHERING: ART & CREATIVITY

CHAIR – Helen Vallianatos

- Sheena Wilson, “Creatively Conceiving Motherhood”
- Natalie Loveless, “Maternal Mattering: The Performance and Politics of the Maternal in Contemporary Feminist Art”
- Laura Endacott, “Birthing My Identity”

Creatively Conceiving Motherhood

Sheena Wilson

The keynote, “Creatively Conceiving Motherhood,” will address how artistic and creative engagements with maternal issues—whether literary, visual, cinematic etc.—allow mothers to explore their lived realities and personal mothering experiences, in ways that have the potential to expose falsely restrictive definitions of the institution of motherhood which are subject to regulation and discipline. To even write our stories as mothers is considered, by some, a transgression. However, this critical stance that condemns mothers who speak, write and create, is also part of a long silencing tradition that removes mothers from the spotlight, denying our own central role in the narrative of family, as well as local and global communities.

This keynote speech will address the ways mothers ‘create’ knowledge—to know themselves—as mothers: to record their mother-knowledge and mother-experiences. Their creativity has the potential to disrupt. Stories of motherhood are scant in the recorded history of world literature, where men have historically been the protagonists, and women have maintained peripheral roles. To write motherhood is to reposition existing daughter-centred cultural narratives. To write motherhood is to write ourselves into the centre of the story.

Sheena Wilson is an associate professor of Cultural Studies and Writing Studies at the University of Alberta, where she is also co-director of the Petrocultures Research Group, Director of the Bilingual Writing Centre, Editor of *Imaginations: Journal of Cross-Cultural Image Studies*. Her research interests involve an interdisciplinary approach to studying human and civil rights abuses in literature, film and media, specifically as they pertain to gendered and other forms of marginalization within the context of global oil cultures. In 2014, she co-edited a best-selling creative non-fiction collection titled *Telling Truths: Storying Motherhood*—a resistance project that calls into question patriarchal definitions of ‘woman’ and ‘mother.’ Her own creative-research contribution to this project, “Petro-Mama: Mothering in a Crude World,” brings together her work on feminist mothering and the global climate crisis. It has since been produced as a short film (2016). Her scholarly monograph in progress, *Feminist Futures: Energy Transition and Environmental Social Justice*, likewise explores oil and energy transition as gendered and feminist issues, at the intersections of race and class. Publication highlights include *Sighting Oil* (2012), “Gendering Oil” (2014), “Petro-Intersectionality” (2016), “Obachan’s Garden: Maternal Geneologies as Resistance in Canadian Experimental Documentary” (2016), and the forthcoming edited collection titled *Petrocultures: Oil, Energy and Culture* (McGill-Queen’s UP 2017).

Maternal Mattering: The Performance and Politics of the Maternal in Contemporary Feminist Art

Natalie Loveless

This paper examines contemporary Canadian maternal art practices such as Jess Dobkin’s The Lactation Station Breast Milk Bar (2006, 2012, and 2016) and Gina Miller’s Family

Tissues (2012), situating them in relation to the maternal art practices of early feminist artists such as Mary Kelly (Post Partum Document, 1973-79) and Mierle Laderman Ukeles (Maintenance Art, 1969+). In so doing, I chart an historical shift from second-wave feminist materialism and third-wave feminist concerns with representational practice to a putative “new materialist” turn in feminist theory and practice concerned with the global ecological (and attendant economic) challenges of our contemporary moment. This paper will ask: how does the context of the Anthropocene (and related though not equivalent concerns with climate change) shift how one engages in meaningful feminist (art) practice and theory today? And how might the maternal offer a particularly potent location from which to investigate this question?

Natalie S. Loveless is a Canadian conceptual artist, curator, writer, and assistant professor of contemporary art history and theory in the Department of Art and Design at the University of Alberta, where she specializes in feminist and performance art history, art as social practice and the pedagogical/dialogic turn, and artistic research methodologies (research-creation). Her dialogic and instruction-based wall-drawing installations, performance actions, and video works have been presented in festivals, galleries and artist-run centers in North America, South America, Europe and Asia. Curatorial projects include “Participatory Dissent” (Western Front/LIVE Biennial, Vancouver, 2008), “Intervene, Interrupt: Rethinking Art as Social Practice” (University of California, Santa Cruz, 2008), New Maternalisms (Mercer Union/FADO, Toronto, 2012), New Maternalisms- Chile (MNBA and MAC, Santiago, 2014), and New Maternalisms Redux (FAB Gallery, Edmonton, 2016; newmaternalisms.com). Current projects include “Maternal Ecologies: An Autoethnographic and Artistic Exploration of Contemporary Motherhood” (funded by an Insight Development Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada; maternalecologies.ca), a book on Art and/as Research for Duke University Press, and a chapter on feminist art and the maternal for the forthcoming Wiley-Blackwell *Companion to Feminist Art Practice and Theory*, co-edited by Hilary Robinson and Maria Elena Buszek.

Birthing my Identity

Laura Endacott

I will speak to my identity as an artist-mother and present a body of artwork that I have produced including a new video. This piece documents performances that I have staged, of myself and women from different cultural backgrounds (English, French, Jewish, etc.) interacting in a wearable body accessory that I have produced, in various locations, in the greater Montreal area. This will serve to mark it in a Canadian context and more specifically in a Quebec context.

The premise is that I am inviting women to come on a series of walkabouts with me as we discuss our concerns from a maternal viewpoint on which I hope to build. I am also looking to do this in spaces where statues of women are erected. Often such statues represent values such as ‘truth’ or ‘purity’ for example. I am interested in both contrasting and coalescing these ideas with the real women found in these spaces.

Laura Endacott is a practicing artist whose research explores women's contemporary identity by focusing specifically on the subject of motherhood. Her recent work considers the body as an archive. As such, she is interested in social life and articulations of agency using performance. She considers her work to be in the tradition of storytelling.

9:00 am-10:15 am KEYNOTE PANEL SIX: REDEFINING/QUEERING MOTHERHOOD

CHAIR –

- Andrea M. Doucet, "Fathering: The Unfinished Business of Feminism"
- Margaret F. Gibson, "Queering Institutionalized Motherhood"

Fathering: The Unfinished Business of Feminism

Andrea Doucet

More than 30 years ago, Sara Ruddick, the late feminist philosopher, author of the best-selling *Maternal Thinking*, and mentor to many MIRCI mothering scholars succinctly summarized the fit between feminism, fathering, and gendered social change:

“ It is argued that the most revolutionary change we can make in the institution of motherhood is to include men in every aspect of childcare. . . . Again and again, family power dramas are repeated in psychic, interpersonal, and professional dramas, while they are institutionalized in economic, political and international life. Radically recasting the power-gender roles in these dramas might just revolutionize social conscience . . . and economic, political and international life”.

Since then, three decades of feminist and mothering scholarship have laid out the complexities of this 'revolutionary change' in fathering involvement, the challenges of reaching or even measuring gender equality in care work, and how fathering advocates and feminists can be both friend and foes. My presentation draws on a 20-year engagement with fathering as both an advocate and cautious critic. Reflecting on the complex and evolving theoretical, practical and policy intersections between fathering and feminism, I highlight the potential of this pairing around shared caregiving, gender equality at work and home, and fathers who mother or 'mather'; at the same time, I also point to collapsed bridges between feminism and fathering through debates on men's and fathers' rights movements, battles over child custody, and violence against women. Finally, I argue that the full contributions of feminist theoretical and epistemological scholarship to understanding meanings and practices of fathering have yet to be achieved and, towards this end, I identify several pathways forward.

Andrea Doucet is the Canada Research Chair in Gender, Work and Care and Professor of Sociology and Women's & Gender Studies at Brock University. She is the author of *Do Men Mother?* which was awarded the John Porter Tradition of Excellence Book Award from the Canadian Sociological Association; a second updated edition is forthcoming. She has published widely on concepts and practices of care, fathering and parental leave,

embodiment, feminist methodologies and epistemologies, knowledge making and epistemic responsibilities. She is the proud mother of three feminist (young adult) daughters. As the 'other Andrea', she is delighted to be part of this important 20th Anniversary MICRI conference; she participated in the first conference twenty years ago and was a keynote (along with her mentor, the late Sara Ruddick) at the 10th Anniversary conference.

Queering Institutionalized Motherhood

Margaret Gibson

What does it mean to “queer motherhood”? As lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans* parents become more visible, and as people all kinds overtly question what “traditional” motherhood might mean, discussions of queering family have hit the mainstream. This paper addresses several key sites in which contemporary complexities of what Adrienne Rich famously referred to as “institutionalized motherhood” can be considered through a queer lens. From academic research on the “normalcy” of queer mothers and their children, to debates around “sex education” in Ontario public schools, to the experiences of LGBTQ parents whose children have identified ‘special needs’, any understanding of what it might mean to “queer motherhood” calls into question what tasks are loaded onto mothers and families. Are “queer mothers” asked to signify the triumph of individual freedom, privatized care-work, and the “modern” nation-state? How might such expectations themselves be “queered” and resisted?

Meg Gibson is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the School of Social Work at York University. Meg completed her BA at Harvard University and her MSW and PhD at the University of Toronto, and has spent many years working in community agencies. Her research interests include disability studies, LGBTQ communities and service access, critical research methods, parenting and marginalization, and the history and philosophy of ‘helping professions’. Meg’s work has been published in journals including *The British Journal of Social Work; Culture, Health, & Sexuality; Disability & Society*; and *Signs: A Journal of Women and Culture*, as well as in numerous book collections. She has edited a book entitled *Queering Motherhood: Narrative and Theoretical Perspectives* (Demeter Press, 2014), an interdisciplinary collection that questions expected and normative practices of mothering, kinship, gender, and sexuality.

2:35 pm-3:50 pm

KEYNOTE PANEL SEVEN: MATERNAL NARRATIVES & EXPERIENCES

CHAIR – Sinéad O’Malley

- Jowita Bydlowska, “The Bottle in the Stroller: Mommy Drinks Because You Cry”
- Gillian Demeyere, “Third Wave Mothers at Work: Rethinking the Law of Family Status Discrimination in Canada”

The Bottle in the Stroller: Mommy Drinks Because You Cry

Jowita Bydlowska

Three years after giving up drinking, Jowita Bydlowska found herself throwing back a glass of champagne like it was ginger ale. It was a special occasion: a party celebrating the birth of her first child. *Drunk Mom* is Bydlowska's account of the ways substance abuse took control of her life- the binges and blackouts, the humiliations, the extraordinary risk-taking- as well as her fight toward recovery as a young mother.

In the presentation I will talk about the stigma of “drunk mom” as well as “drunk woman.” I will use some of the choice quotes from emails I’ve received over the years from mothers who drink in secret because they’re too afraid to get help for the fear of being ostracized. I will also discuss the difference between how the society views drunk fathers (fun, silly, redeemable) versus drunk mothers (shameful, unmotherly, selfish). I will also talk about post-partum depression and the loneliness of a mother at home with an infant.

Jowita Bydlowska is a writer from Toronto, Canada. She's the author of the bestselling memoir, *Drunk Mom*, and *GUY*, a novel (fall, 2016).

Third Wave Mothers at Work: Rethinking the Law of Family Status Discrimination in Canada

Gillian Demeyere

Canadian human rights law, owing to important victories and reforms achieved by second wave feminists in cases such as *Brooks v Canada Safeway*, recognizes the social and economic costs of pregnancy, childbirth and parenting. However, the law is in many ways premised upon a view of having and caring for children as a burden and of motherhood as a status or condition, not unlike a disability, to be accommodated. Inspired by the recent Federal Court of Appeal decision in *Johnstone v Attorney General* concerning an employer's duty to accommodate an employee's child care obligations, I challenge the law's view of mothering as giving rise to (narrowly defined) burdens to be accommodated (in limited circumstances) and ask how Canadian human rights law might better reflect the experiences, and protect the interests, of mothers in the third wave.

Gillian Demeyere is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Law at the University of Western Ontario. From 2013-2016 she held the Daryl T. Bean Research Chair in Law and Women's Studies. She teaches courses in Contract Law, Employment Law, Gender and the Law, and Feminist Legal Theory. Her current research focuses on discrimination in employment on the grounds of sex and family status, with a focus on the equality rights of working mothers.

REGULAR PRESENTERS

SESSION A1: MOTHERS IN THE ACADEME

CHAIR – Kryn Freehling-Burton

- Crystal Clark, “Mothering Academics: Women’s Perception of the Intersectionality of Academic Leading and Rearing Underage Children in a Midwestern Urban Community College”
- Jennifer Heisler, ““I Didn’t Know What to Say to Her...” The Academic Department Chairperson’s Role and Impact on Work-Family Issues Within Academic Motherhood”
- Kristin Marsh, “Age and the Timing of Career and Life Experiences: The Matter of Motherhood in Academia”

Mothering Academics: Women’s Perception of the Intersectionality of Academic Leading and Rearing Underage Children in a Midwestern Urban Community College Crystal Clark

Mothering Academics: Women’s Perception of the Intersectionality of Academic Leading and Rearing Underage Children in a Midwestern Urban Community College is a preliminary qualitative study involving interviews with 13 mothering women in various positions of academic leadership. The phenomenological study explores (1) how female academic leaders in the community college sector perceive their role as academic leader and their role as mother of underage children, and (2) how female academic leaders in the community college sector perceive the effects, if any, of mothering underage children on their professional development and advancement. Much of the study’s relevance lies in the fact that institutions awarding associate degrees herald more women in positions of leadership than any other degree-granting institution, yet little scholarly attention has been given this sector. In alignment with the statement that motherhood is the unfinished business of feminism, the study documents the lived experiences of the participants and engages the findings within the context of Eagly’s social role theory and Marshall’s feminist critical policy analysis but with O’Reilly’s matricentric feminism serving as the conceptual framework.

Crystal Clark holds a Master’s Degree in English from The Ohio State University, and a Master’s Degree in Theological Studies from the Methodist Theological School in Ohio. She is a fourth-year doctoral candidate at the University of Toledo and a professor of English at Columbus State Community College.

“I Didn’t Know What to Say to Her...” The Academic Department Chairperson’s Role and Impact on Work-Family Issues Within Academic Motherhood Jennifer Heisler

In 2010, women accounted for 53% of all doctoral degrees conferred in the United States (U.S. Department of Education). In spite gains over the last decade, universities struggle to

maintain gender equality beyond initial faculty appointments. Studies confirm that female faculty are less likely to be promoted than men, and when promoted the process takes longer (Misra et al, 2011; Knapp, 2011). Explanations for this discrepancy often include work-family balance issues. Work-family policies are inconsistent (and non-existent) at most universities in the U.S.; Even implementation of the federally mandated FMLA is erratic across the academic landscape. More significantly, women faculty hesitate to utilize existing policies for fear of negative attributions.

The home (hiring) department often acts as socializing agent for new faculty (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996) and becomes a source of information for faculty making sense of work-family decisions. As appointed, peer-sanctioned department authorities, chairpersons occupy a unique location from which understand faculty access and use of work-family policy. As administrators and faculty, chairs are liaisons between administration and faculty; as gatekeepers, chairpersons hold (often proprietary) knowledge while making daily decisions regarding how, when and with whom to share information. Therefore, chairpersons' perceptions provide a missing link in understanding university climate for faculty work-family balance.

The current study interviewed department chairpersons at various public 4yr universities in the U.S. regarding their perceptions and knowledge of work-family issues among their faculty. Themes include the sources and knowledge of existing policy. Results discuss perceptions of role and impact on faculty work-family issues and university climate.

Jennifer Heisler (Ph.D., Michigan State University) is an Associate Professor of Communication at Oakland University in Michigan. Her research focuses on family communication, specifically “difficult conversations topics” mothers and children discuss (or don't!) such as sexuality, dating and religion. Her recent research explores the journey of academic mothers and their choices regarding work-family balance. She loves teaching undergraduate Communication courses. She lives in Michigan with her husband and three sons.

Age and the Timing of Career and Life Experiences: The Matter of Motherhood in Academia

Kristin Marsh

This project explores the importance of age and motherhood in the experience of career for women in academia. With a particular emphasis on new (“junior”) faculty in both contingent and tenure-track positions, I explore the salience of age and motherhood (or aspirations of motherhood) in self-reporting about career potential and experiences in graduate school and early career. A sample of findings from focus groups and interviews allows for in-depth understanding of the felt constraints and choices women face as they establish patterns of family and career.

Previous interviews with tenured women academic sociologists in the U.S. and the sociological literature on gender, work pathways, and the “ideal worker” inform this research. In-depth interviews with tenured women sociologists uncovered the theme of

age as salient among women faculty, particularly those entering Ph.D. programs and careers later than others in their cohorts. I expected my finding that women perceived a gendered climate. But I also heard from respondents that gender and age intersect in their experiences; that is, age matters. For example, one respondent explained to me that “I was 40 when I started graduate school and really out of stride because my cohort were the age of what could have been my kids...it shaped everything.” Another spoke about the negative impact her 40-something age had on the potential for energetic mentoring from graduate school professors, and another explained the feeling of being talked down to as “junior” faculty when she was at least as old as many of her colleagues.

Further, we know that the question of motherhood affects women’s career plans and experiences. The literature on work well recognizes that organizations are gendered in ways that disadvantage workers with families and other life-based needs. My research questions flow from what I observe is going on differently in women’s careers over time. I am interested in the ways aging intersects with motherhood in the experiences and sense of identity among professionals, particularly faculty in higher education.

Women’s pathways navigating work and family are more varied than men’s. If they take time out to begin families, they are entering the work force more tentatively and perhaps later than the ideal worker would. Displaying flexibility with work and family, they may not experience the same curve of productivity and career span that we expect of “ideal workers,” entering at a young adult age (for professions, after college or graduate school); increasing in rank and productivity and earnings through mid-life and mid-career; and then tapering off in commitment and levelling off in earnings near retirement. But the scholarship does not adequately address the different career arcs faced by men and women.

At the core of this project is the recognition that the realities of career through academia are much more complicated than the ideal, bringing our gendered lives into sharper relief because women are entering and navigating life and career in ways that an ideal worker wouldn’t have to. The reality, without having to look too closely, brings age and parenthood into the picture. It is stated but normalized and therefore not noticed, because women are aging along the way and they are making decisions about motherhood that impact career; decisions about career that impact motherhood; and looking for self-affirmational evidence that they are juggling and choosing effectively along the way.

Dr. Kristin Marsh is Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Mary Washington, where she teaches courses on gender & work, sociological theory, stratification, and aging & society. She also teaches introduction to women's & gender studies. Her current research examines the intersection of gender & aging in academia. Kristin earned her Ph.D. from Emory University in 2001.

SESSION A2: REPRESENTING MOTHERS & MOTHERING #1

CHAIR – Nancy Peled

- Diane Shoos, “Abused Mothers in Contemporary Hollywood Film: Dilemmas, Risks, Stakes”
- Danielle Hedke, “Now You See Us: How Media Portrayals Affect the Experience of Student Mothers”
- Manon Niquette, “Constructing the Millennial Caring Mothers through the Facebook Pages of Children’s Pain and Fever-Relievers”

Abused Mothers in Contemporary Hollywood Film: Dilemmas, Risks, Stakes

Diane Shoos

Hollywood movies that focus on domestic violence include several that underscore the specific risks, dilemmas, and stakes for abused mothers, revealing how motherhood can be used as a weapon by an abuser. The 2002 film *Enough* demonstrates how abusers exploit children to manipulate their victims and calls attention to the limited choices for mothers who are financially dependent on their abusers. The 1995 film *Dolores Claiborne* brings together spousal and child abuse, demonstrating the ways in which forms of male violence merge. Yet these films also subscribe to a postfeminist victim empowerment frame that re-delegates the burden of responsibility for her safety back to the victim, offering improbable, dangerous solutions to abuse and denying repercussions for abused mothers. Thus the dominant script of these films harbors contradictory implicit messages that do not advance the empowerment of abused mothers and potentially hamper our ability to help them change their situations.

Diane Shoos is Associate Professor of Visual Studies in the Humanities Department at Michigan Technological University where she teaches and publishes on film and visual representation. Her manuscript *Gaslighting: Domestic Violence in Hollywood Film* is under review and she is currently working on a collection on adoption in the media.

Now You See Us: How Media Portrayals Affect the Experience of Student Mothers

Danielle Hedke

Graduate student mothers lack visibility in American society, both in contemporary media and on the university campus. The silent struggles they navigate at home and in institutions of higher education are exacerbated by the unrealistic social expectations and traditional values portrayed by the media, and a complete lack of policies and programs that support graduate students who are also mothers. I provide personal reflection and analysis on my own experience as a graduate student mother in order to highlight the isolation of this (increasingly) shared experience. It is undeniable that policy must be reformed to incorporate the needs of mothers in higher educational programs. I propose that the catalyst for federal and institutional policy changes and socio-cultural recognition lies in the increased visibility and validation of graduate student mothers in the media and on campus.

Danielle Hedke is a full-time mother and recent graduate of the Women's and Gender Studies program at the University of North Texas. Her passion for advocacy and research includes interests in feminist mothering and motherhood, feminist and trauma-focused therapy, human trafficking survivors, female empowerment policy, and psychological resilience of women.

Constructing the Millennial Caring Mothers through the Facebook Pages of Children's Pain and Fever-Relievers

Manon Niquette

Mothers are the gateway to health-product sales. By targeting the "mom segment", the health industry reinforces gender stereotypes as most of its advertising content depicts women as not only being responsible for meeting health needs in families, but also as being good at it, and happy. However, since marketing surveys suggest that millennial mothers preferred less idealistic pictures of motherhood, one might conclude that their participation in social-media content transforms the way gender-health care roles are depicted. Drawing on recent works in the critical analysis of discourse, I deployed the systemic functional grammar of transitivity to study the content of two Facebook pages dedicated to the promotion of over-the-counter analgesics for children. The study permits one to identify not only how gender stereotypes are reified --despite an apparent effort to be more realistic-- but also how women's agency is effaced by the celebration of the curative effects of medication.

Manon Niquette is a professor in the Department of Information and Communication at Laval University (Quebec, Canada), an associate researcher at the feminist "Chaire Claire-Bonenfant -Femmes, Savoirs, Sociétés", and a researcher at "Com-Santé, centre de recherche sur la communication et la santé". Among other publications, she has directed a special issue of the journal *Recherches Féministes* on mothering. She is currently doing critical research on online pharmaceutical advertising, and, more specifically, on the exploitation of the "mamasphere" as a vehicle for drug promotion.

SESSION A3: HEALTH, ADVOCACY & ACTIVISM #1

CHAIR – Riikka Homanen

- Laurel O'Gorman, "The Impact of Childhood Obesity Discourses on Mothering Work for Single Mothers who live in Poverty in Northeastern Ontario"
- Linda Hunter and Emerson LaCroix, "The Next Generation, The Next Strategy: Women, HIV Stigma, and Education"
- Anna Dion, "Supporting Shared and Informed Decision-Making Between Patients and Maternity Care Providers to Improve Maternal Health Outcomes Among Hard-to-Reach Groups in Canada"

The Impact of Childhood Obesity Discourses on Mothering Work for Single Mothers who live in Poverty in Northeastern Ontario

Laurel O’Gorman

The term “healthy children” has been used repeatedly in academic research, public health, and the mainstream media to describe children whose weights are within a socially acceptable range. This usage conflates overall health with thinness, often completely ignoring other aspects of health and employing body-stigmatizing language about children’s bodies.

In my doctoral research, I am using institutional ethnographic methodologies to explore the impact of discourses surrounding childhood obesity on health-related domestic and reproductive labour done by low income single mothers residing in rural Northeastern Ontario. Specifically, I conducted interviews and guided walks with participants in order to investigate parent’s conceptions of children’s health as well as the implications of rurality and poverty on their access to the means necessary to do the work they believe is required to raise “healthy” children.

In this presentation, I will discuss how mother’s conception of children’s health impacts the work they do in the home. I will also discuss the geographic implications of this work for rural families and how my findings compare to research previously conducted in urban areas.

Laurel O’Gorman is a PhD candidate in the Interdisciplinary Northern and Rural Health program at Laurentian University and a research assistant at the Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research. Laurel has a Master’s degree in Sociology from Laurentian University and also teaches in the Sociology, Labour Studies, and Women’s Studies programs.

The Next Generation, The Next Strategy: Women, HIV Stigma, and Education

Linda Hunter and Emerson LaCroix

In order to successfully reduce Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) related stigma, it is necessary to strongly promote relevant information in educational programs. Educational and health campaign strategies to reduce HIV related stigma for women require eliminating barriers to communication, safer sex negotiation, knowledge of testing and support, developing culturally-specific prevention programming, and enhancing public education about women and HIV. The controversial new Ontario Health and Physical Education Curriculum will be discussed in relation to these issues and in promoting greater awareness around stigma and stereotypical attitudes. It is important for young people to develop an understanding of HIV and stigma as related to women. The new curriculum provides accurate and accessible knowledge for students, which, it is hoped will assist in the deconstruction of stigma that may be present in their families, schools and communities.

Linda Hunter is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Guelph as well as the Department's Undergraduate Coordinator. Dr. Hunter has published journal articles on the depiction of gender in the media, HIV awareness health campaigns, young mothers, communication and HIV prevention, and on the support needs for HIV positive women and mothers. She is currently researching teaching methods and the application of interdisciplinary programs such as fine art, to the study of sociology, with a focus on the representation of motherhood.

Emerson LaCroix is a fourth year undergraduate student in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Guelph. Emerson is a student ambassador for the Department, the Vice President of the Sociology and Anthropology Student Society, and an active Undergraduate Research Assistant for various faculty in the Department. Emerson is oriented towards qualitative methodology and his research interests include classical and contemporary sociological theory, social deviance, and the sociology of health and mental health.

Supporting Shared and Informed Decision-Making Between Patients and Maternity Care Providers to Improve Maternal Health Outcomes Among Hard-to-Reach Groups in Canada

Anna Dion

Women in Canada living in chronic poverty and social isolation experience maternal and newborn health outcomes that are consistently below the Canadian average. By exploring the barriers faced by women and health care providers in the delivery of family-centered maternity care among marginalized women, this research seeks to highlight how theories addressing patient engagement, choice in the context of reproductive and perinatal health and of what constitutes a 'good birth' need to be re-examined. This research will foster a critical opportunity to bring maternity care providers together with hard-to-reach women to co-design concrete strategies to support informed and collaborative decision-making in maternity care in order to improve maternal and newborn health outcomes among this population. This presentation will highlight the current reality, competing theories and opportunities for action.

Anna Dion is a PhD candidate at McGill University's Department of Family Medicine, focusing on the causes and consequence of social exclusion in maternal health in Canada. She has graduate degrees in engineering and public health. Prior returning to school, she worked in international public health for 10 years.

SESSION A4: CRIMINALIZED MOTHERS & MOTHERING

CHAIR – Deborah Byrd

- Melinda Vandenbeld Giles, "Motel Mothers: Families Experiencing Homelessness in Toronto"
- Sarah Benbow, "Mothering at the Intersections: A Critical Narrative Analysis of Social Exclusion and Homelessness Among Mothers"

- Lucy Baldwin, “Working Positively with Mothers in Criminal and Social Justice Settings”
- Sinéad O’Malley, “Supporting Incarcerated Mothers in Ireland With Their Familial Relationships; A Case for the Revival of the Social Work Role”
- Hee-Jeong Yoo* and Christine Walsh, “Challenging Good Mothering Ideology: Narratives of Mothers’ Experiences of Child Welfare Involvement”

Motel Mothers: Families Experiencing Homelessness in Toronto

Melinda Vandenbeld Giles

In “Poverty in Canada” Ann Duffy and Nancy Mandell discuss what they term “The Feminization of Poverty”, referring to the fact that women in many industrialized Western nations are more likely to be poor than men (2001: 98). If we look at the situation of homelessness in Canada, it is indeed gendered in a particular way. There has been an unequivocal increase in homelessness for families since the mid-1990s, the majority of which are female-led (Layton 2008: 50). The situation of mothers living with their children in motel rooms in Toronto can be related directly to larger global forces of what has been called neoliberalism and globalization. Since the 1970s the average income of Canadians has fallen and income inequality has increased. The two longest waiting lists in Ontario are for affordable housing and luxury import cars. If we begin to put the pieces of this narrative together, we can start to see how decreased funding for social housing coincided with increased job losses and precarious employment, which coincided with increased housing and rental costs. The result: A mother living in a motel room with leukemia, unable to work and unable to access necessary social services and proper housing.

Melinda Vandenbeld Giles is a writer, lecturer in Social Anthropology and Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies, and PhD candidate at the University of Toronto. She has an edited collection titled *Mothering in the Age of Neoliberalism* published by Demeter Press in 2014, and she is co-editing the Routledge *Companion to Motherhood* to be released in 2018. Her feminist fiction novel titled *Clara Awake* will be published by Inanna in May 2017. Melinda’s work has appeared in many journals including *Development* (Journal of the Society for International Development) and JMI (Journal of the Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement) and Demeter Press edited collections.

Mothering at the Intersections: A Critical Narrative Analysis of Social Exclusion and Homelessness Among Mothers

Sarah Benbow

Background and Purpose: Mothers experiencing homelessness in Canada mother at the intersections of a multitude of inequity. The purpose of this study was to critically examine the socio-political context, health needs, and exclusionary and inclusionary forces, in the lives of mothers experiencing homelessness.

Methodology: This study falls under the critical paradigm informed by the theoretical perspective of intersectionality. Critical narrative methodology was employed. Data were

collected at various homeless shelters and programs that provide services for women and mothers who are homeless in Southern Ontario. A purposive sample of women experiencing homelessness and service providers participated in the study.

Findings: Four overarching themes were identified: (a) exclusion from safety; (b) stigma: public surveillance and discrimination; (c) contradictory sources and systems of support; and (d) internal impacts of exclusion. Experiences of mothering in public spaces and the internal impacts of exclusion were shaped by dominant societal discourses on mothering.

Conclusions: The findings revealed the socio-political and complex nature of mothering while homeless. The findings illuminated the need for increased and ongoing advocacy and the need to challenge oppressive societal discourses of mothering.

Sarah Benbow is a Registered Nurse and a Professor at Fanshawe College in London Ontario. Her clinical and research areas of expertise include mental health, social justice, social exclusion, criminalized women, psychiatric survivors, and homelessness, with a particular focus on mothering at the margins.

Working Positively with Mothers in Criminal and Social Justice Settings

Lucy Baldwin

Women simply by their gender alone experience challenges based on inequality, disadvantage and victimization, both in the 'systems' and before they enter 'systems' (Baldwin 2105, Carlen 1983, Corston 2007).

Arguably women as mothers are further disadvantaged by such systems, not only in their physical treatment, for example the magnified severity of punishment felt when mothers are incarcerated – but also, and importantly in the neglect of their mothering emotions. Mothers are not being given the 'best chance' at success because of the lack of attention paid to the mothering role, mothering identity and mothering outcomes and their associated emotions (Baldwin 2105).

In relation to working with mothers and their children, there ought not to be winners and losers - but instead a commitment to securing the best possible outcome whilst considering needs of both parties. Motherhood and mothering emotions have a centrality to them, both positively and/or negatively, whether mothers have care of children or not, that are never irrelevant to engagement or outcomes.

This paper will demonstrate the importance of the 'factoring in' the additional layer motherhood and mothering emotions bring to existing complexities when working with mothers in already challenged circumstances alongside highlighting their relevance to positive outcomes.

Lucy Baldwin is Currently a Senior Lecturer in Criminology, she is also an ex Social Worker and Probations Officer. Lucy is currently undertaking her PhD, *Mothering Confined: Exploring the Emotional Impact of Incarceration on mothers*.

Supporting Incarcerated Mothers in Ireland With Their Familial Relationships; A Case for the Revival of the Social Work Role

Sinéad O'Malley

Incarcerated mothers and their children face particular difficulties in maintaining their relationships and for mothers to 'perform' a mothering role (Baldwin, 2015; O'Malley, 2015). The very nature of imprisonment is containment and loss of liberty, but this does not strip people of their basic rights (Herrick, 2009; ICCL/IPS, 2012). Incarcerated mothers in the majority of instances retain their parental rights, her children retain their rights and the family unit retains its right to a family life. In Ireland, this task is primarily managed by national legislation and policy and is influenced by European and International human rights and best practice treaties. However, there are significant gaps in supportive services for mothers and children affected by incarceration in Ireland. This paper explores the case of 'Irish Catholic Mother' - judged and shaped by the Catholic Church and State and historically oppressed through policy and legislation - and its direct conflict with the prejudged incarcerated mother. The paper further discusses how the State neglects imprisoned mothers through the lack of support with regard to their familial relationships, in particular with their children, and the need for a supportive social work role within the prison system to oversee this complex and emotional space.

Sinéad O'Malley: PhD: The Mothers Project: Participatory research exploring the experience of motherhood and mothering for imprisoned mothers in Ireland. Sinead qualified with an MA in Social Work in 2013 and has professional experience in statutory and non-statutory agencies. Sinead currently teaches on related degree programmes in National University of Ireland, Galway.

SESSION A5: MOTHERHOOD STUDIES

CHAIR – Tatjana Takševa

- Andrea O'Reilly, "Teaching Motherhood Studies: A Women's Studies Course on Mothering and Motherhood"
- Nicole Willey, "Mothering, the Academy, and MIRCI"
- Clare Harvey, "The Return of Kristeva's 'Object': Mothering a Child With a Physical Disability"

Teaching Motherhood Studies: From Normative Motherhood to Empowered Mothering

Andrea O'Reilly

The paper examines the design and the teaching of my undergraduate course on mothering-motherhood that I have taught at York University since 1992. The full year course examines how patriarchal motherhood is oppressive to women and how women may resist such through empowered mothering. The students in the first term analyze, by way of various maternal theories, how patriarchal motherhood functions as a patriarchal institution to disempower and oppress mothers. The students then read three

contemporary novels about motherhood from the standpoint of these theoretical concepts. In the second term, students examine specific practices of maternal empowerment such, as those found among indigenous, African American, young, queer, and feminist mothers.

Andrea O'Reilly, PhD, is Professor in the School of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies at York University. She is founder and director of the Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement; founder and editor-in-chief of the *Journal of the Motherhood Initiative*; and founder of Demeter Press. She is a recipient of the CAUT Sarah Shorten Award for outstanding achievements in the promotion of the advancement of women in Canadian universities and colleges, and is the author and editor of numerous books on motherhood, as well as the first *Encyclopedia on Motherhood*. In 2014, she was the first inductee into the Museum of Motherhood Hall of Fame.

Mothering, the Academy, and MIRCI

Nicole Willey

This presentation would discuss the ways in which ARM then MIRCI helped give a voice to my research interests, and while this organization was changing and growing, I was as well, as a mother and scholar. I'd like to discuss the importance of support for research on mothering, as well as the importance of the work itself, and its impact on my life and career. As I look back at my academic record, it is clear to me that without this organization, my research aims would have had to change or I would not have found success. Thanks to MIRCI, I've been able to follow the path of mothering through my career. This will largely be a personal presentation, highlighting various moments in my academic, scholarly and mothering life, following from rocking my first baby to applying for full professor.

Nicole Willey is (soon to be) a Professor of English at Kent State University Tuscarawas, where she teaches early American and modern/postmodern British literatures, along with English Grammars and a variety of writing courses. Her research interests include mothering, fathering, memoir, and African American literature. She wrote *Creating a New Idea of Masculinity for American Men: The Achievement of Sentimental Women Writers in the Mid-Nineteenth Century*, co-edited *Motherhood Memoirs: Mothers Creating/Writing Lives*, and her current book project is about Feminist Fathering. She lives in New Philadelphia, Ohio with her husband, two sons, and one dog.

The Return of Kristeva's 'Abject': Mothering a Child With a Physical Disability

Clare Harvey

Feminist scholars in the area of Motherhood studies have criticised society as well as the parenting industry for largely neglecting women's subjectivity, including their emotional experiences. This has resulted in a reiteration of the long-standing social tendency to view mothers as merely the background to their children's overall development. The feminist movement has further criticised traditional motherhood writings, including psychoanalysis, for tending to reduce a woman's perspective of her experiences to that of her child. More recently, psychoanalytical feminist theorists have begun to focus on

women's subjectivity of motherhood from women's first-hand accounts. Mothers are beginning to be recognised as subjects. While this shift has been welcomed, this move has not necessarily been seen within the areas of feminist writings when a woman has added layers to her identity, including disability. This is perhaps more pronounced when she is not disabled herself, but she is mothering a disabled child. Their close proximity to their disabled child gives these women a peculiar and intimate connection to disability experiences. In this talk I will unpack some of the feminist motherhood literature on maternal subjectivity in an attempt to elucidate what it can reveal about a woman's maternal experience when her child has a disability.

Clare Harvey is a Clinical Psychologist, lecturer and researcher in the Psychology Department at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. Clare's research interests are primarily in disability studies and motherhood and she is currently completing her PhD: *Mothering a child with a physical disability: A psychoanalytic exploration of maternal subjectivity and meaning making*. She has published both locally and internationally and has presented at numerous national and international conferences.

SESSION B1: MOTHERS, MOTHERING & WORK

CHAIR – Linda Hunter

- Karen Christopher, ““You are Angry at the World”: Job Demands and Work-life Conflict Among Mothers in the Nursing Profession”
- Erin Bell, “Make Me Good, God—But Not Yet:” Nurse Jackie, Working Mothers, and Post-Feminism”
- Elena Neiterman, “Blurring the Boundaries of Public/Private: Embodied Motherhood in Workplace”

“You are Angry at the World”: Job Demands and Work-life Conflict Among Mothers in the Nursing Profession

Karen Christopher

In this paper, I draw from in-depth interviews of 27 U.S. mothers in the nursing profession to explore how job and family demands influence work-life conflict. While past research finds that paid care labor is often stressful, this study adds that chronic understaffing makes nurses feel they are unable to adequately care for all their patients, which causes significant job stress. Understaffing combined with twelve-hour shifts leaves nurses stressed and exhausted, which negatively affects their parenting: many mothers feel too drained by their jobs to provide either the quantity or quality of child care they prefer. Single mothers struggle to arrange child care around non-standard work hours. Most partnered mothers confront a gendered division of household labor in which the majority of child care and housework falls to them. However, a few nurses with egalitarian relationships at home, or with better work environments, are more satisfied with work-life arrangements. The paper ends by discussing how Rich's “institution of motherhood” intersects with neoliberal policies to disadvantage nurses in the U.S., and by exploring structural changes that lessen work-life conflict.

Karen Christopher is Associate Professor of Women's & Gender Studies and Sociology at University of Louisville. Her research explores gender, race, and class in families and workplaces. She has published in *Gender & Society*, *Advances in Gender Research*, and *Feminist Economics*. Her current projects examine work-life conflict among U.S. nurses and academics.

Make Me Good, God—But Not Yet:” Nurse Jackie, Working Mothers, and Post-Feminism

Erin Elizabeth Bell

Nurse Jackie (2009-2015), Showtime's quirky, dark comedy starring Edie Falco as Jackie Peyton as an intense ER nurse, is often lauded for its frank portrayal of Jackie's drug addiction. Most critics focus on the tension between Jackie's secret life as addict and her professional world, where she is a key member of the emergency staff—a nurse that is known for patient advocacy and often relied upon by doctors and administrators for her support and expertise. This project, however does not critique Falco's depiction of drug addiction, but instead discusses how maternity and work intersect on the program through an ongoing conflict that is not resolved within the program's seven seasons. Though drug addiction does not prevent Jackie from performing her duties at her work, her professional role does, in fact, frequently impede her ability to mother her two daughters. In a supposedly post-feminist world, *Nurse Jackie* does not appear to have it all—she is depicted as being forced to choose between her children and her job, and nursing almost always comes first. Jackie's character is contrasted with that Dr. O'Hara (Eve Best), who leaves her entire profession behind when she gives birth. This presentation studies whether *Nurse Jackie* suggests that even in a post-feminist world, women must choose between work or motherhood rather than allow for professional agency and personal life to coincide harmoniously.

Erin Bell is an A.B.D. doctoral candidate specializing in American short fiction by women and the 2016 Humanities Center Fellow at Wayne State University in Detroit, as well as the mother of four children ranging in age from 3 to 12 years old. Her work has appeared in *The Explicator*, *Criticism*, and *Lilith: A Feminist History Journal*, and her scholarly interests include gender, sexuality, and women's issues.

Blurring the Boundaries of Public/Private: Embodied Motherhood in Workplace

Elena Neiterman

During pregnancy and the postpartum period, women physical bodies and social identities undergo significant transformations. This paper examines how these changes shape women's experiences in the workplace. Analyzing qualitative interviews with 48 women who experienced transition to motherhood in the context of workplace, I show how embodied motherhood necessitates women to renegotiate personal and professional boundaries, allows for building of new relationship with co-workers, calls for reaffirmation of professional identity, and shapes women's attitudes towards their changed, maternal bodies. In conclusion, I discuss the implication of these findings for social policy.

Elena Neiterman is a Lecturer at the School of Public Health and Health Systems at the University of Waterloo. Her research interests include pregnancy, mothering and the body.

SESSION B2: MATERNAL PRACTICES & EXPERIENCES #1

CHAIR – Anna Kuroczycka Schultes

- Sara Hamed, ““The Mother is a School”: Muslim Mothers and Their Religio-Educative Roles”
- Lucia Davis, “Mothering in Inter-Ethnic Relationships”
- Helen Valliantos, “Mothers, Movements, Meals: Perspectives on Meanings of Motherhood”
- Nancy Peled, “Kibbutz Mothering in Transition: Bringing the Children Home”
- Anna Kuroczycka Schultes, “Foreign Mothers - Native Children: How Polish Immigrant Women Reproduce Language and Culture in Chicago”

“The Mother is a School”: Muslim Mothers and Their Religio-Educative Roles

Sara Hamed

Using found poetry extracted from in-depth ethnographic interviews, this study seeks to explore the experiences and imaginations of eleven Muslim mothers of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), particularly focusing on their religio-educative, child-rearing roles. With strikingly spatial language, participants describe themselves in terms of heroines and poets who engage in invisible work, while also expressing overwhelming feelings of failure to fulfill self-defined ideal motherhood. For these mothers, their central role is to facilitate their children’s spiritual “heart-building,” complicating notions of self and other. Poetic inquiry, highlighting the affective, helps this research move beyond paradoxes of success and failure. This work offers the concept of poetic spaces –in-between spaces that are fluid and transformative, navigating everyday truths in relation to religious Truths- to demonstrate the complexity of mothers’ imaginations and identities. This research is also part of a small yet growing line of inquiry, seeking to explore Muslim imagination from an aesthetic perspective, rather than through a predominantly legal lens –a lens that is mainly constructed through men’s experiences and expectations. Within this small yet important area of inquiry, and with a commitment to feminist theory, this study is the first of its kind to focus exclusively on Muslim mothers.

Sara Hamed is an amateur poet, feminist, anthropologist, and a mother, with a Masters in Religious Studies (McMaster University), planning to pursue a PhD. She also writes against piety policing in the Muslim community via *living letters* to her children on her recently launched blog, *The Garden is a Flower*.

Mothering in Inter-Ethnic Relationships

Lucia Davis

The number of inter-ethnic relationships is growing both internationally and in New Zealand with an increasing number of mothers having to negotiate the way they raise their children in such circumstances.

Using a theoretical triangulation of social constructivism, feminist and critical perspectives, I interviewed 15 migrant mothers and recorded how they negotiated their worldview with their partner's worldview and what value they gave to the result of these negotiations. Mothers had to construct their mothering within new family settings and neighborhoods, negotiating a role with a local 'parenting culture' reinforced by institutional settings like hospitals and schools. Some mothers enjoyed the freedom to re-invent themselves in a new parental script, unrestricted by personal traditional values, while some mothers found the new parenting territories limited in their support for migrant mothering. All mothers interviewed used their stories to actively create and recreate mothering, making sense of who they are, re-shaping their past, and re-inventing themselves and the world around them.

My research benefits mothers raising children in inter-ethnic relationships. It informs on the strengths and deficiencies of practices of health care, education, employment, services delivered by central and local government, the business sector and Non-Governmental Organisations. It highlights areas of interest to researchers and advocates in the women's and ethnic communities.

Lucia Davis works in community development in Auckland, New Zealand and studies for her PHD on the role of mothers in inter-ethnic relationships under the guidance of Marilyn Waring and Ruth Desouza. Lucia is Romanian. Her experience of negotiating motherhood in New Zealand with her Maori partner inspired this research.

Mothers, Movements, Meals: Perspectives on Meanings of Motherhood

Helen Valliantos

In this presentation I synthesize over a decade's worth of research working with mothers in different places. I explore how mothers on the move affects their culturally constructed roles and responsibilities, particularly in relationships to feeding the family. I will describe gender and age hierarchies within families and discuss how these change in relation to migration, changing cultural contexts, and socioeconomic shifts. Implications for supporting migrant mothers in Canada will also be discussed.

Helen Valliantos is an associate professor of anthropology at the University of Alberta. Her research and teaching focuses on the topics of food, gender, body and health, with a current emphasis on migration and foodways in diasporic communities. She is also collaborating on projects examining how place shapes health and food practices and outcomes, including work with immigrant and Canadian-born people, and how people's

perceptions of food, body and health influence their food and health practices and uptake of health messages.

Kibbutz Mothering in Transition: Bringing the Children Home

Nancy Peled

My generation of mothers on Kibbutz Hazorea is in the unique situation of mothering in two contexts – the “normal” way, and the kibbutz way, due to the 1991 Gulf War when the children moved home, leading to a de-facto end of collective education for our kibbutz children. Today, the kibbutz educational framework is considered both desirable and prestigious in Israel, and many children who are part of the pre-school kibbutz system do not live on the kibbutz.

In the coming year I will be investigating how the role of “mother” evolved in this transition from communal child-rearing to full parental responsibility as well as how the mothers felt about the transition. I also will address what effect, if any, their own upbringing had on their experiences. I will interview kibbutz mothers raised in communal education; kibbutz mothers who joined the kibbutz as adults; and hopefully a subgroup of women who worked or did not work as child care givers (metaplot). I plan to approach approximately 15 subjects.

Nancy Peled: I teach English literature and Academic Reading for pre-service English teachers in Israel. Originally from Canada, I live on a kibbutz. I received my M.A. and Ph.D. from Haifa University while teaching English and raising my children. My research interests include representations of witches, wives and mothers in contemporary narratives.

Foreign Mothers - Native Children: How Polish Immigrant Women Reproduce Language and Culture in Chicago

Anna Kuroczycka Schultes

Women living abroad are charged with many difficulties brought about by the immigration process: the demands of the labor market, changes in legal/social status, ethnic identity, fluency in a new language, among others. The main challenge, however, that many women are faced with is how to raise their children in a new environment: should they emphasize the language/culture/religion of their home or host country? Many immigrant communities misunderstand the importance of bilingualism/biculturalism and focus on either solely maintaining their native culture or blindly adopting the culture of the host country out of fear that they will cause a cognitive dissonance in their children. Since language and culture are inextricably intertwined, I will attempt to discern how mothers are still disproportionately expected to be responsible for cultural reproduction by teaching children their native language using the example of Polish immigrant women raising American-born children in the Chicago area.

Anna Kuroczycka Schultes holds a Ph.D. in English-Modern Studies and a Women’s Studies certificate from the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. Her research focuses on migrant female domestic workers, immigration, mothering and care work. Her recent

book, *The Migrant Maternal: 'Birthing' New Lives Abroad*, was released in the Fall of 2016 from Demeter Press.

SESSION B3: MATERNAL STORIES #1

CHAIR – Denise Ferris

- Myrel Chernick, “Paris in Light and Shadow”
- Carly McAskill, “Mothers, Mothering, Motherhood in Today’s World: Experience, Identity, Agency, and Institution”
- B. Lee Murray, “My Mother’s Secrets”
- Summer Cunningham, “How Mothers are Made: Post-Post Partum Document”

Paris in Light and Shadow

Myrel Chernick

Paris in Light and Shadow, a hybrid novel that includes texts, images and hand written fragments, tells the story of a young American artist living in Paris in 1985-86. The novel follows her life and loves, interwoven with her trajectory that is rooted in a strong sense of the city. She finds inspiration for her pieces and gathers ideas and materials while walking, and as she ventures out into unknown neighborhoods, she translates the visual rhythms of the streets into her work. The plot evolves as Lily meets the people who come to influence her life, and the city becomes the backdrop as the characters and their experiences develop. The story is particularly rich in Lily’s relationships to the women who are prominent in her life, and she explores French history and language in relation to feminism and discrimination against women in France, she loses some of her illusions about French culture. When her close friend dies from AIDS and her relationship ends just as she discovers that she’s pregnant, she has to make some major decisions about her life. I will be reading a short segment of the text and showing some of the images.

Myrel Chernick is an artist and writer living in New York City. Beginning in the late 1970s/early 80s she created text-based multimedia installations and videotapes that have been shown nationally and internationally. She developed and curated the exhibit *Maternal Metaphors*, presented at the Rochester Contemporary Art Center in 2004. An expanded version, co-curated with Jennie Klein, was shown at Ohio University in 2006. Their comprehensive anthology *The M Word: Real Mothers in Contemporary Art* was published in 2011 by Demeter Press. Chernick has been the recipient of National Endowment and New York State Artist Fellowships and has lectured widely on her work as both artist and curator. She is currently developing a site-specific multimedia installation as well as writing and illustrating a hybrid novel set in Paris in the 1980s.

Mothers, Mothering, Motherhood in Today's World: Experience, Identity, Agency, and Institution

Carly McAskill

In my presentation, I would like to outline my intended PhD project, 'Who Am I? Who Are You? Who Are We?' I will discuss how I will use my art and research background in memory, identity, storytelling, collage, and drawing to lay the foundation for the project in order to make deeper connections to women, mothers, daughters and dementia. It stems from my current relationship with a woman in my motherline: my grandmother who has dementia. For my proposed doctoral project, I seek to work with twelve senior women with dementia and their daughters in a research-creation project that promotes the shared experience of the motherline where women with dementia can build on their individual strengths, art, and intergenerational learning with their daughters by looking at what their relationships are to themselves, one another and others. Additionally, the relationship to their environment, culture, immediate family and friends will be looked at. Memory and narrative inquiry are central to the project because women with dementia and their daughters have something important to say, have stories and want to tell them.

Carly McAskill is an artist, teacher, writer and researcher. She is interested in research-creation, art education, arts-based methodologies, intergenerational pedagogies, narrative inquiry, memory studies, motherline research, feminist pedagogy and disability and age. Currently, Carly is completing her Doctor of Philosophy in Communication Studies at Concordia University.

My Mother's Secrets

B. Lee Murray

All women have personal stories . . . but there is one kind of story in particular, which has to do with a woman's secrets, especially those associated with shame; these contain some of the most important stories a woman can give her time to unraveling. (Estes, 1992, p. 374).

I want to unravel, unpack, and explore secrets of mothering. I want to explore what those particular secrets are about and how they relate to feelings of guilt, incompetence, inadequacy, shame and blame. I want to understand the telling of secrets and the response the teller of secrets receives. Does this response impact future secret-keeping and secret-telling? How does the normative discourse surrounding mothering contribute to our secret-keeping and secret-telling?

Inevitably, if we are mothers, our secrets are related to the practice and discourse of mothering (O'Reilly, 2004). How do mothers decide when and to whom to tell their secrets? When do we keep our stories private? What do we expect from the listener when we tell our own secrets? Are we afraid we will be seen as a "bad mother" if we tell the secrets that expose motherhood as being messy, complex, and challenging?

Dr. **Lee Murray** is currently an Associate Professor at the College of Nursing, University of Saskatchewan. She is also a Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) in adolescent mental health, in particular suicidal adolescents and adolescents with developmental disabilities. Dr. Murray's clinical practice, research and teaching is in the area of adolescent mental health, individual and group counseling, interprofessional practice and leadership, and school health in context of the role of a mental health nurse in schools. She also has a great interest and curiosity regarding "Mothering." To satisfy this curiosity, she uses autoethnography as methodology to explore the normative discourse of mothering in the context of her own experiences as a mom.

How Mothers are Made: Post-Post Partum Document

Summer Cunningham

Drawing from philosophy of communication scholar Michael LeVan's ideas on Deleuzian translation, I juxtaposition documentation of my motherhood with Mary Kelly's infamous artwork work, Post-Partum Document (PPD), to offer a critical and creative analysis of the ways in which both sets of documents, Kelly's and mine, work to reveal and trouble the contemporary cultural production of motherhood in Western culture. Maternal scholar Susan Maushart contends that the key to transforming contemporary motherhood is to unmask it. For Maushart, unmasking motherhood is not a refusal to mother, but a shedding of the shroud of perfection and fakeness that surround everyday performances of motherhood in an effort to reveal the fullness of the occupation and experience—both good and bad. However, through this unmasking project, I aim to reveal, not merely some of the good and bad personal experiences of motherhood, but to reveal the larger, cultural structures at work in the making of contemporary mothers.

Summer Cunningham Ph.D. is a Lecturer of Communication at Arizona State University. As a communication scholar and performance activist, she is interested in reframing public conversations on issues connected to reproductive labor and caregiving for children; she specifically explores methods for garnering interest among members of the society who do not see themselves as stakeholders in these issues.

SESSION B4: MOTHERS, MOTHERING & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

CHAIR – Kandee Kosior

- Jessica Pinto, "Mothering in the Domestic Violence Shelter"
- Emily Colpitts, "Complicating the Narrative: Mothering and Domestic Violence"
- Pat Breton, Eva Kratochvil, & Paula Lang, "Hear Our Collective voices!: Survivor Moms Organizing Around Domestic Violence In Ontario"

Mothering in the Domestic Violence Shelter

Jessica Pinto

Mothers in domestic violence situations mother in a heightened state of surveillance within a system meant to provide them safety, support and appropriate resources based on their

individual needs. In this paper I will focus on The Florida Department of Children and Families' (DCF) certified domestic violence center policies and the Florida statewide certified domestic violence center program standards developed by the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence (FCADV), showing how they regulate and surveil mothers in a time of tremendous chaos, crisis and trauma in their lives. In this way, the domestic violence shelter functions within a culture of bureaucratic control, ultimately not empowering domestic violence survivors to effectively move towards self-sufficiency and independence as the program's philosophy intend. This functional disempowerment is evident in policy discourse and enactment. For instance, domestic violence centers' program philosophies are grounded in feminist and empowerment based philosophy, but I argue that they in fact co-opt the language of feminism and empowerment, not effectively doing either as a result of unrealistic and rigorous policies. Similarly, mothers in domestic violence shelters are held to unattainable expectations of motherhood, are judged by staff for not meeting those expectations and therefore are not supported adequately in their individual goals and choices. Additionally, the ways these policies manifest in daily life in the domestic violence shelters creates tensions between different families in shelter and between families and shelter staff members. Mothers who come into domestic violence shelters experience tremendously challenging circumstances, the lack of privacy while recovering from trauma, loss of physical space and the comfort of home, and the chaos of community living do not allow mothers to participate in mothering the way they are used to and often the way they want to. They mother in survival mode. Living and mothering in survival mode does not allow mothers to maintain or create the routines, consistency and nurture the way typically associated with the high expectations of 'good mothering.' Survival mothering means mothering in a state of constant chaos, crisis and instability. Mothering is a responsibility that does not subside or minimize in times of crisis and chaos. Physical and emotional needs of children are unending and often grow in times of crisis and chaos. For mothers experiencing domestic violence in or outside of the domestic violence shelter system mothering is a responsibility that never subsides. Responsibilities for caring for a child never end, no matter what the circumstances are. The ability to have a safe home, establish routines, and do motherwork is not possible while living in crisis. Crisis and chaos created by the abuser at home transitions to crisis and chaos created as a result of community living dynamics and/or chaos created and maintained by the bureaucracy of the domestic violence shelter system.

Jessica M. Pinto is currently a graduate teaching assistant in the Department of Women's and Gender Studies at the University of South Florida in Tampa, Florida. Her research interests include violence against women intervention and prevention programs, their policy discourse, and program management and measurement.

Complicating the Narrative: Mothering and Domestic Violence

Emily Colpitts

Despite the fact that women who are mothers are more likely to experience domestic violence, there is little overlap between literature on domestic violence and on motherhood and mothering. When mothers are addressed in the domestic violence literature, they are typically characterized as weak, passive victims and as 'bad' mothers. By contrast, in the limited research that explores the perspectives of mothers who experience domestic violence, women overwhelmingly describe themselves as 'good' mothers and as having agency or being empowered. Drawing on critical literature on mothering and motherhood, this paper aims to complicate the dominant narrative of mothering in the context of domestic violence. Specifically, this paper seeks to explore the concept of agency among mothers who experience domestic violence, as well as the ways in which this agency is limited not only by violence but also by systems and institutions including dominant discourses of family and motherhood, child protection legislation and family court systems, and resources for mothers seeking to leave violent relationships.

Emily Colpitts is an Elia Scholar and first year doctoral student in Gender, Feminist and Women's Studies at York University. She also holds an MA in International Development Studies from Dalhousie University. Her current research focuses on efforts to engage men in preventing violence against women.

Hear Our Collective Voices!: Survivor Moms Organizing Around Domestic Violence In Ontario

Pat Breton, Eva Kratochvil, and Paula Lang

Canadian research on violence against women highlights the systemic and structural inequalities mothers and their children encounter when fleeing violence (Cull, 2006; Mann, 2003; Greaves et al. 2002). Lack of safe, affordable housing and universal child care supports, policing and legal systems that fail to support women's safety from abusers, and child welfare interventions that punish women for "failing to protect" their children are but a few of the barriers mothers and their children experience in living violence-free lives, most harshly realized by First Nations, racialized, and low-income mothers.

This chapter examines how mothers across Ontario are organizing for change to address these structural and systemic barriers with their collective voices at policy tables and beyond. Beginning with the early history of survivor activism in 2008 through the support of provincial funding and the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses (OAITH), the chapter will shed light on the struggles of activist moms/women engaging in province-wide anti-violence work. What successes and challenges do survivor moms encounter to be included at policy tables and in research? Is the inclusion of survivor moms in policy and research contributing to new reforms to address the systemic barriers for women and their children fleeing violence? What are the new ways forward for survivor moms' meaningful engagement in policy development and systemic change in Ontario?

Three different perspectives offer critical analyses about the inclusion of mother survivor voices: an activist/academic researcher whose PhD research “Tell Your Story” project centers the experiences of Ontario mothers and their families seeking violence-free lives; a mom survivor of abuse who is a founding member of Freedom Sisters, an anti-violence advocacy group for women survivors of abuse in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario; and an activist/front-line worker in Windsor, Ontario who advocates for abused women and their children, particularly homeless moms, moms with mental illness and LGBTQ moms. Employing a feminist anti-racist/oppression framework, our analysis brings to light the race, class, gender, sexuality and nation inequalities informing mothers’ lived experiences, particularly First Nations, racialized, low-income and new/young moms. Our paper draws on findings from qualitative research with mothers fleeing violence obtained through 20 interviews conducted in northern and southern Ontario over the last year and builds on the survivor inclusion research conducted by OAITH from 2011-2013 with 22 survivor focus groups in twenty Ontario communities.

Pat Breton is a PhD Candidate in Gender, Feminist, and Women’s Studies at York University, Toronto Canada. Her research interests are feminist political economy, maternal/child welfare in Ontario and violence against women. Pat is Canadian and has been involved as an activist in violence against women initiatives for over 15 years. Her work appears in Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community (MIRCI) journals and the edited edition, “Mothering in the Age of Neoliberalism”.

Paula Lang is a MSW Candidate at Grand Valley State University. Paula is Canadian and is an activist and co-founder of Freedom Sisters in Sault Ste. Marie. She is an executive member of the Algoma Council of Domestic Violence and a survivor representative on the provincial board ARC (Advocacy Change Research). As a single mother of two daughters, Paula is passionate about ending violence against women in her community.

Eva Kratochvil is a Canadian frontline shelter worker, Board member with Ontario Association of Interval & Transition Houses (OAITH), Co-Chair of OAITH Survivor Advisory Committee (OSAC), member of Windsor-Essex Domestic Violence Coordinating Committee (WE-DVCCC), and Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Medal recipient. She participated in Mapping the Blueprint for an National Action Plan on Violence Against Women (2014). Eva is one of 250 delegates chosen to attend the Global Campaign for Violence Prevention Meeting (World Health Organization), September 2015, Geneva, Switzerland.

SESSION B5: MATERNAL POWER & CARE

CHAIR – Crystal Clark

- Lorna Turnbull, “Power and Care: The Agency of Mothers when Carework is Valued”
- Anastasia Valassis, “Models for My (Greek-American) Mothering: Lessons From the Immigrant Family”
- Crystal Whetstone, “Motherhood as Power”
- Nargis Ara, “Mothers Self Efficacy Refers the Abilities: To Perform Diverse Tasks, Lessen Stress and Increase Children School Success”

Power and Care: The Agency of Mothers when Carework is Valued

Lorna Turnbull

This paper calls into question the privileging of market work in social policy and the legal regulation of income supports as they affect mothers, and examines the impact on the members of our society who provide the vast majority of unpaid carework, and in particular motherwork. The paper looks at several sites of care, including privatized mothering, paid childcare, mothering while engaged in paid work, respite care for families with children with complex care needs, and the socialized care of the child welfare system to ask the questions about when and where carework is valued and not valued. The paper then considers the economic impacts of caring and the consequences for women's agency, concurrent to providing care and in later life. Finally, possible policy and legal options that would permit women to adequately care for their children while living full and purposeful lives are considered, as a requirement of Canada's constitutional principle of equality and of its obligation under international law. Specific reference is made to the work of Ailsa McKay, a feminist economist who presented at a past MIRCI conference and coedited a book (Demeter Press) honouring Marilyn Waring prior to her untimely death in 2014.

Dr. **Lorna A. Turnbull**, Dean and Professor, University of Manitoba, Faculty of Law is a graduate of the International School of Geneva, Queen's University, the University of Ottawa, and Columbia University in New York City. She has taught and published in both law and women's studies. She is the author of *Double Jeopardy: Motherwork and the Law*.

Models for My (Greek-American) Mothering: Lessons From the Immigrant Family"

Anastasia Vahaviolos Valassis

This paper will offer a creative, personal meditation on the experience of mothering children as a first generation Greek-American, wrestling between the technologically advanced, academically competitive, materially, and verbally rich culture my children are growing up in in the United States and the one that my parents were raised in, in post-war, poverty-stricken villages of the rural Peloponnesus, in households that have been described to me as "laconic" in character. Separated by time and distance, those childhoods are largely juxtaposed in my mind, and are symbolically united in my mothering. I will reflect on maternal power and disempowerment across Greek and American cultures, and specifically with respect to action and rhetoric. The appendages of my modern, American mothering are endless mommy blogs, parenting books, and mommy groups in which we share experience and advice. Culturally and personally, however, I navigate a striking family history that continues to shape my maternal self, and that requires from me an attitude of quiet reflection, of silent searching, so contrary to the immediate environment in which I mother.

Anastasia Vahaviolos Valassis is a PhD candidate in English Literature at the Graduate Center, CUNY, working under the advisor-ship of Talia Schaffer. She is currently writing her dissertation, tentatively titled "Genre and Transgression: Maternal Subjectivities in the 18th and 19th Century British Novel," which examines the maternal subject from the British novel's rise with Daniel Defoe to the domestic fiction of the 1860's with Yonge and

Oliphant. She has taught high school and college English, and is currently raising two wonderfully inspiring young children.

Whetstone, Crystal, “Motherhood as Power”

Crystal Whetstone

Motherhood entails both empowering and oppressive dimensions. Based on views of motherhood as empowering, there have been calls for women to find the inherent “mother power” that lies within. In this paper, I examine motherhood from two perspectives, that as an identity and that as a strategy or political tool, in order to determine whether mother power can further women’s rights. Some feminists question whether mother power can provide women with true power. There are concerns that motherhood, as identity or strategy, puts women into the “mother box” from which they cannot escape. What kind of agency can motherhood provide? How limiting is motherhood as an institution? To explore these issues, I review different understandings of power found within social sciences literature, examine the instrumental use of strategic essentialism and women’s agency. Finally, I investigate the concept of maternal love, which I argue may serve as a jumping off point for mother power. Through case studies of maternal activists, I argue that motherhood as a political strategy can sometimes provide women with true power. This study holds important implications for democracy, particularly in how women can become more politically involved.

Crystal Whetstone is a second year doctoral student at the University of Cincinnati’s Political Science department. Her focus fields are international relations and comparative politics. Her research interests lie in feminism, women’s maternal activism and women’s experiences in war.

Mothers Self Efficacy Refers the Abilities: To Perform Diverse Tasks, Lessen Stress and Increase Children School Success

Nargis Ara

This study posits that Mothers Self Efficacy refers the abilities to perform different tasks and perceptions of teachers regarding High Self Efficacy of High Educated Mothers as compare to Low Self Efficacy of Less Educated Working Non Working Mothers in Swat KPK Pakistan. For this study, qualitative and quantitative approach was employed. The population comprised on ten primary schools, 552 children, their respective mothers i.e. 552 and 21 teachers of fifth class only.

According to Bandura's Theory of Social Cognitive (1982, 1986, 1996, 1997) high working educated mothers have high Self Efficacy for dealing with prospective task accomplishment and regarding teacher's perceptions based on this research highlighted theoretical conceptual model that high educated working mother's children got high percentages, good social interactions and behaviour.

Dr. Nargis Ara: Associate Professor, Government Girls Postgraduate College, Saidu Sharif, Swat Pakistan, Working on second PhD, MS Education, B. Ed Education, M.Phil Chemistry,

MSc Chemistry. BSc Chemistry, State, F Sc. Secondary, Professional development teachers training and social work Certificates, International conferences, workshops and publications.

SESSION C1: MOTHERS & DAUGHTERS #1

CHAIR – Myrel Chernick

- Mary Thomas, “Mothers Leading Daughters: Transformational Leadership and the Mother-Daughter Connection”
- Lesley Bunnell* and Heather Jackson, “Untitled”
- Asli Aygunes, “Like Mother, Like Daughter”: Mothers’ Perspectives on Virginity in Turkey
- Lena Richardson, “Singing Through: Songs from my Mother: A Performative Inquiry”

Mothers Leading Daughters: Transformational Leadership and the Mother-Daughter Connection

Mary Thomas

This study sought to explore the relationship between a transformational leadership style of mothers and the mother-daughter connection. Daughters completed three questionnaires: the Transformational Parenting Questionnaire (TPQ) (Morton et al, 2011) to establish the level of transformational leadership characteristics of their mothers, the mother portion of the Inventory of Peer and Parental Attachment (IPPA) (Greenberg & Armsden, 2009) to establish the level of connection with their mothers, and demographic data to describe the sample and determine if any statistically significant differences were present among any of the demographic groups. Spearman’s rank correlation analyses revealed a significant positive correlation between TPQ scores and IPPA scores. Research specific to females claims girls establish their identity through connection with others and for optimal growth and healthy development, daughters must maintain strong emotional connections with their mothers. This research contributes to the body of knowledge in the areas of parenting, women in leadership, and mother-daughter relationships, and provides scholarly significance for counselors and practitioners who advise mothers of daughters, and to leadership consultants who advise leaders. The practical significance of this research extends to any mother who wishes to develop her leadership skills regarding parenting her daughter and maintaining a strong mother-daughter connection.

Mary Thomas, MBA, Ed.D, is an Assistant Professor at St. Catherine University, an all women's liberal arts university in St. Paul, Minnesota, where she teaches management courses and a core course titled The Reflective Woman. Mary’s research interests involve exploring mother-daughter relationship, specifically how mothers effectively lead their daughters.

Untitled

Lesley Bunnell* and Heather Jackson

(Lesley) I am a divorced, single mom. I've spent my adult life enmeshed with my ex-partner. I met him when I was 18, had our daughter at 29, and detangled from him at 41. Our co-dependent relationship, which was often miserable, so distracted me, I never developed and cared for MYSELF, which includes figuring out who, what, and how I want to love and live my life.

(Heather) I became a mother when I was 18 and now raising a teen. Further I have been a single mother most of my daughter's life. Her father hasn't seen her in years. We had a destructive relationship; I am glad my daughter and I both have moved on.

Navigating life as a mother is difficult, no matter what age or relationship status. There are legal definitions of adulthood, but does that really define adulthood? How do we navigate ourselves, as people, apart from being a mom?

We will explore single motherhood and raising teenage daughters as two women who became mothers at different times in their lives. But the similarities of our stories are striking. We want to discuss how we continue growing as people while we help our daughters grow.

Lesley Bunnell lives, works, and writes in Providence, RI. She and her 13-year-old daughter share their old, creaky house with a brother and sister cat duo named Mr. Pibb and Rihanna, a 1-year-old pit bull rescue named Bernie, and a lots of dust bunnies.

“Like Mother, Like Daughter”: Mothers’ Perspectives on Virginit

Asli Aygunes

Sexuality, virginity, women's bodies and women's roles as mothers are controversial issues in contemporary Turkey. A mother has more respect than a woman in the Turkish society. Mothers are seen as the agents to carry on traditional beliefs, norms, and values but what kind of values women carry on and transfer have not been studied. The goal of this study is to examine how mothers define virginity in Turkey and how they convey these meanings about women's sexuality to their children. Semi-structured interviews, conducted with mothers who are 45-60 years old, well-educated, and who fit to assumption about modernity, were conducted. Deriving from feminist grounded theory and open-coding, these interviews are analyzed through using feminist critical interpretive textual analysis. The interviews revealed that mothers shared common understandings about virginity and gender inequality in the Turkish society. The narratives also showed that these mothers, although they fit to the assumptions of modernity in Turkey, create and convey traditional and conservative understandings of virginity (especially when they talk about their daughters). I believe it is crucial to reveal how “modern” mothers talk about virginity as it opens up new lines of discussions about modernity and women's sexuality.

Asli Aygunes is an international master's student in the department of Women's and Gender Studies at the University of South Florida. Her research interests are centered around Turkey and are about women's sexuality and virginity. She hopes to pursue her career in academia and spread feminist perspectives in Turkey.

Singing Through: Songs from my Mother: A Performative Inquiry

Lena Richardson

The story begins on the bathroom floor at my home at 2 am. I was in pain, more pain than I had been in a long time. I sat on the cold tile, breathing and wishing I knew what to do. And then my voice opened and this song came through me: a song that my mother taught me as a girl. This song about a "sinning" woman in red who needs shelter...moved me into song, and the singing of it gave me solace and the pain lessened as my voice opened. This is despite that fact the words of the song don't match my current conscious belief system about women and their sexuality.

So began an autoethnographic inquiry process. This presentation shares my learnings and questions: about singing as a form of connection and about how the songs that I love to sing from my mother can encode multiple and conflicting messages about voice and free expression for women. The presentation examines the emergent process of "singing through" the complexity of musical and gendered learnings, passed from my mother to me to myself and now, my family and communities in the present.

Rebecca Lena Richardson is a PhD student in Arts Education at Simon Fraser University. She has an M.A. in Adult Education and Community Development from OISE/University of Toronto with a focus on narrative and autobiographical stories in community contexts. She has worked with oral history and intergenerational programs as a facilitator, including the Stories Between Us Project, which she developed in Berkeley, California.

SESSION C2: MATERNAL PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES #2

CHAIR –

- Leesa Streifler, Kathryn Bracht*, Lynn Gidluck, & Sonya Corbin Dwyer (*Presenting), "International and Transcultural Adoption: Navigating Home to Homeland: Highlights From an Interdisciplinary, Creation-Based Symposium Held at the University of Regina"
- Alison Quaggin Harkin, "The Ever-Nestling: Mothering an Adolescent or Adult With an Intellectual Disability"
- Huma Ahmed-Ghosh, "Contradictions of Mothering Amongst the Somali Community in Southern California"
- Shira Richter, "Visionaries Need Visuals-Creating Online Campaigns for our Messages—a Real Story"

International and Transcultural Adoption: Navigating Home to Homeland: Highlights from an interdisciplinary, creation-based symposium held at the University of Regina

Leesa Streifler, Kathryn Bracht*, Lynn Gidluck, & Sonya Corbin Dwyer (*Presenting)

Kathryn will present highlights from a symposium held at The University of Regina in January, 2016 focussed on international and transcultural adoption. The key question explored in the symposium and our research is on the significance of 'home' and 'homeland' and the complex and multiple ways this concept is interpreted by transracial/transcultural adoptees. The symposium examined these questions through multiple lenses; visual art, performance, and the written word. This creation-based exploration encouraged multiple perspectives on this complex subject and in our presentation we will share the highlights and our insights from this deeply moving and meaningful gathering.

Kathryn Bracht: Currently the Department Head of Theatre in the faculty of MAP at the University of Regina, Kathryn worked for many years in new play development as an actor and director, and is now writing exploring themes of identity and belonging in adoption.

The Ever-Nestling: Mothering an Adolescent or Adult with an Intellectual Disability”

Alison Quaggin Harkin

Every mothering experience is different, but the narrative arc of mothering tends to involve a non-disabled child’s developmental stages in infancy, toddlerhood and the preschool years, childhood, adolescence, and independent adulthood. For mothers whose children have intellectual disabilities, however, these stages are fragmented or occur “off schedule,” and sons or daughters may never leave home to become independent in the ways generally expected in North American society (e.g., through postsecondary education or training, employment, marriage or partnerships, and parenthood). While mothers of non-disabled adolescents or adults often must deal with empty-nest syndrome, the mother of an “ever-nestling” teen or adult with an intellectual disability has the challenge of ongoing intensive caregiving. In this paper, the work of philosopher Eva Feder Kittay and the ethics of care are the starting point for an exploration of how mothers create meaningful lives for themselves and co-create such lives with other family members.

Alison Quaggin Harkin is the mother of three children and a lecturer in the University of Wyoming gender and women’s studies program, the disability studies program, and the English department. She has an MA in cultural studies from Athabasca University and a BA in English from the University of Toronto.

Visionaries Need Visuals-Creating Online Campaigns for our Messages—a Real Story

Shira Richter

Visually campaigning for monetary acknowledgement should be something we mother academics embrace. In 2014 Demeter Press published "Counting on Marilyn Waring" which features my artwork; "Iron Maiden" on its cover, and a chapter I co-wrote, based on my photography project Invisible Invaluables - about Israeli mother's economic status. For the

event of MIRCI's 20'th anniversary conference I am interested in performing an ambitious interactive experiment: I will lead (and then lecture about) a Facebook campaign in which I will promote the ideas in the book connected to valuing mothers work, together with my relevant visuals. My purpose is to generate online interest in the subject, while also exposing Demeter's book, the conference, my work, and hopefully selling artwork which will cover my travel and accommodation fare. This idea is rooted in Susan Hrdy's research about women's need to co-create. MIRCI, Demeter press and myself will all benefit from this experiment.

Shira Richter - *Mamactivist Artivist from Israel

ARTiculating Motherhood/Mothering/MotherValue & Worth in the socio-political-economic context for over a decade*.

Director of award winning documentary film about women's voices regarding the Israeli Palestinian conflict titled "Two States of Mind" (2002)

Artist Creator of Two large scale photography-text-video exhibitions about motherhood; The Mother Daughter and Holy Spirit (2006) about the secrets of the transition into motherhood, and INVISIBLE INVALUABLES- photography, light, video installation (2011) About the value of mother labor in the economic economy, which developed into a chapter I co-wrote titled "If Mothers Counted- Status symbols for the invisible art of mothering" included in the feminist economics book "Counting on Marilyn Waring- New Advances in Feminist Economics" published by Demeter press. An image from the exhibition is featured as the cover of the book.

A chapter included in best selling Israeli book about mothers (Lehiot Ima) is about my activism for mother's rights, and I gave endless Visual Performance lectures called "Hot Potato called Mama" about the disappearing mother.

The first artist to be the International guest of The Motherload project in United States (DallasMuseum of art 2014) and also The Recent Minnesota Women and Money Project (2016). The first Israeli feminist artist to participate in The Mother Voices Foundation project. (the Netherlands)*.

More information about my work can be found in the "details about" section of my facebook page -which is where I do alot of activism, and my writing can be found at academia.edu.

SESSION C3: MATERNAL STORIES #2

CHAIR – Laurie Kruk

- Freema Elbaz-Luwisch, "Writing Mother as Immigrant: Body, Memory and Fiction in Understanding Lives"

- Robin Silbergleid, ““We Talk about Our Pregnancies, Not Our Miscarriages”: Motherhood and The ART of Infertility”
- Sheila Rabillard, "Mothering and the Drama of Replacement—Diski and Lessing"

Writing Mother as Immigrant: Body, Memory and Fiction in Understanding Lives"

Freema Elbaz-Luwisch

Recently, for a study of autobiography and pedagogy (Elbaz-Luwisch 2013), I undertook to write the story of my mother's life. Three themes emerged from this writing: 1) Memory as embodied: the body is a place of memory, through which I reconnected to formative childhood experiences. 2) Mothering as an immigrant: my mother was an immigrant to Canada from Russia, while I emigrated from Canada to Israel; I came to understand her experience of mothering through experiences and dilemmas I confronted in relation to my own children. 3) Fictionalizing as a key to understanding lives: somewhat dissatisfied with the factual account of my mother's life, I have been trying again through a fictional account in which someone not unlike my mother interacts with a character based on the life of renowned Canadian feminist, Lea Roback. Each of these themes bears implications for mothering, teaching, and the pedagogy of teacher education.

Freema Elbaz-Luwisch (PhD in educational theory from the University of Toronto) serves on the University of Haifa's Faculty of Education. She is the author of two previous books and numerous articles and the co-author (with Xin Li and Carola Conle) of *Shifting Polarized Positions: A Narrative Approach in Teacher Education* (Peter Lang, 2009).

"We Talk about Our Pregnancies, Not Our Miscarriages": Motherhood and The ART of Infertility

Robin Silbergleid

At twenty-seven years old, Robin Silbergleid decided to become a single mother. Not as a backup or “Plan B,” but as a first choice. In her memoir *Texas Girl*, she raises fundamental questions about the nature of family and maternity at the turn of the twenty-first century. At a moment when SMCs grace the covers of magazines and Hollywood films, *Texas Girl* adds the perspective of someone who boldly side-steps the social expectation for a woman to take a life-partner before she has a child. Beginning with a metaphorical conception, *Texas Girl* charts a long four-year journey, including infertility, miscarriage, and high-risk pregnancy, traveling from Indiana to Texas and back to the snowy north. In this compelling coming-of-age narrative, Silbergleid explores the notion of the chosen family, as close female friends provide perspective, support, and comic relief along the way. A must-read for anyone contemplating single motherhood, this biting honest memoir will resonate with anyone concerned with the vital feminist issue of what reproductive choice really means and the obstacles we face in pursuit of it.

Robin Silbergleid is the author of the memoir *TEXAS GIRL* (Demeter 2014) and the collection of poems *THE BABY BOOK*. She is associate professor of English at Michigan

State University, and collaborator with the international art, oral history, and portraiture project The ART of Infertility.

"Mothering and the Drama of Replacement--Diski and Lessing"

Sheila Rabillard

As Jean Owen and Naomi Segal note, family relations in the west have moved rather suddenly from one kind of replacement pattern to another: in the distant past, death in childbirth made step-mothers not unusual; one or two centuries ago, replacement children were common due to high childhood mortality; today, serial monogamy introduces into the family alternative partners who, at least as substitute parents, negotiate a complicated supplementation of the still-living family member whom they (partially) supplant. With this societal shift in mind, I propose to examine an extraordinary—but in some respects exemplary—instance of replacement mothering: Doris Lessing's temporary parenting of the adolescent Jenny Diski. This relationship was unusual in being a voluntary arrangement between Lessing and Diski, rather than the result of a parental divorce and re-marriage, although Diski's parents were in fact separated, and her mother mentally unstable. Lessing herself had a cherished son, but had abandoned two other children when she left Africa to make a literary career in England. The complexities of this temporary replacement mothering, haunted by a biological mother in the wings, are intriguingly represented in the writings of these two gifted women. Diski reflects directly on her years with Lessing in her cancer diary, published serially in the *London Review of Books* during the past year and then issued as a volume, *In Gratitude*, on the heels of her death this spring. Diski's entwined reflections on dying and on Lessing's quasi-maternal care are subtly related to her travel diary-cum-memoir of her mother, *Skating to Antarctica*. This paper will examine the revealing connections between Diski's two non-fictional works, plus her related novel *Like Mother*; and compare her autobiographical presentations of mothering and replacement mothering with Lessing's fictional versions of these maternal matters in several novels that feature figures based upon Diski: *Memoirs of a Survivor*, and *The Sweetest Dream*.

Sheila Rabillard is an Associate professor, Department of English, University of Victoria. Sheila has published on a variety of modern and contemporary dramas, British, Canadian and American; currently I am at work on a monograph concerning mothering in recent theatre. A special section I co-edited, "Staging Motherhood," is forthcoming in *Theatre History Studies*.

SESSION C4: MATERNAL ADVOCACY AND ACTIVISM #1

CHAIR – Andrea O'Reilly

- Regina Edmonds, "Using Images of Traditional Mothering to Oppose Gun Violence in Contemporary Culture"
- Debbie Byrd, "Agents (and Agencies) of Change: How Undergraduate Students Can Support Non-Profits Addressing Issues of Hunger and Homelessness."

- Reena Shadaan, “Mothering and Maternal Activism amongst Indigenous Women and Women of Colour on the Frontlines of Environmental Justice: Essentialist or Revolutionary?”

Using Images of Traditional Mothering to Oppose Gun Violence in Contemporary Culture

Regina Edmonds

Maternal theory, particularly the work of Sara Ruddick, stresses the interface between the work of mothering and efforts for peace. In her influential book, *Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace*, Ruddick asserts that the preservation of the life of one's child is a significant mandate given to all mothers and that as mothers care for the delicate bodies of their children they develop a deep awareness of the fragility of life in general along with a consciousness that the peaceful resolution of conflict is a crucial mechanism to sustain all life. Consequently, many mothers become socially active and learn that invoking powerful images of motherhood's life-giving functions is a highly effective tool in mobilizing others and influencing the public discourse. Building on these insights and the work of scholars, this paper will explore how invoking the "mantra of motherhood" functions as a strategy to counter violence, particularly gun violence.

Regina Edmonds is a clinical psychologist and Professor Emerita of Psychology. She was also the director of the Women's Studies Program at Assumption College for over a decade. Her research focuses on the prevalence and persistence of mother-blame within psychological theory, discovering the qualities that characterize successful mother-daughter relationships, the treatment of trauma based disorders, and the transnational challenges facing women.

Agents (and Agencies) of Change: How Undergraduate Students Can Support Non-Profits Addressing Issues of Hunger and Homelessness

Debbie Byrd

This talk draws upon semi-structured interviews with two groups of women: pregnant and parenting teens enrolled in a support program called ASPIRE, and low-income mothers living in Roofover, a transitional housing facility that provides living accommodations and case management services to homeless families with children. During the interviews, the women explain why they chose to participate in the ASPIRE and/or Roofover programs and identify ways in which these support programs have helped them address challenges and devise strategies for accomplishing personally identified goals. The women also draw attention to gaps in program services and specify ways in which the programs' philosophy, regulations, and activities could be modified or improved.

Debbie Byrd is Professor of English & Women's and Gender Studies at Lafayette College, where she also serves as Director of the institution's Center for Community Engagement. Dr. Byrd publishes in three major areas: 19th- and 20th-century British literature, feminist and community-based learning pedagogy, and motherhood as experienced by young and low-income women.

Mothering and Maternal Activism amongst Indigenous Women and Women of Colour on the Frontlines of Environmental Justice: Essentialist or Revolutionary?

Reena Shadaan

Environmental racism is the impetus for the environmental justice (EJ) movement, led and sustained, largely, by women of colour and Indigenous women. Literature on these women's EJ activism often indicates a maternal impetus, in which women become involved to ensure the health and safety of their children, and often, the community. Some contend that such motherist justifications for activism reinforce the gender division of labour, and particularly women's roles in household reproduction. Others view maternal activism as essentialist. While useful in their critique of women's disproportionate role in household reproduction, such assertions are often rooted in conceptualizations of the gender division of labour, family, and (patriarchal) motherhood, which often do not apply to the histories, knowledges and lived experiences of diverse Indigenous women, and diverse women of colour (WoC) in Canada and the United States. Moreover, such assertions do not factor the historic and present-day denial and demonization of mothering knowledges and practices by Indigenous women and WoC, and that mothering in the context of 'imperialist, white supremacist, capitalist patriarchy' (hooks) is political. In effect, I contend that the utilization of a motherist frame in EJ activism by diverse WoC, and diverse Indigenous women is a powerful reclamation of mothering knowledges and practices, and can be empowering for mothers, and their families/communities.

Reena Shadaan is a PhD Candidate in the Faculty of Environmental Studies (York University), looking at the gendered impacts of environmental racism. She is a Coordinating Committee member of the International Campaign for Justice in Bhopal - North America, and is part of the Endocrine Disruptors Action Group (EDAction).

SESSION C5: MATERNAL STRATEGIES: ATTACHMENT, AMBIGUITY & AMBIVALENCE

CHAIR – Fiona Green

- Abby Palko, "Compulsive Mothering in an Age of Compulsory Motherhood"
- Eric Taggart, "Don't Code the Mother": The Strange Situation Experiment and the Aesthetics of Attachment
- Julie Lane, "Mothering and the Poetics of Failure"
- B. Lee Murray and Kerri Kearney, "'Giving Up' and Taking In": Challenging the Assumptions around Adoption"

Compulsive Mothering in an Age of Compulsory Motherhood

Abby Palko

Why do mothers pit themselves (and others) against each other? This question has drawn a lot of media and scholarly attention, including my own, for years, and this attempt to formulate an understanding of the phenomenon grows out of an exchange I had with a student. After developing blisters from wearing new shoes, she stumbled into the world of mommy blogs:

I had googled how to break in shoes, and all of a sudden, out of nowhere, I found a huge mommy blog fight about the differences (or lack thereof) between suede and leather and breaking in flats of those materials. My question is what is the point of arguing over something so trivial over mommy blogs? Why do these women feel the incredible need to prove they are right about leather and suede?

This student's question, why do mothers feel the need to prove they are right about something seemingly trivial, cuts to the heart of the insecurity plaguing contemporary mothering practices. I offered her a partial, beginning answer: "insecurity: that there's so much pressure to do mothering the right way or you'll mess your kids up for life (esp. among the crowd that's in a position to hang out on Mommyblogs) that you're constantly trying to prove you're "mom enough"." I call this response "compulsive mothering." This presentation will draw on Adrienne Rich's formulation of compulsory heterosexuality to think through ways that contemporary mothering practices are informed by a spirit of competition. Following the example of CJ Pascoe, whose work on masculinities posits a form of "compulsive masculinity" driven by a need to answer the dictates of compulsory heterosexuality, I will examine recent iterations of the Mommy Wars and theorize a form of a "compulsive mothering" as a possible source of this fracture.

Abigail L. Palko is the Director of the Maxine Platzer Lynn Women's Center at the University of Virginia. Her scholarship focuses on representations of mothering practices, with a particular interest in the ways the Irish and Caribbean women writers negotiate new understandings of the figure of the Good Mother in their writing. Her book, *Imagining Motherhood in Contemporary Irish and Caribbean Literature*, (Palgrave Macmillan) has just been released. She has contributed chapters to a number of Demeter Press books and is currently co-editing *Mothers, Mothering and Globalization* (with Dorsía Silva Smith and Laila Malik) and *Cultural Representations of Breastfeeding* (with Ann Marie Short and Dionne Bremyer).

Don't Code the Mother": The Strange Situation Experiment and the Aesthetics of Attachment

Eric Taggart

The finding of an object is in fact a refinding of it.

Freud

In permitting the reproduction to meet the beholder in his own particular situation, it reactivates the object reproduced.

Walter Benjamin

In this presentation I screen training footage of the Strange Situation Experiment and suggest an aesthetic analysis of the experiment as art object. I address the relationship between content, form and affect in the videos and draw attention to the way the episodes of Ainsworth's Strange Situation Protocol reflect classic narrative structure.

Once this has been established, I suggest that one reason the experiment has been performed tens of thousands of times and continues to be so captivating today, is that when we watch the separations and reunions of the Strange Situation Experiment, we are actually watching love stories (though some certainly have the makings of tragedy).

I discuss the experiment in relation to critical social theory on the male gaze (Mulvey 1975), primary vulnerability (Butler 1993, 2015) and maternal subjectivity (Baraitser 2009), and trace how the methodological injunction “Don’t code the mother!” shows up in and through the experimental design and training.

Eric Taggart is a father, interdisciplinary artist and licensed psychotherapist in private practice. He is a PhD candidate in Performance Studies at UC Davis where his dissertation (mis)translates developmental attachment theory into a feminist materialist revision of psychoanalysis through aesthetic readings of Mary Ainsworth’s Strange Situation Experiment and other odd objects from the archive of attachment theory.

Mothering and the Poetics of Failure

Julia Lane

In her book *Performance Theatre and the Poetics of Failure* (2010), Bailes considers the possibilities that arise from treating failure as both an aesthetic and pedagogical category. She counteracts a tendency to dismiss failure as something that did not happen (ie, a success that didn’t come to be), and instead embraces failure as worthy of consideration in and of itself. The figure of the clown provides a specific lens through which we might appreciate this perspective on failure. Indeed, the clown’s unique relationship with failure has been described as a “success-failure cycle.” In their common sense usage, success and failure are understood to be opposing concepts, meaning that one can be defined by the absence of the other: we succeed when we do not fail and we fail when do not succeed. For the clown, however, success and failure are intimately and even cyclically connected to one another.

I am interested in applying the logics of the clown’s “success-failure cycle” and Bailes’ “poetic of failure” to the everyday failures encountered in the practice of mothering. My concern is both with how an appreciation of failure – its aesthetic, ethical, and pedagogical potentials – can transform our understanding and experience of mothering and with the way that such an approach can speak back to the persistent and insidious association between failure and blame in the context of mothering.

Julia Lane is a recent graduate of the PhD in Arts Education at Simon Fraser University. Her doctoral research focused on the possibilities of bringing the practice of clowning into the scholarly context. Julia’s son Felix was born in February 2015, right before she finished the first draft of her dissertation.

“Giving Up” and Taking In”: Challenging the Assumptions around Adoption

Common public perception and contemporary adoption literature often associate enduring pain with the multiple roles in the adoption triangle; for example, birthmothers who “give

up” a child, adoptive mothers who are not biological or “real” mothers , and children who are not the “natural” offspring of their parents. These are circumstances about which we speak quietly, secretly, and sometimes uncomfortably. While few people may argue these life experiences are pain free, there remains an unspoken assumption that these forms of other mothering must be associated with a pre-determined or appropriate level of pain and shame. Interwoven with other voices of adoption, two mothers discuss their stories with a goal of questioning assumptions, myths, and stereotypes about life in the adoption triangle. Autoethnography as methodology is used to consider the implications of the personal experiences of two mothers who discovered that truly being okay was perhaps the biggest secret of all.

Dr. Lee Murray is currently an Associate Professor at the College of Nursing, University of Saskatchewan. She is also a Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) in adolescent mental health, in particular suicidal adolescents and adolescents with developmental disabilities. Dr. Murray’s clinical practice, research and teaching is in the area of adolescent mental health, individual and group counseling, interprofessional practice and leadership, and school health in context of the role of a mental health nurse in schools. She also has a great interest and curiosity regarding “Mothering.” To satisfy this curiosity, she uses autoethnography as methodology to explore the normative discourse of mothering in the context of her own experiences as a mom.

Kerri Kearney, M.BA, Ed.D., is an associate professor of higher education and student affairs at Oklahoma State University. Her professional background is in both education and corporate America. Her teaching, research and service focus on organizational issues, the role of emotions in human transition, other mothering, and arts-based methodologies in qualitative research.

SESSION D1: MOTHERS & DAUGHTERS #2

CHAIR – Regina Edmonds

- Tania Grinberg Twena, “Mother-Blame: An Exploration of Motherhood for the Prevention of Eating Disorders
- Laura Lewis, “Mothering Adolescent Females: The Unique Challenges of our Times”
- Michelle Hughes Miller, “The Constructions of Mothers in Female Circumcision Eradication Efforts”

Mother-Blame: An Exploration of Motherhood for the Prevention of Eating Disorders

Tania Grinberg Twena

This paper will explore theoretical debates relevant to mothers and motherhood, particularly as it pertains to mothers' and daughters' relationship with their bodies. The purpose of this work is to investigate the possibilities for the prevention of eating disorders amongst mothers and daughters while hoping to problematize mother-blame through an exploration of the literature on motherhood.

I will first situate my interest in motherhood and maternal theories as relevant to my research on the prevention of eating disorders. Then I will situate eating disorders within feminist discourses that look at the body as a site of surveillance. I will draw on Piran and Teall's (2012) Developmental Theory of Embodiment to conceptualize on the idea of the lived experience incorporating the broader meanings and contexts of food refusal in relation to gender and other power differentials. This paper will then analyze mother-daughter relationships in regards to food and body image exploring some of the debates in regards to patriarchal motherhood and the good-mother/bad-mother myths. Finally, this paper will discuss the implications of empowered mothering to the field of prevention of eating disorders.

Tania Grinberg Twena is a second year PhD candidate in the Department of Gender Feminist and Women Studies at York University. She completed her Masters in Arts of Education at OISE in the University of Toronto and her B.A. in International Relations at Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City. Her research focuses on the prevention of eating disorders in schools.

Mothering Adolescent Females: The Unique Challenges of our Times

Laura Lewis

This presentation will look at the unique challenges of mothering adolescent females in today's society. Through an analysis of current research literature and scholarship, the unique challenges of raising teenage daughters in an age packed with the presence of overt sexism in social media and in popular culture, will be revealed. Such sexist forces are having substantive impacts on the psychological well-being of teen girls. While female teens who emerge as young adult women have never been more free to enter into the public sphere, and in doing so are often outperforming their male counterparts in many academic and employment arenas, the social landscape for teen girls and young adult women is fraught with female sexual objectification that is having personally damaging effects. This sexual objectification has become so normative, so ubiquitous that it is incumbent upon mothers to recognize the toxic forces that continue to bombard female teens and try to mother them to a consciousness of these dimensions of current culture that are toxic to their well-being.

Laura Lewis is Co-ordinator of the Master of Social Work program at King's University College at Western University. She has been a social work academic for the past 12 years. Her PhD training was at Smith College, a private women's liberal arts college that specializes in intensive clinical social work training. Prior to transitioning to academia, she worked as a community based social worker for 15 years providing counselling services to diverse populations.

The Constructions of Mothers in Female Circumcision Eradication Efforts

Michelle Hughes Miller

Efforts to eradicate the practice of female circumcision, or female genital mutilation/cutting, have diverse international and regional partners, goals and strategies.

Yet, within the discourses of these eradication efforts and public discussions is also a complex portrayal of the mothers of the girls who are to be, or have been, circumcised. In this presentation I focus on the multiple constructions of mothers presented in these forums, emphasizing how their actions and inactions are discussed, negotiated and evaluated. I pay particular attention to the narratives of context, which place mothers into particular sociocultural, religious, political and cultural milieus within which their decisions about their daughters' circumcisions are made. Contrasting narratives from personal accounts, international reports, movement claims and scholarly treatises, I argue that the constructions of mothers as "good" or "bad" in the debates over female circumcision is nuanced and complicated by presumptions/narratives of the mothers as victims themselves.

Michelle Hughes Miller is an Associate Professor of Women's and Gender Studies at the University of South Florida. She earned her M.A. and PhD in Sociology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln while raising two wonderful children with her husband, Rob Benford. As a feminist criminologist she researches motherhood within legal and policy constraints. Her most recent work on criminalized and allegedly "bad" mothers is her co-edited volume with Tamar Hager and Rebecca Jaremko Bromwich, *Bad Mothers: Regulations, Representations and Resistance* (Demeter Press, forthcoming). She is also co-editor with Catherine Kaukinen and Rachael Powers of *Addressing and Preventing Violence Against Women on College Campuses* (Temple University Press, 2017) and *Alliances for Advancing Academic Women: Guidelines for Collaborating in STEM* (Sense Publishers, 2014), with Penny Gilmer and Berrin Tansel. She is currently analyzing discourses of mothering in global economic and social campaigns, along with very much enjoying being a new grandma.

SESSION D2: EMPOWERED MOTHERS & MOTHERING

CHAIR – Linda Ennis

- Kerri Kearney, "Feminist Ideals and Mothering at Middle Age"
- Lynn O'Brien Hallstein, "But, Didn't I Choose This?: Empowering Mothers by Closing the Choice Gap between Women and Men Before becoming Mothers and Fathers"
- Karla Knutson, "The Rhetoric of Breastmilk Supply"
- Pamela Courtenay-Hall, "The Philosophical Significance of Breast-Feeding"

Feminist Ideals and Mothering at Middle Age

Kerri Kearney

It was my hope, even my belief, that I would be well situated, as an older, experienced mother, to confidently guide my children – to prepare them for the complexities of real life. However, mid-life combined with my first child entering puberty unexpectedly disrupted my "togetherness." In mid-life, I am startled well beyond personal comfort by the possibility that I am living with multiple identities that include, by day, the reasoned academic professional woman who lives, teaches and researches in various areas related to feminist thought and, by night, the woman who seems to have sacrificed both my ideals and

my pride on the altar of mothering. For my generation, cradled in the second wave of feminism, society offered us increased flexibility, but that very flexibility may create complex and confusing situations for women managing the deeply ingrained protective tendencies of mothering and their well-established working ideals. Based in my stories of mothering pre-teens, this presentation reveals my recent musings on the collision of mid-life mothering and my professional world. Perhaps its greatest contribution is to offer transparency, and to encourage discourse, about yet another well-kept secret about this complex task called mothering.

Kerri Kearney, M.BA, Ed.D., is an associate professor of higher education and student affairs at Oklahoma State University. Her professional background is in both education and corporate America. Her teaching, research and service focus on organizational issues, the role of emotions in human transition, other mothering, and arts-based methodologies in qualitative research.

But, Didn't I Choose This?: Empowering Mothers by Closing the Choice Gap between Women and Men Before becoming Mothers and Fathers

Lynn O'Brien Hallstein

Contemporary mothers, especially well-educated, middle class, heterosexual mothers, experience what Pamela Stone describes as a choice gap. In this proposed presentation, I will continue and further develop the conversation that Stone started about contemporary mothers' choice gap, first, theoretically by situating this gap at the intersection of the post-second wave and neoliberal turns and, second, I will describe the kinds of conversations I believe young women—young brides--need to have with their husbands prior to having children to resist adopting neotraditional family configurations after the babies arrive, while also offering some strategies of resistance that mothers can enact to close the choice gap between themselves and their parenting partners and, hopefully, to engage in empowered rather than hegemonic mothering after they become mothers.

Lynn O'Brien Hallstein is an Associate Professor of Rhetoric and Acting Chair of the Rhetoric Division in the College of General Studies and an Affiliated Faculty of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program at Boston University. She is the author of *Bikini-Ready Moms: Celebrity Profiles, Motherhood, and the Body*, which won the Organization for the Study of Communication, Language, and Gender's 2016 Outstanding Book Award and *White Feminists and Contemporary Maternity: Purging Matrophobia*, co-edited *Academic Motherhood in a Post-Second Wave Context: Challenges, Strategies, and Possibilities* and *Contemporary Maternity in an Era of Choice: Explorations into Discourses of Reproduction*, which won the Organization for the Study of Communication, Language, and Gender's 2011 Outstanding Book Award for an Edited Volume, and she has been published in variety of feminist and communication journals.

The Rhetoric of Breastmilk Supply

Karla Knutson

Contemporary American motherhood is constructed by the risk culture Joan B. Wolf describes, in which the “responsibility for the health of babies is privatized, or assigned to mothers” (69). Breastfeeding mothers thus carefully observe their children for signs of “a failure to thrive” and consult advice texts about increasing milk supply. These texts follow a similar format; they reassure readers that milk supplies are likely to be sufficient, list the signs of a satisfied baby, but end with “natural” suggestions to increase supply. My presentation will argue that the rhetorical effects of these texts are similar to those occurring in instances of body shaming, as the mother who is wondering about her milk supply is exhorted by contrasting tropes of inspiration and blaming language to critique her body and behavior. These rhetorical appeals may result in guilt and shame about her body’s apparent failings and even her femininity, as she measures herself against an ideal mother who follows the advice with discipline and vigilance. My study will examine literature about increasing milk supply on popular websites, such as those maintained by Dr. Sears, the La Leche League, Kelly Mom, and Baby Center and suggest strategies for resisting negativity.

Karla Knutson is Associate Professor of English and Co-Director of Women’s and Gender Studies at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, USA. She teaches courses on women’s writing, women and children in literature, first-year writing, and ethnography. Her current research focuses on the rhetoric of breastfeeding.

The Philosophical Significance of Breast-Feeding

Pamela Courtenay-Hall

There is nothing more intimate than having a little creature who is dependent on you for its sustenance every few hours of every day for weeks and months -- and in more earth-based communities, for years – a little creature who needs you to hold its helpless body in your arms and help it connect its mouth to a highly sensitive part of your body to help it draw from your body the sustenance it needs to survive and to grow. During this period, a mother and child develop modes of communication and mutual understanding that are unique and often more bodily than verbal. A closely engaged bottle-feeding parent has this experience too, minus of course the bodily nipple and breast involvement.

In this essay, I explore the uniqueness of the breastfeeding relationship and the bottle-feeding relationship. I will be exploring especially the basis that this infant-mother experience provides for the child’s later erotic development, and the insight into the origins of human language, understanding and behaviour that we can draw from these relationships.

Pamela Courtenay-Hall is the mother of two grown sons, and a professor of Philosophy and Environmental Studies at UPEI. She previously taught for 11 years in the Faculty Education at UBC, where she piloted a graduate course on “Mothering: Experiences and

Constructions.” Author of several articles on mothering, she is currently completing “The Myth of the Natural Mother: Cherishings/ Deconstructions.”

SESSION D3: MOTHERS & ART #1

CHAIR – Barbara Kutis

- Bianca Williams, “More than just a Novelty Keepsake?: Pregnancy Belly Casting from a Transnational, Feminist Perspective”
- Rachel Epp Buller, “Knock, Knock; Who’s There? Maternal Humor in Contemporary Art”
- Kathy Mantas, “ART-i-facts (Phase VII): An Artful Inquiry on/into/through the Experience of Becoming a Mother by Way of ART (Assisted Reproductive Technologies)”
- Jennie Klein and Myrel Chernick, “Representing Maternity: Artists, Artwork, and the Maternal”

More than just a Novelty Keepsake?: Pregnancy Belly Casting from a Transnational, Feminist Perspective

Bianca Williams

What is the relationship between art and mother’s lives? How can art transform relationships between mothers? This paper introduces an emerging PhD project which contributes to writings on ‘art and the maternal’ by adding the genealogy of pregnancy belly casting - a practice which has largely been ignored by academics, perhaps because it is seen as too “low brow”. (Allison and Ossman 2014: 7) Drawing upon interviews with artists and other key players in the transnational belly casting movement, this project seeks to situate belly casting as an important means through which pregnant women have taken up agency by literally casting and reinscribing their own identity as mothers and, in doing so, creating a powerful feminist symbol. Indeed, from the Redstockings movement in 1970s Denmark to Reconciliation in an Australian context, pregnancy belly casting, has been a symbol of, and catalyst for, social change. Particular emphasis is placed on the Australian context where belly casting has already transformed the way in which some pregnant indigenous women engage with medical professionals, institutions and their community. The talk concludes by pondering belly casting’s further potential to advance reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous Australian mothers.

Bianca Williams is a PhD Candidate in Gender, Sexuality and Culture at the Australian National University. She has over 10 years experience working with mothers and families, including as president of a mothers’ support service. She has also project managed, and contributed to, a number of women’s community art projects.

Knock, Knock; Who's There? Maternal Humor in Contemporary Art

Rachel Epp Buller

Humor has historically been used by artists, writers, and cultural critics as a means of conveying a marginalized social or political position in a potentially less-threatening way. This paper will examine the ways in which a variety of contemporary artists working in the United States employ humor as a way to engage maternal issues, to subvert conventional thinking about motherhood as a site of sentimentality and nostalgia, and to confront particularly American definitions of motherhood. Based in part on a dialogue that was published this year in *n.paradoxa*, the paper will address the work of performance artist Marni Kotak, social practice artist Jill Miller, photographer Gail Rebhan, and others.

Dr. **Rachel Epp Buller** is a feminist art historian printmaker book artist and mother of three whose art and scholarship speak to these intersections. She lectures, publishes, and curates widely on the maternal body in contemporary art. Her books include *Reconciling Art and Mothering*, *Mothering Mennonite*, and the forthcoming *Inappropriate Bodies: Art, Design, and Maternity*.

Kathy Mantas is an associate professor of education at Nipissing University in North Bay, Ontario. She is the editor of *On Mothering Multiples: Complexities and Possibilities (2016)*. Her research interests include ongoing teacher development, teacher knowledge and identity, adult education, arts education, artful and creative forms of inquiry, creativity in teaching-learning contexts and in women educators, holistic and wellness education, women's health issues, and motherhood and mothering studies.

Representing Maternity: Artists, Artwork, and the Maternal

Jennie Klein and Myrel Chernick

In 2011, Myrel Chernick and I edited *The M Word: Real Mothers in Contemporary Art*. Since that time, we have noted that the interest in exploring maternity in the visual arts has greatly increased, with important international exhibitions taking place such as Project Afterbirth, New Maternalisms, and Home Truths. This talk will address the globalization and expansion of maternal art work beginning in 2010, in the process exploring the implications of a focus on what it means to cite the maternal across cultures and countries. In this presentation, Chernick and Klein will explore the expanding roster of exhibitions, publications and work done by artists on the topic of motherhood and the maternal.

Jennie Klein is an associate professor of art history at Ohio University. She is the co-editor, along with Myrel Chernick, of *The M Word: Real Mothers in Contemporary Art*. In 2014, She and Chernick organized TFAP@CAA The Day of Panels, with the theme of maternity and motherhood in art.

Myrel Chernick is an artist and writer living in New York City. Beginning in the late 1970s/early 80s she created text-based multimedia installations and videotapes that have been shown nationally and internationally. She developed and curated the exhibit *Maternal Metaphors*, presented at the Rochester Contemporary Art Center in 2004. An expanded

version, co-curated with Jennie Klein, was shown at Ohio University in 2006. Their comprehensive anthology *The M Word: Real Mothers in Contemporary Art* was published in 2011 by Demeter Press. Chernick has been the recipient of National Endowment and New York State Artist Fellowships and has lectured widely on her work as both artist and curator. She is currently developing a site-specific multimedia installation as well as writing and illustrating a hybrid novel set in Paris in the 1980s.

SESSION D4: MOTHERS & SELF CARE

CHAIR – Angie Deveau

- Ashley Teodorson, “Mothering the Mother: Maternal Traces and the Doula”
- Katerine Wardi-Zonna, “Art Therapy and Mindfulness: Tools to Alleviate Anxiety and Depression in Expectant Mothers”
- Judith Mintz, “A Labour of Love: Care Work, Mothering, and Teaching Yoga”
- Mari Rossi, “Radical Self-Care for Mothers: Resisting a Neoliberal Agenda”

Mothering the Mother: Maternal Traces and the Doula

Ashley Teodorson

“She has tricks”- Maggie Nelson

As birth has become increasingly medicalized and corporatized, generations of maternal lines are being excluded from attendance at birth. As a result, the contemporary professional birth doula functions largely as a stand-in for the experienced, seasoned maternal figure.

This presentation seeks to understand how birth doulas function as maternal figures-mother without history, drawing upon the scholarly work of Maggie Nelson, Lauren Berlant, Judith Butler, Sara Ahmed, and D.W. Winnicott.

I suggest that doulas are present at the birth site with all of the privileges of the maternal but with a presumed competence and steadfastness that is largely absent from psychosocial constructs of the mother. The birth doula is knowledgeable and skilled at navigating the confusing bureaucratic systems of the birth room. She is a fierce guardian. She is also a source of comfort and reassurance- she mothers the mother.

This presentation suggests that the doula inhabits a queered space, one which challenges traditional constructs of maternity and benefits from privileges not generally afforded to actual mothers. She is paternal enough (good with numbers and formidable) and yet, the pinnacle of maternity.

Ashley Teodorson is a mother, doula and activist-academic in Davis, CA. She is a professional staff member at the Women’s Resources and Research Center at the University of California, Davis where she teaches and works in reproductive justice, gender equity and sexual health education.

Art Therapy and Mindfulness: Tools to Alleviate Anxiety and Depression in Expectant Mothers

Katherine Wardi-Zonna

From a Western cultural viewpoint, a wanted pregnancy is regarded as a wonderful and amazing time in the life of a woman. The process is perceived as a true miracle—it is from a single cell that a unique human being is ultimately created. From this narrative, it would follow that pregnancy would engender an unadulterated celebration for all involved. This, however, may not be the lived experience of the expectant mother. She may find herself overwhelmed with worries and concerns about the health and welfare of the baby within. Pregnancy has become significantly medicalized where the expectant mother is subject to a number of examinations and procedures and is obligated to wait for test results to be assured of wellness. The expectant mother is charged with creating a healthy physical environment with special attention paid to nutrition, activity and self-care with information that may be overwhelming, and at times, contradictory. Various studies have found that up to 30% of pregnant women struggle with symptoms of anxiety and depression (Abramowitz, Larsen & Moore, 2010). Contrary to common wisdom, for some women the birth of the child may not be the end of the emotional struggle. Research has shown that women who are anxious or depressed during pregnancy have an increased risk of suffering from post-partum depression or anxiety. Many women who struggle with these issues are unidentified and not provided with sufficient mental health support. This paper will explore the benefits of mindfulness to reduce and combat the symptoms of anxiety and depression. By using an art-therapy medium, mindfulness can be more easily achieved, and therefore increase the coping capacity and sense of wellness for the mother.

Katherine Wardi-Zonna earned her Ph.D. from SUNY-Buffalo in Counseling Psychology. She is a Licensed Psychologist who has had a private practice for the past 20 years. She is an Assistant Professor of Counseling at Edinboro University and has special interest in women's issues and trauma.

A Labour of Love: Care Work, Mothering, and Teaching Yoga

Judith Mintz

Many yoga teachers find that pregnancy, the postpartum period, and mothering places new challenges both on their business and their commitment to practice. In North American culture where most yoga teachers are self-employed and have no maternity benefits, teaching yoga means precarious employment and pressure to resume work after the baby is born. Some parents strive to integrate their yoga practice into their mothering, and others are constrained from time and lack of support. Hothschild (1981) points out that domestic labour inequalities in partnerships place additional strain on a mother, particularly because of the high levels of emotional labour that raising a family demands. Kabat-Zinn (1997) urges parents to be particularly mindful of their children's needs while somehow encouraging them to maintain a modicum of their own practice to benefit their parenting. The parenting becomes a dynamic, spiritually demanding practice, but how is a mother supposed to continue the care work of teaching yoga when mothering is so demanding? Using feminist materialism, this paper shares the experiences of ten mother

yoga instructors and the ways in which they can do empowered mothering while maintaining their business.

Judith Mintz is writing her dissertation on contemporary yoga culture in North America. In her multi-sited ethnography, she is developing critical yoga studies informed by post colonial theory, feminist embodiment, and feminist political economy. Judith has been a yoga teacher since 1998 and a mother since 2004.

Radical Self-Care for Mothers: Resisting a Neoliberal Agenda

Mari Rossi

"Take care of yourself... so you can be the very best mother you can be" is a common advice to mothers that hides a disturbing logic, in which mothers are deeply disempowered. The apparently common-sensical imperative to engage in self-care disguises a discourse in which the mothers' duty is to put their children's well being above all else. It is not self-care itself that is the problem, of course. Instead, it is the context in which it is inserted that is deeply gendered and ignores systemic oppressions; and that is embedded within a patriarchal neoliberal context of self-improvement. In my presentation I would like to critique this type of self-care, and offer a radical new way for mothers to engage in the care of the self: one that defies gendered and neoliberal agendas, and instead places the mother as an individual with agency at the centre. Calling it radical self care, and embedding it in a framework of matricentric feminism, I would like to propose that mothers may be well served by engaging in self-care on their own terms: defying the very oppressions of motherhood that normative self-care logic puts forth; and refusing to engage only in socially sanctioned activities that will produce happiness, beauty, patience and productivity. Instead, I suggest an approach to self-care that places mothers as selves inherently worth of care. In a world that is bent on reducing mothers to their commitment to their children within a patriarchal family structure, radical self-care is a political act.

Mari Rossi is a single mother completing her second undergraduate degree, in Women and Gender Studies and Psychology at the University of Toronto. Working from an intersection of identities —mother, immigrant, psychiatric survivor, academic, artist, and activist — she teaches mindfulness for parents within a feminist framework and radical self-care at a homeless shelter.

SESSION D5: GENDER-FLUIDITY & GENDER DIVERSITY: PARENTING PRACTICES AND IDENTITIES

CHAIR – Fiona Green

- Karleen Pendleton Jiménez, ““Dear Mom, I Am Happy With Being a Tomboy Because You Are My Role Model”: Mothering for Gender Diversity”
- Fiona Green, “Mothers' Lives Today: Lessons from Intersectionality, Trans Feminisms and Trans Parenting”
- Michelle Walks*, Trevor McDonald, Diana West, Mary Lynne Biener, and Alanna Kibbe*, “To Be or Not To Be... a “Mother”: Trans Masculine Parental Identities”

“Dear Mom, I Am Happy With Being a Tomboy Because You Are My Role Model”: Mothering for Gender Diversity

Karleen Pendleton Jiménez

Current research has shown that parental support for gender diversity in children and youth is a major influence on the health of the child (Travers, 2012). In addition, parents of gender creative children and youth are sharing their experiences of resilience and advocacy, amidst social contexts that are often still hostile (Witterick, 2013). In this presentation I examine how mothers respond to their children’s gender transgressions, from the positionality of various gender identities (of both mother and child). I will present findings from part of a two year study, where I gathered responses from gender equity workshops provided to approximately 600 rural grade 4-12 students in Ontario. In particular I will focus on the words written by students in grade 9/10 “Exploring Family Studies” classes.

Karleen Pendleton Jiménez is a writer and associate professor in education at Trent University. Her new book *Tomboys and Other Gender Heroes: Confessions from the Classroom* documents research with approximately 600 students describing experiences of gender. She also wrote the screenplay for the award winning animated short *Tomboy*.

Mothers’ Lives Today: Lessons from Intersectionality, Trans Feminisms and Trans Parenting

Fiona Green

Over the past century, feminists have given voice to the complicated experiences, realities and contexts of motherhood and mothering, and maternal scholars have examined the unfeasibility of patriarchal institutionalized motherhood. As we celebrate 20 years of maternal scholarship under the leadership of MIRCI, I draw upon intersectionality, trans feminisms, and trans parenting to open up definitions, ideas, practices and expectations of who can be mothers and who can engage in mothering. I interrogate the role and the responsibilities all community members have, regardless of gender, in the significant work involved in raising children. I offer ways in which we may move from the impossibility of current patriarchal institutionalized motherhood towards a rearticulated intersectional approach and practice that collectively conceives of parents, parenting and parenthood beyond assumptions and expectations of what constitutes “good mother/ing.”

Fiona Joy Green is a feminist mother who believes in the power of feminism in contributing to the agency of children and adults, and to revolutionizing parenting. She holds the positions of Professor of Women’s and Gender Studies and Associate Dean of Arts at the University of Winnipeg. Dr. Green is the author of *Practicing Feminist Mothering* and a co-editor of three collections: *Maternal Pedagogies: In and Outside the Classroom*; *Chasing Rainbows: Exploring Gender-Fluid Parenting Practices*; and *Essential Breakthroughs: Conversations about Men, Mothers, and Mothering*. She’s currently exploring the issues of privacy and ethics related to mommy blogging and is the co-author of the blog *Mommy Blog Lines: Ta[l]king Care* <http://mommybloglines.blogspot.ca/>

“To Be or Not To Be... a “Mother””: Trans Masculine Parental Identities

Michelle Walks, Trevor McDonald, Diana West, Mary Lynne Biener, and Alanna Kibbe

“Mom” and “mother” are common parental labels for parents who have birthed a child in English-speaking cultures. While some trans masculine individuals find comfort or resonance with these labels, others do not. In 2014, as part of a (CIHR, Institute of Gender and Health funded) community-based project focused on “Transmasculine Individuals’ Experiences With Pregnancy, Birthing, and Feeding Their Newborns,” 22 transmasculine individuals who had experienced pregnancy were interviewed. This included genderqueer parents, parents who had transitioned prior to their pregnancies, as well as some who transitioned after experiencing one or more pregnancies. This paper considers how these trans masculine individuals negotiated their parental identity through the use of parenting labels such as “mom,” “dad,” and a variety of other terms. It also reviews how other individuals (ie: grandparents, health care providers) referred to and responded to the trans masculine parents through the use of parenting labels. The aims of this paper are to highlight: 1) the variety of parenting labels that have been embraced by trans masculine parents who have birthed, 2) some of the reasons for the diversity, and 3) the significance of respecting individual choices with regards to parental labels or names.

Michelle Walks is a queer Momma and feminist anthropologist whose research focuses on queer reproduction. She is part of a community-based research team who researched “Trans Masculine Individuals’ Experiences With Pregnancy, Birthing, and Feeding Their Newborns.” She teaches at a variety of post-secondary institutions in BC.

Alanna Kibbe, RM is a midwife in affiliation with Seventh Generation Midwives Toronto (SGMT) and Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre. She has been involved in reproductive justice/health work since 1992, and actively engages in an anti-oppression framework for the teaching, interprofessional work, research, and clinical care in which she is involved.

SESSION E1: MOTHERS & DAUGHTERS #3

CHAIR – Regina Edmonds

- Natalie Morning, “‘Like a Tattoo’: Motherless Daughter, Memorial Tattoo Art, and the Conjuring of a Performative Space Through the Body”
- Miriam Schaer, “Biasing the Non-Maternal & Reverse Mothering”
- Kandee Kosior and Emily Powers, “Feminist Mother / Feminist Daughter”

‘Like a Tattoo’: Motherless Daughter, Memorial Tattoo Art, and the Conjuring of a Performative Space through the Body

Natalie Morning

Motherless daughters are women who have experienced the loss of their mother before they have reached adulthood. It is important to consider that most women will become motherless at some point in their lives, however this presentation centers on those who came into adulthood lacking maternal presence. The cultural production surrounding

motherhood encourages the belief that mothers are essential to childrearing, and inadvertently silences alternative narratives.

This presentation intends to explore ways in which motherless daughters challenge intensive mothering models by using artistic expression as a tool for representation. The artistic expression explored in this presentation will be tattoos created by motherless daughters that memorialize their mothers, and seeks to illustrate how the memorial tattoo has become a form of cultural representation for motherless daughters. Memorial tattoos both convey individualistic expression, and simultaneously link motherless daughters together through shared experience and the visual communication of this through the body.

Natalie Morning is a M.A candidate in the joint Communication and Culture program at Ryerson University and York University. Her current research concerns motherless daughters and art as a tool for community building. Her research interests include parental loss, memoir writing, motherhood ambivalence and feminist considerations of mothering.

Biasing the Non-Maternal & Reverse Mothering

Miriam Schaer

This presentation is about two extremes of the motherhood experience, and how one led me to the other: society's bias against the non-maternal and what I call reverse mothering. The bias toward childless women- childless, or child-free, women are disparaged and discriminated against around the world. Non-maternity, whether chosen or by circumstance, is nowhere considered normative. Childless women face a spectrum of disdain.

By reverse mothering, I mean the situation many encounter as parents age beyond their ability to care for themselves, and must be cared for by others. These others are often us, their children; most often, the female children.

My own mother passed away after a decline marked by dementia. Caring for her led me to consider what it means to be a mother and to have a mother, while exploring my relationship with her as she faded before my eyes.

Miriam Schaer's artwork is in numerous collections, including the Sallie Bingham Center at Duke University. *Baby (Not) On Board: The Last Prejudice?*, about societal bias against women without children, was in *Motherhood Around the Globe* at the International Museum of Women, and featured on the Huffington Post, among other media.

Feminist Mother / Feminist Daughter

Kandee Kosior and Emily Powers

In this collaboration, Emily and I share our individual perspectives on feminist moments that we have experienced together. Over the past eighteen years I have practiced feminist

parenting with her. Today, Emily has launched into the world as a vibrant feminist in her own right.

Kandee Kosior is a feminist mother with special research interests in women and the law, moral regulation, women's human rights and motherhood. She has a BFA from the University of Regina, a BA in Criminology from University of Toronto and is a graduate of the Women's Human Rights Education Institute, OISE, University of Toronto. She is a longstanding member of ARM and MIRCI where she guest edited JARM's Mothers and Daughters, 2008 and JMI's Mothering Violence, Militarism, War and Social Justice in 2010. She is a co-editor of *Feminist Parenting* - Demeter Press - 2016. She is currently on the editorial board for the inaugural issue of the Museum of Motherhood's Journal of Mother Studies. (JourMS)

Emily Powers is first year English major, studying in the Northrop Frye stream of the Vic One program, Victoria College at the University of Toronto. Her poem, Retrospect, appears in *Feminist Parenting*, Demeter Press, 2016. When she is not nose deep reading novels, she enjoys writing, painting, sewing and exploring Toronto.

SESSION E2: REPRESENTING MOTHERS & MOTHERING #2

CHAIR – Judith Mintz

- Kryn Freehling-Burton, "The 21st Century Television Mother"
- Victoria Jane Bailey, "Stereotypes and Stigma: Representation of Single Mothers in Canadian Newspapers"
- Terri Hawkes, "Prams in Motherhouse: Mother-Artists Acts of Resistance in the UK"

The 21st Century Television Mother

Kryn Freehling-Burton

The past few television seasons have highlighted popular shows by strong women showrunners that center diverse middle-aged women and strong, complex mother characters. An examination of several of these shows confirms the research that finds when more women work behind the scenes, we see more women on screen. When multiple mothers are central characters or important supporting characters, they are drawn in more complex ways that mirror more of real life mothers' experiences. Even if one mother's depiction is problematic, there is another who offers a counterpoint or challenge to the stereotyping. *How to Get Away With Murder*, *Orange is the New Black*, *Grace and Frankie*, and *Jane the Virgin* all have central mother characters and the shows' female creators and writers present them in storylines that even when funny or outlandish, are compassionate and authentic. These shows also challenge the standard young, thin, white woman character. We see old mothers, black and Latina mothers of varying ages, and pregnancy is not always welcome nor is mothering desired or possible. Their mothering is depicted in varied contexts that subvert institutional motherhood that demands mothers always be nurturing and content to be homemakers in a heterosexual/normative family, opening possibilities for offscreen-mothers.

Kryn Freehling-Burton is a senior instructor at Oregon State University and the book review editor for the Journal of the Motherhood Initiative. With her partner, Kryn mothers their four almost-grown children, creates theatre as often as possible, and finds creative ways to justify watching good television.

Victoria Bailey recently graduated an MA program from the Centre for Women's Studies at the University of York, UK. She works as a freelance writer and has been published in feminist magazines such as the *f word* and **Herizons**.

Stereotypes and Stigma: Representation of Single Mothers in Canadian Newspapers

Victoria Jane Bailey

Presentation of MA dissertation findings focussing on the use and meanings of the term 'single mother' in Canadian newspaper texts. Two methods of data generation and analysis: i) critical discourse analysis of sample texts and ii) thematic analysis of a focus group transcript where single mothers discussed texts from the data sample, as well as newspaper representations of single mothers generally, will be outlined and explained. The three main topics identified by this research will then be presented - biased dichotomy of representation, homogenization of single mothers, and application of the term being connected to gender related identification of familial status rather than relevance to article information. The presentation will conclude by arguing that the term 'single mother' in Canadian news texts functions as a trope which reiterates and reinforces, via explicit and implicit means, stereotypical notions, prejudice and stigma, on a macro and micro social level.

Prams in Motherhouse: Mother-Artists Acts of Resistance in the UK

Terri Hawkes

Where are the acts of resistance supporting mother-artists in continuing their creative practice after becoming mothers? I suggest there is a current zeitgeist among academics, artists and mothers in the arts that has contributed to formalized discourse in the U.K., the Netherlands, the United States, Canada and beyond. Here I focus on mother-artist "spirit of the time" in London, England. I am happy to report that sites of resistance for mother-artists are alive and well in the U.K., and are particularly evident in the current work of groups such as *Prams In the Hall*, *PIPA*, *MotherHouse*, *Procreate* and *Raising Films*. Collectively, these associations have taken action to support mother-artists in the visual arts, film, television, theatre, other performing arts, performance art, media arts and more. Through their work, they have also successfully created space for expanded representations of mothers in all of these art forms. An overview of the current 2016 missions of these five organizations provides fodder for discourse around the energized British movement to support mothers in the arts. This nascent research will also be used as a contribution to Demeter Press' upcoming publication, *Inappropriate Bodies*, edited by Rachel Epp Buller and Charles Reeve.

Terri Hawkes has worked extensively across Canada and the U.S. as an actor, director, and writer in theatre, film and television. She holds an Honours MFA in Theatre, Film and

Television (UCLA), an MA in Gender, Feminist and Women's Studies (York University), and has completed PhD course work focusing on women in the arts. Publications include the anthologies *Performing Motherhood* (co-editor, Demeter), *Mothering Multiples* (contributor, Demeter, upcoming), and *Motherhood in Contemporary Cinema* (contributor, Demeter, upcoming). Ms. Hawkes has written a number of plays for theatre, many that include mother-subjects, including *Rhubarb, Rhubarb, Rhubarb* (Finalist for the Herman Voaden National Playwriting Award), and her current project, *Mother Knows Breast*. Upcoming projects include assistant directing at the Tarragon Theatre and a recently commissioned screenplay for Elevation Films. Along with her teenagers, Alexa and Jake, Ms. Hawkes co-founded and is the artistic director of *art4you*, an organization mentoring youth in the arts.

SESSION E3: HEALTH, ADVOCACY & ACTIVISM #2

CHAIR – Michelle Hughes Miller

- Dorit Redlich-Amirav, "In the Midst of a Conflict Area: Mothers' Experiences of Hope alongside Adult Children Struggling with Mental Illnesses"
- Riikka Homanen, "Becoming a Mother in Finland: Enabling and Controlling Motherhood in Publicly Provided Maternity Healthcare"
- Neda Maghbouleh, Jamilah Dei-Sharpe and Maleeha Iqbal, "Where Are the Mothers' Groups? A Pilot Study in Toronto"

In the Midst of a Conflict Area: Mothers' Experiences of Hope alongside Adult Children Struggling with Mental Illnesses

Dorit Redlich-Amirav

Since mothers are commonly the major caregivers for adult children struggling with mental illness, their stories of hope may deepen our understanding of the experiences of hope among those mothers who are living in a conflict area. In the midst of the profoundly complex relationships between Palestinians and Israelis, the purpose of this study was to explore in a relational way the various aspects of hope felt by mothers living in that difficult reality. The author offer narrative accounts of narrative inquiry in four mothers, two Palestinian who are living in East Jerusalem, and two Israeli mothers who are living in West Jerusalem. We engaged in several hope conversations about mothering occupation during July to October 2015 in East and West Jerusalem. Interim research results of this narrative inquiry will be presented.

Dorit Redlich-Amirav is an occupational therapist, working in the mental health field. Presently she is a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Rehabilitation Science at the University of Alberta, Canada. Her research is about "Mothers' Experiences of Hope alongside Adult Children Struggling with Mental Illnesses living in the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict".

Becoming a Mother in Finland: Enabling and Controlling Motherhood in Publicly Provided Maternity Healthcare

Riikka Homanen

This presentation discusses parental support in the practices of maternity healthcare provided by the welfare state. Drawing on institutional ethnographic material from clinics in Finland, I discuss maternity healthcare care practices and processes as the specific contexts of subjectification to motherhood in the Nordic welfare state. The analysis shows that in both nurses' (work) experience-based knowledge and population statistical knowledge of scales of normalcy, maternal competence is achieved largely through a 'natural' process of experiencing pregnant life. Care practices can be seen as enabling motherhood through respect for this process. Clinics encourage mothers-to-be to self-reflect and be self-reliant. Emphasis on self-reliance has been interpreted previously as a response to consumer capitalist demands for the welfare state to offer its citizens more autonomy and choice. I argue, however, that the maternal subject emerging from the practices of this welfare service cannot be reduced to a neo-liberal reflexive individual for whom motherhood is an individual project and who will be blamed for individual shortcomings. Equally, she is no mere disciplined product of governmentality being pushed to conform to an idealised mother-figure derived from collective ideas of 'good' motherhood.

Dr. **Riikka Homanen** is an Academy of Finland postdoctoral researcher at Gender Studies in the School of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Tampere, Finland. She has a doctoral degree in Gender Studies, and her postdoctoral project is concerned with marketisation and social inequities in reproductive healthcare with a special focus on cross-border reproductive tourism.

Where Are the Mothers' Groups? A Pilot Study in Toronto

Neda Maghbouleh, Jamilah Dei-Sharpe and Maleeha Iqbal

Research has shown individual-level gains in mental and physical health for postpartum mothers who join local mothers' groups. Related work has shown unanticipated individual-level gains in social capital and personal networks following mothers' voluntary involvement in similar organizations. No research exists, however, on civic level involvement or activism that spills out from these collective activities. This is a knowledge gap particularly worth investigating in Canada, where participation in such groups is fostered not only through parental leave policies and benefits guaranteed by the government, but also through strong cultural norms of joining and participation.

The puzzle we explore is: what is the full suite of "outcomes" of local mothers' groups? Put differently, does the participation of post-partum women in local mothers' groups produce measurable, significant effects for the community ("externalities") beyond the individual level? And if mothers' groups produce civic positive externalities, what part, if any, do affinities and inequalities of race, ethnicity, and immigration status play? To what extent does the composition of a mothers' group shape—in degree, effect, and/or substance—its

social and cultural outcomes? In this presentation, we offer preliminary discoveries from the first step of our pilot study: mapping the presence of mothers' groups

Jamilah Dei-Sharpe and **Maleeha Iqbal** are undergraduate researchers at the University of Toronto Mississauga. Dr. **Neda Maghbooleh**, Assistant Professor of Sociology, serves as research supervisor. Their project on "Civic Engagement in Toronto Mothers' Groups" is funded by the University of Toronto Connaught New Researcher Award and the UTM Dean's Office ROP Fund.

SESSION E4: THE GIFT ECONOMY & MATRIARCHY #1

CHAIR- Anna Dion

- Kirre Koivunen & Kaarina Kailo, "Finno-Ugric Guardian Spirits and Animal Mothers - Pohjola Mythology and Ecological Knowledge" Short Documentary, 37 min. 2015
- Lin Daniels, "Mixed Blessings: A Matriarchal Perspective on Older Women Raising Children"
- Genevieve Vaughan, Gift Economy, "Interpersonal Neurobiology and the Maternal Gift Economy"

Finno-Ugric Guardian Spirits and Animal Mothers - Pohjola Mythology and Ecological Knowledge

Kirre Koivunen and Kaarina Kailo

The documentary introduces the worldview and mythological cosmos of ancient Finno-Ugric peoples; it provides information on traditional ecological knowledge and the culture of guardian spirits, totemistic animal mothers and other nature beings. Dr. Kaarina Kailo and ecopsychologist Irma Heiskanen have brought new insights to bear on the links between the motif of the Tree of Life, a three-layered universe and the visual language of Goddess textiles among Finno-Ugric people. It consists of recurring symbols that communicate a common belief system embraced particularly by women. Traces of ancient value systems and cosmovisions are contained also on rock art and in power places. The sacred cosmos of the sun, birds, power animals and constellations are among the recurrent motifs in women's arts and crafts. The embroidered World Tree as a recurring symbol connects generations, genders and species and functions as a pillar supporting the cosmic structure. The symbolic language revealed is closely tied with the culture of giving back and a harmonious, balanced relationship between humans and nature. The film also introduces little known Finno-Ugric deities that have been marginalized by mainstream patriarchal epic culture in Finland. Many Finno-Ugric women communicate with songs (sagas) and with stitches.

Kirre Koivunen is a freelance photojournalist and media educator. Her journalistic work is focused on reports based on social justice, social documentary photography and video productions. Koivunen also does international human rights work, with "women-at-risk" – cases, which are also related partially to her journalistic work. In addition to her home country, she has worked in Syria, Palestina, China, Japan, Venezuela, India and in Namibia,

to mention a few. Kirre Koivunen is also the Sixth Angle (Kuudes kulma) online media's photojournalist and journalist. www.kuudeskulma.fi.

Dr. **Kaarina Kailo** belongs to the International network of Feminists for a Gift Economy and has served as Professor of Women's Studies in Finland, and held tenure at Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Canada. Her many publications include among other works *Wo/men and Bears—the Gifts of Gender, Culture and Nature Revisited* (2008), co-edited books on the Sami-Indigenous people of Northern Europe and on ecopsychology, ecofeminism, the gender impact of globalization and many articles on gender and the Gift economy. She is also politician, activist and a textile artist.

Mixed Blessings: A Matriarchal Perspective on Older Women Raising Children

Lin Daniels

In the U.S., motherhood is not only disrespected, but was and remains a condition that forces women to accept underemployment and deferred careers. Mothers can look forward to lower wages, lower expectations, with no affordable childcare available, and the isolation of the nuclear family. How do women cope with the responsibilities?

Many mothers cannot. Socio/economic changes have now shifted to the reality of older women (grandmothers, friends, through adoption) raising children. Adequate housing, proper nutrition, healthcare, are just a few of the necessities that are elusive to many women in their later years. The mixed blessing of raising children often provides the added challenge of how to provide these things for themselves and the children/child they care for.

The shift among Lesbians regarding parenthood will be explored, together with personal reflections and research findings.

Examples of older women raising children will be presented. This raises questions about intergenerational motherhood becoming increasingly normative, with its roots firmly in the Gift Economy and in the Matriarchal paradigm.

Lin Daniels, a Lesbian Feminist activist for over 40 years, produces events, conferences, and festivals for, by and about women. Board member: Women's School in California. Member: Pagoda: intentional Lesbian Feminist community in the U.S. Lectures on building alternative women's communities and Lesbian/Feminist issues.

Interpersonal Neurobiology and the Maternal Gift Economy

Genevieve Vaughan

New 'interpersonal neurobiological studies' have shown that "...our relational connections shape our neural connections" (Dan Siegel p 15, 2015). Siegel and Alan Schore demonstrate that the relationships created through mothercare shape the 'architecture of the brain'. Thus Nurture becomes Nature through mothering. Motherers nurture young infants without expecting an equivalent return. Thus the child lives in a free gift economy

where her needs are met unilaterally through the gifts of mother work and s/he learns to receive the gifts without a concomitant exchange. It is in this economy that the neural connections of the child's brain are established. The market, which is based on quid pro quo exchange contradicts and oppresses the logic and practice of free giving and receiving. Market logic, which functions according to representation, categorization, and abstract equivalence, runs counter to the logic of the gift that earlier shaped the architecture of the brain. The capitalist market has become fused with patriarchy, and functions according to competition for accumulation and domination. The interaction of the two logics and the connection of exchange and money with Patriarchy deny our maternal heritage and are the reason for planetary crisis.

Genevieve Vaughan (b. Texas 1939) created the all-women multicultural Foundation for a Compassionate Society (1987-2005) and initiated a network: International Feminists for a Gift Economy (2001- present). Her books are *For-Giving, a Feminist Criticism of Exchange* (1997), *Homo Donans* (2006) *The Gift in the Heart of Language* (2015) and several anthologies www.gift-economy.com.

SESSION F1: MOTHERS & LITERATURE

CHAIR – Deborah Byrd

- Andrea O'Reilly, "We Need to Talk about Patriarchal Motherhood: Essentialization, Naturalization and Idealization in Lionel Shriver's *We Need to Talk about Kevin*"
- Anissa Wardi, "Maternal Ecocriticism and the Ecology of Motherhood in Jean Toomer's *Cane*"
- Naomi Mercer, "Give Me Children or Else I Die": Motherhood and Religious Fundamentalism in Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*"

We Need to Talk about Patriarchal Motherhood: Essentialization, Naturalization and Idealization In Lionel Shriver's *We Need to Talk about Kevin*

Andrea O'Reilly

This article considers how *We Need to Talk about Kevin* disturbs and deconstructs the patriarchal mandates of essentialization, naturalization, and idealization. In patriarchal motherhood it is assumed (and expected) that all women want to be mothers (essentialization), that maternal ability and motherlove are innate to all mothers (naturalization), and that all mothers find joy and purpose in motherhood (idealization). While various motherhood themes have been examined in feminist criticism on the novel including mother blame (Cusk), ideologies of good/bad mothering (Murphy; Muller; Robbins), maternal subjectivity and practice (Messer) and maternal ambivalence (Almond), my reading of *Kevin* will seek to uncover "what lies beneath" the maternal angst discussed in the above criticism. I argue that the mother-blame, 'bad' mothering, and maternal ambivalence so evident in the novel and so central to discussions on the novel are the symptomatic manifestations of the essentialized, naturalized and idealized mandates and expectations of patriarchal motherhood. Eva is blamed and regarded as an ambivalent or bad mother precisely because she is seen as lacking the assumed innate desire and ability

to mother as well as the happiness expected of women in and through motherhood. Kevin, thus, not only compelling and convincingly conveys the discontents of patriarchal motherhood, but more importantly it uncovers the cause of, and reason for this maternal discontent: namely the essentialization, naturalization and idealization of patriarchal motherhood. In moving beyond the representation of the symptoms of women's oppression in motherhood –ambivalence, blame, guilt, judgement---, to an understanding of their cause, the novel opens up the possibility for change in the narrative itself and hopefully in the lives of the mothers reading it.

Andrea O'Reilly, PhD, is Professor in the School of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies at York University. She is founder and director of the Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement; founder and editor-in-chief of the *Journal of the Motherhood Initiative*; and founder of Demeter Press. She is a recipient of the CAUT Sarah Shorten Award for outstanding achievements in the promotion of the advancement of women in Canadian universities and colleges, and is the author and editor of numerous books on motherhood, as well as the first *Encyclopedia on Motherhood*. In 2014, she was the first inductee into the Museum of Motherhood Hall of Fame.

Maternal Ecocriticism and the Ecology of Motherhood in Jean Toomer's Cane

Anissa Wardi

Pine trees shout, cane fields whisper and a countryside flows into a woman's eyes in Jean Toomer's *Cane*, a fragmented, modernist text that invites a reflection of the human and the nonhuman as part of an interdependent web of vibrant matter. The assemblage of the agrarian South, African American women, and scenes of racial violence coalesce and construct a narrative of violated fertility and motherhood. The women of *Cane* are denied their motherhood because their identity cannot be divorced from the trans-Atlantic trade route, plantation labor practices, and post-Reconstruction industrial-scale logging. By conflating women and nature, Toomer illustrates that human corporeality is tethered to the material world, a concept that feminist theorist Stacy Alaimo, in *Bodily Natures*, refers to as trans-corporeality. This paper examines moments of trans-corporeal exchange in *Cane* (i.e. felled pine trees and fetuses and maternal bodies and cotton fields) and in so doing provides an ecocritical reading of motherhood and material interconnectivity in Toomer's masterpiece of the Harlem Renaissance.

Dr. **Anissa Wardi** is Professor of English at Chatham University and a past contributor to journals such as *African American Review*, *MELUS*, and *ISLE*. She is the author of *Water and African American Memory: An Ecocritical Perspective* and *Death and the Arc of Mourning in African American Literature*.

"Give Me Children or Else I Die": Motherhood and Religious Fundamentalism in Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*

Naomi Mercer

In her seminal dystopian novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*, Canadian author Margaret Atwood takes religious fundamentalism to its logical extremes. One of these extremes is the

treatment of women, particularly as mothers and how they are simultaneously venerated by the State but also oppressed based solely around their reproductive capacities. Moreover, women's individual wombs and the control of their fertility become sites of contested loyalty to God and the religious denomination and/or nationalism. Similarly, Western society is rife with laudatory rhetoric about the work mothers do and their contributions to raising the next generation, especially when women do so full-time rather than working outside the home. Yet this lip service to motherhood and involved parenting casts into relief the lack of support that society actually offers parents, but predominantly mothers, in terms of post-partum maternity and paternity leave, accommodation for nursing and pumping, quality daycare, and affordable health care for women and their children. Ultimately, however, the Handmaids' reduction to "two-legged wombs" and "ambulatory chalices" and deprivation of their children as well as any positive experience of motherhood demonstrates the nationalizing and religionizing of reproduction and motherhood. This exemplifies the means by which fundamentalist regimes seek to subordinate women to keep them powerless and reveal the impetus to perpetuate kyriarchal axes of power in which men retain power and control by oppressing women. Atwood's treatment of motherhood in *The Handmaid's Tale*, and the complete divorce of biological motherhood from parenting, offers commentary on current social norms and practices that reflect the lack of support the mothers experience in contemporary society.

Naomi Mercer is a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army and an assistant professor in the Department of English and Philosophy at the United States Military Academy. She specializes in twentieth-century American literature and feminist dystopian and utopian writing. She is the author of *Toward Utopia*.

SESSION F2: MATERNAL PRACTICES & EXPERIENCES #3

CHAIR – Lori Chambers

- Kinga Pozniak, "Negotiating Neoliberal Pedagogies of Motherhood: The Case of Ontario Early Years Centres"
- Nancy Sinclair, "Social Exclusion From Gestational Surrogacy as a Fertility Treatment in Ontario: An Autoethnography"
- Tatjana Takševa, "Oppression and Empowerment: The Range of Maternal Experiences in Bosnian Women Rape Survivors"

Negotiating Neoliberal Pedagogies of Motherhood: The Case of Ontario Early Years Centres

Kinga Pozniak

Political and economic processes are always worked out, domesticated and negotiated in people's everyday lives - including the institution, experience and identity of mothering and motherhood. This paper feeds into a research project that is concerned with the ways in which neoliberal discourses, policies and technologies shape the lives of contemporary Canadian mothers. Specifically, it focuses on Ontario Early Years Centres (OEYCs) as instruments of state production and reproduction of neoliberal pedagogies of motherhood.

OEYCs are government-funded spaces where caregivers (primarily mothers) interact with various experts, and take part in programs that convey hegemonic ideas of how to be a good mother. I examine how OEYC activities are shaped by, and in turn reproduce, neoliberal values, techniques and philosophies, and how they inculcate neoliberal subjectivities in the participants. These include, for instance, the values of individuality, flexibility and choice, the reliance on “experts,” and an emphasis on “technologies of the self” through which mothers are expected to enterprise and optimize themselves. However, mothers are agents who selectively adopt or reject elements of these discourses depending on their particular situations. This research stems from my own participant observation in various OEYC workshops and activities, as both a mother and an anthropologist.

Kinga Pozniak is an anthropologist based at The University of Western Ontario. She has previously published on the topic of the postsocialist transformation in Eastern Europe. After having children she started to think anthropologically about her experiences as a mother, and is now starting a new research project that reflects her changed life and interests.

Social Exclusion From Gestational Surrogacy as a Fertility Treatment in Ontario: An Autoethnography

Nancy Sinclair

For many women, being a mother is an integral part of their identity, and may involve the use of reproductive technology. Upon occupying the role of ‘patient’ within the fertility clinic setting, patients fall under the patriarchal policies and procedures of the clinic, as well as the personal biases of the physician(s) upon whose expertise they rely. The physician(s) is a gatekeeper to becoming a parent; the power dynamic is indisputable.

While entitlement and deservingness are differentiated in social welfare and health care literature, using a critical feminist lens, I will explore how, in this case, they both lead to the exclusion of women presenting with mental health concerns. This discussion will be illustrated through the use of my autoethnobiography, in which I share my experience of infertility, the neonatal deaths of my twins, and subsequent pursuit of surrogacy and proposed simultaneous embryo transfer. I sought fertility professionals’ expertise due to my grief, loss of hope, and the prospect of high risk pregnancy. I was declined these services due to policies which are paternalistic and exclusionary of mental health as a legitimate basis for surrogacy treatment; I was deemed both undeserving and unentitled.

Nancy Sinclair is a mother and social worker. While she loves the challenges of her profession in a family health team, mothering is her *raison-d’être* (most days!). She considers herself to have fought hard to become a mother, facing infertility, infant loss, and unsupportive physicians.

Oppression and Empowerment: The Range of Maternal Experiences in Bosnian Women Rape Survivors”

Tatjana Takševa

Between 1991 and 1995 Bosnia was one of the deadliest regions in the wars triggered by the disintegration of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Under the banner of the old Yugoslav army all sides, but particularly Serbian nationalist forces engaged in campaigns of ethnic cleansing of Bosnians of Moslem faith and ethnic heritage, also called Bosniaks (Bošnjaci) (Sharratt 1). As many as 50,000 women were raped on all sides. A significant strategy for this particular form of violence was the forced impregnation of women of the enemy group, with the aim of destabilizing and eventually destroying the social fabric of the enemy community. Muslim, Croat and Serbian forces engaged in these campaigns with equal cruelty, raping women in so called rape camps and releasing them only after their pregnancies have progressed beyond the possibility of a safe abortion. It is estimated that between 25,000 and 40,000 Bosniak women and girls—the greatest number -- were victims of genocidal rape and enforced impregnation by Serbian forces (Allen; Sharratt 1; Skjelsbaek 374-5; Erjavec and Volčič).

The aim of this talk is to provide a preliminary catalogue of maternal experiences in women rape survivors and survivors of enforced impregnation in the recent Balkan War based on recorded personal narratives and statements that survivors and their children gave to various media outlets. Relying on a feminist perspective, the catalogue will create a record of maternal experiences of the following three groups of women:

- Rape survivors in relation to their own mothers/daughters
- Rape and enforced impregnation survivors who committed infanticide upon giving birth
- Rape and enforced impregnation survivors who kept and raised their children:
 - those who feel psychically and physically oppressed by their experience and whose children see them as “traitors”
 - those who are experiencing strong feelings of maternal ambivalence but use it as a tool of maternal empowerment

The purpose of this catalogue is to provide the basis for further study of women rape survivors in the Balkans and their mothering practices, as well as to shed light on the range and complexity of maternal experiences and maternal subjectivities that encompass both oppression and empowerment. Cataloguing their stories legitimates their diverse maternal experiences, and provides the basis for further feminist theorizing of maternity and the mother not through “the containing or transformative function she performs,” but the mother as a person, her psycho-social history, the specific circumstances of this particular conception, as well as the subjective meaning a woman assigns to the experience of mothering (Raphael-Leff , “Mothers” 1-3). No similar study currently exists.

Tatjana Takševa is Associate Professor of English and Women and Gender Studies at Saint Mary's University, Canada. Her recent and ongoing research deals the different contexts of motherhood, such as motherhood and consumerism and motherhood and ambivalence, as

well as more specifically with raising children born of wartime rape in post conflict Bosnia. She is the co-editor of *Mothers Under Fire: Mothering in Conflict Zones*, with Dr. Arlene Sgoutas (Demeter Press, 2015). She is the mother of three, and lives in Halifax.

SESSION F3: MOTHERS & ART #2

CHAIR – Summer Cunningham

- Denise Ferris, “On Mother’s Memories, Others’ Memories: Expression and the Art of Experience”
- Kate Greenway, “Motherhood and Adoption as Experience and Identity: An Exploration Through Glass Art”
- Nané Jordan, “Red Thread Projects: Motherhood Studies as Feminist Praxis and Poiesis”

On Mother’s Memories, Others’ Memories: Expression and the Art of Experience

Denise Ferris

During 1979 and 1980 artist Australian artist Vivienne Binns worked on a groundbreaking community arts project, *Mothers’ memories, Others’ memories*, in which, through the use of family albums, needlework, knitting and other artefacts, she documented the personal histories of women. The compilation was produced for the Blacktown Community Project in a western Sydney suburb of Australia.

Binns’ artwork *Mothers’ memories, others’ memories* (1980) is a postcard rack, which uses prints, installed on the rack. These prints are photo-screenprints, printed in colour vitreous enamels, from multiple stencils and the prints are attached by nylon line to an anodised steel metal postcard rack.

Mothers’ memories, others’ memories has become a model in Australia for Artist-In-Community projects especially those including oral history with the visual arts. When I saw this work as a student, its place in the art gallery was strange and unfamiliar - it was both subversive and in some respects lagging – it was work that resolutely marked a time in contemporary practice when certain subjects entered the exhibition space of the art gallery.

I will examine this work’s public and personal influence, drawing on my mother’s memories (1916-2006) to investigate the arc in current art practice to the context of the 1980’s.

Denise Ferris is an educator and art practitioner, Head of the School of Art, the Australian National University. She investigates visibility and invisibility through photography’s capacity to bear witness to absence and traces of otherwise hidden histories. Her practice and research has an abiding interest in the visual representation of motherhood and mothering. Ferris’ work is held in significant Australian institutions as well as international collections.

Motherhood and Adoption as Experience and Identity: An Exploration Through Glass Art

Kate Greenway

What is being asked of, and how do we institutionalize motherhood, especially the experience of motherhood, illegitimacy and adoption? Many cultural forces have constructed, interpreted and mediated maternity and the adoptive experience and are, in turn, shaped by, resulting from, or reinforced by the artistic images we have of motherhood. The conditions that remove agency and create a punitive or secretive approach to motherhood and illegitimacy are those same under which any artistic representations are constructed. Thus what of my discovery of the virtual absence of representation of adoption and motherhood in fine art?

This paper, with the accompanying artwork on display, “not separate or illustrative of each other, but interconnected and woven through each other to create additional and/or enhanced meanings.” encourages embodied understandings and reflection on relationality: between text and image, between creator and audience, and between and among socio/cultural/historical contexts that all shape and contribute to the meaning of motherhood in adoptive contexts. In seeking, examining and creating artistic products, drawn from personal and historic archives and ephemera, I create a literal and metaphoric connection to the ephemera of adoption within a greater socio-historical context.

I show how artworks can help tell my story, the stories of adoptive women and birthmothers, and also shine the light on the recognition of new truths. I foreground the relationships between art, culture and social justice, and the power of art to evoke awareness, to emotionally engage, to promote dialogue, and to agitate for change, and thus for the necessity of deliberate, thoughtfully crafted and publicly available ‘Adoption Art’ in the 21st century, to reflect and enable understanding of narratives heretofore largely unrecognized.

Kate Greenway is a Ph.D. candidate in Education at York University. She has published articles and creative non-fiction on adoption in *Ephemera Journal*, *Adoption Constellation*, and several Demeter Press anthologies, as well as presenting at many MIRCI and NeMLA conferences. She has exhibited her adoption-themed glass art at the American Adoption Congress “Out of the Fog” 2014 juried group exhibition, and as a solo exhibit at the Samuel J. Zacks Gallery in 2016. Awards include 2014 York Graduate Development Fund for Research; 2013 *Toronto Star* Teacher Award Honour Roll; inaugural MIRCI Outstanding Graduate Student Conference Paper 2012, and York Alumni 2011 “Excellence in Teaching.”

Nané Jordan is a SSHRC Postdoctoral Fellow in Women’s and Gender Studies, at the University of Paris 8, France. She is currently researching the work of the French-Algerian, feminist writer-scholar H el ene Cixous, in the context of arts-based research methods and life writing practices. This work follows Nan e’s previous red threads of research, including themes of mothering, birth, the gift economy, women’s health, and woman-centred spirituality and education. Nan e lives on the Canadian West Coast, in Vancouver BC, with her husband and two daughters.

SESSION F4: MATERNAL ADVOCACY & ACTIVISM #2

CHAIR – Angie Deveau

- Georgina Jung, “Family Law, Disability and Education: One Mother’s Appeal Experience in the Ontario Superior Court of Justice”
- Marcy Paul, “Mother Justice Activism: Conversations with Mothers and Others about Child Loss”
- Iain Hay, ““Clearing Them for Learning”: Exploring the Critical Factors for Success in School-Based Young Mothers’ Education Programs”
- Julie Chami, “The Return to Work Following Maternity Leave and the Implications of Policy in Both Canada and the U.S.”

Family Law, Disability and Education: One Mother’s Appeal Experience in the Ontario Superior Court of Justice

Georgina Jung

Developmental disability prevalence in 2006-2008 was approximately 1 in 6 children per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2015). The needs of this most vulnerable population are complex and diverse. Specialized education is paramount to providing a better and brighter future for this fragile group. As this population ages, educational accommodations are still needed as this cohort embarks on post-secondary education. For those young adults with developmental disabilities whose families have been affected by divorce, are their postsecondary educational needs being recognized, accommodated, and protected adequately by family law and legal processes in Ontario? What are we learning from new research that has significance for family law and the post-secondary educational needs of disabled loved ones from divorced families in Ontario?

One mother’s experience representing her son’s post-secondary educational needs in an appeal before the Ontario Superior Court of Justice is described as a lens into some of these questions. The mother’s appeal sought to overturn a prior arbitration decision of an arbitrator related to educational support for her son. What can we learn from this particular appeal case? How can family law better support the post-secondary educational needs of those with developmental disabilities from divorced families? These questions will be explored by looking through the eyes and experiences of one mother who attempted to help her son through an appeal to the Ontario Superior Court of Justice.

Georgina Jung first graduated from the University of Toronto with a Bachelor of Commerce degree with a Specialist in Computer Science for Data Management and worked in industry for two large corporations as a financial computer programmer. While starting a family she pursued a MBA at York University which took seven years to complete part-time due to the poor health of her infant son. Upon graduation her then family of four was transferred abroad to the USA, France, and Germany where she volunteered in her elementary aged children’s international schools. Upon return home to Toronto, Canada she continued to volunteer in her sons’ schools. Due to the continued health challenges of her one son, upon divorce in 2003, Georgina returned to school to study naturopathic

medicine graduating from the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine in 2008. She worked briefly as a naturopathic doctor in private practice part-time while also teaching nutrition and business to adults. She has facilitated preventative educational health programs for the community on behalf of Flemingdon Health Centre and CARES Cancer Awareness. Her love of teaching inspired her to return to the University of Toronto to complete her Bachelor of Education degree in 2013 with subsequent OCT Additional Qualification studies at OISE of the University of Toronto, and the University of Western Ontario. She has most recently written and revised distance education books for a nutrition school. She is proudly the mother of two beautiful sons.

Mother Justice Activism: Conversations with Mothers and Others about Child Loss

Marcy Paul

Some of us have spent our lifetimes searching our bodies for the letters of flame,
when they arise some of us burn
and some of us set fires.

Deena Metzger (1993)

The origin of the word justice is derived from the Latin “justitia” meaning fairness or equity. Mother Justice Activism (Paul, 2016) is a conceptual framework in which mothers and others, including family, healthcare providers, faith leaders, and friends, have a place to mourn the death of a child and collectively share their stories of grief and loss. While my research has focused on racial disparities of infant mortality in the U.S., this new exploration offers reflexive and reflective conversations with mothers and other members of her community who grieve with her. Grieving mothers are agents of change with energetic pathways that can build upon each other’s insights and from the community around them (Paul, 2016). Mother Justice Activism calls for grieving mothers, of different socio-cultural backgrounds, to do the following: come out of isolation, speak out with their stories, declare their motherhood when an only child dies, acknowledge the actuality of all children in life and in death, and recognize shared community grief. This presentation begins to weave stories of loss that impact an entire community.

The aim of this research is to develop a deeper, holistic, woven story of Mother Justice Activists who want to change the stigma of child death and isolation, and engage their community in sharing their grief. Mothers grieve alone. Family, healthcare providers, faith leaders, and friends are all part of the woven cloth of grief.

Marcy Paul, MA, is on faculty in at the University of North Texas Health Science Center’s School of Public Health’s in the Department of Behavioral and Community Health in Fort Worth, Texas. Her teaching and research focuses on Maternal and Child Health specifically addressing racial, ethnic and gender health disparities in communities. She works from a transdisciplinary approach incorporating the fields of public health and multicultural women’s and gender studies. Her research interests focus on the intersection of race/ethnicity and sex/gender specifically as it impacts infant mortality and utilizes qualitative methodologies including Community Based Participatory Research, PhotoVoice, focus groups, ethnography, and media journaling. She will receive her Ph.D. from the

Department of Multicultural Women's and Gender Studies from Texas Woman's University in Denton, Texas, May 2016. She received her M.A. from the University of Illinois at Chicago in Communication and her B.A. from the University of Wisconsin, Madison in Communication Arts.

“Clearing Them for Learning”: Exploring the Critical Factors for Success in School-Based Young Mothers’ Education Programs

Iain Hay

The importance of (re)engaging young pregnant and parenting students with education has been well documented over the past 20 years. This paper explores the complexities, challenges and policy tensions of supporting young mothers in their (re)engagement with education and/or training. There is limited research available in Australia on the quality of school-based education programs for young mothers. While teenage/young mothering is a frequently, albeit often narrowly, studied topic, most of the research that is performed in this area is based within the psycho-medical and social welfare disciplines. This paper sets out to inform education policy frameworks that aim to improve educational outcomes for young mothers through school-based programs. Two case studies were conducted: the Young Mothers in Education program established at Plumpton High School, a Year 7–12 public school in New South Wales (NSW); and the CCCares program, established at the Canberra College, a public senior secondary school located in the Australian Capital Territory. Through its analysis of these two programs, the study identifies the critical factors for success in delivering education programs for young mothers. However, the research also highlights several macro and micro tensions that appear inherent in school-based young mothers’ education programs that need to be understood by policy actors and policy subjects involved in the delivery of young mothers’ education programs. These tensions pose ongoing threats to the success of young mothers’ education programs and need to be recognised, understood and continually negotiated by policy actors involved in the delivery of these programs in school settings. The paper discusses the processes involved in the design and construction of \$14.5M purpose built centre for young mothers in education and training at Canberra College.

Iain Hay has over 20 years of experience teaching in early childhood, primary and middle school settings in state schools, Catholic schools and independent private schools. He has extensive experience as a professional development and adult educator. Iain is a member of the Australian College of Educators' and is a registered teacher with the Queensland College of Teachers. He has also worked as a public servant in Education Queensland and N.S.W. Department of Education and Training. Iain has been responsible for policy development and program management in Indigenous education; gender and equity; student welfare and support services; and education facilities research.

The Return to Work Following Maternity Leave and the Implications of Policy in Both Canada and the U.S.

Julie Chami

Recovering from birth and caring for a newborn requires time away from other commitments, including one's job. For full-time teachers, the amount of protected time and how much of this time is subsidized varies depending on country, state and school board. For many reasons, women in the labour force face discrimination. Female teachers returning to work upon the completion of a parental leave are also confronted with a variety of new challenges. This study analyzes journal entries and photographs submitted by female teachers transitioning back to work following parental leave. The intention of the inquiry is to give women a platform upon which to share their stories. The findings are used to depict the experience of transitioning back into the workforce following parental leave, to evaluate current parental leave policies in Canada and the U.S. and to recommend future policies that may help to support this shift.

Julie Chami Lindsay is the mother of three young daughters. Julie is a teacher in the public system and a student at the University of Toronto, completing their doctorate at OISE in Leadership and Policy in Education. Julie's research interests include family leave policies in Canada and abroad, Effective Parenting and feminist employment policy.

SESSION F5: THE GIFT ECONOMY & MATRIARCHY #2

CHAIR – Genevieve Vaughan

- Kirre Koivunen, "Women At Risk: The Gift Economy's Possibilities and Matriarchal Social System Worldwide," Extracts from the Film by Koivunen
- Angela Miles, Gift Economy, "Mothering and the Gift Economy: Escape from 'Gender'"
- Kaarina Kailo, "From Primal Ma to Money and the Bitch Goddess of Success—The Ecosocial Impact of Non-Patriarchal Maternal Images"
- Barbara Mann, "Woman Is the Mother of All"

"Women At Risk: The Gift Economy's Possibilities and Matriarchal Social System Worldwide," Extracts from the Film by Koivunen

Kirre Koivunen

Inequalities between women and men globally remain strong, and women face multiple forms of discrimination because of their gender. Many cultural and social practices allow the unequal treatment. The document is historically important because it collects together the theory, research and experiences about the gift-based, woman-appreciating cultures that offer humanity, womanity and hope. Kirre Koivunen working for a document that tells about tribal people who are applying the matrilineal societal system and also about the gift economy. In April 2015 Koivunen participated the Maternal Roots of the Gift Economy Conference in Rome. It was truly a historical, landmark feminist event. Koivunen interviewed for document many great women, professors and researchers. The

documentary is a story about women who are in vulnerable position (women-at-risk), and also about two different tribes, Khasis (India) and Owambos (Namibia), who follow matriarchal social system. It is important in our times to contrast the patriarchal and matriarchal cultures as a matter of the very survival of our planet's conditions of life, dignity and survival.

Kirre Koivunen is a freelance photojournalist and media educator. Her journalistic work is focused on reports based on social justice, social documentary photography and video productions. Koivunen also does international human rights work, with “women-at-risk” – cases, which are also related partially to her journalistic work. In addition to her home country, she has worked in Syria, Palestina, China, Japan, Venezuela, India and in Namibia, to mention a few. Kirre Koivunen is also the Sixth Angle (Kuudes kulma) online media's photojournalist and journalist. www.kuudeskulma.fi.

Mothering and the Gift Economy: Escape from 'Gender'

Angela Miles

The maternal basis of the gift economy reveals the self-evident but currently hidden truth that economic relationships are human and social relationships. This presentation will explore the ways that healing this separation between our economy and our humanity moves us beyond 'gender.'

Angela Miles is a Professor in the Adult Education and Community Development Program and Co-founder of the International Women's Human Rights Education Institute at OISE/UT and an editorial Board member of *Canadian Woman Studies Journal*. Her publications include the book *Integrative Feminisms: Building Global Visions* (1996) and the edited collection *Women in a Globalizing World: Transforming Equality, Development, Diversity and Peace* (2013).

From Primal Ma to Money and the Bitch Goddess of Success—The Ecosocial Impact of Non-Patriarchal Maternal Images

Kaarina Kailo

The aim of my paper is to present a major figure in Finno-Ugric mythology—the Golden Woman, who is still even ritually honored by many indigenous minority cultures in Russia. It is important to know of the most ancient—and still influential--images of motherhood as blueprints for an ecosocially sustainable model of the human, not just of women. The Golden Woman speaks to the modern efforts to reappropriate a maternal prototype that could help redress the balance in the current world of mastery over nature, women and indigenous populations. The dominant heteronormative, nuclear family notion of maternity is historically fairly recent, and is the source of misery, exhaustion, dependency and isolation of many mothers. Mythic representations of Great Mothers have not liberated women in India or elsewhere where the Mother Goddess is still a strong presence. However, the historical vagaries of the ecological Golden Woman reveal how the matriarchal notion of protective divinity (Deity of Mountains, MONS) came to be replaced by Moneta, concretized Gold and mint-making, also leading to efforts by conquerors to

plunder and appropriate the statue of the Golden Woman. This figure allows us to trace the shift from the Gift logic of prechristian times to the exchange ethos of modernity, patriarchy and globalization. The Golden Woman presents us with a radically alter-native imaginary for womanhood--and the human norm.

Dr. **Kaarina Kailo** belongs to the International network of Feminists for a Gift Economy and has served as Professor of Women's Studies in Finland, and held tenure at Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Canada. Her many publications include among other works *Wo/men and Bears—the Gifts of Gender, Culture and Nature Revisited* (2008), co-edited books on the Sami-Indigenous people of Northern Europe and on ecopsychology, ecofeminism, the gender impact of globalization and many articles on gender and the Gift economy. She is also politician, activist and a textile artist.

Woman Is the Mother of All

Barbara Mann

Western scholars approach issues of mothering and motherhood in terms of the female sexual function, fulfilled in post-natal acts of sentimentality between one woman her children. This is as far removed from the Indigenous American concept of Motherhood as it is possible to be. As Katteuha, Beloved Woman of the Cherokee in 1787, advised Benjamin Franklin in a discussion of the U.S. Constituion, Europeans should “Rightly consider” the matter (as they were not) for “woman is the mother of All.” That woman “Does not pull Children out of Trees or Stumps nor out of old Logs, but out of their Bodies,” so that all humans “ought to mind what a woman says and look upon her as a mother.” It is highly doubtful that Franklin grasped Katteuha's logic. To this day, even feminists hear these words, only to interpret them personally, as a maudlin description of childbearing, instead of as what Katteuha meant, let alone the significance of her position. The Indigenous Cosmos happens by Twinned Halves of Blood and Breath. Trees, Stumps, and old Logs fall into the Breath half of the cosmos, whereas woman's Blood half of the cosmos is what births and regulates all things upon the planet on which we stand. Katteuha meant that the Founding Fathers had the balance upside-down in their Constitution. Indigenous constitutions gave the edge of power to the women, as had the Cherokee to Katteuha, for “Beloved Woman” was the highest Cherokee office of all. This talk will explicate the Indigenous concept of Mother as Keeper of the Cosmic Balance.

Barbara Alice Mann, Ph.D. is Professor of Humanities in the Honors College, University of Toledo. Author of thirteen books and over 200 chapters and articles, she most recently published *Spirits of Blood, Spirits of Breath* (2016) and the *Matriarchal Studies Bibliography* (2015), both with Oxford University Press.

SESSION G1: MOTHERS, MOTHERING & FEMINISM

CHAIR – Andrea O'Reilly

- Tracy Cassels, “How Liberal Feminism and Patriarchy Work Together to Create the Detached Mother”

- Kaila Adia Story, "Not Your Mama's Feminism: Beyoncé, Motherhood, and What To Do With #FlawlessFeminism"
- Jane Chelliah, "A Proposal for a Matricentric Feminism for Mothers of Colour"

How Liberal Feminism and Patriarchy Work Together to Create the Detached Mother

Tracy Cassels

Feminism has made great gains for women over the past century, particularly in the economic realm. Currently over 60% of mothers are employed in Canada, and though their role as employee is viewed with value, their role as mother continues to be devalued. This devaluation has resulted in many difficulties for mothers, ranging from the economic problems associated with childcare to fighting the concept of "idealized" mother, but one area that is often overlooked in this discussion is the effect of patriarchy on the parenting practices promoted in society. In patriarchal feminism, the focus becomes how to detach mother and child from each other to benefit the workforce with parenting practices reflecting this detachment. This leads to dissatisfaction with the mothering experience, replacing what should be confidence with frustration and joy with anxiety as mothers are told to ignore their instincts in favour of these detached practices. In this talk, I discuss how patriarchal feminism shapes the practices in our society, why these are harmful to mothers and children, and how a feminism that embraces the feminine and values the core principles of responsiveness, sensitivity, and interdependence which shape much of the feminine experience in mothering is best.

Tracy Cassels, Ph.D., is the founder of Evolutionary Parenting, a website and consulting practice dedicated to helping parents using a biological perspective of parenting. She obtained her B.A. (Cognitive Science) from the University of California, and her M.A. (Clinical Psychology) and Ph.D. (Developmental Psychology) from the University of British Columbia.

Not Your Mama's Feminism: Beyoncé, Motherhood, and What To Do With #FlawlessFeminism"

Kaila Adia Story

When Beyoncé Knowles released her fifth album, Beyoncé' and also subsequently gave birth to her first child Blue Ivy. The album which explores the many fissures of black and female sexuality and pleasure created a lot of controversy from her fans and others who felt that now that Beyoncé was married and was a mother that she should've toned down the explicit sexuality showcased in her last album. Utilizing a Black & Queer Feminist genealogy, I will discuss how respectability politics, racism, and sexism all contributed to the ways in which Beyoncé's motherhood and album was seen, processed, celebrated and hated. Lastly, Dr. Story's talk will explore the possibilities of a "Flawless Feminism". A Feminism that engenders the overcoming of oppression in all forms, and allows for women to make choices about their bodies and lives, even if they are contradictory to what we as a society conceive of as Feminist.

Kaila Adia Story is an Associate Professor in the Departments of Women's & Gender Studies and Pan-African Studies and the Audre Lorde Chair in Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at the University of Louisville. She also co-hosts a weekly radio show with longtime Louisville activist Jaison Gardner called *Strange Fruit: Musings on Politics, Pop Culture, and Black Gay Life* on WFPL (Louisville affiliate of NPR). Her research examines the intersections of race and sexuality, with special attention to Black feminism, Black lesbians, and Black queer identity. Dr. Story's book, *Patricia Hill Collins: Reconceiving Motherhood* was published in November of 2014 by Demeter Press, and the anthology explores the impact, influence, and/or importance of Dr. Patricia Hill Collins' work on motherhood research, adding to the existing literature on Motherhood and the conceptions of Family. Dr. Story has appeared on Huffington Post Live a number of times discussing issues that relate to race, sexuality, popular music, and gender. She has also been featured in the Feminist Wire's series "Feminists We Love," as well as been featured in Elixher's Magazine's "InspiHERed" series. Most recently, Dr. Story was featured in Go Magazine's "100 Women We Love" Series.

A Proposal for a Matricentric Feminism for Mothers of Colour

Jane Chelliah

I propose to present a paper that will consider and set out what 'matricentric feminism' for mothers of color would be. Inter sectional features are essential in categorizing the experiences of mother of color but there is not enough information and scholarly work on this. According to Andrea O'Reilly the term 'matricentric' denotes a mother-centered standpoint and emphasis to designate it as a particular, long overdue and urgently needed mode of feminism. Using this analysis I will consider how, even though feminist mothering theories and accounts of lived experiences overlap and have many common characteristics for mothers of color, there is still an important piece missing in this Venn diagram. I will put forward considerations on what is missing. These considerations will consist of interdisciplinary subjects which are social, economic, political and cultural considerations. I will argue that, given the plethora of definitions of feminism, e.g queer, activism, there is already an inbuilt elasticity within feminism that will be able to accommodate a 'matricentric' feminist theory firstly, and, by extension, one that applies to mothers of color.

Jane Chelliah lives in London, UK and is the official blogger for MIRCI and Demeter Press. She works in the public sector and is also involved in the UK-UN Women's initiative on the inclusion of females in post conflict peacebuilding. Jane has contributed Demeter publication titled *Mothering in the Age of Neoliberalism*. She blogs at <http://ambitiousmamas.blogspot.co.uk/>.

G2: MATERNAL PRACTICES & EXPERIENCES #4

CHAIR – Crystal Whetstone

- Betty Baba, "Mothering and Poverty: The Socio-Economical Factors as Indicators of Persistent Poverty"

- Patricia Hamilton, “Back to Africa? Examining Black Mothers’ Engagement with Attachment Parenting in Britain”
- Linda Rose Ennis, “Is Fatherhood Undermining and Further Disempowering Motherhood?”

Mothering and Poverty: The socio-economical factors as indicators of persistent poverty.

Betty Baba

The average Canadian man puts in 831 hours per year of unpaid work while the average Canadian woman puts in 1,483 hours per year. Women in Canada are disproportionately affected by poverty as compared to men and the disparity is even more visible among single mothers, the elder the disable women. Poverty According to recent study 59 percent of women live in poverty. (National Council of Welfare 1993).

The analysis will take into consideration the socioeconomic, the occupational choices, the age groups that are affected not excluding race, gender, or class inequalities to determine the cause of women’s poverty the psychological impact on women and their children. If women are poor is it due to their gender, single parents or due to inflation. The other factors that will be taken into account are the cutbacks of the social assistance to what extend does it affect unemployed mothers?

What are the solutions to eradicate poverty?

Betty Baba, Part-Time Professor at the University of Ottawa. I’m a Canadian Citizen. My teaching and research interests are related to my expertise as a Researcher and a specialist in both western and non western feminist Women research topic on abortion in the USA since 1973, modern slavery, polygamy in Canada, violence against women. Her publications are in English and French of Books, Articles, and a co-editor of feminist journeys. *“I got there through women studies”*

Back to Africa? Examining Black Mothers’ Engagement with Attachment Parenting in Britain

Patricia Hamilton

In recent years, a new parenting philosophy has garnered increasing attention and popularity. Coined by William Sears in the early 1990s, attachment parenting proposes that secure attachment between parent and child is necessary for optimal development and therefore ‘good’ parenting. Simultaneously, neoliberalism, a socio-political context defined by the logic of economics, has emerged as the dominant global trend. In addition to its effects on economic policy, neoliberalism promotes individualism and self-responsibility and situates racism and sexism as problems of the past. In this paper, I will examine attachment parenting and its emergence in a neoliberal context through the perspective of black mothers in Britain. Drawing on interviews conducted with 10 mothers, I argue that black women’s engagement with attachment parenting draws attention to attachment

parenting's uncritical appropriation of the 'primitive' practices of women in the Global South and its exclusionary articulation as the epitome of 'good' motherhood in the Global North. Through this examination of black women's motherhood, the raced, gendered and classed dimensions of 'good' parenting are made apparent.

Patricia Hamilton is a PhD candidate in Women's Studies and Feminist Research at the University of Western Ontario. Her research interests include the medicalization of pregnancy and childbirth, the emergence of 'natural' motherhood and its intersections with race and class in a neoliberal context. Her dissertation examines black mothers' experiences of attachment parenting.

Is Fatherhood Undermining and Further Disempowering Motherhood?

Linda Ennis

This talk will examine our distaste for the term "gender essentialism", particularly as it relates to fatherhood care, which has been generalized to anyone other than mother, who engages in childcare. In a utopian world there would be no difference between gender, race, sexual orientation and culture. Understanding our hope for equality, this discussion realistically will raise the possibility that increased father recognition may be undermining the maternal role in some cases and may be further devaluing the motherhood model. While fathers can mother, many fathers do not choose to do so as it is still not the norm just as mothers can mother but some do not choose to do so. This is a critical issue when it comes to divorce proceedings where joint custody is granted to some fathers, who have not been engaged with their children under the mistaken assumption that they will "step up to the plate" if given the opportunity and if the mother did not prevent it, which sounds a lot like "mother blame" once again. The question is how to encourage father involvement but not at the expense of motherhood and how not to further disempower mothers, who have been repeatedly disenfranchised by the patriarchy.

Dr. **Linda Ennis** is a psychoanalytic therapist in private practice, a family mediator and a lecturer at York University. Her education includes the following; a Ph.D. in Psychology and Education; a Masters in Education; a Diploma in Child Study and a teaching degree from the University of Toronto. She has written and spoken extensively on her research in her area of expertise, "On Combining Motherhood With Employment", which was the first qualitative piece done in this area. She has, more recently, written contributions in the *Encyclopedia of Motherhood*, discussing the "empty nest", the "mommy track", and has contributed a chapter entitled "Contract-Faculty Mothers: On The Track To Nowhere" in O'Brien Hallstein & O'Reilly's book entitled *Academic Motherhood in a Post-Second Wave Context* (Demeter Press: 2012). Most recently, she has published an edited collection, *Intensive Mothering: The Cultural Contradictions of Modern Motherhood* (Demeter Press: 2014) and is in the process of publishing her new work entitled *After the Happily Ever After: Empowering Women & Mothers in Relationships*.

SESSION G3: MOTHERS & ART #3

CHAIR – Carly McAskill

- Sarah Irvin, “Home Studio: Blending Artistic Practice and Mothering”
- Kirre Koivunen, “FORGET-ME-NOT Photo Exhibition”
- Barbara Kutis, “Artist-Mothers: Self-Portraits at the Intersection of Art, Society, and ‘Ideal’ Mothering”

Home Studio: Blending Artistic Practice and Mothering

Sarah Irvin

In 2013, I was convinced that becoming a mother was not compatible with my art practice. As an experiment, I assumed the opposite was true, that there was work that I could only make if I was a mother. Suddenly, I was able to envision not only the possibilities for my creative practice, but also myself in the role of mother for the first time. Three months later I was pregnant and I immersed myself in a rigorous research based practice in which the lived experience of motherhood became the primary point of departure. Creating in this way allows me to define myself as a mother and in turn motherhood continually redefines my art practice through continued aesthetic and conceptual shifts. By sharing images of my artwork and describing my processes in this presentation, I will reveal how my studio practice is formed specifically by the experience of pregnancy, birth and caretaking and the ways in which the art practice has supported these experiences. Additionally, I will outline how this experience has been shaped by my socio-economic circumstances and family relationships.

Sarah Irvin is a MFA Candidate at George Mason University. She founded the Artist Parent Index, an online database of artists creating work about their experience as parents. Irvin has exhibited in numerous solo exhibits and is represented by Markel Fine Arts in New York and the Page Bond Gallery in Richmond, Virginia.

FORGET-ME-NOT Photo Exhibition

Kirre Koivunen

FORGET-ME-NOT symbolize two different meanings. As a species flower it grows almost anywhere in the world. Flower petal color varies in size and they are small and fragile, like children all over the world. The exhibition raises an important question. Can the children whose existence there is no note or document, to forget?

Kirre Koivunen is a freelance photojournalist and media educator. Her journalistic work is focused on reports based on social justice, social documentary photography and video productions. Koivunen also does international human rights work, with “women-at-risk” – cases, which are also related partially to her journalistic work. In addition to her home country, she has worked in Syria, Palestina, China, Japan, Venezuela, India and in Namibia, to mention a few. Kirre Koivunen is also the Sixth Angle (Kuudes kulma) online media’s photojournalist and journalist. www.kuudeskulma.fi.

Artist-Mothers: Self-Portraits at the Intersection of Art, Society, and 'Ideal' Mothering

Barbara Kutis

There has been a significant shift within contemporary artistic practice and artists' engagement with Mothering since the 1990s. Artists have increasingly represented themselves as parents and featured their children within their art, thus contributing to public discourses of motherhood and the nature of parenting, more generally. This paper will explore the work of Katharina Bosse and Tierney Gearon, two contemporary photographers who publicly exposed themselves as mothers through their works. Bosse, on the discovery that she was pregnant with her second child, created the series, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Mother* (2004-2009). In this series she documented herself both nude and in various guises both while pregnant and after the birth with her two children. The series, set entirely outdoors in the natural landscape, alternatively casts the artist-mother as a prostitute, earth mother, and monster and serves as an exploration of the artist's changing body and identity. Bosse's work is compared to Tierney Gearon's series, *I am a Camera* (2000-2001) in which Gearon, rather than depicting herself, presents her two children in various states of dress and captures various acts and behaviors that bespeak of the nature of mothering and the expectations society imparts on mothers.

Barbara Kutis is an assistant professor of Fine Arts - Art History at Indiana University Southeast. Her research focuses on women, motherhood, domesticity, and parenting. Her current book project, "Artist-Parents: Gender, Identity, and Domesticity in Contemporary Art," focuses on artists' interpretations of parenting, gender, and identity in their art.

SESSION G4: MEN & MASCULINITIES

CHAIR – Deborah Byrd

- Tifanie Valade, "Playing With Boyhood"
- Tola Olu Pearce, "Motherhood and the Construction of Masculinity in Africa"
- Andrea O'Reilly, "From Clytemnestra and Orestes to Thetis and Achilles; From Estrangement to Connection: The Mother-Son Relationship in Anglo-American Feminist Theory"

Playing With Boyhood

Tifanie Valade

Playing with Boyhood is an autoethnographic photo and textual exploration of the gendered marketing of film and television-licensed children's toys in Canada, as viewed through the lens of motherhood. By meshing personal anecdotes with theoretical musings, this presentation seeks to discover the different ways parents and children might internalize and/or enforce gendered toy marketing, and consequently, gendered play. In addition, it seeks to examine a lack of diversity in terms of race, ability and class inherent in Canada's toy retailing sector which is dominated by multinational conglomerates such as Toys R Us, and relies largely on products licensed from American media franchises. This project considers toys in three ways: first, as paratexts of film and television properties,

second, as objects in their own right that claim physical and affective space in families, and third, as tools and inspiration for imaginative play. This investigation also considers whether feminist activism has overlooked the positioning of boys in toy consumption, particularly in relation to the enforcement of hegemonic masculine ideals.

Tifanie Valade is completing an MA in Media Studies at Concordia University in Montreal. In previous incarnations she has worked in the private sector, owned her own retail business, and helped direct a local community aid organization. Her research interests include children, play and popular culture, curriculum studies, and issues surrounding social policy and social justice in Canada.

Motherhood and the Construction of Masculinity in Africa

Tola Olu Pearce

Women's entry into the workforce is believed to affect marital relations and men's masculinity (Kabeer 2007). In Africa, where women are described as "providing mothers", the issue of work is not new. Here families, particularly children, expect mothers to work. This paper focuses on generational relationships and the co-construction of motherhood and masculinities. I explore how the structure of African families, from the micro-unit (the hearth-hold) to the lineage-level, affects the relationship between the institution of motherhood and masculinity. A son confers status on a mother within her husband's patriarchal lineage. A strong bond is expected to develop as mothers work for their children. Nonetheless, sons must extricate themselves from the devalued female sphere to participate in the higher-status male sphere. The paper explores the emotions and tensions that develop as sons strive to join the more prestigious world of men.

Tola Olu Pearce (Ph.D. Brown University): Professor of Sociology & Women's and Gender Studies, University of Missouri-Columbia. She researches, teaches and publishes in the areas of Human Rights, Globalization, and Health in Africa. Courses include: *Women, Development and Globalization, Post-colonial Feminist Theory, Gender and Human Rights in Cross-Cultural Perspective*.

From Clytemnestra and Orestes to Thetis and Achilles; From Estrangement to Connection: The Mother-Son Relationship in Anglo-American Feminist Theory

In "Man Child: A Black Lesbian Feminist's Response," African-American poet and essayist Audre Lorde (1995) asks us to "consider the two western classic myth/models of mother/son relationships: Jocasta/Oedipus, the son who fucks his mother, and Clytemnestra/Orestes, the son who kills his mother" (76). These ancient myths are continually retold and reenacted in Western culture and interpolate mothers and sons into specific relationship positions that are most fully dramatized in the narratives of Clytemnestra and Jocasta. The sanction against mother-son closeness and connection is signified and achieved by the incest taboo, while the enforcement of mother-son separation is represented and enforced by the murder of Clytemnestra. Both patriarchal narratives are enacted through the denial and displacement of the maternal presence. This paper will argue that maternal erasure and disconnection are central not only to

patriarchal thinking on mothers and sons, but also to Anglo-American feminist thought on mothers and sons as well. This paper will revisit one early, classic, Anglo-American feminist text on mothers and sons to argue that early Anglo-American perspective on mothers and sons scripted mother-son attachment in terms of these hegemonic narratives of maternal erasure and disavowal. Next, the paper will consider how recent Anglo-American feminist writings on mothers and sons call into question this patriarchal and early feminist view of maternal displacement to emphasize mother-son connection so as to raise healthier and happier men.

Andrea O'Reilly, PhD, is Professor in the School of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies at York University. She is founder and director of the Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement; founder and editor-in-chief of the *Journal of the Motherhood Initiative*; and founder of Demeter Press. She is a recipient of the CAUT Sarah Shorten Award for outstanding achievements in the promotion of the advancement of women in Canadian universities and colleges, and is the author and editor of numerous books on motherhood, as well as the first *Encyclopedia on Motherhood*. In 2014, she was the first inductee into the Museum of Motherhood Hall of Fame.

SESSION H1: BAD MOTHERS/WOMEN

CHAIR – Rebecca Bromwich

- Rebecca Bromwich, "Still Wearing Scarlett? Discursive Figures of the Unfit Mother as Pervasive Phantoms Active in Governing Mothers Through Ontario's Child Protection Regime"
- Mandi Danielle Veenstra, "The Mother Next Door: Marginalization within the Ontario Child Welfare System"
- Rachel Ewan, "The Cultural Production of Problem Baby Mamas: What do Baby Mamas Mean To and For Our Society?"
- Miranda Leibel, "Incapable of Care: Public Discourse and Colonial Continuity in the Case of 'The Unfit Mother'"

Still Wearing Scarlett? Discursive Figures of the Unfit Mother as Pervasive Phantoms Active in Governing Mothers Through Ontario's Child Protection Regime

Rebecca Bromwich

Using the literary figure of Hester Prynne in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlett Letter* as a historical reference point, I will present critical discourse analysis of the representative figure of the "unfit mother" as a construct in historical and contemporary child protection regimes in Ontario, Canada in order to analyze to what extent these representations may influence, and problematize, the uneven application of child protection law in this jurisdiction Through this analysis, I will critically unpack a messy plurality of intersecting normative orders at work governing mothers through the deployment of child welfare law.

Called to the Bar of Ontario in 2003, **Rebecca Bromwich** works as a lawyer, and has previously researched and published in a variety of areas, including youth criminal justice

law, law practice management and equality issues relating to women and members of other historically marginalized groups in the legal profession, She has contributed as author and co-editor to several Demeter Press anthologies. Her 2015 monograph "Looking for Ashley: What Re-Reading the Ashley Smith Case Reveals About the Governance of Girls, Mothers, and Families in Canada" published by Demeter Press. Rebecca Jaremko Bromwich has a B.A. (Hon.), an LL.B. and an LL.M. from Queen's as well as a Graduate Certificate in Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies from the University of Cincinnati. She has a Ph.D. from Carleton University, in Legal Studies, completed in 2015. Rebecca is Director of Carleton's Graduate Diploma in Conflict Resolution Program, and is a PartTime Professor at the University of Ottawa Faculty of Law. Most importantly, she is grateful for her family, and is mother to four amazing children.

The Mother Next Door: Marginalization within the Ontario Child Welfare System

Mandi Danielle Veenstra

In Canada, under the guise of austerity measures, the state is increasingly distancing itself from the responsibility of helping families raise their children. This distancing is evident in Canada's child welfare system, where the focus on protective child services significantly outweighs preventative programming and family support. A tenant of neoliberalism, a focus on individual responsibility is evident in the increasing concern that parents are risk factors in their children's lives. This ideology is apparent in the constructed "bad" mother label applied to mothers involved with Canadian child welfare, where 89% of involved caregivers are biological mothers. The landscape of "bad" mothers involved with child welfare is discussed with relation to what's being termed the mother next door – the vague category where marginalization and disadvantaged social positioning serves as an invitation for increased scrutiny and gaze from the state. This presentation challenges assumptions and stereotypes held about mothers involved with Ontario child welfare by highlighting the marginalized contexts in which they navigate life for both themselves and their children.

Mandi Veenstra is a PhD candidate in Sociology at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. With experience working in the Ontario child welfare system, alongside being a mother of three young children, Mandi's research interests involve challenging dominant-held ideologies of caregiving within Canadian social policy. Her PhD dissertation specifically addresses the current call for reform within Canadian child welfare to increase preventative services and to improve access to quality family support within the existing child protection framework. A comparative analysis of Canadian and Finnish child welfare policy and programming, her SSHRC-funded PhD research project specifically focuses on the experiences of marginalized mothers and their navigation of current preventative programming and family support.

The Cultural Production of Problem Baby Mamas: What do Baby Mamas Mean To and For Our Society?

Rachel Ewan

This paper provides an extensive analysis of the culturally produced term “Baby Mama” (BM). I reveal how the BM term presents certain mothers as inherently problematic individuals—particularly Black women— as opposed to understanding them as a cultural production reflective of collective life. I then provide an historical review of the BM term. Subsequently, I introduce a second and associated term, “Baby Mama Drama,” and discuss how it further degrades and objectifies those to whom it applies. In the latter part of this paper, I present conversations and postings from of a popular website for mothers called Baby Centre. Placing a focus on public forum discourse, I reveal how this online community of mothers continue to (re)produce the idealized “problem BM” of Westernized culture. To conclude, I provide a theoretical premise about the significance of this form of stigmatization, and how both terms are reinforced by various systems of oppression such as racism, patriarchy, colonization and capitalism.

Rachel Ewan is a first year PhD Social Work student from Wilfrid Laurier. Her current research interests are in Gender and Social Policy. Rachel is a mother, an activist and a tenant representative for her community. She is also an Early Childhood Educator for the City of Toronto.

Incapable of Care: Public Discourse and Colonial Continuity in the Case of 'The Unfit Mother

Miranda Leibel

Indigenous children represent a massive portion of Canadian children in care. This phenomenon is particularly noticeable in Western Canada, where Indigenous children represent anywhere from 69% to 87% of all children in care (Working Group 2015, 7). This phenomenon must be examined through its relationship with historical processes of colonization in Canada, particularly those which have focused significantly on efforts to institutionalize and regulate Indigenous bodies, for example through the residential school system and the Sixties Scoop. My research attempts to unpack the effects of historical/colonial ideologies of race and gender on contemporary narratives of Indigenous women as mothers. Specifically, my research asks the following questions: what kinds of narratives about Indigenous mothers are revealed through an analysis of public discourse? How do these discourses support or challenge the dominant discourse of Indigenous mothers as ‘unfit’? To begin to answer these questions, I have completed a critical discourse analysis of online reader commentary from news articles from the Globe and Mail. The specific focus on online reader commentary allows my research to interact with contemporary public discourse—that is, how individual citizens and Canadians at large understand the issue of Indigenous child removal, and how these representations are framed through discussions of Indigenous women as mothers.

Miranda Leibel is currently an MA student in the Department of Political Science at the University of Alberta. Her research interests include settler-colonialism’s invasions into

family structures, particularly through child removal, as well as broader critical engagements with the literature of reconciliation in Canada.

SESSION H2: MATERNAL PRACTICES & EXPERIENCES #5

CHAIR – Clare Harvey

- Florence Pasche Guignard, “Survival Moms. Motherhood, Mothering, and Emergency Preparedness”
- Viki Peer, “Similar Stories, Different Contexts: Transnational Discourses Among Media Representations of Mothers”
- Lori Chambers, “Adoption and the Rights of Gestational Mothers”
- Valerie Andrews, “Motherhood Denied: Canada’s Maternity Homes”

Survival Moms. Motherhood, Mothering, and Emergency Preparedness

Florence Pasche Guignard

This contribution analyzes discourses about and by mothers in several publicly accessible blogs and forums on the topic of emergency preparedness and survivalism. Sensationalizing media discourses often picture “preppers” mostly as men engaging in stereotypically masculine activities such as physical training, hunting, manipulating weapons, etc.... Hardcore preppers themselves tend to position (unprepared) women in general, and in particular mothers with their children, either as needing (and receiving) help, or as potential victims of violence and abuse in various imagined or real situations of emergency, disaster, or economic collapse. However, when looking at marginalized but nevertheless authentic maternal voices in discourses by preppers and survivalists, other key topics, discourses, and practices of preparing for or coping with disaster emerge. For “survival moms,” some practices even participate in a form of identity parenting. In this contribution, I examine how both religious and secular discursive practices of survivalism and prepping reinforce social norms about gender roles, with a focus on parenting roles, while at the same time they bear a potential to destabilize them in situations of emergency and disaster.

Florence Pasche Guignard completed her Ph.D. in the study of religions at the University of Lausanne (Switzerland). From 2012 to 2016, she conducted her postdoctoral research project entitled “Natural Parenting in the Digital Age. At the Confluence of Mothering, Religion, Environmentalism, and Technology” at the Department for the Study of Religion, University of Toronto. Her interdisciplinary research engages issues at the intersection of religion, ritual, gender, embodiment, media and material culture. She is now affiliated with the University of Fribourg (Switzerland).

Similar Stories, Different Contexts: Transnational Discourses Among Media Representations of Mothers

Viki Peer

How do we construct our expectations of mothers? How do we construct our understandings of people with disabilities? Online media accounts play an instrumental role in our acquisition of information and aid in the construction of our expectations of mothers and our collective understandings of disability, both at the individual and institutional levels. The goal of this paper is to illustrate how discursive representations of mothers who kill their children with disabilities inform popular narratives about mothers and about people, specifically children, with disabilities. Through a feminist critical discourse analysis examining the content in online news media reports of mothers who killed their child(ren) with disabilities, I find that the inclusion of terms and phrases like “burden”, “pressure”, “overwhelming”, and “weight” generate a [misleading and extremely problematic] causal relationship between the child(ren)’s disabilities and the mothers’ exhaustion, stress, and anger. More importantly, these reports fail to interrogate key factors such as poor/non-existing social services and/or community support systems. When news reports implicate the presence of disability as the key factor in the mothers’ decisions, we dismiss important discussions about how to understand disability as a positive site for transformation and about what to improve the contexts in which mothers mother.

Originally from Chicago, **Viki Peer** is a first year MA student in the Women’s and Gender Studies department at the University of South Florida. Her academic interests have been and continue to be informed by her involvement with various disability communities throughout the Midwest over the last twelve years.

Adoption and the Rights of Gestational Mothers

Lori Chambers

The conditions under which women consented to relinquishment were often exploitative. Overwhelmingly, until into the 1970s, children released domestically for newborn adoption in Canada were those born to unmarried women; poor pregnant unmarried women lacked the financial resources to raise children alone and single pregnant middle class women, to avoid shame and stigma, retreated into homes for unwed mothers where they released their infants in secrecy. The relinquishing mother was often intimidated and harassed, but influence and coercion have been narrowly construed in courts overseeing adoptions. Although the Supreme Court of Canada censured the Children’s Aid Society with regard to proceedings that pressured young unwed women to release their babies for adoption in a case heard in 1970, since that time the Court has retreated from such protections of mothers. Current provisions which ostensibly guarantee the mother the right not only to make the decision regarding relinquishment without coercion, but also to change her mind within a legislated timeframe, have been interpreted restrictively.

Dr. **Lori Chambers** is a Professor in Women's Studies at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay where she teaches courses in feminist theory, women and law, and reproductive

justice. Her most recent book, *A Legal History of Adoption in Ontario, 1921-2015*, was recently published by the University of Toronto Press.

Valerie Andrews is an adoption activist and Masters Candidate in GFWS at York University. Her works include *The Language of Adoption, Crimes Against the Unmarried Mother in Post WWII Canada, Sales and Marketing in Modern Domestic Adoption, #Flip the Script on Teen Mothers*. Valerie is also Executive Director of Origins Canada: Supporting Those Separated by Adoption.

Motherhood Denied: Canada's Maternity Homes

Valerie Andrews

The construction of the characterization and incarceration of 'fallen' women in Canada began almost as soon as the Europeans arrived. Magdalen establishments for the rescue of the fallen transitioned in the late nineteenth century with the emergence of the maternity home movement; although the daily schedules and internal life of women quasi-incarcerated in these establishments changed little over 150 years.

These facilities were operated by mainstream religious organizations including Catholic, Salvation Army, Anglican, United and Presbyterian. Over the course of the twentieth century the purpose of maternity homes shifted significantly. Once a place of refuge for the unmarried mother and her baby, by the 1940s, maternity homes had become a major factor contributing to the separation of unmarried mothers and their newborns through adoption.

In postwar Canada, women sent to maternity homes were separated from their babies by adoption with rates up to 96% whereas rates for women in the general population were approximately 66%. Unmarried mothers surrender their children for adoption at the rate of approximately 1% in North America today.

The confinement of unmarried mothers in Canada's maternity homes resulted in the denial of the performance of motherhood to thousands of women in postwar Canada. Today, empowered mothers of adoption loss strive to construct a space to reclaim mother identities by distancing themselves from dominant themes and narratives; and inserting their previously silenced voices into feminist and motherhood discourse for the 21st century.

SESSION H3: MATERNAL ADVOCACY & ACTIVISM #3

CHAIR – Deborah Byrd

- Caroline McDonald-Harker and Joanne Minaker, "The Role and Influence of Mother-Care In Environmental Disasters"
- Kirsten Goa, "Emotional Labour and Public Life: Invisible Mothering in Community Organizing"

- Linda Hunter and Emerson LaCroix, “Twenty-Five Years Later -Same Song, Different Lyrics: A Critical Commentary on HIV Awareness Posters Targeting Women”
- Erica S. Lawson, Crystal Gaudet* & Patricia Hamilton*, “Girl/Mom: Analysing Young Motherhood Through the Lens of Girlhood Studies”

The Role and Influence of Mother-Care In Environmental Disasters

Caroline McDonald-Harker and Joanne Minaker

Mothers’ experiences are multiple, varied and shaped by their social location. At times mothering takes place in the context of disasters, which are conceptualized and defined as challenging, threatening, hazardous, precarious, and perilous circumstances. One such disastrous setting in which mothering occurs is in situations of environmental disasters. However, there is a dearth of research in a Canadian context that examines how women mother in and through environmental disasters, particularly in relation to the “mother-care” that they engage in and provide for their children, their families, their communities, and even themselves during disasters. This paper specifically examines the role of mother-care during the 2013 Southern Alberta Flood and is based on qualitative research conducted with 87 mothers residing in High River Alberta, a rural community just outside of Calgary that was the hardest hit by the flood. We discuss the type of mother-care that women engaged in both during and post-flood and the implications this has for their personal, family, and community disaster experience. We also discuss how the roles that mothers play in situations of environmental disasters have important implications for emergency preparedness, disaster recovery, and resiliency.

Dr. Caroline McDonald-Harker’s areas of expertise and research include sociology of family; parenting; children and youth; sociology of gender; sociology of disaster; pornography; criminology; domestic abuse/violence; social inequality and intersections of gender, race, and social class; and qualitative research methods.

As a Sociologist, Dr. McDonald-Harker is committed to engaging in knowledge translation and dissemination of her sociological research, knowledge, and insight into the public realm. She is regularly interviewed by television, radio, newspaper, and web news media to provide her expert opinion on sociological topics in her areas of expertise.

In addition to other publications, Dr. McDonald-Harker is the author of the recently released book *“Mothering In Marginalized Contexts: Narratives of Women Who Mother In and Through Domestic Violence,”* published with Demeter Press.

Dr. Minaker received a PhD in Socio-Legal Studies from Queen's University in 2003 and has since developed two main areas of scholarly research and social engagement: 1) youth crime, youth justice, and criminalized youth; 2) sociology of care, motherhood studies, and marginalized mothering. Her areas of study include care, human connection, social exclusion/inclusion, marginalization, and social in/justice. She is an award-winning instructor who teaches a variety of courses, among them: Criminology; Youth, Crime and Society; Gender, Crime and Justice. Dr. Minaker's work explores the tensions between

individual agency/selfhood and social systems, paying particular attention to social relations and the power of "meaningful connections" in creating openings for personal transformation and social change. One of her current projects explores the challenges, barriers and opportunities young women encounter in their experiences of mothering at the margins of mainstream society. She co-authored the book *Youth, Crime and Society: Issues of Power and Justice* (2009, with Bryan Hogeveen) and has published widely on such issues as regulation of criminalized girls, violence by and against women, social justice and regulation of mothers. Dr. Minaker showcases her work in academic and community settings and has made several appearances on television and other local media.

Emotional Labour and Public Life: Invisible Mothering in Community Organizing

Kirsten Goa

There is a burgeoning interest in community development, reclaiming public life, and creating a more participatory democracy where citizens engage in effective and meaningful ways in the public conversations that build our communities. Much of the literature and practice around this work speaks passionately about the need to shift from a consumer culture to a community oriented culture. A fundamental way we do this is through nurturing public relationships, neighbourliness and bringing empathy back into our neighbourhoods and communities. However, despite the extensive literature and practice, it is notable that very little of it (if any?) recognizes that much of it is emotional labour – labour that is often invisible, even in measures of caregiving work.

How does community organizing leverage the capacity of mothers/caregivers to engage in public life and how does it use their unspoken experience as a tool for change? Where is the recognition for this work and who is doing it? Does community organizing have the potential for bringing visibility, public recognition, value to the emotional labour women (and especially mothers) do in their communities, and redistributing the load, or is it the “Third Shift”?

Kirsten Goa is a mother of five. Building relationships as the fabric of family and public life is a central theme in her eclectic education/work/life experience. After five years community organizing with the Greater Edmonton Alliance, she is now the Co-Chair of the City of Edmonton’s Council Initiative on Public Engagement.

Twenty-five Years Later -Same Song, Different Lyrics: A Critical Commentary on HIV Awareness Posters Targeting Women

Linda Hunter and Emerson LaCroix

This commentary provides selected observations from 25 years of research in Canadian HIV awareness campaign representation. Earlier research by Hunter (2004) found that HIV awareness posters targeting women focused on messages of fear, rather than presenting women as proactive about safer sex. Several HIV awareness posters targeting women also focus on pregnancy or motherhood. Prevention posters tend to be less concerned with a woman’s own sexuality and communication around safer sex practices than with her role as a mother. Although there has been some improvement in recent years, we remain quite

troubled by many of the Canadian HIV awareness posters targeting women. We demonstrate that there has been little progress in portraying women's agency in communicating safer sex options with their partners. Further, posters tend to reinforce the stigma associated with HIV, rather than depicting support, in order to minimize stigma. This commentary offers a critical appraisal on the minimal progress of Canadian HIV awareness posters targeting women throughout the years, and makes the case for developing HIV awareness poster campaigns which focus on prevention through communication, and support around stigma.

This paper will be published in the Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality, Issue 25.3, University of Toronto Press.

Linda Hunter is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Guelph as well as the Department's Undergraduate Coordinator. Dr. Hunter has published journal articles on the depiction of gender in the media, HIV awareness health campaigns, young mothers, communication and HIV prevention, and on the support needs for HIV positive women and mothers. She is currently researching teaching methods and the application of interdisciplinary programs such as fine art, to the study of sociology, with a focus on the representation of motherhood.

Emerson LaCroix is a fourth year undergraduate student in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Guelph. Emerson is a student ambassador for the Department, the Vice President of the Sociology and Anthropology Student Society, and an active Undergraduate Research Assistant for various faculty in the Department. Emerson is oriented towards qualitative methodology and his research interests include classical and contemporary sociological theory, social deviance, and the sociology of health and mental health.

Girl/Mom: Analysing Young Motherhood Through the Lens of Girlhood Studies

Erica S. Lawson, Crystal Gaudet* & Patricia Hamilton

Drawing on data from focus group and one-to-one interviews with young women accessing a drop-in centre program for young mothers in London, Ontario, this paper provides a snapshot of the encounters they face as they move across the city and try to negotiate the tensions and struggles associated with young motherhood. Although the findings of this study are not generalizable, they reflect some of the emerging themes in girlhood studies and in qualitative research on the experiences of young mothers more broadly. Narratives of the young mothers in this study illustrate the struggles they experience to maintain an autonomous identity as they straddle the line between adolescence and adulthood. Young mothers disrupt the gendered norms and expectations of girlhood and womanhood and as such, tend to be constructed as a 'social problem,' and as irresponsible parents. The young women in this study challenged these stereotypes insisting that their status as young mothers be respected and emphasizing the maturity that comes with the responsibilities of parenthood

Crystal Gaudet is a PhD Candidate in the Department of Women's Studies and Feminist Research at the University of Western Ontario, in Canada. Her general research interests include: gender and work, transnational care migration, feminist political economy, anti-racist feminism, and intersectionality. Her current work examines narrative meaning making about care and domestic work in the lives of women employed within Canada's Caregiver Program.

Patricia Hamilton is a PhD candidate in Women's Studies and Feminist Research at the University of Western Ontario. Her research interests include the medicalization of pregnancy and childbirth, the emergence of 'natural' motherhood and its intersections with race and class in a neoliberal context. Her dissertation examines black mothers' experiences of attachment parenting.

SESSION H4: MOTHER, MOTHERING, LOSS AND BEREAVEMENT

CHAIR – Andrea O'Reilly

- Angelina Avedano, "Raging Grief and the Dual Descent"
- Vanessa Reimer, "Sharing the Weight of Pregnancy and Infant Loss: A Liberation Theological Perspective"
- Linn Baran, "Memento Mori Maternal: Memories of My Mother Outlaw"

Raging Grief and the Dual Descent

Angelina Avedano

Separated from their children, mothers encounter an overwhelming abyss. A tsunami of sorrow, guilt, and rage strips the soul; like Inanna it hangs unceremoniously from a meat hook in the Underworld. Rites of passage initiate mothers' simultaneous descent. Separation occurs at death, but also during the interminable absence of the hunter/warrior/traveler—or the wayward, addicted, or mentally ill son or daughter. Mythically, mother's death/denial flags initiation evidenced by corpse mothers, suicidal/murderous mothers, and longsuffering sainted mothers.

Corpse mother signals exile in the Mahabharata ; Anticlea dies grieving Odysseus; Jocasta commits suicide over Oedipus; Agave dismembers (and disremembers) Pentheus; and Sethe's motherrage in Morrison's *Beloved* alongside Mary's silence at the cross illustrates a grief spectrum unique to injustice. Great Mother Isis is instructive: the grieving mother's agency instigates transformation. Savage, suffering, or silent, she must navigate her descent while serving as impetus and intercessor for her children.

Angelina Avedano earned a Master of Theological Studies from Harvard Divinity School (HDS), a MA in English from Boston College, and is a PhD Candidate in Mythological Studies at Pacifica Graduate Institute (PGI). Her most recent publication "Violence and Veneration: Tapping a Sodomasochistic Vein in the American Psyche," appears in PGI's *Mythological Studies Journal*. Angelina is a professor in the English Department at Massasoit Community College in Brockton, Massachusetts.

Sharing the Weight of Pregnancy and Infant Loss: A Liberation Theological Perspective

Vanessa Reimer

This life writing piece contextualizes the author's personal experience of infant loss in the broader principles of feminist liberation theology. In contrast to dominant Christian doctrines which necessitate individual righteousness and self-improvement, liberation theology emphasizes the connectedness of human experience, as well as the importance of engaging in social justice work which seeks to eliminate all forms of oppression. Accordingly, this paper explores the meaningful connections that mothers forge with each other when they share their experiences of pregnancy and infant loss and support one another through the grieving process. In doing so, "loss mamas" may also find empowerment in openly affirming the physical, emotional, and intellectual labour they perform during and after pregnancy, which is often rendered invisible in a patriarchal culture that devalues motherwork.

Vanessa Reimer holds a PhD in Gender, Feminist and Women's Studies from York University. She is the editor of *Angels on Earth: Mothering, Religion and Spirituality* (2016). Her research interests include feminist studies in religion, girlhood, and mothering.

Memento Mori Maternal : Memories of My Mother Outlaw

Linn Baran

In the spring of 2015, I lost my best friend. My mentor. My closest confidant. My sister in the struggle.... I lost my mother.

So much of who I am today as a feminist mother /activist/writer/blogger/researcher/editor in maternal feminist thought is because of this one woman- My own "Mother Outlaw".

In Myrl Coulter's recent memoir *A Year of Days*, she writes: "As soon as she was gone from this earth, I felt an overwhelming need for more of her. I had to find her again. But how do you find someone after they've gone for good?". For the past year and a half, I have been travelling throo many mind scapes (and over many land mines) of grief and remembrance to find my mother again. I have been sorting -crumb by crumb and petal by petal- the bread and roses of her life.

In the two years leading up to my mother's passing, I began assisting her as she began the process of writing out all her stories with the intention to finally publish her memoirs. She always referred to them in the plural – her stories and her memoirs. My mother lived many different lives over the course of her 85 years. She was very aware of the fact that every woman's life contains many secrets that can only be shared with certain others when the time was right. There are the public stories everyone knows about a woman, mother and grandmother and then there are the private stories that are kept slightly hidden; dropping clues here and there for only those who are truly willing and able to listen. My mother was also very cognizant of the fact that one's woman's history has the power and potential to

repeat itself down the matrilineal line in various similar yet different ways. The concentric circles of "like mother, like daughter".

My mother never completed her most important literary project before her death. I am doing it for her. My mother gifted me with the most honorary title of being her "literary executor"; and it is within her private papers, memorabilia, photos, and scraps of "stuff" she left just for me that I am un-covering and re-discovering her again and again.

In my paper, I will be sharing some of the personal challenges experienced in this process of "diving deep into the wreck", to use Adrienne Rich's own words. My presentation includes visual archival documentation of my mother's life . My own story will include an examination of other memoirs recently published that have also explored the intimate relationship between a "lost" mother and her "grieving" daughter. These examined memoirs include those by Canadian women writers Myrl Coulter, Plum Johnson, and Margaret Christakos.

Linn Baran is very honored to present at this celebratory MIRCI conference. She has been a member of ARM/MIRCI since their inception, attending conferences and presenting her work. Linn has also always assisted MIRCI with community outreach ventures to link "lived mothering" to "examined motherhood"; bridging academe, activism and social media. In this capacity, Linn was the Coordinator of MIRCI's Mother Outlaws group and monthly speaker's series. Her chapter entitled "Mother Outlaws: Building Communities of Empowered Feminist Mothers in the Mother'hood" is included in the collection *The 21st Century Motherhood Movement* (2011, Demeter Press). A graduate of York University with degrees in English Literature and Women's Studies, Linn spends a lot of her time now editing the work of others but is also hard at work on her own writing projects including a collection of personal essays on mothering and motherhood issues in contemporary feminist dystopias, a critical analysis of the new "feminist gothic" in contemporary domestic narratives and a co-written memoir (with her late mother) about mothering over three waves of feminism. Linn lives with her 15 year old son and partner in the Beaches community of Toronto.



CALL FOR PAPERS

The editorial board is seeking submissions for Vol. 8.1 and 8.2 of the *Journal of the Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement (JMI)*

This double issue will be published in fall/winter 2017

MOTHERS, MOTHERING, MOTHERHOOD IN TODAY'S WORLD **DOUBLE ISSUE TO COMMEMORATE MIRCI'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY**

We welcome submissions from scholars, students, activists, artists, community workers, bloggers, mothers and others who research in this area. Cross-cultural and comparative work is encouraged. We are open to a variety of types of submissions including academic papers from all disciplines and creative submissions including art and literature.

Motherhood scholars argue that motherhood, as it is currently perceived and practiced in patriarchal societies, is disempowering, if not oppressive, for a multitude of reasons: the societal devaluation of motherwork, the endless tasks of privatized mothering, the incompatibility of waged work and care work, and the impossible standards of idealized motherhood. Many of the problems facing mothers—whether social, economic, political, cultural, or psychological—are specific to their role and identity as mothers. This double issue of *JMI* positions mothers' needs and concerns as the starting point for a new politic and theory of feminism to empower mothers and to explore what mothers in the 21st century need to adequately care for their children while living full and purposeful lives. This issue will examine 21st century motherhood under four interconnected themes of inquiry: motherhood as experience, identity, agency, and institution. It considers what changes are needed in public-social policy, health, education, the workplace, the family, popular culture and the arts to create full and lasting gender equity for mothers in the 21st century.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

Articles should be 15-18 pages (3750 words) including references. All should be in MLA style, WordPerfect or Word and IBM compatible.

Please see our style guide for complete details:

<http://www.motherhoodinitiative.org/journalsubmission.html>

SUBMISSIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY

MAY 1, 2017!

TO SUBMIT WORK ONE MUST BE A MEMBER OF MIRCI

<http://www.motherhoodinitiative.org/membership.html>

**Please direct your
submissions to:**

Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement
(MIRCI)
140 Holland St. West, PO Box 13022 Bradford, ON, L3Z 2Y5 (905)
775 9089 <http://www.motherhoodinitiative.org>
info@motherhoodinitiative.org