

Mothers, Mothering and Motherhood in Literature

(Fiction, Poetry, Drama, Life Writing,
Creative Non-Fiction, Social Media)

October 22-24, 2014

Heaslip House, Ryerson University
(297 Victoria Street, Toronto)

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22 2014

8:30am-9:00am **REGISTRATION: CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**

9:00am-10:30am **SESSION A: MOTHERS/MOTHERING/MOTHERHOOD IN LITERATURE**

CHAIR – Deborah Byrd, Lafayette College

- Kate Williams, University of Tulsa, “Isolated Mothers in the Fiction and Memoirs of Joan Didion”
- Rose A. Sackeyfio, Winston Salem State University, “Motherhood in African Women’s Literature”
- Erin Bell, Wayne State University, ““Co-workers in the mother trade:” Grace Paley’s Short Fiction and the Single Mother”

10:45am-12:15pm **SESSION B: LIFE WRITING AND MATERNAL PRESENCE/ABSENCE**

CHAIR – Andrea O’Reilly, York University

- Freema Elbaz-Luwisch, University of Haifa, “Writing About Mother as Personal and Pedagogical Project”
- Natalie Morning, Ryerson and York University, “Words of Consequence: Motherless Daughters, Feminism and the Cultural Texts of the ‘New Momism’”
- Sarah Sahagian, York University, “No, I Don’t Have a Baby: Being Child-free in the Motherhood Studies Community”
- Karen Gold (*Presenter), Women’s College Hospital, and Christine Stewart-Nunez, South Dakota State University, “Disordered: Creating Nuanced Narratives of Mothering Children With Disabilities Through Creative Non-Fiction”

12:15pm-1:30pm **LUNCH: ON YOUR OWN**

1:30pm-3:00pm **SESSION C: THE BODY/NATURE**

CHAIR – Erin Bell, Wayne State University

- Anissa Wardi, Chatham University, “Mother Bodies, Marigolds and Dirt: Transcorporeality in Toni Morrison’s *The Bluest Eye*”
- Barbara Mattar, Australian Catholic University, “Birth Under Duress: Representations of Childbirth in Late 20th Fiction”

3:15pm-4:45pm

SESSION D: THE MOTHER FIGURE, ALISON BECHDEL AND GRAPHIC NARRATIVES

CHAIR – Mary Thompson, James Madison University

- Abigail Palko, University of Notre Dame, “Are You Speaking For Me? The Maternal Figure in *Are You My Mother?*”
- Judith Lakämper, Wayne State University, “Surviving Destruction: The Cathetic Mother-Daughter Relationship in Alison Bechdel’s *Are You My Mother?*”
- Natalja Chestopalova, York University and Ryerson University, “From Jane Austen to Alison Bechdel: Affective Economies and Representation of ‘Peripheral’ Voices and ‘Meddling’ Mothers”
- Lorinda Peterson, Queen’s University, “Rendering Visible: Lesbian Mothering, Trauma, and Sequential Art”
- Walter Lai, Ryerson University, “‘Nobody Heard Her Tears’: Graphic Memoir as Intersubjective Space between Mother & Child”

5:00pm-6:30pm

SESSION E: CREATIVE VOICES/STORYTELLING

CHAIR – Maythee Rojas, California State University-Long Beach

- Melinda Vandenberg Giles, University of Toronto, “The Perfect Mother”
- Tiffany Chenneville, University of South Florida, “The Humility of Motherhood”
- Linn Baran, Writer, Editor, Researcher and Community Educator, “His Hand in My Palm: A Feminist Mother’s Experience of “Boyhood””
- Nargis Ara, Government Girls Post Graduate College, “Grand Motherhood to Feel the Deep Emotions of Daughter and Voice of Granddaughter (Come Father Come)!”
- Debbie Byrd, Lafayette College, “Scripting Stories of Resistance: Young Mothers and Theatre of the Oppressed Activism”

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2014

8:30am-9:00am

REGISTRATION: CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

9:00am-10:30am

SESSION F: MOTHERS/MOTHERING/MOTHERHOOD IN LITERATURE

CHAIR – Bethany Jacobs, University of Oregon

- Maythee Rojas, California State University-Long Beach, ““Only in Complete Solitude Did She Feel Like A Woman:” Fractured Images of Domestic Life in Helena Maria Viramontes’s Short Fiction”

- Berit Åström, Umeå University, Sweden, “Unforgiven: The Representation of Motherhood in *The Hunger Games*”
- Ebony Olivia Lumumba, Tougaloo College, “Mothering Interrupted: Representations of Motherhood and South African Apartheid as Repressive Social Paradigms in Nadine Gordimer’s *July’s People* and *The House Gun*”
- Janel Atlas, University of Delaware, “Sui Sin Far’s Mothers: Infanticide and Loss in Chinatown”
- Robin Silbergleid, Michigan State University, “Queer Mothers, Heterosexual Narratives: Pregnancy and Plot in Contemporary Women’s Memoirs”

10:45am-12:15pm

SESSION G: MOTHERS/MOTHERING/MOTHERHOOD IN RELIGIOUS & SPIRITUAL LITERATURE

CHAIR – Diana Gustafson, Memorial University

- Brooke Nelson, Claremont Graduate University, “Breastfeeding Virgins and Other Maternal Ironies in the Martyrdom of St. Agatha”
- Mandi Veenstra, Queen’s University, “The “Good” Christian Mother: Manufacturing an Unattainable Ideal”
- Vanessa Reimer, York University, “Whose Memories? A Critical Reflection on Life Writing and the Mother-Daughter Relationship”
- Florence Pasche Guignard, University of Toronto, “Helplessness as Victory. Maternal Dharma in Representations of Mothers, Motherhood and Mothering in Modern Hindi Literature”
- Roxana Cazan, St. Francis University, “Exclusionary Citizenship, Epistemic Violence, and Reproductive Constraints: Being Roma in the Contemporary Czech Republic”

12:15pm-1:30pm

LUNCH: ON YOUR OWN

1:30pm-3:00pm

SESSION H: LOVE, LABOUR & LOSS: MATERNAL DESIRE & REPRODUCTION

CHAIR – Betty Baba, University of Ottawa

- Modhumita Roy, Tufts University, “A Womb of Their Own: Popular Culture and the Normalising of Commercial Surrogacy”
- Mary Thompson, James Madison University, “Thinking Back Through Our Mothers: Contemporary Memoir and Abortion”
- Kate Greenway, York University, “The Absent Mother: Alternative Visions of the Adoption Story”
- Kathy Mantas, Nipissing University, “ART-i-facts (Phase V): An Artful Inquiry On/Into/Through the Experience of Becoming a Mother by Way of ART (Assisted Reproductive Technologies)”
- Zarena Aslami, Michigan State University, “Motherhood as “Exit Strategy”: Professional Working Mothers in the Media and the Problem of Choice”

3:15pm-5:15pm WRITING MOTHERHOOD DEMETER KEYNOTE PANEL

CHAIR – Andrea O’Reilly, York University

- Laurie Kruk, Author of *My Mother Did Not Tell Stories* (2012)
- Rachel Epp Buller, Author of *Have Milk, Will Travel: Adventures in Breastfeeding* (2013)
- Robin Silbergleid, Author of *Texas Girl* (2014)
- Lissa Cowan, Author of *Milk Fever* (2013)
- Linda Rosenbaum, Author of *Not Exactly As Planned: A Memoir of Adoption, Secrets and Abiding Love* (2014)
- Tricia McCallum, Author of *The Music of Leaving*

5:30pm-6:00pm KEYNOTE ADDRESS

CHAIR – Elizabeth Podnieks, Ryerson University

- Jowita Bydlowska, author of the bestselling memoir *Drunk Mom* (Doubleday 2013)

6:00pm-8:00pm RECEPTION & BOOK LAUNCH

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2014

8:30am-9:00am REGISTRATION: CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

9:00am-10:30am SESSION I: DIS/ABILITY

CHAIR – Zarena Aslami, Michigan State University

- Betty Baba, University of Ottawa, “Disability: Measuring the identity and social challenge of a mother”
- Kathleen Venema, University of Winnipeg, “Mothering as Containment Strategy in Lori Lansens’ *The Girls*”
- Melanie Stone, Western University, ““Where did she get that baby?” The Erasure of Dis/abled Mothers in Social Media and Mommy Blogs”
- Jane Tolmie, Queen’s University, “Emily Rapp’s *Little Seal*: Regarding the Pain of Others”

10:45am-12:15pm SESSION J: MOTHERS/MOTHERING/MOTHERHOOD IN LITERATURE

CHAIR – Betty Baba, University of Ottawa

- Bethany Jacobs, University of Oregon, “Ride me to the Crossroads: Becoming the Erotic Mother in Audre Lorde’s *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*”
- Rita Bode, Trent University, “Complicating Motherhood in Edith Wharton’s Fiction”
- Katie Piper Greulich, Michigan State University, “An Ambient—and Ambivalent—Poetics: The Ecomimesis of Writing Motherhood”
- Betty Baba, University of Ottawa, “Motherhood: The Black Mother in American Mother—Daughter in Toni Morrison’s *Literal Work*”

12:15pm-1:30pm

LUNCH: ON YOUR OWN

1:30pm-3:00pm

SESSION K: THE BODY, MEDIA, & POLITICS/SOCIETY

CHAIR – Linn Baran, Writer, Editor, Researcher and Community Educator

- Diana Gustafson, Memorial University, “Maternal Bodies in Medical Textbooks and Classrooms”
- Davod Ahmadi Gheidari, “Mothers’ Food choices: An analysis of differences between Francophones and Anglophones in Canada”
- Penelope Morris, “Problems and Prescriptions: Ideas of Motherhood in 1950s and 1960s Italian Print Media”
- Mariam Irene Tazi-Preve, University of Vienna, “Motherhood in Patriarchy. Abolishing the Matrilineal Order”

3:15pm-4:45pm

SESSION L: SOCIETY/POLITICS/COMMUNITIES

CHAIR – Diana Gustafson, Memorial University

- Linda Hunter, University of Guelph, “Maternal Politics and Representations of Motherhood During the French Enlightenment: Relevance to Theoretical Developments”
- Laura Saldanha, Concordia University, “Mothering as an Embodied Practice: Contemporary Notions of the "Good" Mother Within a Neoliberal Framework”
- Valerie Heffernan, National University of Ireland Maynooth, “Contemporary Women’s Writing in German: The Feminist Family Romance”
- May Friedman, Ryerson University, “Trans/parent: The Politics of Transition”