



CALL FOR PAPERS

Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement (MIRCI) **MATRICENTRIC FEMINISM: THEORY, ACTIVISM, POLITICS, PRACTICE AND REPRESENTATION**

May 2-4, 2018, Syracuse University
Piazza Savonarola 15, 50132, Florence, Italy

Motherhood, it could be said, is the unfinished business of feminism. The conference positions mothers' needs and concerns as the starting point for a theory and politics on and for women's empowerment. Maternal scholars maintain that the category of mother is distinct from the category of woman and for women who are mothers, mothering is a significant, if not a defining dimension of their lives, and that, arguably, maternity matters more than gender. They emphasize as well that the category of mother is distinct from the category of woman and that many of the problems mothers face—social, economic, political, cultural, psychological, and so forth—are specific to women's role and identity as mothers. Indeed, mothers are oppressed under patriarchy as women and as mothers. Consequently, mothers need a matricentric mode of feminism organized from and for their particular identity and work as mothers. Indeed, a mother-centred feminism is needed because mothers—arguably more so than women in general—remain disempowered despite forty years of feminism.

Matricentric feminism is explicitly matrifocal in its perspective and emphasis—it begins with the mother and takes seriously the work of mothering—and is multidisciplinary and multi-theoretical in its perspective. Overall, matricentric feminism, to paraphrase feminist writer and activist Marilyn Waring, seeks to deliver a mode of feminism in which mothers and mothering count. The conference will examine the aims, themes and challenges of matricentric feminism from the perspective of theory, activism, politics, practice and representation as well as from diverse and various cultural and disciplinary standpoints.

The conference considers what changes are needed in public-social policy, health, education, the workplace, the family, and the arts to effect full and lasting gender equality for mothers in the 21st century. More specifically, the conference addresses how best to broker, leverage, mobilize and implement scholarship on maternal empowerment of relevance and of use for activists, service providers and policy makers who work for and on behalf of mothers. As well it will explore literature, film, social media, popular culture and the arts from a matricentric feminist perspective. The conference is multi- and interdisciplinary with scholars from fields as diverse as women and gender studies, anthropology, health studies, law, children studies, religion, political science, English literature, visual art, and psychology. As well the conference includes the voices and perspectives of matricentric activists and writers.

If you are interested in being considered as a presenter,
please submit a 200-word abstract and a 50-word bio by **November 1, 2017**
through our website (<http://motherhoodinitiative.org/conferences/>).

**** TO SUBMIT AN ABSTRACT FOR THIS CONFERENCE,
ONE MUST BE A 2018 MEMBER OF MIRCI:**

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

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