NEGOTIATING DEMANDS: 21st CENTURY MOTHERHOOD

RMIT University
Melbourne
13th-16th July 2016

Sponsored by:

The Australian Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement (AMIRCI formerly ARM-A)
The Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement in Canada (MIRCI formerly ARM)
The Centre for Communication, Politics and Culture, RMIT University
The Australian Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement (AMIRCI)

AMIRCI is a non-profit organisation interested in promoting research into mothering/motherhood/motherwork and related areas, including maternal subjectivities and identities, cultural representations and differences.

This valuable field of research seeks to raise critical awareness of the particularities and complexities of mothering embedded in Australian society. Our membership is predominantly composed of scholars but we welcome writers, artists, activists, professionals, groups, agencies, policy makers, educators and anyone interested in promoting feminist mothering.

We are committed to the inclusion of all mothers, those people who are mothering, and those people interested in mothers/mothering. We recognise that the experience of being a mother varies through dislocation, discrimination, culture and context.

About Us

At the conclusion of the successful conference *Theorizing and Representing Maternal Subjectivities* held at the University of Queensland, Brisbane in October 2005, it was decided that an Association for Research on Motherhood/Mothers/Motherwork be established in Australia (ARM-A). Dr. Marie Porter, who has been researching motherhood/mothering for many years, was, and remains, the driving force behind the establishment, and continuation, of our organisation. At that time, it was proposed that the association be a national one, and be used as a vehicle for future growth.

The organisation has prospered due to the voluntary dedication of a small group. As life has changed for many of us, our need for new members is critical. If you want to see this focus on the maternal to continue, please consider nominating for the committee.

The AMIRCI Committee.
Past Conferences

2014 *Motherhood, Feminisms and the Future*
7th Australian International Conference. RMIT University, Melbourne. A selection of these papers can be found in *Motherhood, Feminisms and the Future* (2015; a special edition of the Journal of Family Studies) with Taylor and Francis.

2011 *Mothers at the Margins*

2009 *The Mother and History: Past and Present*
5th biennial Australian International conference. The University of Queensland, Brisbane.

2007 *The Mother: Images, Issues and Practices*

2005 *Representing and Theorising Maternal Subjectivities*

2002 *Performing Motherhood: Ideology, Agency and Experience*
2nd Australian International Conference. La Trobe University, Melbourne.

2001 *Mothering: Power/ Oppression*
Inaugural biennial Australian International Conference. The University of Queensland, Brisbane. A selection of these papers can be found in *Motherhood: Power and Oppression* (2005). Edited by Marie Porter, Andrea O'Reilly and Patricia Short. Toronto: Women’s Press.
Venue Information

The Design Hub (RMIT Building 100): Located on the corner of Swanston and Victoria Streets

Location: https://www.rmit.edu.au/maps/melbourne-city-campus/building-100/
Info: http://designhub.rmit.edu.au/about/visit

- Walk to the intersection of Victoria and Swanston Streets
- The main entrances are on Victoria Street and Swanston Street.
- There is a tram stop almost opposite the building
- Tram routes on Swanston St include: 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 16, 64, 67 and 72, from which you can connect to the train at Melbourne Central or Flinders Street.
- The building is about a 5-minute walk from Melbourne Central, and from Victoria Markets

Rooms:
- Keynotes, AGM, Plenary Panel: Lecture Theatre (ground floor)
- Registration Desk: Foyer (ground floor)
- General Catering: Long Room (level 10)
- Concurrent Sessions: Pavilion 1, Pavilion 2, Pavilion 4 (level 10)

WIFI Details:
- Network name – RMIT-University
- Username – x80336
- Password – Monday123
CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

WEDNESDAY 13TH JULY

2.00 – 3.45 pm  Registration desk open  Foyer
                 (ground floor)

3.45 – 4.30 pm  Conference Opening  Lecture Theatre
                 Chair – Jenny Jones
                 (ground floor)

            Welcome to Country
            Aunty Joy

            Welcome to delegates and Information
            Marie Porter and Lisa Raith

4.30 – 6.00 pm  KEYNOTE ADDRESS 1  Lecture Theatre
                 Professor Tina Miller
                 (ground floor)

6.00 pm onwards  Reception - drinks and nibbles  Foyer
                 (ground floor)

THURSDAY 14TH JULY

8.00 – 9.00 am  Registration desk open

9:00 – 10:30 am  Concurrent Sessions A

10:30 – 11:00 am  Morning Tea

11:00 am – 12:00 pm  Concurrent Sessions B

12:00 – 1.30 pm  Lunch

1.30 – 3.30pm  PLENARY PANEL

3:30 – 4:00 pm  Afternoon Tea

4:00 – 5:00 pm  Concurrent Sessions C

5:00 – 6:00 pm  AMIRCI ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
                 Lecture Theatre – ground floor

6.15pm onwards  Conference Dinner
                 Venue TBA – costs not included in registration fee.
                 Traditionally this is kept relatively simple and inexpensive.
FRIDAY 15TH JULY

8.00 – 9.00 am  Registration desk open  Foyer (ground floor)

9:00 – 10:30 am  KEYNOTE ADDRESS 2  Lecture Theatre (ground floor)
    Professor Andrea O'Reilly

10:30 – 11:00 am  Morning Tea

11:00 am – 12:30 pm  Concurrent Sessions D

12:30 – 2:00 pm  Lunch

2:00 – 3:30 pm  Concurrent Sessions E

3:30 – 4:00 pm  Afternoon tea

4:00 – 5:30 pm  Concurrent Sessions F

5:30 pm onwards  Dinner – own arrangements

SATURDAY 16TH JULY

8.30 – 10 am  KEYNOTE ADDRESS 3  Lecture Theatre (ground floor)
    Dr Kay Cook

10:00 - 10.30 am  Morning tea

10:30 – 11:30 am  Concurrent Sessions G

11:30 am – 1:00 pm  Q & A SESSION
    Facilitator Jenny Jones

1:00 - 1:30 pm  Conference Closing and Thanks
    Jenny Jones, Marie Porter, Sophia Brock,
    Lisa Raith, Joan Garvan, Craig Batty
SESSION SCHEDULE
**WEDNESDAY 13TH JULY**

**Foyer (ground floor)**

Registration Open (2:00pm – 3:45pm)

Conference Opening (3:45pm – 4:30pm)

**Lecture Theatre (ground floor)**

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS 1**

(4:30pm – 6pm)

Taking a long view on unfolding motherhood experiences of managing and narrating competing demands: Can a primary caring responsibility for children be equally shared?

**PROFESSOR TINA MILLER**

Chair: Lisa Raith

**THURSDAY 14TH JULY**

**Foyer (ground floor)**

Registration Open (8:00am – 9:00am)

**CONCURRENT SESSION A**

(9:00am – 10:30am)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sessions &amp; Rooms</th>
<th>Titles</th>
<th>Presenters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1 Pavilion 1*</td>
<td>Australian Maternal Histories since mid-20th Century</td>
<td>Chair: Julie Stephens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-A1</td>
<td>Missing in Action: Adult daughters’ ambivalence about their mothers</td>
<td>Kerreen Reiger La Trobe University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-A1</td>
<td>“I wouldn’t do it now with the grandchildren”: Reflection on parenting as a grand-parent</td>
<td>Miranda Francis La Trobe University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-A1</td>
<td>Negotiating history: The changing experiences of becoming an Australian mother since 1945</td>
<td>Carla Pascoe Melbourne University</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A2 Pavilion 2</th>
<th>Motherhood in Community Art</th>
<th>Chair: Fleur Summers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-A2</td>
<td>An ode to mothers’ arts</td>
<td>Lisa Raith University of the Sunshine Coast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-A2</td>
<td>Mothers’ cultural cringe</td>
<td>Anna Kerr The Feminist Legal Clinic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-A2</td>
<td>Motherhood Unmasked: A community arts based approach to valuing mothers and mothering</td>
<td>Emma Sampson* &amp; Shannon McSolvin Motherhood Unmasked (MUM)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*NB: Pavilions 1, 2 & 4 are all located on level 10
**A3 Pavilion 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Chair</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-A3</td>
<td>Grappling with Motherhood Ambivalence</td>
<td>Andrea O'Reilly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mothering children with disabilities and hegemonic maternality</td>
<td>Sophia Brock (The University of Sydney)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-A3</td>
<td>Mothering disability: negotiating ambivalence</td>
<td>Christina Fernandes* &amp; Rachel Robertson (Curtin University)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-A3</td>
<td>Maternal subjectivity in mothering a child with a disability</td>
<td>Clare Harvey (University of the Witwatersrand)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CONCURRENT SESSION B**

(11:00am – 12:00pm)

**B1 Pavilion 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Chair</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-B1</td>
<td>Negotiating Aboriginal Motherhood/s in 21st century Australia</td>
<td>Jenny Jones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negotiating Aboriginal Motherhood/s in 21st century Australia</td>
<td>Amy Elizabeth Parkes (University of South Australia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-B1</td>
<td>Becoming amai (mother): How Zimbabwean women deal with competing demands in their homeland</td>
<td>Pranee Liamputtong* &amp; Sandra Benza (Western Sydney and La Trobe Universities)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**B2 Pavilion 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Chair</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-B2</td>
<td>On motherhood and mothering: Stories of possibilities and progress</td>
<td>Tina Miller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>On motherhood and mothering: Stories of possibilities and progress</td>
<td>Tanya Dannock*, Miriam Grotowski, Anne Croker (The University of Newcastle/Pallotella)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-B2</td>
<td>The Subject is Herself</td>
<td>Michelle Johnston (Wollongong Creative Arts Studios)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**B3 Pavilion 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Chair</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-B3</td>
<td>The line in the sand: Feminist perspectives on refusal of recommended maternity care</td>
<td>Belinda Barnett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The line in the sand: Feminist perspectives on refusal of recommended maternity care</td>
<td>Bec Jenkinson (University of Queensland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-B3</td>
<td>Perfect mothers perfect babies: Health professionals’ views of the demand for residential parenting services in NSW</td>
<td>Virginia Schmied (Western Sydney University)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PLENARY PANEL

(1.30pm – 3.30pm)

Mothering Under Neo-liberalism

Mothers and the #UBI: Or what does basic income have to do with gender justice?

Petra Bueskens
Melbourne University

Lifters and Leaners: Neo-liberalism and the Farewell to Maternalism

Anne Manne

‘Satisfying the needs and giving pleasure’: Breastfeeding in public as a slow food critique of neo-liberalism

Fiona Giles
The University of Sydney

Do economists love their babies too?

Andie Fox

CONCURRENT SESSION C

(4:00pm – 5:00pm)

C1 Mothers Writing: Writing Motherhood

Chair: Sophia Brock

Pavilion 1

1-C1 Reading Queen Lear in the context of intensive mothering and neoliberalism

Emma Hughes
La Trobe University

2-C1 Maternal thinking and extended breastfeeding in Emma Donoghue’s Room

Barbara Mattar
Australian Catholic University

C2 Artwork not (M)otherwork

Chair: Lisa Raith

Pavilion 2

1-C2 Stories from the in-between – being mothers, academics and artists

Fleur Summers*, Angela Clarke, Skye Kelly & Rebecca Mayo
RMIT University

2-C2 Balancing Act: The mother/artist identity in contemporary art

Danielle Hobbs
La Trobe University

C3 Navigating Cultural Demands

Chair: Jenny Jones

Pavilion 4

1-C3 Negotiating competing demands: living and working conditions of Burmese women in southern Thailand

Titaree Phanwichatkul
Western Sydney University

2-C3 Manoeuvring resettlement as a nurturer: The infant feeding experiences of Asian mothers from refugee backgrounds in Brisbane

June Joseph*, Pranee Liamputtong, Wendy Brodribb
Universities of Queensland and Western Sydney

AMIRCI AGM (5:00pm – 6:00pm)

Lecture Theatre
FRIDAY 15TH JULY

Foyer (ground floor)  Registration Open *(8:00am – 9:00am)*

Lecture Theatre (ground floor)  KEYNOTE ADDRESS 2  *(9:00am – 10.30am)*  PROFESSOR ANDREA O’REILLY

Ain’t I a Feminist? Matricentric Feminism, Feminist Mamas and why mothers need a feminist movement/theory of their own

Chair: Marie Porter

Sessions & Rooms  Titles  Presenters

CONCURRENT SESSION D  *(11:00am – 12:30pm)*

**D1 Pavilion 1**  **Feminism's Mark on Motherhood**  Chair: Jenny Jones

1- D1  Has equality feminism airbrushed mothers and their needs out of the conversation?

Marie Porter  University of Queensland

2- D1  Changing the game of volunteering: Challenging broken structures

Catherine Walsh  Mamapalooza

3- D1  Feminism and the terrifying dependency of children

Cristy Clark  Southern Cross University

**D2 Pavilion 2**  **Breastfeeding Particularities**  Chair: Pranee Liamputtong

1- D2  Care factor: How do Lactation Consultants help women breastfeed... and more

Jen Hocking  La Trobe University

2- D2  “Not at all what I had imagined or been prepared for”. Women's experiences of becoming a breastfeeding mother

Miranda Buck  La Trobe University

3- D2  Biologically normal, culturally normal, or an intervention? Using the right language for breastfeeding

Virginia Thorley  University of Queensland
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pavilion</th>
<th>Session Title</th>
<th>Chair/Presenter(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D3 Pavilion 4</td>
<td><strong>Equality in Paid Work?</strong>&lt;br&gt;1-D3 Becoming a mother and still mattering in 21st century Australia: Exploring women’s paid and unpaid work transitions during the perinatal period</td>
<td><strong>Chair: Lisa Raith</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Belinda Barnett</strong>&lt;br&gt;University of Queensland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-D3 The space between: Constructing academic mothering</td>
<td><strong>Clarissa Carden</strong>&lt;br&gt;Griffith University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONCURRENT SESSION E</strong>&lt;br&gt;(2:00pm – 3:30pm)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E1 Pavilion 1</td>
<td><strong>Supporting Mothers/hoods</strong>&lt;br&gt;1-E1 Weaving webs of support online for mothers away from home</td>
<td><strong>Chair: Tina Miller</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Leah Williams Veazey</strong>&lt;br&gt;The University of Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-E1 Aging Activisms: Unsettling apolitical (grand)motherhood narratives</td>
<td><em><em>Jesse Whattam</em>, May Chazan</em>*&lt;br&gt;Trent University, Canada</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-E1 “Clearing them for learning”: Exploring the critical factors for success in school-based young mothers’ education programs</td>
<td><strong>Iain Hay</strong>&lt;br&gt;Canberra University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E2 Pavilion 2</td>
<td><strong>Peri- and Post-natal Transitions</strong>&lt;br&gt;1-E2 The perinatal is political: Maternity Choices Australia’s advocacy for maternity services reform and why we need the next National Maternity Services Plan (NMSP V2.0)</td>
<td><strong>Chair: Joan Garvan</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Belinda Barnett; Nicole Ford</strong>&lt;br&gt;Maternity Choices Australia (MCA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-E2 The Happiness Imperative: When women (do not) talk about their experiences of psychological distress during pregnancy</td>
<td><strong>Aleksandra Staneva</strong>&lt;br&gt;University of Queensland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-E2 Coming through: Animating female experience of Postnatal Depression</td>
<td><strong>Andi Spark</strong>&lt;br&gt;Griffith University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E3 Pavilion 4</td>
<td><strong>Art Interrogating Motherhood</strong>&lt;br&gt;1-E3 The Good, The Bad, and the Critical Single Mother: Researching and cartooning single mothering, while single mothering</td>
<td><strong>Chair: Lisa Raith</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Penelope Mendonça</strong>&lt;br&gt;University of the Arts, United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-E3 Interplay and parallel play: The arts-based research of a sex-worker mother</td>
<td><strong>Francisca Vanderwoude</strong>&lt;br&gt;Griffith University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-E3 Narratives of motherhood and music: Understanding intensive mothering in early years music making</td>
<td><strong>Sally Savage</strong>&lt;br&gt;Monash University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONCURRENT SESSION F

(4:00pm – 5:30pm)

F1
Pavilion 1

**Questing Motherhood**
Chair: Andrea O’Reilly

1-F1  Grief, love, violence and autism: Jenny McCarthy and the quest of the mother warrior
Karen Williams
Adelaide University

2-F1  “Who am I aside from Mum”? Relational self-concept and wellbeing in mothers
Lauren Wills
Monash University

F2
Pavilion 2

**Motherhood and the Paid Work Rhetoric**
Chair: Sophia Brock

1-F2  Mother guilt and the working mother’s juggling act
Anita Missiha
La Trobe University

2-F2  On motherhood on being bored
Mary Ellen Jordan
Curtin University

3-F2  “I didn’t know mothers *paid* child support”. Money and ‘part-time’ mothering after separation in Australia
Maria Vnuk
Australian National University

Dinner – own arrangements
(5:30 pm onwards)
SATURDAY 16TH JULY

Lecture Theatre
(ground floor)

KEYNOTE ADDRESS 3
(8:30am – 10.00am)
Valuing mothers:
Insights from the margins

Chair: Sophia Brock

Presenters

Sessions & Rooms

CONCURRENT SESSION G
(10:30am – 11:30am)

G1 Pavilion 1

Patriarchal Motherhood and the Lens of
Mothering Young Adults

Chair: Sophia Brock

1-G1 We need to talk about patriarchal
motherhood: Essentialism, naturalization and
idealization in Lionel Shriver’s We need to
talk about Kevin
Andrea O’Reilly
York University, Canada; MIRCI

2- G1 Window dressing and mothers’ emotional
and ethical labour in the tertiary education
setting: A new moral imperative?
Jenny Jones
AMIRCI; Clinical
Ethicist and Maternal
Scholar

G2 Pavilion 2

Patriarchal Motherhood and the Lens of
Mothering Young Adults

Chair: Lisa Raith

1-G2 Workforce gender equality – A false
equivalence
Anna Kerr
The Feminist Legal
Clinic

2- G2 Support for young families: Rhetoric and
reality in contemporary Australia
Joan Garvan
Independent
Researcher & Maternal
Health Advocate

Lecture Theatre
(ground floor)

Q & A SESSION
(11:30am – 1:00pm)
A panel comprised of the Keynote Speakers
and established scholars will lead a forum
situated in the broad conference theme and
stimulated by delegate questions (in advance
and from the floor).
Facilitator:
Jenny Jones

Conference Closing and Thanks
(1:00pm – 1:30pm)
ABSTRACTS
**KEYNOTE SPEAKERS**

TINA MILLER

**Professor of Sociology, Department of Social Sciences, Oxford Brookes University, United Kingdom**

**Taking a long view on unfolding motherhood experiences of managing and narrating competing demands: Can a primary caring responsibility for children be equally shared?**

This paper reflects upon qualitative longitudinal research conducted over more than 20 years in the UK which has focused on how caring in family lives is anticipated, negotiated and managed. Taking apart and exploring the micro-processes of transitions, intentions and practises leads to important and complex understandings of caring processes and relationships. What becomes clear is that no amount of preparation can prepare you for the fact a small baby occupies every space (emotionally and almost physically too, with all the ‘necessary’ paraphernalia a ‘good’ mother must have) and that a sense of a ‘24/7 thinking responsibility’ descends as a baby is born. And someone has to take on that responsibility. Regardless of intentions to change gendered practises of caring by mothers and fathers and to share caring in equal ways, mothers typically very quickly become the parent who is most practised at caring and doing the ‘mental labor’ (Walzer, 1996), first of the baby, then toddler, then young child and so on. Exhaustion for everyone in the early weeks and months of becoming a parent make it a difficult time at which to challenge and try to disrupt gendered arrangements in the work place and so corresponding possibilities in the home.

Becoming practised leads to perceived ‘maternal’ expertise and fathers can ‘get it wrong’ if they are left ‘in charge’: everyone falls back into traditionally gendered positions. What emerges are practises of parental caring which indicate father’s increased emotional engagement and possibilities of change as well as maternal and paternal ‘gate-keeping’ of particular practises. Patriarchal habits and dividends and motherhood wage penalties continue to underscore the terrain. But it is the daily, micro-processes of caring, documented over many years which shows the ways in which gendered practises become accepted, reinforced and quite quickly ‘invisible’ and where inequalities and gatekeeping co-exist. Even though it must be possible (mustn’t it?) for a 24/7 thinking and caring responsibility to be shared equally, why is this equation so hard to balance in relation to parental caring? Rather than focus on the division of tasks, their type and hours spent on them in trying to promote more gender equitable choices in home and work spheres, at the heart of these matters sits the assumed singularity of a primary responsibility. For all the sharing, it is this singularity - so obdurately stuck to motherhood - which demands our critical attention if meaningful change is to be finally achieved.
ANDREA O’REILLY

Professor, School of Gender, Sexuality and Women’s Studies, York University, Canada.

Ain’t I a Feminist? Matricentric Feminism, Feminist Mamas and why mothers need a feminist movement/theory of their own

It has been said that motherhood is the unfinished business of feminism. A cursory review of scholarship on mothers and paid employment reveals that while women have made significant gains over the last three decades, mothers have not. Mothers in the paid labour force find themselves “mommy tracked,” making sixty cents for every dollar earned by full-time fathers. Indeed, today the pay gap between mothers and non-mothers under thirty-five years is now larger than the wage gap between young men and women. Maternal scholars likewise argue that motherhood, as it is currently perceived and practiced in patriarchal societies, is disempowering if not oppressive for a multitude of reasons; namely, 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. Indeed, many of the problems mothers face—socially, economically, politically, culturally, psychologically—are specific to their role and identity as mothers. What is needed therefore is matricentric feminism; a feminism that is fashioned from and for women’s particular identity and work as mothers. This paper will argue that, as feminist theory and women’s studies have grown and developed as a scholarly field, they have incorporated various and diverse theoretical models to represent the specific perspectives/concerns of particular groups of women; global feminism, queer feminism, third wave feminism and womanism. In contrast, as I will go on to argue, feminist theory and women’s studies more generally have not likewise recognized or embraced a feminism developed from the specific needs/concerns of mothers, what I have termed matricentric feminism. The paper will consider possible reasons for the exclusion of matricentric feminism in feminist theory and demand that this school of feminism be accorded the same legitimacy and autonomy as other feminist theoretical models in the discipline of women’s studies.

KAY COOK

Senior Lecturer, School of Global, Urban and Social Studies, RMIT University

Valuing mothers: Insights from the margins

Consecutive governments in Australia have taken different approaches to the valuation of motherhood. John Howard’s policies are often depicted as preserving a ‘white picket fence’ view of Australian family life, with generous support provided to stay at home parents; namely mothers. Within this perspective, and mirroring trends internationally, other forms of motherhood came under attack. In 2006, Australian welfare-to-work obligations commenced for new benefit recipient single mothers with children over the age of six, and a move to the less generous Newstart Allowance once their youngest child turned eight. These changes were progressively expanded in 2014 to include all single mothers with children aged over six. During the same time period, child support legislation underwent fundamental reform that dissolved the ‘male bread winner model’ on which it was originally based. Taken together, these two reforms have had significant and negative financial impacts on some of Australia’s most vulnerable mothers, but they also have significant symbolic implications. In this presentation, I examine these reforms as a lens into how, for whom and in what contexts the practice of mothering is valued in Australia, the results of which reveal different valuations of mothering along class lines. These valuations of mothering then have implications for the equity of other policy reforms, such as child care and parental leave.
PLENARY PANEL

Mothering Under Neo-liberalism

PETRA BUESKENS
Melbourne University

Mothers and the #UBI: Or what does basic income have to do with gender justice?

Universal basic income - or #UBI - has been gaining traction in recent years as a utopian alternative to the punitive, stigmatising and declining welfare state in neo-liberal societies. The confluence of increased automation, declining wages and under-employment has been seized by the Left as a powerful reason for the establishment of a basic income. For women as mothers, however, the #UBI opens up the possibility of a hitherto unseen equality that includes freedom from dependence on a male wage to rear a family. In this paper I will draw on the work of feminist scholars Carole Pateman and Kathi Weeks to argue that a UBI is a crucial means by which women can ‘re-write the sexual contract’.

ANNE MANNE

Lifters and Leaners: Neo-liberalism and the Farewell to Maternalism

Neo-liberalism has a radically different constellation of values, culture and social ecology to industrial capitalism. The new ideal is the economically self-sufficient citizen, a revamp and universalising of Economic Man, whose self-interested behaviour in the labour market was rewarded, supported by an 'Angel in the House' who took responsibility for all care work. Now both men and women are, in former conservative Treasurer Joe Hockey’s terms, to be ‘Lifters and not Leaners.’ As a consequence a new ideology of motherhood is forming. As Ann Orloff has argued, there is a state sponsored ‘farewell to maternalism’ occurring and new ideals of maternal virtue being tied to paid work. The mother is still meant to be self-sacrificing; she is to exhibit effortless perfection in ‘doing it all,’ making minimum demands on employed male partners for shared parenting, or the State for adequate parental leave and affordable, high quality child care. Women's unequal responsibility for the shadow world of unpaid care remains invisible. The new ideology renders the decisions and life practices of so many mothers unintelligible and unsupported. New forms of stigma, coercion, and shaming are also being mobilised, with both conservatives and Labour colluding in creating harsh new policies to punish a new ‘dead beat’ Mum; the sole parent who is depicted as a lazy parasite, stigmatised for being poor and for being ‘unemployed.’ There is a neo-liberal wolf hiding inside liberation rhetoric increasingly deployed by conservative politicians.
‘Satisfying needs and giving pleasures’: Breastfeeding in public as a slow food critique of neo-liberalism

Drawing from Sarah Ruddick’s *Maternal Thinking* (1989), this presentation considers the role of ‘training’ in caring labour as the outcome of ‘attentive love’ and ‘proper trust’ in the context of the breastfeeding relationship. As a literal enactment of embodied care discussed by Maurice Hamington (2004), the open practice of breastfeeding could have profound implications for subject-formation in the contemporary west. I propose that one reason breastfeeding struggles to find social acceptance and ease of practice, particularly when performed in public, is that it affronts the *mythos* underpinning neoliberalism, of the separate, quantifiable and questing individual. Those who argue that breastfeeding in public is disturbing because it invites associations with sex are touching on only part of the problem: it is not so much the erotic associations of the breast itself but the reminder that it is only during sexual congress, not other forms of caring, that bodily intermingling is considered acceptable. This not only denies the sexuality of the maternal breast and vice versa, but the role of intersubjectivity in caring labour more broadly, and the centrality of caring labour to the overall wellbeing of all communities. The productive entanglements of breastfeeding for both mothers and children, and potentially fathers, provide an example of a qualitative self that resists the dry, abstracted separations of individuals as consumers. As such, breastfeeding is also an affront to the market forces of neo-liberalism, since it exemplifies a self-sufficient, locavist, environmentally sound example of slow food, in many ways autonomous from commercial conceptions of consumption. This theoretical analysis links Ruddick’s ‘practicalist’ maternal thinking via pragmatist aesthetics and its off-shoot, somaesthetics, to the slow food movement and its celebration of taste within the pleasures of the convivium.

ANDIE FOX

Do economists love their babies too?

Surprisingly, there has been no substantial change in the proportion of young women in full-time employment in Australia for half a century. In spite of increased levels of education and a reduction in the number of children, women are no more likely to work full-time during their late twenties and thirties than their mothers did. While this has been bleak news for the progress of the gender income ratio, which has stalled in Australia at around 54 cents in the male dollar, this paper argues that the data also suggests many of the widely held beliefs about women and work pushed under neoliberalism do not appear to hold. Women seem to have maintained a strong desire to be with their offspring while children are young. It further suggests that the real options for young mothers in their relationships and workplaces may be limited while children are young and highly dependent. Australian government policies around addressing gender disparity have been primarily aimed at young women replicating the male lifecycle, but these appear to have failed to properly consider maternal desire and attachment. This paper provides important contextual discussion for understanding previously unreported data from Professor Bob Gregory of the Australian National University. The paper explores the implications for government policy as well as gender roles in personal relationships and provides recommendations for the future direction of feminism.
CONCURRENT SESSIONS

KERREEN REIGER 1-A1
La Trobe University

Missing in Action: Adult daughters’ ambivalence about their mothers

On the cusp of second wave feminist debates on motherhood, women born in the early post WW2 decades often grew up with traditional ideas of mothering as fulfilment that belied their personal experience of living with mothers in distress. While maternal ambivalence has been widely discussed in feminist and psychoanalytic literature, in this paper, I turn the focus to the complexity of daughters’ experience in these years and the implications for their identities and their own mothering. I draw on interviews from the Australian Generations oral history project to explore how class, ethnic and geographical location shaped the ways in which they negotiated their mothers’ legacy.

MIRANDA FRANCIS 2-A1
La Trobe University

“I wouldn’t do it now with the grandchildren”: Reflection on parenting as a grand-parent

My history PhD, examining women’s memories of parenting children in suburban Melbourne, is based on life-review style interviews with women aged over sixty, but this paper is concerned with how they understand a new role, as grandparents. The number of women I have interviewed (thirteen so far: my eventual aim is about twenty) is far from a statistical sample, but the interviews are long and deep. Certainly, their memories of parenting help us identify the forces of change exerted on the lives of a much broader group of women since the end of the Second World War. Yet, it is not simply a matter of how changes in work, childcare, professional child-rearing advice, family law and technology affected the experiences of mothers and their families in suburban Melbourne. The interviews also show how women remember and talk about their experiences as mothers, an aspect of parenting that comes into focus with the experience of grand-parenting. For many women, observing their own children parent, has prompted them to reflect on and even change how they think about and explain their own experiences of mothering. This illuminates both the historical picture and our understandings of what is happening now.

CARLA PASCOE 3-A1
University of Melbourne

Negotiating history: The changing experience of becoming an Australian mother since 1945

Research suggests that Australian women in the early twenty-first century struggle to adapt to the demanding experience of becoming a mother. Perinatal anxiety and depression now affect up to one in seven Australian parents. Yet Australian women who became mothers after the Second World War recall a different experience, describing the transition to motherhood as ‘natural’ and explaining that maternity was seen as inevitable, unquestionable and unproblematic. How are we to make sense of such divergent narratives of the experience of becoming a mother? This paper will draw upon research conducted for an ARC-funded project exploring the changing Australian experience of transitioning to motherhood since 1945. Based largely upon oral history interviews, the
Abstracts

LISA RAITH

University of Sunshine Coast

An ode to mothers’ arts

For the artist, making art is an imperative. It is as essential to their life as breathing. This is just as true for mother artists who, in pursuing their art, must find ways of balancing the desires of mothering and the yearnings to create; of holding on to the threads of inspiration at the very moment the baby cries or the school bell rings; of juggling chores and one’s dedication to art work. But how do we perceive the creative work of those mothers who are unable to pursue art/craft as a career or do not identify as artists? Much work undertaken in the course of mothering is artistic but not recognised as art; costumes made, clothes sewn or knitted, cakes decorated and gardens created and nurtured. Using the creative endeavours of my matrilineal line and my Friday art group, and drawing on discussions of women’s crafts (e.g., Rozsika Parker’s The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine) plus ideas from positive psychology, this presentation considers the meaning(s) art might have for mothers, and how art work might feed mothers’ souls and thus, their mothering. It also ponders how mothers can, and do, find space for craft and art in amongst the ‘real’ work of mothering, and the paradoxes of this relationship when neither motherwork nor artwork are recognised as work at all.

ANNA KERR

The Feminist Legal Clinic

Mothers’ cultural cringe

Mamapalooza Sydney has been operating for a number of years, but can struggle to attract adequate entries from female visual artists focused on the theme of motherhood. Despite the pioneering work of Vee Malnar in this area, there continues to be a reluctance to perceive mothering and the domestic sphere as an appropriate subject for artwork. This female cultural cringe is unsurprising given the lack of representation of artworks by mothers and women generally in education and popular culture. Even among those with tertiary education in the fine arts, there is low awareness of the historical contributions of women artists. This presentation will include a slide show of women artists from the middle ages through to the 20th century who managed to negotiate the competing demands and restrictions placed upon them and achieved success and recognition as visual artists in their own time. Their work is frequently focused on motherhood and the domestic sphere, an area of human activity largely ignored by male artists. The aim of this presentation is to raise awareness of these iconic women artists who have to date been systematically ignored by male art historians and to inspire 21st century women artists to continue this forgotten tradition of artworks that celebrate motherhood.
EMMA SAMPSON and SHANNON MCSOLVIN 3-A2

Motherhood Unmasked (MUM)

Motherhood Unmasked: A community arts based approach to valuing mothers and mothering

Despite a growing social awareness of the importance of supporting mothers (particularly new mothers), there remains a gap in locally delivered, non-judgmental supports that offer women the opportunity to come together and share their experiences. Based on feminist principles, Motherhood Unmasked (MUM) is a community arts project aimed at engaging new mothers within local communities. The program aims to engage mothers to critically explore, express and share their experiences of being mothers, with each other and through a community exhibition which aims to value mothering more broadly. Individual mother’s experiences and challenges, such as navigating competing demands, are situated within broader social and community structures, and implications of navigating mothering with the complex and changing sense of selves within this space are shared. Learnings from MUM point to the need to better value mothers, individually and collectively and highlight the promise of community, arts based approaches to do this locally. The session may incorporate an art exhibition and opportunity for conference participants to respond to the art works on display.

SOPHIA BROCK 1-A3

The University of Sydney

Mothering children with disabilities and hegemonic maternity

Based on research with 18 women who are mothers of children with disabilities, this paper argues that motherhood can be theorized in terms of ‘hegemony’, through the conceptualization of ‘hegemonic maternity’. ‘Hegemonic maternity’ is a useful way of capturing and further understanding the complex and often ambivalent experiences of women who are mothers of children with disabilities, and follows Connell’s (1982) concept of ‘hegemonic masculinity’. The concept of hegemonic maternity is based on the notion of motherhood as a social construct and is an expansion of Rich’s (1979) identification of motherhood as an institution. It also provides a framework within which to situate ideologies of ‘intensive’ or ‘good’ mothering. This paper will reimagine Connell’s concept of ‘hegemonic masculinity’ through the lens of motherhood, outlining the contours of hegemonic maternity. Based on the experiences of participants, this paper will examine how hegemonic maternity is distinct from the ‘institution of motherhood’ and ‘good mothering ideology’, and how motherhood is a practice, a relational category, involves emotional labour, is hierarchical, relates to the body, and is constructed and regulated through institutional settings.

CHRISTINA FERNANDES and RACHEL ROBERTSON 2-A3

Curtin University

Mothering disability: Negotiating ambivalence

In this presentation we take a critical disability studies approach to maternal ambivalence, drawing on our own lived experiences of mothering disabled children. We speak from these different subject positions in a dialogue that extends our thinking on maternal ambivalence and represents our diverse experiences. Recognising the debate over the extent to which mothering a disabled child is different from a non-disabled child (Greenspan; Read; Ryan and Runswick-Cole), our approach accords with Ryan
and Runswick-Cole’s case that “the experience of mothering a disabled child is complex and contradictory at a number of levels which extend over and above those experienced by mothers of non-disabled children” (206). We suggest that experiences and representations of maternal ambivalence are one such area of complexity. We argue that mothers of disabled children experience a heightened form of intensive mothering and its concomitant expectations, partly because of the needs of our children, and because of the increased accountability and surveillance arising from our exposure to a range of experts and state institutions. This exposure is associated with complex and contradictory positions: at times blamed and judged, at others congratulated, all the time living our child’s marginalisation. We explore how these experiences influence and affect maternal ambivalence, and the taboo around the expression of ambivalence by mothers of ‘special’ children. We posit that our ambivalence emerges from and within our everyday/everynight negotiations of the dualisms of abled/disabled, progression/regression and anxious mother/compliant mother. The ‘maternal valour’ of this warrior or vigilante positioning and identity is exhausting and unsustainable (Blum in Ryan, 204). So, too, are the care expectations in which lies an implicit conceptualisation of control (the other face of care) of the child. We present a layered account in which we dialogue and debate our diverging and converging mothering positions and identities.

CLARE HARVEY

University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

Maternal subjectivity in mothering a child with a disability

This paper offers an understanding of the internal emotional experiences and sense of self of mothers of children with a disability. Specificities of this maternal subjectivity include mothers’ engagement in unconscious defence mechanisms in order to manage the intense emotions of this mothering experience. Mothers of disabled children are forced to confront and tolerate their own preconceived notions and uncomfortable feelings of disability that they have introjected from society’s often deficit view of disability. Societal practices, as well as motherhood studies, have tended to neglect holistic maternal experiences, focusing instead on the more positive aspects of mothering. This has resulted in a negative social construction of ‘other’ groups of mothers, including mothers of children with a disability. Once women have a baby that belongs to the ‘outgroup’ of society, they have to tolerate society’s projections of the disavowed aspects of disability. Mothers are left with intense feelings of ambivalence, shame and guilt. They also experience loss for their fantasised ideal object, the non-disabled baby. Initial findings from my PhD will be presented to explore the various demands and negotiations of this particular kind of maternal subjectivity.

AMY ELIZABETH PARKES

University of South Australia

Negotiating Aboriginal motherhood/s in 21st century Australia

When considering the competing demands of 21st century motherhood it is important to acknowledge that the way in which these demands are defined is greatly influenced by race and class. Within feminism, motherhoods are frequently imagined from a normative, white middle-class gaze, raising questions about the visibility of Aboriginal motherhoods in discussions which may not necessarily reflect the unique sets of demands placed on colonised people. This paper aims to highlight the ways in which Aboriginal motherhoods have been devalued in public and media discourses through the racist portrayal of
disadvantage as dysfunction. Drawing from recent field work, examples of Aboriginal mother's lived experiences challenge common assumptions and negative stereotypes about Aboriginal mothers, showing that despite the powerful demands placed on mothers and grandmothers, deep protective and nurturing ways persist.

PRANEE LIAMPUTTONG AND SANDRA BENZA

Western Sydney University and La Trobe University

Becoming *amai* (mother): How Zimbabwean women deal with the competing demands in their new homeland

Becoming a mother is a life transition often accompanied by challenges to many women, particularly for migrant women in a foreign land. Becoming a mother is often enjoyable for the women and their families but it can be overwhelming if the transition occurs while the woman is also attempting to settle in a new country. This paper portrayed the lived experiences of Zimbabwean women who gave birth to children in Zimbabwe and in Melbourne, Australia. Our findings highlight the marked cultural influences on the motherhood role, behaviours, and attitudes of Zimbabwean mothers. The motherhood discourse was based on their traditional role and practices, the value of having children and cultural expectations, and societal attitudes towards infertile women. Through their motherhood experiences in Australia, these mothers had to negotiate between the Zimbabwean and the Australian culture as well as to deal with their double identities, as a migrant woman and as a mother. Despite this, the women made many attempts to deal with the competing demands in their every day life so that they and the family can succeed in their new homeland. Our research extends knowledge in the area of motherhood and has implications for culturally sensitive health care that can influence the health and wellbeing of Zimbabwean women in Australia.

MIRIAM GROTOWSKI, ANNE CROKER and TANYA DANNOCK

The University of Newcastle/ Pallotella

On motherhood and mothering: Stories of possibilities and progress

What picture of maternal subjectivities emerges if we take account of the material maternal body? Many women feel that the experiences of pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding and embodied care are central to the construction of their sense of self as a mother. Feminist writings, however, with their emphasis on the social and discursive structuring of maternal experiences, have given relatively limited attention, from a biological perspective, to the effects of these embodied experiences on subjectivity and thus, within these writings, material maternal bodies, flesh and blood, neuronal and synaptic bodies have a minimal presence. Consideration of the material or biological body has been seen as risking essentialism or reductionism. In this paper, I investigate how maternal subjectivities are constructed in the embodied mother-child relationship, and its myriad of invisible connections and countless tiny encounters every day, taking an approach that sees the biological, psychological, relational and social as mutually constitutive. I draw on the neurosciences which, after the developments of the last two decades, can provide a theoretical framework in which to investigate the influence of somatic processes, that is, those of the brain and the body proper, on mental phenomena, on thoughts and emotions, without reducing the latter to the former. Such an approach can enhance understanding of maternal subjectivities in all their multiplicity and individual complexity.
MICHELLE JOHNSTON 2-B2
Wollongong Creative Arts Studios

The Subject is Herself

In 2011 I published a book of personal visual art journals titled “Woman on the Verge – The Subject is Herself”. This work was a seven-year project I lavished attention on whilst simultaneously pouring time and energy into the role as a mother and a wife. Woman on the Verge became not only a place to escape to but also a way to integrate, develop and honour my creative needs as a person and find the balance between art, motherhood and life. Woman on the Verge explores the choices we make and the inner journey through vibrant art pages, poetry, prose, photography and musings whilst giving voice to the contradictions and demands of 21st Century motherhood. The undercurrent of my work explores feminist thoughts and societies expectations as a woman. Research and interest includes: Art theory, feminist theory and history, creative living, women’s literature, journal writing and personal growth over a twenty-year period. At the AMIRCI Conference I will discuss my experience of negotiating the competing demands of 21st Century Motherhood in relation to my book Woman on the Verge – The Subject is Herself, sharing images, art and extracts from my book Woman on the Verge.

REBECCA (BEC) JENKINSON 1-B3
University of Queensland

The line in the sand: Feminist perspectives on refusal of recommended maternity care

Feminist and midwifery scholars have developed a sustained critique of the medicalisation of childbirth and particularly, its impact on women’s autonomy. Although woman-centred care is a widely-touted gold standard in maternity, and the right to refuse medical treatment is well established, news sources, advocacy organisations and scholars are increasingly highlighting cases where pregnant women’s autonomy has been undermined, both in Australia and internationally. This paper reports on a mixed methods study of refusal of recommended maternity care, incorporating the clinical outcomes of women (n=52); content analysis of clinical documentation; and thematic analysis of in-depth, semi-structured interviews (n=30) with women, midwives and obstetricians. Despite widespread espoused support for maternal autonomy, in practice women’s access to supportive care was bounded by clinicians’ individual values systems. These boundaries were often unarticulated and variable, but when women’s refusals were perceived to be unreasonable, the women (and in some cases, the midwives caring for them) faced a range of punitive strategies intended to ensure compliance. The greater forces of power, paternalism and medical hegemony remained largely unchallenged.

VIRGINIA SCHMIED 2-B3
Western Sydney University

Perfect mothers perfect babies: Health professionals’ views of the demand for residential parenting services in NSW

Social media and the academic literature draw attention to the chasm between idealised motherhood and reality. For many mothers, dreams are shattered, feelings of incompetence and guilt dominate, anxiety escalates, and some receive a mental health diagnosis. Australia is unique in providing residential parenting centres (RPS), offering distressed mothers a four night stay to address issues related to their infant, parenting and
their own needs. We have analysed administrative datasets, case files and interviewed staff working in the RPS in NSW, to describe the characteristics of women using RPS. In this paper we examine staff’ perceptions of what is driving demand for RPS. Forty-five staff participated in eight focus groups. Perfect parents, perfect babies’ emerged as a key theme. Mothers were described as high achievers with high expectations. They were highly anxious, often given a diagnosis of ‘adjustment disorder’. Staff reported that some mothers had a significant mental health problem but others came seeking a ‘quick fix’, not prepared to do the hard parenting work, as they juggled motherhood and paid work. RPS staff perceptions may be part of and reinforce the pervasive mother-blame discourse, the very discourse that has driven women to seek RPS in the first place.

EMMA HUGHES
La Trobe University

Reading *Queen Lear* in the context of intensive mothering and neoliberalism

Linda Ennis proposes that the tendency of contemporary mothers to engage in the practice of intensive mothering “operates today” (2014, 9) within the context of neoliberalism. Whilst it appeared that McDonald’s 2012 staging of *Queen Lear* was set in the English Renaissance, the audience who witnessed McDonald’s staging watched from the perspective of individuals living within twenty first century Australia. Read in the context of intensive mothering, from the perspective of a neoliberal society, Queen Lear’s actions could be interpreted quite differently from the way in which the options for the representation of mothers within English Renaissance performance would position those actions (Rose 1991). By giving her daughters her worldly possessions and property in exchange for declarations of love Queen Lear could be understood to be teaching Goneril, Regan and Cordelia that nothing comes without a cost. In a sense, Queen Lear’s love-test might be understood to be evidence of the maternal practice of training (Ruddick 1990). This paper will offer an analysis of Rachel McDonald’s adaptation *Queen Lear* and its 2012 staging at the Melbourne Theatre Company which analyses the representation of Queen Lear through practices of intensive mothering.

BARBARA MATTAR
Australian Catholic University

Maternal thinking and extended breastfeeding in Emma Donoghue’s *Room*

This paper focuses on Emma Donoghue’s novel *Room* (2010) to discuss the role of maternal practice and maternal thinking in decision making about breastfeeding. The use of extended breastfeeding in the novel is analysed within the framework of Sara Ruddick’s theory of maternal thinking to argue that for the mother in this novel who is only referred to as “Ma” this was the only reasonable choice in the face of captivity and violence, despite how her maternal thinking is critiqued and undermined by her family and the media upon the discovery that she is continuing to breastfeed her son who has just turned five years old.
Stories from the in-between – being mothers, academics and artists

Sharing stories about the experiences of individual women is a powerful way to develop critical feminist narratives that can inform our daily practices. We propose that this is especially important to women who encounter the competing demands of motherhood and academia alongside the intensities of being an artist. While this is a rich and creative life choice, negotiating these various institutions can be isolating and frustrating especially when many women are unable to spend extended time with peers due to family commitments. Additionally, some women feel their parenting capacity is affected by their commitments to work, study, and making and exhibiting their artwork. This paper shares the stories of a group of women who have experienced these demands and, through individual and collective critical analysis, explores how this is manifested in their sense of identity. We will draw upon the notion of the in-between and theories of liminality and how this facilitates conceptual and physical transitions between home, work and the studio. By sharing these stories, and discussing both the difficulties and triumphs in our work, we hope to empower ourselves and others, as well as provide the groundwork for future social action at a grassroots level.

Balancing Act: The mother/artist identity in contemporary art

The shift that occurs when a woman becomes a mother, often physically unchanged, but mentally and psychologically moved beyond recognition, can be seismic. Traversing the line between mother and artist and their competing issues has further complications and at times break into a jostle for who will prevail... and in the immediacy of new motherhood, life’s boisterous chaos often make it a one-sided struggle. It takes sustained negotiation (internal and inter-familial) to agree on a balance between laundry and drawing, and even longer to reclaim time to sit and think through ideas and processes without the thought sphere being interrupted by a mental note to prepare lunches for tomorrow or pierced by a cry for “muuuuummm”. While the roles of mother and artist still oscillate in the privacy of domestic life, attempts to make these issues centre stage in the professional/public domain still push up against barriers such as the patriarchal structure and hierarchies within contemporary visual arts. This paper surveys the struggle to locate evidence of a professional creative self when the overwhelming duties of fulltime motherhood weigh down most of one’s body and mind, critiques the structures that limit the exploration of motherhood in the professional art practise arena, the experience of applying ethics when making art about motherhood in academia, and the outcome of practise led research into the darker aspects of motherhood such as Postnatal Depression.
TITAREE PHANWICHATKUL

Western Sydney University

**Negotiating competing demands: Living and working conditions for Burmese women in southern Thailand**

In this presentation, we use data from an ethnographic study to examine the competing demands experienced by Burmese migrant women working in Southern Thailand and report the impact that pregnancy has on employment opportunities for Burmese women. We conducted participant observation and interviews with ten Burmese women and four Burmese interpreters working in Thailand. Data were analysed using thematic analysis. Due to economic hardship in Burma, women migrate to Thailand to improve their living conditions. Although they are employed, they are in casual, low paid, manual work. The living and working conditions are difficult and pregnancy complicates this. Therefore women, their husbands and often employers believe it is better for the well-being of mother and baby to stop work in pregnancy. This leaves women in a precarious situation, as they are unlikely to be re-employed by the same employer after the birth. During the pregnancy, the burden of work shifts from paid employment to unpaid domestic work and caring for children of other family members and friends. This employment gap creates difficulties for women as they are required to send remittances to families in Burma and some have other children living in Burma who they must support.

JUNE JOSEPH, PRANEE LIAMPUTTONG and WENDY BRODRIBB

University of Queensland and University of Western Sydney

**Manoeuvring resettlement as a nurturer: The infant feeding experiences of Asian mothers from refugee backgrounds in Brisbane**

Breastfeeding and timely solid food introduction are essential for a child’s health and also is the leadoff accomplishment of motherhood. In the west, this discourse is mediated by medicalised recommendations and support. However, infant feeding in traditional societies is socio-culturally imbued within the familial web. Resettlement unplugs mothers from their private domains to one that is public and secular. This paper aims to explore the navigation mechanisms of infant feeding among mothers from Vietnam and Myanmar in Brisbane. Twenty-two mothers, eleven from each cultural background were recruited. Data was collected via interviews, photos and drawing methodologies guided by the feminist theoretical perspective. Data was analysed thematically. Four themes were identified namely: (1) postpartum vulnerability, (2) infant feeding beliefs (3) support networks and (4) western identity. Despite breastfeeding being a transgenerational norm, the process of resettlement led mothers from Vietnam to incline towards formula feeding while mothers from Myanmar enhanced their infant feeding practice. Data revealed that the application of Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus (embedded norm), capitals (social, economic and cultural) and fields could illustrate the spheres of infant feeding negotiations within the Australian context. Since infant feeding is a social health behaviour, I propose the importance of coalescing the socio-ecological model (SEM) with Bourdieu’s concepts to explain how mothers from Myanmar negotiated their barriers as medically ‘successful nurturers’ and also disclose where the Vietnamese conceded. The correct application of social theories could drive policy implementations by empowering mothers as worthy nurturers of their children.
Has equality feminism airbrushed mothers and their needs out of the conversation?

In *The Whole Woman*, Germaine Greer claims that ‘equality is no substitute for liberation’ (175). She later states that, the notion of equality takes the male status quo as the condition to which women aspire’ (311). In this paper I will argue that the dominant form of feminism in Australia has indeed sought equality at the expense of liberation for women and that this form of feminism makes life more difficult for women who have children. The emphasis in equality feminism is on equality in the workplace in which the customs and practices have emerged from a male life style which historically has not been hindered by the need to care for children or the home and is never hindered by pregnancy or childbirth. Equality feminism does not acknowledge unpaid motherwork or consider the position of mothers in relationship to paid work. Women who are not mothers cannot fully understand the changes that occur with motherhood. These changes are not limited to physically caring for a baby, they encompass psychological and emotional changes and, usually a change of attitude to life itself. As Andrea O’Reilly argues, we need a matricentric feminism which is focused on the life journey and needs of mothers.

Changing the game of volunteering: Challenging broken structures

"It will be a great day when our schools get all the money they need and the air force has to hold a cake stall to buy a bomber." This is as true now as it was in the 1970s. Feminism calls us to challenge patriarchal structures. What does this mean in relation to mothers doing voluntary work in their communities? There are economic, social, and structural implications. Mothers volunteer in their communities for a range of reasons, including the building of personal skills and cultural capital. Considering women’s unpaid care work is still undervalued in the capitalist system, and volunteering requires mothers and others to donate their time, money, skills and intelligence for free, is it wise to leave these same jobs for the next generation? Rather than working to maintain structures, when all caregivers are negotiating competing demands, could feminist mothers instead challenge these broken structures? With reference to Annie Leonard’s *The Story of Solutions*, perhaps it is time to ask if the voluntary work done by mothers and others who care is changing the game. Changing the game means challenging structures, accounting for all costs, factoring in environmental impacts, and creating a healthy community and planet.

Feminism and the terrifying dependency of children

This paper will contend that liberal feminism has failed to adequately respond to the realities of motherhood, because it has primarily focused on helping women to overcome their historic status as second-class citizens by promoting emancipation through independence. This approach to women’s liberation has also dominated the agenda of Australian feminist legal reform with the result that progress has focused primarily on the rights to own property; to work and receive equal pay; to participate in public life; and to bodily autonomy (particularly including the right to terminate unwanted pregnancies). While these are all important rights, the problem with this vision of equality is that it falls down...
when the reality of dependency enters the picture. Worst still, when this occurs, women are often blamed for sabotaging their own liberation by ‘choosing’ to become mothers. This paper will conclude by asking: **What kind of legal reforms might result from a maternal feminist perspective?** Would a universal basic wage and the pay of care workers take greater prominence to equal pay and the promotion of ‘women on boards’? Would the rights of women in labour receive as much attention as access to abortion?

**JEN HOCKING**

*La Trobe University*

**Care factor: How do Lactation Consultants help women to breastfeed… and more?**

My PhD study asks the question “how do lactation consultants support women to breastfeed?” My ethnographic approach has involved observation of women (Lactation Consultants) supporting other women and families in their endeavours to breastfeed their children. What happens during this time with new, vulnerable mothers who are attempting a huge life transition? There has been scant research investigating what this particular group of professionals do. Popular discourses suggest that breastfeeding supporters are zealots who are only interested in persuading women of the necessity to breastfeed – at all costs. I describe the work of a group of individuals who are experienced clinicians, who have well-developed communication skills, detailed knowledge of the physiology and pathology of lactation and who are reflective about the way they work. Much of the *work* of Lactation Consultants is providing assistance to mothers who are making a major life transition, who have experienced some kind of disconnection from their babies in the early days and weeks of mothering and who are seeking genuine support and reassurance about their new role – as mothers. Some of that care is about breastfeeding support, some of it is about promoting understanding of infant behaviour and development, some of it is de-briefing the birth experience, some of it is discussing the impact of the baby’s arrival on family relationships. Breastfeeding is a complicated health behaviour - Lactation Consultants play an important role in helping breastfeeding mothers negotiate their roles. Lactation consultants are often confined in their practice by structures that limit their autonomy of practice, their clinical decision making and by the lack of supportive management or recognition of the worth of their work. The experience of Lactation Consultants reflects the way breastfeeding is considered in our society.

**MIRANDA BUCK**

*La Trobe University*

**“Not at all what I had imagined or been prepared for.” Women’s experiences of becoming a breastfeeding mother**

This paper will develop some of the intersections between feminist theory and critical disability studies in relation to mothering and maternal subjectivity. Recent scholarship in disability studies has called for a closer analysis of the relationship between feminist theory and disability and the need for disability as a category to be included within feminist scholarship. Disability, like gender, is a concept that pervades all aspects of culture as well as our experience of embodiment. Disability studies critiques what Alison Kafer (following Rich’s analysis of compulsory heterosexuality) describes as ‘compulsory able-bodiedness’ and questions the necessary cultural linkage of dependency with inferiority. Both feminist and disability studies approaches explore identity, the ethics of care, bodily differences, reproductive technology, and the private/public split, all aspects that relate to the experience and institution of mothering. My paper will explore how feminist disability theory might approach certain aspects of motherhood, using in particular Rosemarie...
Garland-Thomson’s critical terms of ‘misfit’ and ‘misfitting’. As the mother of a child with a
disability, I have a particular experience of ‘misfitting’. Following Jane Gallop’s notion of
anecdotal theorising, I will use my own experiences as a starting point for my paper.

VIRGINIA THORLEY 3-D2

Biologically normal, culturally normal, or an intervention? Using the right language
for breastfeeding

Current practice among breastfeeding advocates and organizations is the use of “normal”
to describe breastfeeding, treating anything else as an intervention. The evidence has led
me to question the use of these terms. Breastfeeding is biologically normal, but it has not
always been culturally normal. Promoting breastfeeding can be an intervention in times
and places or cultures with strong traditions of little or no breastfeeding across generations.
I argue that more appropriate terms would describe breastfeeding as “biologically normal”
or “physiologically normal”, and to acknowledge that it is not necessarily “culturally normal”.
In a long tradition of artificial feeding, with breastfeeding discouraged or practiced only
briefly, efforts to introduce breastfeeding to the culture are indeed “interventions”. This
reflects usage in other contexts, such as quitting smoking, where smoking tobacco is
aberrant, but quitting requires interventions. It is more realistic to promote exclusive
breastfeeding as a modern application, combining maternity and science. Use of correct
language assists in correct thinking, and can only aid our efforts to promote, protect and
support breastfeeding, while ensuring that mothers making other choices have access to
safe products, without excessive or misleading marketing.

BELINDA BARNETT 1-D3

Becoming a mother and still mattering in 21st century Australia: Exploring women’s
paid and unpaid work transitions during the perinatal period

Becoming a mother can be a challenging transition for many women as they negotiate
significant changes in their paid and unpaid work and relationships. This presentation will
briefly outline some of the paid and unpaid work contexts and subsequent challenges that
many Australian women negotiate during the perinatal period. This presentation will
provide some preliminary findings from a qualitative study of 12 women based in South
East Queensland who gave birth between August 2015 and February 2016. The study
employed a critical feminist perspective to explore the broad range of contextual factors
influencing women’s paid and unpaid work decisions and transitions during the perinatal
period. Between three and five semi-structured interviews were held with each participant
over a 10-12 month period, beginning during their second trimester of pregnancy (12-26
weeks) and continuing through to approximately 4-6 months after their babies’ births. The
complex nature of women’s perinatal transitions will be discussed, including some
strategies that women use to negotiate their competing demands during this significant life
transition.
The space between: Constructing academic motherhood

The difficulties facing academic mothers in consolidating their maternal and professional identities are well documented in the academic literature. Less documented, however, are narratives of academic mothers intentionally merging those identities by bringing their children into academic spaces. As a student of sociology and an emerging academic I have consistently brought my young daughter into my academic life. This has been, at times a conscious strategy through which I have attempted to consolidate my academic and maternal identities. More frequently, however, it has been the unavoidable consequence of being a mother and student with limited time and financial resources. The proposed presentation will draw upon my own experiences, alongside the published experiences of mothers working in academia, to reflect upon the challenges involved in formulating a cohesive identity as a mother and an academic in a university culture shaped by masculine assumptions of what an academic ought to be.

Weaving webs of support online for mothers away from home

Migration and motherhood both involve the rupture and reshaping of women’s social networks and identity. Both may bring joy, excitement and novelty, and also isolation, depression and struggle (Barclay & Kent, 1998; Benza & Liamputtong, 2014; DeSouza, 2006; Oakley, 1981). Juggling migration and motherhood brings additional challenges (Hennegan, Redshaw & Kruske, 2015) that are often inadequately addressed by health and social care services or distant family networks. This paper explores two social media strategies used by migrant mothers to create peer support networks in response to the challenges they face juggling migration and motherhood. In one, they create locally focused, closed online groups for mothers with a common ethnicity, nationality or language. In the other, mothers create globally dispersed public networks using linked blogs, twitter chats, forums and rotating photo-sharing accounts, based around a shared identity as expatriate mothers. In an attempt to manage the multiple demands of 21st century migrant motherhood, women have created these communities of mothers as a means of seeking out the practical information, emotional support and friendship they need to navigate a path through the unfamiliar landscapes of mothering away from home.

Aging activisms: Unsettling apolitical (grand)motherhood narratives

Both motherhood and grandmotherhood are frequently conceptualized as apolitical periods within women’s lives. While feminist scholars have brought attention to the diverse ways motherhood and activism interact, fewer scholars have analyzed the dynamics between grandmotherhood and activisms. Based on 35 life histories generated with older women from across North America, this paper examines women’s social justice efforts across their lifecourses. It reveals insights into how socio-political and personal contexts shape how women construct (grand)motherhood and practice social change work. Far from a time of retreating from political struggle, participants described how, as mothers, their activism became intertwined with their personal circumstances. Several decades later,
they likewise portrayed grandmotherhood not as a period of decline but as a time of new and renewed engagement. Unlike their earlier activisms, though, their later-life engagement was less interwoven with their own struggles. Furthermore, many strategically mobilized grandmotherhood as a means of legitimizing their efforts, where they did not previously deploy motherhood in political ways. The paper thus contributes an important aging lens, challenging simplistic assumptions about the supposedly disengaged nature of (grand)motherhood, while providing a nuanced analysis of the continuities and changes in women’s social change work across their lives.

IAIN HAY

Canberra University

“Clearing them for learning”: Exploring the critical factors for success in school-based young mothers’ education programs

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 (and their children) in education and training at Canberra College.

BELINDA BARNETT and NICOLE FORD

Maternity Choices Australia (MCA)

The perinatal is political: Maternity Choices Australia’s advocacy for maternity services reform and why we need the next National Maternity Services Plan (NMSP V2.0)

Many women becoming mothers in 21st century Australia experience a heightened risk of discrimination, disrespect and/or violence in relation to their paid work and personal relationships during the perinatal period. Therefore, the discrimination, disrespect and bullying of some women during labour and birth in Australian hospitals tends to be overlooked by our community and normalised within Australia’s medically dominated maternity services. The National Maternity Services Plan (NMSP), which was established in 2010 and expired in 2015, aimed to enable all Australian women to access respectful, high quality maternity care. Unfortunately, the NMSP’s vision was not realised, and many
Australian women continue to experience discriminatory and non-consented maternity care which violates their human rights. This can have a detrimental impact on women’s physical and emotional health and wellbeing and their ability to confidently mother. The work of Maternity Choices Australia (MCA) volunteers (mostly mothers), to advocate for the NMSP’s implementation and the development of the next Plan will be outlined. The improvements in some women’s access to respectful, high quality maternity services over the past five years will be described, as will the challenges that MCA volunteers continue to negotiate as we work towards our vision that all women can access respectful, dignified maternity care.

ALEKSANDRA STANEVA 2-E2
University of Queensland

The Happiness Imperative: When women (do not) talk about their experiences of psychological distress during pregnancy

Discourses around motherhood, unanimously positively framed, inevitably impact women even before being mothers - during their pregnancy. The scripted framework of the Good Mother who successfully and magically balances all aspects of mothering, including her emotions, exerts a particular pressure on women who are emotionally vulnerable during their pregnancy. This talk is based on the qualitative work I conducted as part of my doctoral studies with 18 pregnant women who experienced high levels of psychological distress during their pregnancy. I will discuss how women orient their talk within the “happy glowing” pregnancy imperative and how this did not fit well with their experiences. As a result women engaged in various discursive strategies in order to (not) talk about negative mood or negative experiences related to their pregnancy. I will then explore the implications of this discursive mismatch. I will present an alternative “way out” through a pilot photo-voice project that I carried out with postnatal women who experienced distress after having their babies.

ANDI SPARK 3-E2
Griffith University

Coming Through: Animating female experience of Postnatal Depression

This presentation discusses a creative arts research project focused on the lived experience of postnatal depression. Developed as a series of animated sequences, “Coming Through” explores various symptoms of the illness, depicting a raw, confronting, yet oftentimes humorous take on, not only PND, but the realities of modern motherhood. This study takes an exploratory self-reflective practice approach wherein I examine my own and others experiences and responses to mental health issues surrounding childbirth, correlating these to associated themes of the representation of adult women, social constructs and expectations of women as mothers, concepts of taboo and abjection, along with ideas of embodiment, memory and fragmented storytelling. “Coming Through” is designed for web-based dissemination, created as very short clips (approximately 1 minute each), targeting an audience who are both time-poor and with temporary low cognitive load capability, yet offers a sophisticated and nuanced interpretation of a (still) little talked about problem.
PENELOPE MENDONÇA 1-E3

University of the Arts, London, United Kingdom

The Good, The Bad, and the Critical Single Mother: Researching and cartooning single mothering, while single mothering

This paper will argue that making comic art and doing a PhD, as a single mother, can be a political act. A key aim of this practice-based PhD is to address the stereotypical (and under-) representation of single pregnancy within comic art practice, and within motherhood research. The study involved being a single mama, while undertaking twenty graphically facilitated interviews and workshops with single, pregnant women/ single, first-time mothers of babies, aged between 16 and 52. The raw material from these sessions was then filtered and condensed into a graphic narrative, which explores difficult ‘truths’, while being humorous in tone. Women's experiences are not monolithic, and both graphic facilitation and cartooning proved to be incisive and revealing tools for accessing and analysing diverse experiences and perspectives. At times critical theory, field research and participant views provided direct challenges to the researcher's own life choices and circumstances (while meeting institutional milestones, and drawing single mother narratives, it was also necessary to pay the bills, find the childcare, find money for the childcare, pump the breast, scrub the walls, heat the fish fingers, draw with and nurture my child). The paper will conclude by asking questions about the politics of ‘thinking through drawing’.

FRANCISCA VANDERWOUDE 2-E3

Griffith University

Interplay and parallel play: The arts-based research of a sex-worker mother

Madonna/Whore binaries continue to pervade the representation of women in the 21st century. When viewed within sex-positive, third-wave feminist frameworks, this limits the way women can see and imagine themselves, reinforces negative stereotypes, and leads directly to the oppression and suppression of female sexuality and desire. As a mother and a sex-worker, my experiences serve as both embodiment and subversion of this binary. I am investigating these experiences through arts-based research, utilising auto-ethnographic research processes such as photographic self-portraiture and lo-fi home video, with reference to the subversive potential of “selfie culture”. Emerging from this research are new, alternative representations which challenge the tired essentialism associated with maternal experience by relating it to the extreme performativity of adult entertainment. With a focus on intersubjectivity, affective labour and classed bodies, I will discuss my research in the context of utilising methods and methodologies drawn from and accounting for the competing demands of sex-work, creative research and maternal practices to demonstrate and represent ways of reconciling these roles within contemporary Australian society.

SALLY SAVAGE 3-E3

Monash University

Narratives of motherhood and music: Understanding intensive mothering in early years music making

In this presentation the experiences of a group of middle-class Australian mothers who have attended early childhood music classes with their children are discussed as a form of intensive mothering. Research on parental involvement in early childhood music education
has centred on the benefits for the child, most significantly in developing a potential talent, maintaining motivation and encouraging home music practice. Music education research rarely acknowledges the intersections between mothering and music as a gendered and classed social practice and this research will contribute new understandings about women’s musical mothering. Taking a Bourdieu-inspired view of this gendered practice, as another form of mother work, the discussion demonstrates the huge amount of labour these mothers invest to seek musical activities that accrue various forms of capital that may advantage their children in future educational and employment spaces. Current research also points to the enormous amount of emotional capital mothers spend on cultivating their children’s lives, and how intensive child-centred mothering can have a detrimental effect on mothers and their well-being, who often receive limited support from partners. This is known to provoke anxiety and stress for these aspirational mothers where a competitive undertone to their mothering exists. Whilst intensive mothering is evident in these women’s stories of musical mothering and the pressures this entails, there are also contrasting stories to the negative picture of burden and emotional costs often portrayed by research. These narratives illustrate a positive side to involvement in music classes for mothers’ own well-being and sense of self that speak back to the cultural contradictions of intensive mothering. A sense of belonging, self-acceptance, parenting support and the opportunity to share in an activity that adds value to family life are amongst the cited benefits of attending early years music classes with their children. By focusing on the potential value of mothers’ active participation in music activities with their children, it is hoped that more mothers will involve themselves as willing participants in early childhood music programmes. Using a sociological framework and a narrative case study methodology, this research contributes to existing knowledge by showing how music can benefit mothers’ well-being and impact positively on their mothering practice.

KAREN WILLIAMS

Adelaide University

Grief, love, violence and autism: Jenny McCarthy and the quest of the mother warrior

Mothers of autistic children encounter a range of discourses as they navigate their way through parenting. This study explores a discourse that both challenges and aligns itself with the medical model of disability whilst ignoring and embracing the social. Celebrity mother, Jenny McCarthy, claims to have recovered her true child from the trap of autism. She is now, in combination with Generation Rescue group, honouring the deal she made with god to teach the world how she did it. McCarthy produces knowledge that works to simultaneously entrap and empower the mother. Her knowledge is embedded within a discourse of love and devotion that sees a mother’s love presume and normalise a violence against autism. For McCarthy there are two types of mothers and two types of children. For the mother who dedicates herself to her child there is hope that she may recover her true child. For the other, there is ‘woe is me’. The dedicated mother fights for their true child by trying everything. She becomes a warrior, who with McCarthy as her guide, enters the labyrinth of endless strategies and information to discover her tools, her weapons, to eliminate the autistic child who persists in front of her.
“Who am I aside from Mum?” Relational self-concept and wellbeing in mothers

Mothering is a complex and difficult practice with ever-changing, ill-defined and often contradictory societal standards that are impossible to live up to. The psychosocial aspects of motherhood are rarely examined beyond 12 months post-partum. Any interest in the wellbeing of mothers has been child-centred with a view to improving child outcomes rather than mother-centred. The role of mother can be all-consuming for many women especially in the early years. But 21st century mothers are expected to assume many other social roles which can lead to self-concept confusion: “who am I aside from Mum?” Surprisingly, the psychosocial research has largely ignored the study of the self-concept in mothers. A better understanding of mothers’ self-concept and how this impacts on their wellbeing will promote more realistic expectations for motherhood. This presentation discusses the importance of researching the self-concept and wellbeing of mothers, the emerging relevance of the relational self-concept to mothers and outlines new research examining the effects of a relational self-construal on the subjective wellbeing of mothers of preschool aged children in Melbourne, Australia. The results of this research will assist in the development of appropriate social services and tools for mothers to improve their wellbeing.

Mother guilt and the working mother’s juggling act

Since the 1960s, women have increasingly participated in paid employment and contributing significantly to the family income and sharing financial responsibilities (Fletcher & Bailyn, 2005). Women are now featuring in more senior positions in large, corporate organisations. However even as opportunities for women have extended to outside the family, sex-segregation persists and mothers remain the primary caregiver and family organiser (Bird, 1997). Mothers tend to carry the burden of family responsibilities, even when they are employed (Carlson, Kacmar & Williams, 2000; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). Mothers in the workforce are not only concerned for the wellbeing of their children but also the fear the social disapproval for not being home, leaving them in greater jeopardy of experiencing guilt due to these stressors and worries (Tangney, 1996). The contemporary ideology of motherhood, or ‘motherhood myth’ depict mothers who devote themselves completely—physically, emotionally, intellectually and psychologically to their role (Sutherland, 2006) and is considered a ‘natural’ component of motherhood (Seagram & Daniluk, 2002). This ideology creates an impossible standard of motherhood for working mothers to sustain and can therefore act as a primary source of guilt. Guilt has been described as an interpersonal moral emotion that aims to repair or inhibit behaviour that causes harm to others (Rotkirch & Janhunen, 2009). Maternal guilt has been described as so pervasive that it has been argued to hold an evolutionary basis in that guilt ensures mothers provide adequate care to improve the survival of their offspring (Liss & Schiffrin, 2014) and is considered a normal component of motherhood (Seagram & Daniluk, 2002). The motherhood myth is not a “myth” in the sense of a set of false assumptions. Rather, it is a biased view that emphasizes maternal devotion but denies the existence of different maternal strategies. It presents an idealized view of mothers as exclusive caretakers who are universally present, nurturing and kind— not absent, selfish or aggressive. This view has prevailed and dominated Western science and popular psychology of motherhood for over a century (Hrdy, 1999). The concept of ‘maternal guilt’, sometimes termed ‘motherly guilt’, has attracted little research (Sutherland, 2006) yet the topic receives a lot of
attention in the media (Seagram & Daniluk, 2002). Anecdotally, women are told that maternal guilt is a common feeling. The topic appearing often in women’s and parenting magazines, and self-help books, such as Mother Guilt written by Ita Butrose and Penny Adams in 2005. However little research has studied ‘motherly guilt’ to identify how working mothers may experience it differently to other forms of guilt and what role guilt plays in mother self-care and career pursuits. Research has demonstrated that persistent guilt can result in lowered self-efficacy that impacts on physical well-being, mental health and the ability to be productive (Harper & Aria, 2004) and guilt co-occurs and is exacerbated by feelings of inferiority, exhaustion confusion, fearfulness and anger (Douglas & Michaels, 2004). Therefore it is important to explore the causes and impact of the experience of guilt within the mother role for working mothers.

MARY ELLEN JORDAN 2-F2

Curtin University

On motherhood being bored

In parallel with the fight for women’s liberation from the domestic sphere, a discourse has arisen in 21st century Australia that dismisses the work of looking after young children as ‘boring’, ‘tedious’ or ‘dull’. This discourse is particularly prevalent among middle-class women. Like any occupation, looking after young children can be boring some of the time; however, this discourse describes the total experience of caring for young children as boring, without allowing for any nuance. For example, at an awards night I attended, the keynote speaker described the ‘tedium’ of being at home with her young children instead of writing and was congratulated by the MC for ‘being so honest about motherhood’. As a mother of two children, I have come to wonder what we really mean when we say that parenting is boring. My paper will draw on feminist theory and textual analysis to ask whether this discourse contests or upholds the patriarchal institution of motherhood; what this term says about women’s perceptions of themselves and their role as mothers; how it is employed in some of the negotiations mothers make between competing versions of self; and what some of the possible more complex and challenging meanings hidden behind the use of this term might be.

MARIA VNUK 3-F2

Australian National University

“I didn’t know mothers paid child support.” Money and ‘part-time’ mothering after separation in Australia

In recent decades changes in parenting arrangements of children after separation in Australia has led to an increase in mothers with shared or less-time with one or more children and to more mothers having a liability to pay child support to fathers. Research with ‘traditional’ post-separated families indicates that fathers who spend time with their children are also more likely to comply with their child support responsibilities. Evidence about the relationship between parenting time and child support compliance when the mother is liable to pay is sparse. Gendered norms of mothering as ‘ever present’ suggest that the same relationship between parenting time and money may not apply. My paper presents findings from my PhD research on separated mothers with a child support liability in Australia. Using data from the Australian National University ARC Linkage Grant Child Support Reform Study (CSRS) and reports of liable mothers and payee fathers, I examined the association between time and child support compliance in liable-mother cases one year after the 2008 reforms to the Child Support Scheme.
We need to talk about patriarchal motherhood: Essentialization, naturalization and idealization In Lionel Shriver’s We Need to Talk about Kevin

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.

Window dressing and mothers’ emotional and ethical labour in the tertiary education setting: A new moral imperative?

While the dominant maternal identity is entrenched in the identity of mothers of babies and young infants, it appears that a good deal of window dressing is taking place which constricts and constrains the possible identity constitutions of mothers with young adult children. This window dressing appears to have its roots in the “ideological traditionalist” (Wearing, 1984) maternal identity of the 1950s. Since the 1980s and 90s there has been an increasing concentration on the moral imperative of the child’s growth and development. In traditional heterosexual, heteronormative, patriarchal cultures, the majority of this work has been assigned to mothers and subsumed into the carework mothers engage in with respect to their children. Drawing on the work of moral philosophy and feminist sociology, Maeve O’Brien contends ‘that under traditional gender ideology, mothers’ caring efforts for their children have been assumed, rendered invisible, and not counted as productive effort although this work of care is a fundamental and ethical labour’ (2007: 162). This paper seeks to highlight that, while there is a continued cultural belief that a child is awarded adult status upon reaching the age of 18, Australian universities are establishing new expectations in respect to the care work related to young adult-children. Through the establishment of ‘parent information evenings’ and ‘parental newsletters’, a new moral imperative is also been produced. This moral imperative, however, is window dressed under the banner of parental responsibility. In terms of mothers who are entrenched in
traditional patriarchal ideologies, this new moral imperative is not only window dressing the ‘fundamental and ethical labour’ mothers expend in caring for their young adult-child/ren; it is very likely to constrict and constrain her identity, particularly her maternal identity!

ANNA KERR

The Feminist Legal Clinic

**Workforce gender equality - A false equivalence**

There is currently an expectation that mothers should adapt to the demands of a male operated workforce. It is now the norm for women to return rapidly to paid work, typically having to place their vulnerable new offspring with poorly paid strangers and expressing their breast milk in corporate bathrooms. While women are grateful for the opportunity to retain a presence in the workforce, have we been unwittingly bullied into accepting arrangements that are far less than ideal? How many women and children are experiencing emotional hardship and financial disadvantage because hours of work and leave entitlements continue to be incompatible with school timetables and care responsibilities generally? Are we denying basic physiological and emotional needs of mothers and their children in a bid to secure “equality”? What if the workforce was required to adapt to the needs of mothers and children, rather than vice-versa? What if childcare was resourced to provide the flexibility and support really needed by parents? This presentation will encourage participants to explore solutions and will include discussion of discrimination claims in this area, relevant international human rights law, Finland’s basic income experiment and a consideration of potential reforms of childcare and after school care arrangements.

JOAN GARVAN

Independent Researcher and Maternal Health Advocate

**Support for young families: Rhetoric and reality in contemporary Australia**

An international body of research on the Transition to Parenthood shows high levels of depression, high levels of marital dissatisfaction, a spike in domestic violence and significant issues related to identity for women when they become mothers today. Across the research on perinatal depression is recognition of the need for social support and a recently released study by the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) argues for early intervention and family support. The ‘Our Watch’ campaign maintains that gender inequality underlies domestic violence and they highlight the ‘Baby Makes Three’ program that works with families during the early years after the birth of a child so as to promote respect, communication and equality within families. Though the evidence is compelling these early years services remain inadequate and patchy across Australia. In this paper I argue that we are at a new high water mark in moves towards gender equality and that equality will remain allusive until we recognise and account for issues related to care. The current trends towards gendered roles after the birth of an infant call for institutional change but further to this, couples need to do care differently. The birth of an infant is a significant social and cultural event that has been highly medicalized. Over the course of the twentieth century maternal and child health services have been primarily about infant/child health and the physical recovery of their mothers. Though there has been significant change over recent years these practitioners are scrambling to catch up in an environment where funding has been under attack. This paper looks towards solutions, citing relevant research, and examples of programs that might be used as models for universal services.
BIOGRAPHIES
BELINDA BARNETT
Belinda is a psychologist and volunteer maternity consumer advocate, with a Masters in Organisational Psychology. Belinda is currently a Maternity Choices Australia (MCA) National Committee member and has been an MCA Queensland Committee member for five years. Belinda is also a PhD candidate at the University of Queensland.

SANDRA BENZA
Sandra is a registered nurse who has migrated from Zimbabwe. She has recently obtained her MPH degree with a thesis component at La Trobe University. She is a mother. Her own experience as a migrant woman and a mother prompted her to examine issues of motherhood among Zimbabwean immigrant women in Melbourne, Australia.

SOPHIA BROCK
Sophia is a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology and Social Policy at The University of Sydney. She is investigating how women who mother children with disabilities navigate their personal relationships and sense of identity, within the competing contemporary ideologies of individualization and hegemonic maternity.

WENDY BRODRIBB
Wendy Brodribb is a medical practitioner and Associate Professor in the Discipline of General Practice, University of Queensland. She has been working with breastfeeding mothers and infants for 35 years and has recently been researching infant feeding and postpartum care in the community.

MIRANDA BUCK
Miranda is a PhD candidate at the Judith Lumley Centre, La Trobe University, and works in clinical practice as a lactation consultant at the Royal Women's Hospital, Melbourne. Her research focuses on breastfeeding problems, especially nipple pain, during the transition to motherhood.

PETRA BUESKENS
Petra is an Honorary Fellow at Melbourne University in the Department of Social and Political Sciences, where she teaches Gender Studies and Social Theory. She is also a Psychotherapist in private practice. Her recent publications include *Mothering and Psychoanalysis* (Demeter Press, 2014) and the forthcoming *Modern Motherhood and Women's Dual Identities* (Routledge, 2017). She is the editor of the *Psychotherapy and Counselling Journal of Australia* (2013) and writes opinion pieces on a range of subjects including mothers and mothering, breastfeeding, neo-liberalism, psychotherapy, gender and sexuality.

CLARISSA CARDEN
Clarissa is a PhD candidate in Sociology at Griffith University in Queensland. Her research focuses on disciplinary policies and practices in Queensland schools, both historical and contemporary. She is the mother of a two-year old child.
MAY CHAZAN

May is a Canada Research Chair in Gender and Feminist Studies at Trent University, Canada. Author of The Grandmothers’ Movement: Solidarity and Survival in the Time of AIDS, her scholarship was been recognized by the Royal Society of Canada and the Grandmother’s Advocacy Network.

CRISTY CLARK

Cristy is a legal academic at Southern Cross University, where she teaches Human Rights, and other legal subjects. She did her PhD at the Australian Human Rights Centre, UNSW, where her research focused on the human right to water. She has also written widely on feminism and motherhood.

KAY COOK

Kay is a Senior Lecturer at RMIT University, Co-Director of the International Network of Child Support Scholars, and Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Family Studies. Her work explores how new and developing social policies such as welfare-to-work, child support and child care policies, transform relationships between the state, individuals and families. Given that these policies have a profound impact on the everyday experiences of their targets; Dr Cook’s work makes the personal impact of these policies explicit. By making explicit the connections between political processes and subjective responses, she seeks to provide tangible evidence to policymakers and service providers to affect more humanistic reform.

ANNE CROKER

Anne’s broad experience with ‘women’s collective wisdom’ for breastfeeding mothers was the launchpad for her PhD exploring collaboration. Her findings led to her current qualitative research at the University of Newcastle, Department of Rural Health. Anne also holds an adjunct research fellow position with Charles Sturt University.

TANYA DANNOCK

Tanya draws on more than 20 plus years experience working on family and parenting policies in the public sector and her more recent experience as a professional birthing assistant, facilitator and small business owner, to help organisations support the wellbeing of parents in the workplace.

CHRISTINA FERNANDES

Christina is a Lecturer in the School of Occupational Therapy and Social Work, Curtin University, Australia. A social worker by profession, she has worked in family and domestic violence, consumer involvement in health and general Practice, migrant and refugee settlement and community development fields of practice. She is currently involved in funded research projects in the area of homelessness and the service and support needs of parents with children with disability and significant health needs.

NICOLE FORD

Nicole snatches fragments of time between mothering two small daughters (for love) and grappling with municipal urban strategy issues (for money) to think hard about Australian women’s experience of maternity care. Nicole is a Melbourne-based consumer advocate and a current national committee member of Maternity Choices Australia.
ANDIE FOX

Andie writes about women’s lives, particularly motherhood, from a feminist perspective. Her writing includes contributions to *Daily Life*, *The Guardian*, *The Huffington Post*, and *Meanjin*, plus essays in books such as *The Good Mother Myth: Redefining Motherhood to Fit Reality* (2013), and *Mothers at the Margins: Stories of Challenge, Resistance and Love* (2015). She is a frequently appears as a guest on ABC Radio’s Parenting Panel and is the author of *blue milk*, a personal blog published since 2007 and archived by the National Library of Australia.

MIRANDA FRANCIS

Miranda is a history PhD candidate at La Trobe University. Her research is an oral history of mothering in suburban Melbourne over the second part of the twentieth century. It involves life history interviews with women aged over sixty. Miranda’s other life as a mother and a librarian enlivens this project.

JOAN GARVAN

Joan’s research is in Sociology and Gender. In December 2010 she was awarded a doctorate from the ANU and her thesis was titled: *Maternal Ambivalence in contemporary Australia: navigating equity and care*. Since completing her studies Joan launched an internet site with online courses: [www.maternalhealthandwellbeing.com](http://www.maternalhealthandwellbeing.com). Joan was both a mature aged student and a mature aged mum and her children have now blossomed into young adults.

FIONA GILES

Fiona is a senior lecturer at Sydney University in the Department of Media and Communications, where she teaches creative nonfiction and feature journalism. She is well known for her breastfeeding research including the book *Fresh Milk: The Secret Life of Breasts* (2003). Her most recent publication is ‘Going with the Flow’ a scholarly introduction to Trevor MacDonald’s memoir, *Where’s the Mother? Stories of a Transgender Dad* (2016).

MIRIAM GROTOWSKI

Miriam has 26 years’ experience balancing roles as a General Practitioner (GP), partner, mother of three children, community member, rural healthcare advocate and medical educator. The model of part-time general practice she began 17 years ago, with two others, has been recognised with numerous awards.

CLARE HARVEY

Clare 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. Clare is married with two children.

IAIN HAY

Dr Iain Hay has over 20 years of experience in teaching in early childhood, primary and middle school settings in state schools, Catholic schools and independent private schools. Dr Hay’s Ph.D. titled: ‘Clearing them for learning’: Exploring the critical factors for success in school-based young mothers’ education programs, has had a direct impact on social policy with his research being used to inform the development and construction of a $14.5M purpose built education centre for young mothers at Canberra College.
JEN HOCKING
Jen has worked as a midwife for 20 part-time years. For a number of years she combined
motherhood with paid work and breastfeeding support training and work as a volunteer
counsellor with the Australian Breastfeeding Association. She also became an
International Board Certified Lactation Consultant and gained a Master’s degree in
midwifery. She is currently a PhD student - appreciating the permission this has given her
to immerse herself in what has long been a passion. Her work colleagues are happy that
she has a new audience to complain to. She blogs at http://jenhock.com

DANIELLE HOBBS
Danielle is a Victorian artist, lectures in Fine Arts at La Trobe University, and recently
completed a Masters by Research in the School of Art at RMIT. Since the birth of her
second child, Danielle’s art practice shifted from all-day photographic shoots to working on
small drawings at home with her children, interpreting her experience of Postnatal
Depression and various incarnations of the ‘good’ and ‘bad’ mother as a personalised form
of art-as-therapy.

EMMA HUGHES
Emma is a PhD candidate in the Theatre and Drama Program at La Trobe University.
Emma has a Bachelor of Performing Arts (Honours) from Monash University and a Master
of Arts from La Trobe University. Emma’s doctoral research investigates the
representation of mothers within contemporary Australian female authored play-texts and
live performances.

REBECCA JENKINSON
Bec is a passionate maternity consumer advocate and mother of three. She is in the final
stages of a PhD using feminist theory to examine situations where pregnant women
decline recommended maternity care, and in particular, processes that might enable
respectful care.

MICHELLE JOHNSTON
Michelle is the author and publisher of Woman on the Verge – The Subject is Herself. Her
book explores and reflects on motherhood and living the creative life via visual art journals
and musings. She is the mother of three children and is currently writing a travel memoir In
the Shadow of a Cypress on her recent adventures in Italy.

JENNY JONES
Jenny is a married mother with 3 adult children and is grandmother to one adorable little 5
year old! Her Doctoral thesis Composing maternal identities: The living realities of mothers
with young adult children in Australia was awarded a QUT 2012 Outstanding Thesis Award.
Jenny now works as Clinical Ethicist for Metro South Health, Brisbane, Australia and is a
staff member School of Medicine, Griffith University. She continues to take a keen interest
in, and likes to critique, all things related to Motherhood – particularly the inevitable
tensions that arise for mothers of young adult-children and adult-children.

JUNE JOSEPH
June is a PhD candidate from the Discipline of General Practice, the University of
Queensland, Brisbane. Her PhD around “The experiences of motherhood and infant
feeding among women from refugee backgrounds from Burma and Vietnam in Brisbane” is
informed by phenomenological-feminist theoretical orientations and uses in-depth
interviews and the drawing method in order to enhance the 'voice' and subjective experiences of the women. June hopes to untie the cultural underpinnings of motherhood and infant feeding in a foreign land and show how these mothers navigate powers within the spaces that they interact.

MARY ELLEN JORDAN
Mary is currently enrolled in a creative writing PhD at Curtin University, exploring feminism and motherhood. Her essays have appeared in the Age, ABR and Best Australian Essays and her memoir, Balanda: My Year in Arnhem Land, was shortlisted for several major literary awards.

ANNA KERR
Anna is a mother of four and a lawyer, teacher and activist. She is the founder of the Feminist Legal Clinic which works to advance feminism by supporting feminist groups and their members. Her clients are as diverse as the Coalition for Women’s Refuges, The Women’s Library and Mamapalooza Sydney.

PRANEE LIAMPUTTONG
Pranee is Professor of Public Health at the School of Science and Health, Western Sydney University, Australia. She has particular interests in issues relating to motherhood, reproductive and sexual health of immigrant and refugee women. Pranee has also conducted extensive research regarding motherhood, childbirth, breast cancer and HIV/AIDS with women in Thailand.

ANNE MANNE
Anne is a penetrating social analyst, cultural critic and Monthly essayist who has been a regular columnist for The Age and The Australian. Her works include Motherhood, Love and Money: The Family and the Free Market, the memoir, So This is Life and the best-selling The Life of I: The New Culture of Narcissism. She is currently working on a new book on child sexual abuse.

BARBARA MATTAR
Barbara is a PhD Candidate at the Australian Catholic University. Her thesis explores the representation of pregnancy, birth and breastfeeding in novels and short stories published across the last forty years.

PENELOPE MENDONCA
Penelope is undertaking a practice-based PhD Mothers Storying the Absent Father: A Graphic Novel at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts, London. She is an independent graphic facilitator and cartoonist working on public engagement. With a background in social care and advocacy, Pen’s work considers disability rights, mental health, age and ageing.
TINA MILLER

Tina is a Professor of Sociology at Oxford Brookes University, England. Her research and teaching interests include motherhood and fatherhood transitions, constructions of gender and identities, masculinities, reproductive health, narratives, qualitative research methods and ethics and she has published in these areas (e.g., Contemporary fatherhood: continuity, change and future, 2015 with E. Dermott; and Engaging with the maternal: tentative mothering acts, props and discourses, in Motherhood, Markets and Consumption: The Making of Mothers in Contemporary Western Cultures, 2013; Going back: ‘Stalking’, talking and researcher responsibilities in qualitative longitudinal research, 2015). Tina has lived and worked in the Solomon Islands and Bangladesh and has a particular interest in cultural dimensions and the situated nature of everyday experiences. Tina has been engaged as an expert advisor by the World Health Organisation (Geneva), think tanks and political parties in the UK and presented her work at UNICEF headquarters (New York) as well as in Australia, India and Argentina. Tina has recently completed a British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship focusing on the topic of ‘Managing modern family lives: public understandings and everyday practises of caring and paid work’. Her CUP monograph based on her findings will be published late 2016. She is also an editorial board member for Gender & Society.

ANITA MISSIHA

Anita, a provisionally registered psychologist, is a mother of two young boys who returned to continue with post-graduate studies and is currently finalising a Masters in Counselling Psychology at La Trobe University. Being a mother juggling work, study and family, Anita has experienced firsthand what it is like to cope with competing demands. Having listened to many mothers talk about their guilt and the pressures they experience, Anita was interested in researching the Working Mother phenomenon further.

ANDREA O’REILLY

Andrea is Professor in the School of Gender, Sexuality and Women’s Studies at York University. O’Reilly is founder and director of The Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement (formerly The Association for Research on Mothering) the first and still only international research association on motherhood with 500 paid members worldwide and, founder and editor-in-chief of the Journal of the Motherhood Initiative (formerly Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering), the first scholarly journal on motherhood with 35 bi-annual issues published. As director of MIRCI she has coordinated 48 international conferences. She is founder and publisher of Demeter Press; established in 2006, Demeter is the first feminist press on mothering, reproduction, sexuality and family with 75 titles published. MIRCI, JMI, and Demeter Press are recognized worldwide as the leading research association/publications on motherhood. She has presented her research at more than a hundred conferences, in 20 plus countries and has been a keynote at numerous international conferences including Australia, Canada, England, Ireland, Scotland, South Africa, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Wales and the United States. She has received more than a million dollars in grant funding for her research projects. She is co-editor/editor of 19 books including most recently This is what a feminist slut looks like: Perspectives on the SlutWalk movement (2015), Mothers, Mothering and Motherhood across Cultural Differences: A Reader (2014) and Academic Motherhood in a Post Second Wave Context: Challenges, Strategies, Possibilities (2012). O’Reilly is author of Toni Morrison and Motherhood: A Politics of the Heart, (2004) and Rocking the Cradle: Thoughts on Motherhood, Feminism, and the Possibility of Empowered Mothering, (2006). She is editor of the first encyclopedia (3 Volumes, 705 entries) on motherhood (2010). 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, is twice the recipient of York University’s “Professor of the Year Award” for teaching excellence and in 2014 was the first inductee into the Museum of Motherhood Hall of Fame.
AMY PARKES
Amy is a doctoral candidate in the Centre for Social Change in the School of Psychology, Social Work and Social Policy at the University of South Australia. Using a participatory methodology her research focuses on Aboriginal Australian women’s experiences of motherhood, postcolonialism, sovereignty and Indigeneity. She has published in the Journal of Youth Studies and in Critical and Creative Methodologies in Social Work.

CARLA PASCOE
Carla is a Research Fellow at the University of Melbourne, undertaking an ARC-funded project analysing oral histories of Australian motherhood since 1945. Her research focuses on histories of childhood, menstruation and motherhood in twentieth-century Australia. Her publications include *Spaces Imagined, Places Remembered: Childhood in 1950s Australia* (2011) and *Children, Childhood and Cultural Heritage* (2013) with Kate Darian-Smith.

TITAREE PHANWICHATKUL
Titaree is a PhD Candidate, at the School of Nursing and Midwifery, Western Sydney University. She is a mother of two children and has been a lecturer in Nursing in Thailand. This presentation is based on her PhD research conducted in Thailand.

MARIE PORTER
Marie is an Honorary Senior Research Fellow in the School of English, Media Studies and Art History, at the University of Queensland. Her monograph *Transformative power in motherwork* examines Australian mothering in the 1950s/1960s. Marie was a founding member, and President, of ARM-A, which is now the Australian Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement (AMIRCI).

LISA RAITH
Lisa, a mother, an academic, and artist, has a keen interest in mothers’ and women's creative lives, well-being, and equity issues. She has most recently published in *Mothers at the Margins: Stories of Challenge, Resistance and Love* (2015). A member of AMIRCI since 2005, Lisa creates hand-built pottery between tutoring gigs at the University of the Sunshine Coast.

KERREEN REIGER
Kerreen is an Australian historical sociologist who has published widely on cultural change in families, on childbirth and maternity care organisations and on the challenges of professional work and women’s struggles for change. She is currently working on a biography of Dr Murray Enkin, an international childbirth reformer.

RACHEL ROBERTSON
Rachel is a lecturer in the School of Media, Culture and Creative Arts at Curtin University, Western Australia. Her academic interests include Australian literature, critical disability studies, life writing and feminist motherhood studies. Her motherhood memoir, *Reaching One Thousand*, was published in 2012 and she has published several scholarly book chapters and articles on mothering and disability, including in *Studies in the Maternal* and *Hecate*.
EMMA SAMPSON and SHANNON MCSOLVIN

Emma and Shannon formed MUM in 2009. They are both mothers with young children and have professional backgrounds within Community Psychology and International Community Development. They have an emerging academic interest in all facets of mothering and motherhood, as well as how arts can be a vehicle for community change.

SALLY SAVAGE

Sally is a PhD candidate at Monash University, Australia, completing her studies in the Faculty of Education. Her research interests centre on parental practices in relation to early years music. She is an early childhood educator who has worked in a range of educational settings in Australia and the UK. She is a performer in musical theatre and opera, and for the last twelve years has combined her teaching and musical expertise to facilitate early years’ music classes.

VIRGINIA SCHMIED

Virginia is Professor of Midwifery in the School of Nursing and Midwifery, Western Sydney University. Her research focuses on transition to motherhood, perinatal mental health, and breastfeeding, with a strong focus on the organisation of healthcare, workplace culture and the barriers to the delivery of high quality maternity care.

ANDI SPARK

Andi (Griffith University) has lead the Animation program at the Griffith Film School for the past ten years, after a twenty year career in the industry (including Walt Disney Television Animation and Disneytoon, Medialworld, Viskatoons, and the Australian Childrens’ Television Foundation) as an animation artist then director and producer for short films, music videos, childrens’ television series, TVC’s and independent features. She has since been supervising producer for more than 200 student films, which have screened and won awards in major festivals around the world including Cannes and Annecy.

ALEKSANDRA STANEVA

Aleksandra is finishing her PhD studies at the University of Queensland, Australia. Through employing a feminist, critical realist lens, she is exploring the experience of pregnancy distress; birth, and early motherhood adjustment for women in Australia, particularly focusing on constructions of the “bad mother”, maternal ambivalence, and self-stigma.

JULIE STEPHENS

Julie is an Associate Professor in the College of Arts, Victoria University. Her research investigates changing meanings of the maternal, the social dimensions of mothering, feminist oral history and the outsourcing of emotions and care. She is author of Confronting Postmaternal Thinking: Feminism, Memory and Care (Columbia University Press, 2012).

FLEUR SUMMERS, ANGELA CLARKE, SKYE KELLY and REBECCA MAYO

Fleur, Angela, Skye and Rebecca work in the School of Art at RMIT University. They are all mothers, teach, are currently completing postgraduate study and have artistic practices that include writing, sculpture, installation, performance, music, printmaking, video and photography.
VIRGINIA THORLEY
Virginia Thorley is a cultural historian of the history of medicine and currently an Honorary Research Fellow in the School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry at the University of Queensland. Her recent research interests cover options 18th and 19th-century mothers took when they were not breastfeeding.

FRANCISCA VANDERWOUDE
Francisca is an emerging interdisciplinary artist based in Brisbane, Australia. She completed a Bachelor of Fine Art at Queensland College of Art, Griffith University in 2011, majoring in Sculpture and Printmaking, and is currently completing a Master of Arts (Visual Arts) research project at the same institution.

LEAH WILLIAMS VEAZEY
Leah is a doctoral candidate at the University of Sydney. Her research focuses on migrant mothers and online communities, with related interests in feminism, intersectionality and digital sociology. She is also an online community manager and migrant mother of two.

MARIA VNUK
Maria is a doctoral candidate at the Australian National University. She has more than 20 years’ experience in child support and family policy. Her PhD topic is: Separated mothers with a child support liability in Australia: Does gender matter?

CATHERINE WALSH
Catherine is a Sydney feminist mother, teacher, writer and cancer survivor who has done a lot of volunteering over the years. She is involved in Mamapalooza Sydney and other community groups. She wonders if there may be a better way.

JESSE WHATTAM
Jesse, a recent Trent University graduate, has deep involvements with a number of community-based social justice organizations in Peterborough and is a relentless community organizer, especially around poverty and food security. For three years, she worked at the Ontario Public Interest Research Group as the Food Security Coordinator. Since graduating, she has also been working with Professor May Chazan on research that focuses on the largely unexplored theme of activist aging: asking why and how different women practice social change work at different times in their lives and what it means for them to age as activists.

KAREN WILLIAMS
Karen is currently working on her PhD at Adelaide University in the school of Gender, Work & Social Sciences. Her research focuses on exploring the governmentality of mothers of autistic children. Karen also has a background in marketing and management.

LAUREN WILLS
Lauren is a PhD candidate in the Department of Social Work at Monash University, an ICF-certified life coach for mothers, blogger and a single mother to two fantastic, frustrating kids. Lauren is passionate about helping women define mothering on their own terms and creating lives they love.