The Mother and History: Past / Present / Future
The University of Queensland
2-4 July 2009
"THE MOTHER" AND HISTORY: PAST/PRESENT/FUTURE

An International Conference

University of Queensland

2-4 July 2009

Sponsored by the Centre for Research on Women, Gender, Culture and Social Change in the School of English, Media Studies and Art History, University of Queensland, ARM-A (Association for Research on Mothering – Australia) and ARM (Association for Research on Mothering).
THE MOTHER” AND HISTORY:
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Agenda

**Thursday 2 July 2007**

2:00 – 3:00 p.m.  Registration (Rm 635, 6th floor, Michie Building)

3:00 – 3:30 p.m.  Welcome (Rm 816, 8th floor, Michie Building)

3:30 – 3:50 p.m.  Maurilia Meehan reading from her novel *The Bad Seed* (Rm 816, 8th floor, Michie Building)

Bio: Maurilia Meehan ([www.mauriliameehan.com](http://www.mauriliameehan.com)) is the award-winning author of five novels and many short stories. Her work has been translated into French and German. *The Bad Seed*, her most recent novel, is available from [www.fishpond.com.au](http://www.fishpond.com.au)

4:00 – 6:00 p.m.  Drinks and finger food provided

**Friday 3 July 2007**

9:00 – 10:30 a.m.  **Keynote Address: Gracelyn Smallwood**

(Rm 816, 8th floor, Michie Building)

*The effects of Human Rights violations on Indigenous Mothering*

10:30 – 11:00 a.m.  Morning Tea  ("The Colonnade," outside Goddard Building in the Great Court)

11:00 – 12:30 p.m.  Concurrent Sessions A

12:30 – 2.00 p.m.  Lunch (Wordsmith’s Café) For those interested, there will be a screening of Janet Merewether’s award-winning film *Maverick Mother* (1:00 – 2:00 p.m., rm 437, 4th floor, Michie Building)
2:00 – 3:30 p.m. Concurrent Sessions B

3:30 – 4:00 p.m. Afternoon Tea and Book Launch ("The Colonnade," outside Goddard Building in the Great Court):

Lorelei Carpenter and elke emerald. 2009. Stories from the Margin: Mothering a Child with ADHD or ASD. Posted Press

4:00 – 5:30 p.m. Concurrent Sessions C

6:30 – Late Conference Dinner. Venue TBA

Saturday 4 July 2007

9:00 – 10:30 a.m. Plenary: Andrea O'Reilly (Rm 816, 8th floor, Michie Building)

Outlaw(ing) Motherhood: A Theory and Politic of Maternal Empowerment for the Twenty-First Century

10:30 – 11:00 a.m. Morning Tea ("The Colonnade," outside Goddard Building in the Great Court)

Book Launch:


11:00 – 12:30 p.m. Concurrent Sessions D

12:30 – 2:00 p.m. Lunch (Wordsmith's Cafe)

2:00 – 3:30 p.m. Concurrent Sessions E

3:30 – 4:00 p.m. Afternoon Tea ("The Colonnade," outside Goddard Building in the Great Court)

4:00 – 4:30 p.m. Closing Remarks/Conference reflections (Rm 816, 8th floor, Michie Building)

4:30 – 5:30 p.m. ARM-A General Meeting (Rm 816, 8th floor, Michie Building)
# CONCURRENT SESSIONS

**FRIDAY, July 3**

**SESSION A (11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.)**

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<tr>
<th>Session</th>
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<td>A1 Rm 437</td>
<td><strong>Mothers and Literature</strong> <em>(Chair: Julie Kelso)</em>&lt;br&gt;1-A1 Mothers and Loss: Some Recent Australian Fiction</td>
<td>Bronwen Levy&lt;br&gt;University of Queensland</td>
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<td>2-A1</td>
<td><em>When he is a she is a he is a she is a... The case of the pregnant man</em></td>
<td>Vivienne Muller&lt;br&gt;Queensland University of Technology</td>
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<td>3-A1</td>
<td><em>Doris Lessing’s The Fifth Child</em></td>
<td>Mehtap Akbas&lt;br&gt;Bilkent University, Turkey</td>
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<td>A2 Rm 608</td>
<td><strong>Middle-Age Mothering</strong> <em>(Chair: Marie Porter)</em>&lt;br&gt;1-A2 <em>A Call for Stories: Mothering Through the Lens of a Mother with Young Adult Children</em></td>
<td>Jennifer Jones&lt;br&gt;Queensland University of Technology</td>
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<td>2-A2</td>
<td><em>Which Mother? Whose Daughter?... A Personal Reflection on a Multiple, Multi-Layered and Fractured Mothering Experience</em></td>
<td>Helen Riley&lt;br&gt;Queensland University of Technology</td>
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<td>3-A2</td>
<td><em>Middle Age Mothers in Japan - Past and Present</em></td>
<td>Tomoko Shimoda&lt;br&gt;University of Auckland</td>
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<td>A3 Rm 508</td>
<td><strong>Mothers and Medicine</strong> <em>(Chair: Vivienne Elizabeth)</em>&lt;br&gt;1-A3 <em>‘No Bloody Wonder’: Exposing the Relationship Between Postnatal Depression and the Gender Order</em></td>
<td>Jane Hasler&lt;br&gt;University of Sydney</td>
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<td>2-A3</td>
<td><em>Medicalised Motherhood: Textbook Births and Other Stories</em></td>
<td>Elaine Meyer&lt;br&gt;Curtin University</td>
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<td>3-A3</td>
<td><em>Medicine, Markets and Motherhood: Reconfiguring Care for New Mothers</em></td>
<td>Maria Zadoroznyj&lt;br&gt;Flinders University</td>
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**SESSION B (2:00 – 3:30 p.m.)**
B1  Rm 608  
1-B1  Mothers and Their Men (Chair: Jenny Jones)  
  Hidden in (His)story: Doing Motherwork on the Outside  
  Patricia Short, Nicole Sheperd and Naomi Hansar  
  University of Queensland  
  Christina Reymer  
  Parents as Partners (lobby group, New Zealand)  

B2  Rm 437  
1-B2  Maternity and Autonomy (Chair: Marie Porter)  
  Maternity Care Policy: Limiting Autonomy Today or Promoting Normal Birth for Tomorrow?  
  Rachel Thompson, Faye Lawrence and Yvette Miller  
  University of Queensland  
  Julia Werren  
  University of New England  
  Catherine Kevin  
  Flinders University  

B3  Rm 508  
1-B3  Maternal Resilience and Ideology (Chair: Andrea O'Reilly)  
  Motherhood Resilience: Bouncing back...to what?  
  elke emerald and Lorelei Carpenter  
  Griffith University  
  Elizabeth Dewi  
  Victoria University, Melbourne  
  Virginia Mapedzahama  
  University of Sydney  

SESSION C (4:00 – 5:30 p.m.)  

C1  Rm 608  
1-C1  Mother's Milk (Chair: Elaine Meyer)  
  The Ethics of Human Milk Banking in the Present  
  Rhonda Shaw  
  Victoria University, Wellington  
  Poor Mothers are not Poor Mothers: Understanding Marginalised Mothers in North-Western China  
  Kelly Dombroski  
  Australian National University
3-C1 The MOTHERMe Breastfeeding Peer Support Program: Successes and Challenges with Community-Based Health Promotion
Rachel Thompson and Yvette Miller
University of Queensland

C2 Maternity and Visual Representation (Chair: Julie Kelso)
Rm 437
1-C2 Photographing the Future: The Surprising Convergence of Portraits By a Victorian Mother and a Photographic Book by a Mid-Seventies Feminist
Denise Ferris
Australian National University

2-C2 Media Messages about Mothers' Bodies: From 'Blooming Marvellous Baby Bump' to 'Yummy Mummy No Tummy'
Yvette Miller
University of Queensland

3-C2 Inter-Uterine: Exploring the Reprotech Body through an Interspecies Aesthetics of Care
Tarsh Bates
Artist; SymbioticA, University of Western Australia

C3 Feminist Mothering (Chair: Marie Porter)
Rm 508
1-C3 Mothers and Sons: Feminist Mothers' Narratives about Raising Sons
Sarah Epstein
Deakin University

2-C3 'Worth it in the end': Feminist Mothering as Maternal Practice
Andrea O'Reilly
York University

SUNDAY, July 4

PLENARY (9:00 – 10:30 a.m. rm 816, 8th floor, Michie Building)

SESSION D (11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.)

D1 Mothers and Literature II (Chair: Bronwyn Levy)
Rm 608
1-D1 Milkmother: Demedicalising the Pregnant, Birthing and Lactating Maternal Body
Pamela Douglas
University of Queensland

2-D1 The Maternal Power in the Past: (Lone) Mothers and Their (Adult) Children in Rebecca West’s The Judge (1922)
Shu-Hui Hou
Newcastle University
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<td>3-D1</td>
<td>A Double Burden: Marriage, Motherhood and African Women</td>
<td>Roopali Sircar Gaur</td>
<td>Delhi University</td>
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<td>D2</td>
<td>Maternity in Practice (Chair: Marie Porter)</td>
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<td>Rm 437</td>
<td>There is More to It than Meets the Eye: Custodial Mothers Talk about Contact Arrangements with Fathers</td>
<td>Vivienne Elizabeth, Nicola Garvey and Julia Tolmie</td>
<td>University of Auckland</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-D2</td>
<td>Best Practices Mentoring Programs for Low-Income Teenaged Mothers: What the Moms Themselves Have To Say</td>
<td>Deborah Byrd</td>
<td>Lafayette College</td>
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<td>3-D2</td>
<td>Mothers [working] with Mothers</td>
<td>Corrie Hosking and Jolie Thomas</td>
<td>Adelaide Hills Community Health Service</td>
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<td>D3</td>
<td>Maternity and Activism (Chair: Julie Kelso)</td>
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<td>Rm 508</td>
<td>A Personal History of Maternal Activism</td>
<td>Catherine Walsh</td>
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<td>1-D3</td>
<td>When Mothers Protest: Radical Subjects at Pine Gap’s Women’s Peace Camp, 1983</td>
<td>Alison Bartlett</td>
<td>University of Western Australia</td>
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<td>2-D3</td>
<td>The Paradox of Absent Mothers: Women Who are Both Mothers And Public Figures or Activists</td>
<td>Helene Connor</td>
<td>Unitec, New Zealand</td>
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**SESSION E (2:00 – 3:30 p.m.)**

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<tr>
<td>E1</td>
<td>Maternity and Visual Representation II (Chair: Trisch Short)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rm 437</td>
<td>Maverick Mother: Single Mothers By Choice – an Australian Perspective</td>
<td>Janet Merewether</td>
<td>Filmmaker; Macquarie University</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-E1</td>
<td>The Follywood in Bollywood: Mother Image in Indian Cinema</td>
<td>Roopali Sircar Gaur and Punam Sood</td>
<td>Delhi University</td>
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<td>E2</td>
<td>1-E2</td>
<td>Maternity and the Question of Care (Chair: Denise Ferris)</td>
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<td>Motherhood in the Twentieth Century</td>
<td>Marie Porter</td>
<td>University of Queensland</td>
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<td>2-E2</td>
<td>Maternal Ambivalence: Re-Visioning Care as Outcome of Negotiating Capitals and Meanings</td>
<td>Joan Garvan</td>
<td>ANU</td>
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<td>3-E2</td>
<td>Women’s Maternalist Policy as a Root of the Present-Day Welfare State</td>
<td>Ritva Nätkin</td>
<td>University of Tampere, Finland</td>
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<td>E3</td>
<td>1-E3</td>
<td>Poetry and the Mother (Chair: Julie Kelso)</td>
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<td>Expressed: Mother’s Milk as Substance and Subject</td>
<td>Cath Davies</td>
<td>University of Sydney</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3-E3</td>
<td>Allen Ginsberg: A Poetics of Matricide</td>
<td>Nicola Scholes</td>
<td>University of Queensland</td>
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ABSTRACTS

Gracelyn Smallwood
James Cook University

The Effect of Human Rights Violations on Indigenous Mothering

Prior to European invasion, Indigenous family and kin groups were strong units in which the community cared and revered the young and the elders. Kinship systems unrecognisable to the invaders ensured continuity of care, and gave children an extended family of mothers, all playing the mothering role, and all looking after children equally. The onerousness and loneliness of the traditional western nuclear family did not exist.

The Europeans massacred families, and later herded children into dormitories far from their mothers. Aboriginal women were raped or otherwise abused by white men, and their brown-skinned babies were taken off them to indemnify the whites against their ‘immorality’ of sexual relations with people they regarded as inferior. The impact of the Stolen Generations and segregation and dormitorisation of children has had a lasting impact on present day Indigenous mothering.

Research shows that Indigenous women are more likely to have teenage pregancies, and have more severe substance abuse issues than non-Indigenous women, leading to poorer birth and mothering outcomes. To understand these dismal statistics one must understand the very real effects of transgenerational trauma, poverty and a prevailing hopelessness borne from dispossession from culture, and alienation from country and society.

Bio: Gracelyn Smallwood was the first Indigenous person in Australia to get a Masters of Science (in Public Health). She works at Cleveland Youth Detention Centre as nurse and mentor, and at Townsville Hospital as a nurse and midwife. She is an Associate Professor and Indigenous Advisor to the Vice-Chancellor at James Cook University and has been a driving person behind James Cook University’s progressive Reconciliation Statement.

Bronwen Levy
University of Queensland

Mothers and Loss: Some Recent Australian Fiction

The paper offers a reading of two novels by Wendy James, Out of the Silence (2005) and The Steele Diaries (2008). The novels examine themes of maternal loss in the particular historical circumstances of late nineteenth-century colonial Australia (Out of the Silence) and mid twentieth-century, modern Australia (The Steele Diaries). Both novels examine their themes in ways that link the situation of women, including mothers and children, to questions of women’s independence and agency at particular moments in history, and to feminist thought and activity.

Bio: Bronwen Levy teaches twentieth century, Australian, and women’s writing in the School of English, Media Studies and Art History at the University of Queensland. She has published widely on women’s writing and feminist literary and cultural theory, with a focus on Australian and twentieth-century topics.
When he is a she is a he is a she is a.....The case of the pregnant man

Media and social response to the "pregnant man", Thomas Beatie, has been loud, diverse and fascinating. Thomas was born a biological woman but, as a result of confusion about her sexual identity, decided to become a man. Beatie had breasts removed and hormone treatment, but chose to eave uterus and fallopian tubes intact. When his wife could not become pregnant, Thomas decided to have a baby and his eggs were fertilised by donor sperm under the guidance of a sympathetic woman doctor.

On the Oprah Winfrey show Thomas claimed that it was because he might want children at some later stage in his life that he made the decision to keep his reproductive body. "I actually opted not to do anything to my reproductive organs because I wanted to have a child one day. I see pregnancy as a process and it doesn't define who I am. I feel it's not a male or female desire to have a child. It's a human need. I'm a person and I have the right to have a biological child." (http://abcnews.go.com/Health/story?id=458194)

Thomas's situation has generated mixed reactions, some supportive and indicative of changing and progressive ideas around sex, gender and sexuality. On the other hand, many respondents see Thomas and his decision as an affront to the laws of Nature or God. These varied responses, even those which are encouraging and compassionate, identify the ways in which Western views about sex, gender and sexuality remain predicated on obdurate ideas about masculine and feminine bodies, about pregnant and non-pregnant bodies. This paper will analyse the media and public response to the case of the pregnant man - arguing that most repulsive and disturbing of all, it seems, is the body in-between (Kristeva), the one that visibly defies the binary oppositions of male and female in its insistence on being a "third space of enunciation" (after Homi Bhabha). The paper will also refer to Banana Yoshimoto's fictional piece, Kitchen, as a site which conjures a more instructive image of the transgressive mothering body.

Bio: Dr Vivienne Muller is a Lecturer in Creative Wring and Literary Studies at the Queensland University of Technology

Mehtap Akbas
Bilkent University, Turkey

Doris Lessing's The Fifth Child

Motherhood has always been a controversial subject. While some argue that motherhood and maternal bonding are two skills naturally possessed by women, others insist that all the concepts regarding motherhood are culturally imposed roles which prescribe for women a limited experience of life. The same controversy has become a subject of discussion in many disciplines, including literature. This conference paper will study textual images of mothers and motherhood in Doris Lessing's The Fifth Child (1988). It aims to explore the representation of motherhood, and argues that Lessing challenges the commonly-accepted notion of motherhood as an inborn feature, that women have maternal instinct, fulfilling maternal duties. Lessing does contest this notion through the portrayal of a child, Ben, who is difficult to mother.
David and Harriet are a couple whose sole aim is to be happy with lots of children in a big house, but when it comes to the fifth child, their dream of a blissful family collapses. Ben is an extraordinary child with unconventional skills, attitudes and appearance, who makes life unbearable for both his siblings and his mother. This paper will investigate how Lessing juxtaposes the conventional notion of motherhood with such a challenging experience.

Jenny Jones
Queensland University of Technology

A Call for Stories: Mothering through the lens of a mother with young adult children

The growth of children into young adults may herald, for a mother, troubling times. She may begin to question how she sees and interprets her world. She may begin to ask questions such as ‘who am I’ and ‘who am I to become’. This heralding, I contend, is a call for stories. Building on the work of earlier maternal scholars, I seek to move current understandings of what it means to be a mother, particularly of young adult children, towards a narrative understanding, by addressing how stories construct and narrate mothers and how mothers construct and narrate themselves in story.

My insights have been drawn from personal experience, dominant and popular maternal narratives and stories of mothers whose children are between 18-30 years of age. I interpreted these stories through Aristotelian notions, as well as more contemporary understandings of narrative.

I will show that in moving towards a narrative understanding, we need to re-story maternal narratives so that richer, deeper stories may be told, and more flourishing lives may be lived.

Bio: I am the married mother of three children, currently 25, 28, and 32 years of age. I am also a doctoral candidate in the Applied Ethics program at Queensland University of Technology. My research project seeks to move understandings of what it means to be a mother towards a narrative understanding.

Helen Riley
Queensland University of Technology

Which Mother? Whose Daughter? ... a personal reflection on a multiple, multi-layered and fractured mothering experience ...

I have two mothers. I am a mother of two but I mother four people...my two young adult children, and two mothers in their 90s. I am a late discovery adopted person. This means that I found out about my adoption as an adult. Since then I have ‘found’ my biological mother (and father), attempted (unsuccessfully) to maintain a relationship with two mothers, had two children of my own and, now, as my children become adults I also find myself ‘mothering’ both of my mothers in their advanced aging years.

The challenge of mothering is both rewarding and difficult. When this challenge is ‘doubled’, and complicated by layered secrets, lies and guilt, there are many
conflicting identity pressures and loyalties, as well as a sense of isolation and alienation.

In this proposed presentation I will look at the multi-layered strands of these relationships over the years, their impact, and some strategies I have found to help me balance this confused mix of duty, responsibility, affection, dislike and resentment. These strategies have helped me (so far!) to continue to face the challenges ahead.

These strategies include research on identity and narrative and art therapy. I will include a brief overview of my PhD research. Some of my art works will be included to illustrate my journey.

Bio: Helen Riley is a mature age PhD student in Applied Ethics at the Queensland University of Technology. Her research focus is on the ethical implications of finding out the truth about one’s genetic origins as an adult - specifically the late discovery of adoption or insemination by donor status.

Tomoko Shimoda
University of Auckland

Middle Age Mothers in Japan - Past and Present

The primary aim of this study is to investigate evolving media representations of middle-aged mothers in the Japanese media from the 1980s to the present day. The past three decades have been characterised by a rapidly aging society and rapid technological change in the Japanese media: these things have interacted with gradual, ongoing evolution in gender roles. This study examines the intersections of media and societal changes, with a particular focus on middle-aged mothers, a group once neglected by the Japanese media, but now the target of its growing attention. Interpretative analysis of a range of contemporary Japanese media content was investigated, to understand the nature and diversity of representations of middle-aged Japanese women, how these representations have evolved, and what this evolution signals for how gender representations in the Japanese media may continue to evolve.

Bio: Tomoko Shimoda is a lecturer in the School of Asian Studies, University of Auckland. Her teaching and research interests include Japanese language, gender in Japan, the Japanese media and the social implications of an ageing society. She gained an MA from the University of Sydney, and a PhD from the University of Auckland. Prior to working as an academic, she worked as an announcer in a television broadcasting station in Japan, and has worked as a narrator in a variety of media. She maintains a keen interest in the Japanese media, and a particular interest in how the Japanese media portray gender.

Jane Hasler
University of Sydney

‘No Bloody Wonder’: Exposing the Relationship between Postnatal Depression and the Gender Order

Postnatal depression (PND) has historically been ‘medicalised’ in Western society. It has conventionally been viewed as a medical illness which occurs spontaneously and is best treated with pharmacological and psychotherapeutic interventions.
However, research over the last few decades suggests that gender relations and gender arrangements are central to the development of PND within Western society.

The aims of this thesis, which utilised a feminist/sociological framework, were to explore the adequacy of the dominant medical approach to PND within the contemporary Australian context and to investigate the relationship between the gender order and women's experiences of PND. A primary focus of this research was the ideologies of the 'good mother' and 'good father', both central to the current order.

Three important themes emerged from the qualitative study. First, it was found that the main limitation of the dominant medical approach to PND is that it largely ignores the concept of gender in understandings of this phenomenon. Second, the narratives illuminated a strong relationship between the demands of the gender order — particularly those associated with the gender division of labour, and PND. Third, the 'crisis of identity' that many women experience when they become a mother was found to be closely linked to the 'good mother' identity.

This research suggests that both the state and the individual need to address a range of beliefs, behaviours and institutions that have a significant negative impact on the wellbeing of women in the postnatal period. A model has been developed by the author of this thesis to assist in making clear the relationship between the contemporary Australian gender order and the experience of PND.

Bio: Jane Hasler

**Elaine Meyer**

*Curtin University*

*Medicalised Motherhood: Textbook Births and Other Stories*

My thesis is a discursive analysis of maternal subjectivity and narratives of motherhood, that explores the interplay between women's accounts of their experiences of motherhood and western society's grand narrative of motherhood. In this paper, I discuss how an idea as large as motherhood comes to be constructed in a culture, and how that construct positions women as maternal subjects and thereby shapes their lived experience. Specifically, I examine the ways that the discourse of modern medicine has contributed to western culture's understanding of the maternal subject, unravelling the socio-cultural beliefs and values from the past that underscore the medical institution's view of female reproduction and shape medical practice in the present. My cultural analysis is informed by qualitative research that explores the experiences of a cross-section of Australian women and that unmask the impact of medicalised motherhood on individual women's experiences of birthing and mothering. This will highlight the ways that modern medicine has increasingly come to assert control over what was previously a female domain of knowledge, with the goal of investigating strategies that maternal feminists can use to reposition mothers as knowledge-makers with voices and choices.

Bio: Elaine Meyer is in the final months of her Doctorate in Curtin University's School of Communication and Cultural Studies. She is a mother and step-mother, and her thesis is inspired by her own experiences of motherhood. The thesis combines her qualitative study of online mothers' forums with a discursive analysis of maternal subjectivity, to examine the interplay between women's accounts of their experiences and western society's grand narrative of motherhood.
Medicine, Markets and Motherhood: Reconfiguring Care for New Mothers

Authors: Maria Zadoroznyj and Sarah Berry

The birth of a baby is a major life event that has become increasingly medicalized in many parts of the world, yet the trends in care provision post-birth have taken the opposite path and become increasingly demedicalized, partly in response to fiscal pressures and neoliberal policies. The length of stay in hospital following childbirth has decreased markedly in many high income countries. In this paper we track the changes in postnatal care in such countries, highlighting key aspects of these historical and cultural shifts in terms of their spatial location, temporal duration and cultural meaning. We examine the changes from the so-called ‘social childbirth’ of the late 19th and early 20th century in which care was woman-centred, relational, and extended for periods of up to a month of ‘lying-in’, to the contemporary approaches to care provision. We examine cases from Canada and Australia to illustrate the increasing reliance on families or the market to provide care, and to highlight the cultural shifts in expectations of new mothers. Evidence suggests that care arrangements are generally inadequate and inequitable, and that expectations are unrealistic.

Bios: Maria Zadoroznyj, PhD, is Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Flinders University of South Australia. Her research interests include the division of labour in the health care sector, the social determinants of health, and the social and cultural aspects of childbirth. She has also conducted research on community consultation on attitudes to water management.

Sarah Berry is a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology at McGill University. Her primary research interests concern the social study of health and medicine, and she has conducted research on experiences and cultural representations of caesareans.

Hidden in (His)tory: doing motherwork on the outside

Authors: Patricia Short, Nicole Shepherd and Naomi Hansar

In this paper, we recount the experiences of a small group of mothers caring for children and maintaining family relationships with partners in prison. We focus upon women doing ‘motherwork’ in order to better understand the impacts of incarceration upon the families of inmates, attending to their capacities as well as their needs. To date, much of the research on prison-related families has focused upon costs or benefits of family contact and support for prisoners with scant attention to the costs for partners; upon outcomes or effects of separation rather than of contact, and upon the children rather than the partners of prisoners. The work of women/mothers in family contexts of incarceration remains largely invisible although some recent research suggests a useful shifting of focus. Turning attention to the experiences of mothers on the outside, it becomes apparent that, in the highly constrained and
public(ised) circumstances of dislocation, surveillance and contact that shape their lives, their motherwork is intense, it is deeply connected to values of commitment (to their partner and their children), constancy (in 'being there for him and the kids'), and strength (both emotional and physical), and is 'transformative' in the most immediate sense.

Christina Reymer

Parents as Partners (lobby group, New Zealand)

The Status of Parents and Parenting

Over the last decade, investment in parenting has declined markedly as women's participation in paid work has increased and family sizes have declined. The old models of two parent families on a single income with an at-home Mum have become an option available only for the privileged elite who can afford it. At the same time, government support for subsided childcare outside of the home has increased. What we are seeing, as a consequence, is an increasing number of children who are simply "under-parented" – babies and young children who cannot bond with a significant adult, out-of-control young children increasingly dependent upon Reticin or other medication, and teenagers on the streets, into drugs, alcohol and crime. This calls into question the sustainability of current structures and policies affecting the economic status of parents and parenting, which impacts on parents' capacity to invest in their own time in parenting.

This paper explores a radical proposal for a policy change that creates the opportunity for parents to reinvest their own time in their children's future. It challenges the boundaries of paid and unpaid work, insisting that parenting be regarded as "work". Recognition of parenting as work, the majority of which is done by women, has been described as "the unfinished business of the women's movement".

Bio: Mother of five, and long time campaigner for recognition of the work of mothers in raising children, Christina Reymer is the instigator of Parents As Partners, a lobby group for income splitting. Christina is an executive member of the National Council of Women of New Zealand, and Director of Mahitahi, Catholic Overseas Volunteers. She holds a Masters Degree in Education from the University of Waikato.

Rachel Thompson

University of Queensland

Maternity Care Policy: Limiting autonomy today or promoting normal birth for tomorrow?

Authors: Rachel Thompson, Faye Lawrence and Yvette D Miller

The importance of patient autonomy and informed decision-making is more commonly espoused in the context of maternity care than in any other clinical health setting. Furthermore, there is considerable evidence that women's satisfaction with the experience of labour and birth is optimised when they perceive control and active participation in decision-making. Women's capacity to exercise self-determination during labour and birth may, however, be threatened by maternity care policies which prohibit certain care practices. Some maternity care practices, such as caesarean section delivery in the absence of medical indications, may not carry a net health benefit but may be a preferred option for some women. In this context, we need to examine the potential effects that policies prohibiting these practices may have on
women's perceived control and decision-making. At first glance, policies of this kind may be viewed as constraining choice and disempowering women in their birth experience. However, they may also play a powerful role in reinforcing messages about the safety and normalcy of natural birth at the broad community level and in doing so, effectively empower future generations of women to birth confidently. This paper will discuss this issue in the context of policies preventing caesarean section in the absence of medical indications.

Bio: Rachel Thompson is currently completing a PhD in reproductive health psychology and is a Senior Research Officer in the Queensland Centre for Mothers and Babies (QMCB) at The University of Queensland. Rachel previously held a position coordinating the evaluation of MOTHERMe, a community-owned breastfeeding peer support program in Caboolture, Queensland.

Julia Werren
University of New England

Wrongful Life and Wrongful Birth

In the popular media, motherhood is often presented as a romantic concept where healthy families are happily co-existing together. The practical reality is that, in many instances, motherhood is not necessarily a welcome event for some women and their partners.

This paper will concentrate on two controversial legal actions known as wrongful life and wrongful birth. Wrongful life relates to a situation where a child who has been born disabled argues that if the doctor had properly diagnosed the circumstances that lead to their disability that they would have been aborted and thus would not have had to endure a life of suffering.

Wrongful birth actions relate to a situation where a parent is trying to claim damages for an unwanted pregnancy and, thus, an unwanted child. In most circumstances there will be a failed sterilisation where a doctor has failed to warn the parents that there is a possibility that pregnancy may eventuate. Parent/s is/are seeking damages for the costs of raising an unwanted child.

Clearly these actions relate to contentious and complex legal and ethical issues. Some of the legal and ethical issues that will be explored within this paper include autonomy, sanctity of life, indeterminacy and respect for one's body. These issues and others will be analysed in this paper.

Bio: Julia Werren is a Lecturer in the School of Law at the University of New England.

Catherine Kevin
Flinders University

"Give It to Me Straight": Historicising alcohol, pregnancy and 'responsible mothering' of the foetus

In March this year, the National Health and Medical Research Council delivered their revised guidelines on the consumption of alcohol. These made specific reference to pregnant women who are now advised to abstain from alcohol entirely during pregnancy. The new guidelines have been developed during a period of intensified public anxiety about the effects of alcohol in pregnancy, which has been particularly attentive to the practices of Indigenous and middle-class non-Indigenous women.
This paper examines the recent representations of pregnant women in debates about foetal alcohol spectrum disorder in Australia. It historicises these debates in terms of a history of the medical, legal and social management of pregnant women in relation to the consumption of alcohol and other practices regarded as constituting a departure from 'responsible mothering' of the foetus.

Bio: Catherine Kevin lectures in Australian history, body politics and memory at Flinders University. Catherine has recently edited *Feminism and the Body: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (2009) and co-edited *Branding Cities: Cosmopolitanism, Parochialism and Social change* (2009). She is currently working on a monograph entitled *Great Expectations: A Political History of Pregnancy in Australia since 1945*.

**elke emerald** and **Lorelei Carpenter**

*Griffith University*

**Motherhood Resilience: Bouncing Back ... To What?**

A common understanding of resilience is, as noted by Baraltser and Noack (2006) from the Latin word resalire, to bounce back or jump up again. This concept captures the sense of bouncing back from trauma or adversity. Further consideration of resilience notices the context of ongoing resilience, that is, the context of ongoing environmental stressors such as socio-economic disadvantage or mental illness (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker 2000). In this presentation we explore the metaphor of bouncing back in the context of mothering a child with a disability. In our work with women whose children have been diagnosed as ADHD or ASD, we notice, first, that bouncing back as a metaphor presupposes elasticity, a stretching and relaxing. Yet, for these women resilience is a particular type of ongoing, sustained stretching: that is, an ongoing, sustained capacity to withstand adversity and adapt and change to circumstances. For some aspects of their experience there is no 'back' because the adversity itself is ongoing.

Second, we explore bouncing back by asking: From what? and, To what? In interrogating these women's narratives we find that women are bouncing back from pointed and damaging criticism of their mothering. Criticism based in the myths of good mother that they just cannot live up to because their circumstances, that is, their children, disallow. No matter how diligently they live the ideals of good mother, their children are not able to embody the good child as evidence of good mothering. The children remain inattentive or asocial or distracted, for example. In considering what they bounce to, we find that women bounce to a position of advocacy, primarily for their child. However, advocacy is not a destination, it is not an end to the journey of the bounce. Advocacy is a position of constant motion, constant tension. We explore this tension as an element of the women's resilience in the face of the cultural history of mothering and their personal story of mothering. Women contend with a cultural past that imposes the violence of an unachievable myth; a personal past in which the trauma of the diagnosis of their perfect child shatters their world; a cultural present that is often far from sympathetic to their context and a personal present that necessitates an extraordinary form of resilience in the face of this ongoing pressure; as well as a cultural future of uncertainty together with a personal future that is fraught with problems and the unknown.

Bios: elke emerald examines category construction and identity formation using the theoretical disposition of ethnomethodology and the analytics of membership categorisation analysis and narrative inquiry. She teaches at Griffith University in the
areas of research methods and education. The recent book with colleague Lorelei Carpenter 'Stories from the margin: mothering a child with ADHD or ASD' (Post Pressed 2009) examines motherhood in the context of ASD and ADHD. elke and Lorelei are presently examining motherhood resilience. elke formerly published under the name Helena Austin.

Lorelei Carpenter currently teaches at Griffith University Gold Coast campus, Australia, in the area of Inclusive Education. Lorelei’s primary interest is in exploring how society defines and treats people of difference. She began researching the effect of ADHD on mothers in the mid 1990’s as part of her doctoral studies and has since extended this area to include mothers of children with ASD. Her work is informed by a theoretical and methodological framework of narrative inquiry.

Elizabeth Dewi
Victoria University, Melbourne

Changing Perceptions of Own Mothering among Indonesian Female Domestic Workers

This study examines perceptions of mothering among Indonesian female domestic workers (FDWs) by focusing on the relationship between the women and their families, both nuclear and extended. Although 'the voice' of women is the centre of the discussion in this study, there is a need to recognize the relationship between the women and other institutions and/or ideologies within their families' culture. In addition, economic, political and social changes within the family and community of FDWs could lead to some changes in mothering since mothering does not exist in isolation, but as part of a complex system of globalization that is differentially constructed for women of different races, ethnicities and classes. By looking at FDWs' perceptions on 'good' mothering and their experiences of shared mothering, this study focuses on migrant mothers who leave their children behind; they hence present a challenge to public perceptions of ideal mothers and are singled out for unfavourable, often morally loaded comment. Experiences of mothers, daughters and carers in this study provide a clear picture of women who do not enjoy a degree of economic security, and who do not have the luxury of seeing themselves as individuals in search of personal autonomy, but rather as members of a community, struggling for survival by working as domestic workers overseas.

Bio: In 1996, Elizabeth Dewi gained a Bachelor degree from Parahyangan Catholic University in Bandung, Indonesia. In 2003 she gained an MA from UMass Lowell, USA. She is now a PhD Candidate in Women's Studies at Victoria University, Melbourne. She is also a member of PAC in Plan Australia and an intern for IWDA.

Virginia Mapedzahama
University of Sydney

What Kind of Mother(ing) IsThis?: Conceptualising an Ideology of 'Economic Motherhood' in Zimbabwe

This paper presents the findings of a qualitative study on maternal employment and women's work/life negotiations in Zimbabwe. As in other cultures, motherhood occupies a very significant and essential place in Zimbabwean society, yet there is still a dearth of literature on feminist analyses of the (social construction of) Zimbabwean motherhood and women's mothering experiences. This paper aims to address this gap by exploring the meaning of motherhood through the lived
experiences of a small group of employed mothers interviewed in Harare. In so doing, the paper re/asserts that ideologies of 'motherhood' are powerful determinants not only of the labour force participation decisions that women make, but also of how they experience paid work. Specifically, the paper discusses what I have termed the "economic motherhood" ideology in Zimbabwe, arguing that unlike the ideology of intensive motherhood dominant in most western contexts including Australia, the notion of motherhood in Zimbabwe is developed in conjunction with providing for the family through income-generating activities or paid work, not by being the 'ever-present, always-responsive' parent. The analyses here therefore reveal a sharp diversity in dominant motherhood ideologies in Australia and Zimbabwe, and hence affirm feminist debates on the cultural specificities of motherhood. The paper concludes by arguing that this diversity is important for its potential in facilitating what (even diverse) cultures can learn from the other about the forces that shape women's working lives.

Bio: Virginia Mapedzahama (PhD) is in the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery at the University of Sydney.

Rhonda Shaw

Victoria University, Wellington

The Ethics of Human Milk Banking in the Present

Scant attention has been paid to the ethical dimensions of breast milk donation. However, debate on this topic is propitious given the re-emergence of human milk banks across the globe. In this presentation I outline a number of different perspectives on the gift-exchange of breast milk and some of the presuppositions that underpin debate on this topic, with specific reference to respect for persons and voluntarism, commodification and altruism, and justice and human rights. I suggest that the place of breast milk as a body product and symbolic marker of maternal-child relations, and the cultural, ethical, and spiritual meanings and values attributed to breast milk in ethnically pluralist societies warrants broader discussion than a bioethics model based on principlism and public health discourse affords.

Bio: Rhonda Shaw teaches Sociology at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. Since 2002 she has been engaged in empirical research on body gift-exchange practices including cross-nursing, ovarian egg donation, surrogate pregnancy arrangements, and organ donation and transplantation. Rhonda has recently published in Sociology, Sociological Research Online, The Sociological Review, and Women's Studies International Forum.

Kelly Dombroski

Australian National University

Poor Mothers are not Poor Mothers: Understanding Marginalised Mothers in Northwest China

Poor migrant and minority mothers in China often describe themselves as backward and superstitious, and many medical professionals consider them uninformed when it comes to standardised infant feeding practice. However many of these traditional infant feeding practices are in fact informed by historical practices born of necessity – such as frugality, communal living and shared childcare – practices that continue amongst the marginalised today. This paper explores the relationship between infant feeding decisions, living space and the economy amongst migrant and minority
mothers in Xining, northwest China. I argue that the infant feeding decisions of marginalised mothers are appropriate to their circumstances, and should be understood as fully as possible.

Bio: Kelly Dombroski is a PhD candidate in Human Geography at the Australian National University, and has just returned from a three month stint of fieldwork in Qinghai and Sichuan provinces in north-western China.

Rachel Thompson
University of Queensland

The MOTHERMe Breastfeeding Peer Support Program: Successes And Challenges With Community-Based Health Promotion

Authors: Rachel Thompson and Yvette D Miller

Much evidence supports the value of involving communities in determining health priorities and developing and implementing health promotion strategies. 'Bottom-up' approaches, as opposed to the more traditional 'top-down' approaches, empower communities to exercise control over their health and result in greater effectiveness and sustainability of health promotion projects. The MOTHERMe breastfeeding peer support program is an example of a bottom-up approach to health promotion. MOTHERMe was developed in collaboration with, and implemented by, experienced volunteer mothers in the community, as part of the CABOOLTURE mums and little ones initiative (a suite of interventions to achieve better health outcomes for pregnant and postnatal women in a socioeconomically disadvantaged area in Queensland). In MOTHERMe, experienced breastfeeding mothers developed skills in providing effective peer support to pregnant and postnatal women in their community and provided women with social support to breastfeed via frequent social events, telephone contact and home visits. This paper will describe our experiences in the development, implementation and evaluation of MOTHERMe. We will highlight the considerable challenges experienced in conducting research of this nature (e.g., difficulty balancing research and community development priorities because of disparities in understanding of the usefulness of research; the unsuitability of traditional evaluation approaches due to a need for flexibility and responsiveness to emerging findings; and issues of the sustainability of programs implemented in partnership with volunteers). Key learnings and successes which emerged from the program will also be discussed.

Denise Ferris
Australian National University

Photographing the Future: The surprising convergence of portraits by a Victorian mother and a photographic book by a mid-seventies feminist

Two fine art photographers produced the photographs I will consider. Made under distant and disparate, social and cultural conditions, they exhibit significant commonalities. Communicating similar intentions, they reveal their makers as collaborators with their subjects in their gendered portrayals suggesting developing agency.

From 1859 to 1864, Countess Clementina Hawarden, from her home studio, produced 770 photographs of her adolescent daughters. A century later Starr Ockenga photographed mothers and daughters, her subjects naked.
I expand our perception of the gentility in Hawarden's Victorian photographs to include the possibility of a subversive activity. Ockenga's portraits are brash but Hawarden's liminal spaces are no less remarkable in the context of their own time.

Ockenga's photographs were an audacious 1970's women's liberation display, a confrontation, attempting to normalise the display of the female body as 'natural', foregrounding female sexuality. In a similar way, Hawarden's adolescent daughters are also being showcased, to the tolerable limit or perhaps beyond, of Victorian prevalent customs.

While they appear divergent, looking at these works together provides an opportunity for new interpretations, whose readings are situated outside the evident subjects of the photographic portraits.

Bio: Denise Ferris is a Senior Lecturer in Photography at the School of Art, ANU. Her photographs and works on paper are in Australian public collections including the National Gallery, the National Library of Australia and the Australian War Memorial. International collections include the District Six Museum, Cape Town and Nara City, Japan.

Yvette Miller
University of Queensland

Media Messages about Mothers' Bodies: From "blooming marvellous baby bump" to "yummy mummy no tummy"

The mass media is a powerful source of information that contributes to the current cultural preoccupation with body weight and shape and has been shown to influence women's body image during and after pregnancy. This media content analysis aimed to explore messages about the body weight and shape and health behaviours of pregnant and postpartum celebrities. The content of two popular Australian women's magazines, published over a 12 month period, was examined to identify articles on pregnant and postpartum celebrities. Articles were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. Critical comments about body shape, and messages encouraging weight loss, dieting and exercise were more frequently made about postpartum celebrities than pregnant celebrities. Qualitative analyses revealed four dominant themes; a narrow definition of beauty endorsing thinness during the perinatal period, body shape and weight as the responsibility of the individual and modifiable via self-discipline, pregnancy as a time for unrestricted eating and returning to pre-pregnancy body shape as a priority during the postpartum period. These findings indicate the presence of potentially harmful media messages about body weight and shape and health behaviours during and after pregnancy that may influence women's capacity to engage in healthy behaviours and maintain a positive body image.

Bio: Dr Yvette Miller is a Senior Research Fellow in the School of Psychology at UQ and Deputy Director of the Queensland Centre for Mothers and Babies. Her research is focused on population-level approaches to improving health for women with children, including effective processes for reorienting maternity care to become more woman-centred.
Tarsh Bates
Artist; SymbioticA, University of Western Australia

_InterUterine: Exploring the Reprotech Body through an interspecies aesthetics of care_

As a white lesbian in this biotech era, I am interested in the cultural and scientific discourses around the reproductive body. In a world where children are starving, resources are being massively depleted and species are becoming extinct at an unprecedented rate, we are exhorted to "make babies". As a woman approaching the end of her reproductive life my feelings about my reproductive body are complex and highly ambiguous. I struggle with an urge to produce my "own" child, when the need for foster parents is dire and the resources required to conceive, gestate and parent are enormous.

InterUterine is an artistic research project exploring the aestheticisation and technologisation of the reproductive body, reproductive and creative alternatives, an interspecies aesthetics of care, and the ambiguities of reproduction in a biotechnological era. InterUterine contributes to my Masters research and will comprise 12 glass vessels hand blown in the shape of a human uterus. Each vessel acts as a terrarium for the growth and housing of various plant, fungi and animal species used in reproductive research (Figure 1 & 2).

This paper describes the theoretical and artistic underpinnings of InterUterine and presents some preliminary images of the work.

Bio: Tarsh Bates is interested in corporeal feminism and embodiment. Her artistic research is concerned with the reproductive Cyborg: aestheticisation of the reproductive body, reproductive alternatives, and the ambiguities of reproductivity in a biotechnological era. She explores these concepts through bioart/textiles/sculpture/performance, communicating from the nexus of art and biology.

Sarah Epstein
_Deakin University_

_Mothers and Sons: Feminist mothers' narratives about raising sons_

I am currently engaged in a research project that explores feminist mothers' experiences of parenting sons. The research places an emphasis on the context of their relationship with male partners and investigates how feminism's engagement with ideas of gender and masculinity intersect with the mother-son relationship. I argue that it is within a feminist analysis of the mother-son relationship that the mother's experience can be best understood. Although historically skeptical of motherhood, there are contemporary developments in Anglo-American feminist theory that reinstate agency and celebrate the maternal. Rendering the mother visible can be considered to contribute to boys' developing respect and understanding of women in general. Within this context, the importance of a mother's connection with her son is given great value and their relationship is envisaged as a potential site for social transformation. This research project aims to contribute towards this transformation.
The conference presentation will engage with past ideas about the mother/son relationship while introducing contemporary women's narratives about their relationships with their sons. The presentation will also explore how the participants' feminism and knowledge about masculinity informs the hope they have for their sons future.

Bio: Sarah Epstein is currently undertaking her Masters by Research Thesis at Deakin University in Melbourne. She is a social worker and has extensive work experience with victim/survivors of sexual assault and in providing group supervision and consultation for the YWCA, the Young Peoples' Health Service and The Royal Women's Hospital. Sarah is a parent of two young beautiful boys both of whom are the inspirations for her present research journey.

Andrea O'Reilly
York University

'Worth it in the end': Feminist Mothering as Maternal Practice

A central demand of maternal practice is the task of training: raising a child to be acceptable to her/his society and to have a sense of belonging in his/her culture. However, for a feminist mother such a demand is often understood as interfering with, and negating the overarching aim of her feminist maternal politic and practice; namely to raise my children apart and against the culture of patriarchy. It would seem that to be true to one's authenticity as a feminist one would have to either fulfill the children's acceptability and hence not fulfill the required demand of training or work towards the social acceptability of the children and forsake one's feminist principles. It would seem, in other words, that it is impossible to be both a feminist and a mother and to simultaneously perform feminist mothering and maternal practice. The aim of this talk, "Worth it in the end': Feminist Mothering as Maternal Practice "is to revisit this paradox of feminist mothering and maternal practice and to argue that maternal authenticity and social acceptability of children may be reconciled through a radical re-visioning of the concept of training as developed in Sara Ruddick's landmark Maternal Thinking. More specifically, I will argue that if training is reconfigured specifically as a feminist enterprise through the tasks of cultural bearing, feminist mothering and matroreform, maternal authority makes possible the social acceptability of children and feminist mothering becomes an act of maternal practice.

Andrea O'Reilly
York University


The emergence of an international motherhood movement and the development of Motherhood Studies as an academic discipline over the last decade have lead maternal scholars and activists to define and develop a politic and theory of maternal empowerment. Maternal activists and researchers today agree that motherhood, as it is currently perceived and practiced in patriarchal societies, is disempowering if not oppressive for a multitude of reasons ranging from the societal devaluation of motherwork, the endless tasks of privatized mothering and the impossible standards of idealized motherhood. Maternal activists and researchers likewise contest, challenge and counter patriarchal motherhood by way of a plethora of theories of and strategies for maternal empowerment. This talk "Outlaw(ing) Motherhood: A Theory and Politic of Maternal Empowerment for the 21st Century" will not so much revisit
these ideas and strategies as request that scholars and activists alike, rethink received or accepted notions of how and why motherhood functions as an oppressive institution for women. When asked, students, mothers, researchers readily describe the exhaustion, guilt, boredom, anxiety, loneliness and so forth of contemporary Western motherhood but are less forthcoming on why this is so. Yes, mothers in North America are overwhelmed, fatigued and guilt-ridden because they alone assume the responsibility for, and work of motherhood but the larger question remains: why is this so? It is my view, and the argument of this paper, that modern motherhood functions as a patriarchal institution, one that has largely been impervious to change despite forty years of feminism, because of the gender ideology that grounds it; namely gender essentialism and the resulting naturalized opposition of the public and private spheres. The paper will argue that only by unearthing and severing the ideological underpinning of patriarchal motherhood, namely gender essentialism, can we develop a politic of maternal empowerment and a practice of outlaw motherhood for the 21st century.

Bio: Andrea O’Reilly is Associate Professor in the School of Women’s Studies at York University, Toronto, Canada. In 1998 O’Reilly founded and continues to direct the Association for Research on Mothering, the first research association on motherhood worldwide, now with 550-plus paid members from more than twenty countries (www.yorku.ca/arm). Since 1997 she has served, as director of ARM, as the principal organizer for 30 international conferences in Canada and abroad. In 1999 she founded the Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering, the first and still only scholarly journal on Motherhood.

Pamela Douglas  
University of Queensland

Milkmother: Demedicalising the Pregnant, Birthing and Lactating Maternal Body

While motherhood narratives have flourished since the 1980s, there remains an under-representation of the pregnant, birthing and (metaphorically or literally) lactating woman (“the milkmother”) as subject in Australian women’s fiction and non-fiction. My thesis examines representations of the milkmother in Australian women’s writing not only as a feminist theorist, and mother, but as a general practitioner, who encounters pregnant women, and the mothers of babies and small children in clinical practice daily. These mothers regularly echo the words of writer and mother Fiona Place: “I am completely overwhelmed...” No-one ever warned me it would be like this.” I suggest that the under-representation of the milkmother as an embodied, valorised subject in the Western imaginary negatively affects the biology of the maternal (and therefore the infant) body. In the context of a masculinist imaginary, and an associated relative absence of stories preparing women for the experiences of the transfigurative maternal body, the medical profession has assumed a powerful role in determining the milkmother’s representations, often depicting her as “abject,” or “not enough.” Women introject these images, with problematic physiological consequences. Yummy Mummy, a twenty-first century representation of the milkmother, makes important gains, but remains a derivative of the Virgin Mary and the masculinist imaginary in fundamental ways. My thesis argues that if the milkmother is to demedicalise her experience, celebrate her body’s “jouissance,” and find the political power to protect her own and her young children’s complex biopsychosocial needs, she needs to write herself into a feminine imaginary.
Bio: Pamela Douglas has just submitted her PhD, which has two parts: a memoir in fiction, and a critical essay on representations of the milkmother in Australian women’s creative writing. She is a part-time lecturer in the School of Medicine at both The University of Queensland and Griffith University; works in general practice, and is currently developing an integrated, team-delivered program for unsettled babies and their mothers. She is a lecturer in the School of Medicine at the University of Queensland, and works in general practice.

**Shu-Hui Hou**
Newcastle University

**The Maternal Power in the Past: (Lone) Mothers and Their (Adult) Children in Rebecca West’s The Judge (1922)**

After World War I, in the aftermath of the war, the social, economical, and political upheaval, Britain sought to restore the pre-war peace and stability by returning to the traditional gender roles; namely, the segregation of gender and the dichotomy of femininity and masculinity. Motherhood was expected and promoted, and women were compelled to give up their wartime jobs and return to their traditional roles as wives and mothers. It was assumed that to return to the traditional gender roles would bring about pre-war order and stability; however, it was women who were compelled to return to their traditional roles after they experienced freedom during the war. This paper, focusing on Rebecca West’s The Judge (1922), maps out the discrepancy between the ideology of motherhood which was prevalent in interwar Britain and the dilemma and plight confronted by (lone) mothers - whose personal conditions, such as, marital status, social status, financial condition, and so forth, varied - represented in West’s The Judge. The paper also examines how the ideology of motherhood and social policies both of which went hand in hand during the interwar years affected mothers themselves and the relationships between mothers and their children.

Bio: Shu-Hui Hou is a Ph.D. student in English at Newcastle University, and my doctoral thesis is “Motherhood in Jean Rhys, Elizabeth Bowen, and Rebecca West”. My interests are Feminisms, gender studies, cultural studies, and the First World War studies.

**Roopali Sircar Gaur**
Delhi University

**A Double Burden: Marriage, Motherhood and African Women**

Perception of motherhood is evident in almost all modern African fiction. Such literary texts dramatize a woman’s struggle to conceive, her fear of being replaced, the consequent happiness at conception and delivery or the agony in the denial of motherhood, detailing the various attempts to appease the gods and hasten pregnancy, followed by the joys and/or pains of motherhood. Glorifying the African woman and Africa became an important mission of the writer in colonial and post colonial Africa giving rise to woman as symbol and often leading to stereotyping her role and denying her a place outside her home. This paper will attempt to reveal the insidious use of outdated customs and traditions which subjugate women within the domestic space and how unlike male writers who present womanhood and motherhood within the context of larger social problems, African women writers have successfully attempted to release women from the mystique of motherhood by presenting both joys and pains of the woman’s experiences of motherhood. Various types of motherhood are projected. But one point is clear, motherhood is crucial to
the happiness of the African woman and her ability to control her life.

Bio: Dr Roopali Sircar Gaur is an Associate Professor of English at Sri Venkateswara College Delhi University India. She has a PhD in African Literature from the Jawahar Lal Nehru University New Delhi. Her book published in 1995 is entitled The Twice Colonised: Women in African Literature. As Hon President and founder member of non profit organisations YUVATI, Gramin Foundation and Dharti she works for the health and empowerment of poverty stricken women and young girls in rural as well as the burgeoning slums of urban India. An environmentalist activist she has a unique recycled garden in NOIDA India where she lives.

Vivienne Elizabeth
University of Auckland

There is more to it than meets the eye: Custodial mothers talk about contact arrangements with fathers

Authors: Vivienne Elizabeth, Nicola Gavey, Julia Tolmie

Recent scholarship (Boyd 2003, 2004; Rhoades 2002; Smart 1997; Smart & Neale 1999) points to the frequency with which separated mothers in dispute over care and contact arrangements for their children are defined as hostile and obstructive. The hostile, custodial mother is a highly reductionist construct that pathologizes and demonizes mothers who seek arrangements for their children that are supportive, stable and safe. Importantly, the construct of the hostile, custodial mother obscures the complexity of the positions adopted by custodial mothers towards non-custodial fathers. In this paper, we draw on the narrative accounts of custody disputes provided by twenty-one women living in the upper North Island of Aotearoa/New Zealand to examine the complex and sometimes contradictory positions these women hold in relation to fathering in general and the fathers of their children in particular. Our analysis reveals that mothers in dispute over care and contact arrangements tend to subscribe to the cultural belief that contact with non-custodial fathers is generally in a child’s best interests, even as many of them raise questions about the value of and strains associated with particular kinds of arrangements for contact with particular fathers.

Bio: Vivienne Elizabeth is a Senior Lecturer in the Sociology Department at the University of Auckland. Her academic background is interdisciplinary: she has worked at the intersections of sociology, women’s studies and cultural studies. Her research interests have focussed on in the way in which gendered identities are constructed and negotiated in a range of social sites (for instance, the family and the managerial university) and through a number of different social practices (for example, money management and physical violence). Vivienne has previously published on heterosexual couples, violence against women, and more recently, on custody disputes.

Deborah Byrd
Lafayette College

Best Practices Mentoring Programs for Low-Income Teenaged Mothers: What the Moms Themselves Have to Say

The primary purpose of this presentation is to give a voice to nine remarkable young women in their late teens and early twenties. Four self-identify as white, two as African American, two as Latina, and one as biracial. All became pregnant during or
right before entering high school, and all chose to bear and raise the child. Although most have received significant emotional and financial support from family members, all nine young women remain unmarried; they are single mothers who from the time they were teenagers have assumed primary responsibility for their own and their child’s well-being. Contrary to prevailing stereotypes, these mothers are not foolish, irresponsible, promiscuous, and dysfunctional young women who have done irreparable harm to themselves—and to a child—by becoming mothers as teenagers. Not only did they graduate from high school at the time they were expected to do so, but all are pursuing the kind of post-secondary education that is likely to make them economically self-sufficient in the near future.

What accounts for the success of these teenaged mothers? In a series of interviews, the young moms were asked to articulate the challenges they had faced as pregnant and parenting teens and to identify the factors that helped them maintain high self-esteem and a sense of authority and agency. Without exception, these nine young women claimed that the key factor in their success was their decision to participate in a mentoring program called the Family Development Research Program. In this conference presentation, I will briefly detail the history, goals, and achievement record of the FDRP, which I regard as a “best practices” mentoring program for young, low-income single mothers. In the remainder of the presentation, I will present the words of the young mothers, who identify four components of the FDRP as key to their success:

- Accessible, affordable, high-quality childcare;
- Ongoing, frequent mentoring from one or more adults who can (a) provide accurate information about such matters as health, parenting, social service entitlements, and birth control and (b) listen and advise in a supportive, encouraging, non-judgmental way;
- The opportunity to socialize and form a support network with other current or former teenaged mothers;
- A strong emphasis on the importance and benefits of finishing high school, then pursuing post-secondary education—and programming that makes accomplishing these goals possible.

Bio: Dr. Deborah Byrd is Associate Professor of English and Coordinator of Women’s and Gender Studies at Lafayette College, Easton, Pennsylvania.

Corrie Hosking and Jolie Thomas 3-D2
Adelaide Hills Community Health Service

Mothers [working] with Mothers

Corrie Hosking (Social Worker) and Jolie Thomas (Team Leader and Speech Therapist) are from The Children and Families Team at The Adelaide Hills Community Health Service. The Team consists of Speech Therapists, Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist, Psychologist, PMA and Social Workers and supports children (0-4) who are developmentally delayed, or at risk of delay, and their families—most often their mothers. The Team has identified work with children under the guardianship of the minister and Aboriginal children as a high priority. Some of the issues families might be up against include poverty, disadvantage, isolation, disability, mental health, violence, abuse, drug and alcohol dependence. The focus of our work has shifted over the years from a more clinical service offering one-on-one therapy, to a more wholistic group-based approach which supports parenting, play and attachment.
This presentation aims to explore the complexity of this work with mothers.

How do we position ourselves and how are the women we work with constructing our role? As ’experts’? As women? As mothers?

What are some of the knowledges that underpin our way of working?

How has the historical position of women and mothers in our society shaped this work?

How can we address issues of power and privilege?

How do we grapple with issues of child protection while remaining mindful of our culture’s continued scrutiny and surveillance of women and their ways of being?

How can we remain open to questioning our own values, assumptions and experiences as a group of ‘working mothers’?

Bios: Corrie Hosking is a writer of fiction, particularly driven to explore the complexities of women’s lives. Through opportunities in the Arts, she came to Narrative Therapy and subsequently completed post-graduate studies in Social Work. This informed her PhD in Creative Writing / Cultural Studies, which examined women’s experience of the body and the significance of food, eating, feeding and being fed in women’s lives. She is currently employed in The Children and Families Team at The Adelaide Hills Community Health Service, chipping away at her third novel, about to commence on more studies in Early Childhood Education…and she is always a mother of three delightfully challenging children.

Jolie Thomas has worked in community health with a focus on early childhood and families for most of the past 15 years, initially as a speech pathologist and more recently as coordinator of a multidisciplinary allied health team. Her interest in the complexities of social health issues impacting on mothers and children has led her to attempt a soon to be completed Masters in Health and International Development. Finding respite in the outdoors and planning adventure travel with three children keeps her mostly sane and happy.

Catherine Walsh

A Personal History of Maternal Activism

My presentation is based on a piece I wrote for an anthology for new mums that will be published in 2010. It is the story of my personal experience, of asking questions and seeking answers, of trying to work out how to be a feminist and a mother, that led me to a form of maternal activism.

Bio: Catherine Walsh is a Sydney mother to three daughters. She writes letters to the Sydney Morning Herald and questions to Q&A. She has dabbled in many creative arts and holds a BA M Lit from UNE, and a songwriting award. Her blog is called Motherhugger.

Alison Bartlett

University of Western Australia

When Mothers Protest: radical subjects at Pine Gap Women’s Peace Camp, 1983

In November 1983, around 800 women from around the country converged to meet just outside of Alice Springs in the central Australian desert where they staged a two-week protest against the presence of the US Space Base close by at Pine Gap.
Known as the Pine Gap Women’s Peace Camp, this event was part of a global women’s protest against militarism and the pressing dangers of nuclear war being keenly felt in the early 1980s.

In this paper, I look at the function of maternity. The presence of women with children at the camp meant making plans for childcare, deciding if male children could attend and until what age, and the level of communal responsibility taken. While Pine Gap is often publicly remembered for its lesbian presence, when mothers became protestors their political agency was recognised at the cost of their maternity. And yet one of the major discursive planks used for protesting against nuclear war and militarism in general was that women were acting as guardians of future generations of children, appealing to an essential maternal function. Drawing on newspapers, photographs, gossip, newsletters, interviews and poetry, this paper seeks to create a sense of the controversial place of maternity, its uses and limits, in this particular event of 1980s feminism.

Bio: Alison Bartlett chairs the Women’s Studies program at the University of Western Australia. She has published widely on maternal corporeality, including the monograph Breastwork: Rethinking Breastfeeding (UNSWP 2005). An edited collection with Rhonda Shaw, Giving Breast Milk, is due out shortly. She edits the online journal Outskirts: feminisms along the edge.

Helene Connor 3-D3
Unitec, New Zealand

The Paradox of Absent Mothers: Women who are both Mothers and Public Figures or activists

This paper will draw on the life history of Betty Wark, (1924 - 2001) a Maori woman, community developer and activist. Betty was known as ‘Ma Betty’ to hundreds of street kids over the years she worked as a house-mother at the Arohanui Trust hostels she helped establish. Ironically, however, her position as house-mother created a public identity that was at odds with her own self-perception. Having struggled with issues around her lack of being mothered and her own experiences of motherhood she was to find herself being cast in the role of a ‘Mother Teresa’ figure. ‘Ma Betty’ had been created and her excursion into ‘heart politics’ had begun. Yet this construction can also be viewed as the central paradox of Betty’s life. As her political activism grew along with her mothering of Auckland’s street kids, Betty gradually became an absent mother to her own children. For Betty, as with many other activists who are also mothers, parenthood took second place to her political commitment. It is a dilemma that goes to the heart of the problem of activism for women who are mothers.

This paper will discuss this central paradox in her life and examine how personal narratives can highlight the often contradictory experiences of motherhood and the ways in which women negotiate the constructions of idealized ‘motherhood’ and consequential ‘mother guilt’ when inevitably such constructions are not realized.

Bio: Helene Connor is of Māori, English and Irish descent. She has whakapapa (genealogy) links to Te Atiawa and Ngati Ruanui iwi (tribes) and Ngati Rahiri and Ngati Te Whiti hapu (sub-tribes). Helene’s PhD thesis, (2006, University of Auckland), Writing Ourselves ‘Home’, Biographical Texts; A Method for Contextualizing the Lives of Wahine Māori: Locating the Story of Betty Wark, included the life history of a Maori woman, in which the theme of mothering was central to her narrative. Helene lives in Auckland, New Zealand and has one
daughter. She lectures in the Master of Social Practice and the Bachelor of Social Practice programmes in the Department of Social Practice, Unitec, New Zealand.

**Janet Merewether**
Filmmaker

*Maverick Mother: Single Mothers by Choice – an Australian Perspective*

I propose to examine the subject of solo motherhood by choice/chance in Australia with reference to my recent autobiographical documentary *Maverick Mother* (2007). Growing numbers of working women are now finding that their biological clocks are not synchronised in relation to their personal relationships with men. Considered 'socially infertile', these women are increasingly deciding to choose the path of single motherhood, either through anonymous donor insemination or known donors. Other women and girls who 'fall' pregnant as a result of casual affairs are now in a position to raise their families successfully due to the availability of childcare, healthcare and education.

In the film *Maverick Mother* I document my own experiences through personal and at times irreverent video diaries and performed studio reconstructions. The film interrogates the nature of 'family' in contemporary western society and contemplates the past, present and future concepts of solo motherhood, and the attitudes of women who, rather than being 'left on the shelf' by men because they are too smart, too funny, too 'ugly', too talented or too independent, embrace their own sexuality and fertility to immerse themselves in life's greatest love and greatest challenge.

This paper will examine the changing experiences of solo motherhood from the perspectives of Australian women in the 1890s, 1980s and early 21st century.

**Bio:** Dr Janet Merewether is a Sydney-based filmmaker and academic. She has produced numerous award winning films and digital videos, including *Jabe Babe – A Heightened Life* which won the 2005 AFI Award for Best Directing in a Documentary, 2005 Lexus 'IF' Inside Film Award for Best Australian Documentary and the Merit Award at the Taiwan International Documentary Festival 2006. In 2007, she wrote, produced and directed the documentary *Maverick Mother* which was winner of two ATOM Awards for Best Australian Documentary (General and Human Interest, 2008) and winner of two Taiwan International Documentary Festival Awards (Audience Award and Jury Special Mention, 2008).

**Roopali Sircar Gaur and Punam Sood**
Delhi University

**The Follyhood in Bollywood: Mother Image in Indian Cinema**

India produces the largest number of films in the world and in many languages. India produces more than 1000 feature films and 900 short films every year. Approximately seventy five million people see films in India everyday either in its 13000 cinema halls or on video and cable. Films have played a major role in post independence Indian identity. They have served as a very useful and emphatic medium to portray social, economic, and political realities of the Indian society. For most Indians the large screen provides an alternative escape from the realities of day to day life. Bollywood, as the Indian film industry is known, majorly contributes to the distortion and dissemination of mother stereotypes who are in turn internalised and perpetrated as the ideal.
Long suffering mothers, nurturing mothers, single mothers, unwed mothers, the righteous mother, the cruel step mother, the sacrificing mother and the working mother are the oft repeated images of motherhood which are endorsed, acclaimed and internalised by the movie goer. This paper will attempt to present the changing mores of motherhood and its pervasive influence on the psyche of the common Indian who often identifies himself/herself with the central character.

Bio: Punam Sood is Assistant Professor in the Dept of Hindi Literature at Sri Venkateswara College Delhi University. Coordinator of the Women’s Development Centre at SVC. Uses theatre for purpose of creating awareness. PhD on Indian women writers.

Roopali Sircar is Associate Professor of English Sri Venkateswara College Delhi University. Environmental Activist and Community Worker.

**Marie Porter**
*University of Queensland*

*Motherhood in the Twentieth Century*

Major worldwide events occurred during the twentieth century which influenced the socio-cultural context and, in turn, affected mothering and the mother because motherhood is always embedded in the context in which it is carried out. The changes included two world wars, the rise of science, particularly in relation to medicine and its role in concerns of child welfare, and social changes brought about from and through the feminist movements. Changes in ideas about motherhood result in consequent changes in the mother’s status. In some periods the mother was lauded and respected for her motherwork, while in other periods the mother was viewed as an unintelligent person who was incapable of mothering unless she was told what to do by professionals who were usually men. Conversely, there were ideas about motherhood that were quite inflexible. The most significant and enduring of these ideas was the expectation that only a married women should become a mother. This paper seeks to outline these changes and their impact on understandings of motherhood, mothering and the identity of mothers.


**Joan Garvan**
*ANU*

*Maternal Ambivalence: re-visioning care as outcome of negotiating capitals and meanings*

In this paper I am arguing that the intersubjectivity between the woman as mother and the infant is a critical factor in the revisioning of care and that we need to provide for non-gendered caring routines so that alterity might be preserved for both mother and baby.
Dependency has been historically structured within a gendered family form and based on a misconception of autonomous individualism. Thus many new mothers grapple with issues related to identity as a consequence of a privatization of care, with assumed and gendered roles. Over recent years there have been efforts to reconceptualise care and speak about the work of mothering in terms of negotiating capitals and meanings. Ambivalence can be seen as an achievement by the woman as mother, and has come to characterise the experience, not in terms of their connection with their infant, but in terms of the social location of care.

By way of response to these issues there is evidence of both morals based explanations of care or a capacities approach that reconceptualises welfare economics. The experience of pregnancy, birth, and mothering in the current context, often elicits ambivalences that fosters reflexivity, a reappraisal of interactions between the self and other, and thus the potentiality for a renewed sense of the maternal self.

Bio: Joan Garvan was a mature aged student and completed a Master of Arts, in Women’s Studies and Human Geography aged 42, and became pregnant for the first time in the same year. Now the two children are aged 15 and 13 and she is in the final year of a PhD study, in the field of gender and sociology, at the Australian National University. Her paper is drawn from work in progress. The topic and the experience of mothering has become all consuming while endeavouring to absorb and include dimensions like music, art, walking, friends and fun.

Ritva Nätkin

University of Tampere, Finland

Women’s Maternalist Policy as a Root of the Present-Day Welfare State

In my presentation I seek to answer the question of what the influential Finnish women of the Population and Family Welfare Federation thought ad acted and how they made their policies heard. Population politics in which women participated as both bodily and political agents offers an arena for a closer analysis of women’s contributions. Based on biographical information and (auto)biographical data I also ask what kind of feminist issues they promoted, how they lived (for example mothering, working and studying), in which issues can they be considered pioneers. I pay attention to four influential women who acted during 1941-1971.

Rakel Jalas (1892–1955) was a doctor in medicine and specialised in neurology and mental diseases. She became inspector of poor relief in the Ministry for Social Affairs, and an inspecting doctor in the Welfare and Population Department. She was a Member of Parliament in the National Coalition Party. She was also a teacher of hygiene, psychiatry and welfare work in the training programme of social workers. She was married and had children but didn’t speak about her personal life in publicity. Her focus in politics was moral education and maternity.

Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio (1901–1951) was a researcher and programme planner and a speaker of the Federation. She was doctor in folklore and a wife of a famous professor of folklore. She was additionally a scholar who was able to combine the care of her own (five) small children and scientific work and she proclaimed this model for others as well. Her focus in politics was professionalising the work of housewives.
Martta Salmela-Järvinen (1892–1987) represents a rare species among the women working in the federation. She was a member of the working-class women’s movement and had not gained formal professional or educational qualifications. She was wife of a "red prisoner" and gave birth to seven children, two of whom died. She toured as a speaker in the various functions of working-class organisations and became a Member of Parliament of the Social Democratic Party. Her focus in politics was defending unmarried mothers.

Leena Valvanne (1920—2008), the Health Care Counsellor, was characterised as the "state midwife" because her most important work concerns developing Finnish maternity welfare. She is also a trade union activist and a well-known public figure. With her work she propagated the ideas of "gentle birth" and "active labour". In the 1960s she worked to admit fathers into the delivery room and to promote shared and equal parenthood which was her focus in welfare politics and in her personal life, too. She had three children.

I define maternalism as a political movement and a way of thinking that binds together women and children and their interests in (welfare)politics. It has been characterised also a root of present-day welfare state. I cannot but wonder at the power of maternalist thinking which brought women together across class divisions. Of course it was also political rhetoric aimed at uniting the nation. The maternalist discourse captures also the polyvocality of women. I explore the transformable maternalist discourse with the method of discursive struggle.

Bio: Ritva Nätkin is acting as a professor in social policy in the Department of Social Research, University of Tampere, Finland. She is a mother of four children, two teenagers and two young adults. She has written her doctoral dissertation in 1997 concerning Finnish maternity and population policy. She has studied both women as active, influential agents like female professionals or maternalist politicians in the NGOs who have built the services of the Finnish welfare state, and on another level, women as objects under control: e.g. mothers telling their stories and mothers with substance addiction or wives of alcoholics.

Cath Davies
University of Sydney

Expressed: Mother’s Milk as Substance and Subject

Ever since Hera sprayed the Milky Way into existence so many moons ago, breastmilk has dabbled in the arts. As a material it may be used as paint, invisible ink, photographic emulsion and even sculptural medium. As a motif it might be called upon to represent nature, wisdom, national pride, succour and sanctity—mostly but not always emanating from maternal bodies. This paper offers a brief introduction to the way ‘mother’s milk’ has appeared in artistic practice throughout the ages, from religious iconography and medicine-based advocacy, to contemporary pornography and visual arts.

Bio: Cath Davies is currently completing her doctorate in Media and Communications at the University of Sydney. Her thesis explores the expression, representation and interpretation of breastmilk across a variety of disciplines. When not indulging in academia Cath keeps busy as a freelance journalist, performance artist and rabblerouser (amongst other pursuits). In 2008 she held a 10 day live-in lactation installation piece called Curdle.
Holly Zwalf
University of New South Wales

Sexy (un)Mama: finding the feminist poetic language of the erotic maternal body, and perverting the childless maternal body

This creative paper draws on my Honours project from last year, which looks at ways of representing the taboo concept of the erotic maternal body through my own experimental poetry. The presentation consists of a brief research paper describing my findings, and a reading of my own creative work. The creative piece illustrates the shared language of the body within its relationships as lover and mother, a dual identity that society largely rejects. It is usually demanded of a woman that she discard her sexuality as she enters into motherhood, thereby separating the erotic and the maternal bodies. Expectation requires her to limit the functions of her body to those of nurturer and procreator, devoting her physical self solely to the rearing of her child and rejecting her sexual identity. I am attempting to challenge this by creating a linguistic space where the erotic maternal body can exist, free from social restrictions. The paper also touches on my current PhD project, exploring the notion of the childless maternal body through mummy play in the BDSM (bondage, discipline, domination, sado-masochism) community.

Bio: Holly Zwalf is a queer poet in her first year of a practice-led PhD at UNSW. Her research areas include perverting gendered understandings of the maternal body and experimental erotic poetry.

Nicola Scholes
University of Queensland

Allen Ginsberg: A Poetics of Matricide

Allen Ginsberg's poems can be read in relation to the idea of matricide. I consider two elements of this proposition. The first is that matricide is a traceable theme in the poems, and the second is that matricide occurs through Ginsberg's writing process. In the poems, matricide is a preoccupation, from the explicit murder of the mother in "Black Shroud," to the mother's fear of being murdered in "Kaddish," to "Wichita Vortex Sutra," where the speaker accuses Wichita—metonymic of America—of murdering his mother. As a metaphor for America, the maternal is both murderer (nation state), and murdered (geographical terrain). As Mother Earth, the maternal is fetishized, sexualized, veiled, and destroyed. I argue that the non-human and human mother is both desired and feared, and that this fear of desire for the mother produces a fear of, and desire for, matricide. Ginsberg recreates and appropriates the lives, voices, and bodies of dead women, particularly his mother's, to create his poetry. By relentlessly probing and even sexually pursuing the maternal body, Ginsberg seeks to master the mother and speak from her place. In speaking from her place, he replaces her to become the mother of his own avant-garde poetry, and reaffirms paternal authority. I draw upon feminist and psychoanalytic theory to support my claim that this eclipse has murderous implications.
Bio: Nicola Scholes is a PhD candidate in literature in the school of English, Media Studies and Art History at the University of Queensland. Her thesis is on Allen Ginsberg and the mother. Nicola's debut collection of poems, *Dear Rose*, published by Small Change Press, will be launched at the Queensland Writers Centre on 5 July 2009.