



# “Discourses on Motherhood” International Conference

**27-28 June 2026**

**Birkbeck, University of London / Online**

organised by

**London Centre for Interdisciplinary Research**

## **Programme**

**Saturday, 27 June**

In-person Sessions, Birkbeck

**9:00-9:50 Keynote Speech: Andrea O’Reilly, York University (Canada)**

**10:00-11:15 Session 1A:**

Chair: Carolina Toscano

**Natalia Laverde, Université Clermont Auvergne (France)**

Who Is Supposed to Be a Mother in Today’s Western Society?

**Susanne Kranz, Zayed University (UAE)**

Between Emancipation and Instrumentalization: Motherhood in the German Democratic Republic

**Amber Frost, University of Greenwich (UK)**

Breastfeeding in the Borderlands: The New Age Wet Nurse

**10:00-11:15 Session 1B: Historical and Literary Discourses of Motherhood**

Chair: Rabia Shamim

**Tanya Kainaat, University of London (UK)**

Stepmothers and Saints: Representations of Motherhood in World Folklore

**Rachel Booher, Middle Tennessee State University (USA)**

Duality of Nation: The Masculine Monster and Monstrous Mother in Agatha Christie's Retitled Novel *And Then There Were None*

**Emma Domínguez-Rué, University of Lleida, Catalonia (Spain)**

(Much) More Than a Thriller: Problematising Motherhood in Paula Hawkins' *The Girl on the Train*

**10:00-11:15 Session 1C:**

Chair: Derya Alim

**Marisa Hollywood, The City College of New York (USA)**

Witness to the "Scene of Torture:" The Medicalization of the Pregnant and Conceiving Body in Selected Works by Gilman, Chopin, and Hemingway

**Margarida Carnicé Mur, Mariona Visa Barbosa, Gina Plana Espinet, University of Lleida (Spain)**

Childbirth on Screen: Hegemonic Narratives and the Emergence of Alternative Representations in Contemporary Cinema

**Kaushalya Bajpayee, O.P.Jindal Global University (India)**

Mothers in Bollywood – Changing Narratives of Representation

11:15-11:30 Tea/Coffee

**11:30-12:45 Session 2A:**

Chair: Sushree Routray

**Kristina Ramksyte-Juszczak (USA)**

The Establishment Clause and Its Peculiar Effect on the Contemporary Politics of American Motherhood

**Ame Khin May-Kyawt, York University, Toronto (Canada)**

Mothers under Patriarchy: An Intersectional Analysis of Motherhood, Ideology, and Care among Migrant and Refugee Mothers from Myanmar in Canada

**Carolina Toscano, Saint Louis University, Madrid Campus (Spain)**

Madres Cariñosas: Matricentric Feminist Praxis in Minneapolis, USA 2026

**11:30-13:00 Session 2B:**

Chair: Emma Domínguez-Rué

**Gisela Rovira i Gay, Universitat de Vic – Universitat Central de Catalunya (Spain)**

Motherhood vs Mothering: Maternity in Maggie O’Farrell’s Novels

**Eva Patsovska-Ivanova, Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” (Bulgaria)**

The Unrealised Motherhood: Jackie Thomae’s Novel *Glück (Happiness)* as an Attempt to Reconcile Different Perspectives

**Rabia Shamim, Cybill Salman, National University of Modern Languages (Pakistan)**

“O Mother Where Art Thou”: Examining Abandonment as a Manifestation of Maternal Ambivalence in Elena Ferrante’s *The Lost Daughter*

**Mariana Vale Rosado, University of Lisbon (Portugal)**

Literary Representations of the Filicidal Mother in *Le Jugement de Léa* by Laurence Tardieu

**11:30-13:00 Session 2C:**

Chair: Kaushalya Bajpayee

**Francesca Medaglia, Sapienza University of Rome (Italy)**

Ambivalent Mothers: Agency, Constraint and the Reconfiguration of Motherhood in Contemporary Television Seriality

**Orlagh Woods, Maynooth University (Ireland) / Vilnius University (Lithuania)  
Róisín Freeney, Maynooth University (Ireland)**

Mother Ireland Meets Shakespeare: Irish Maternal Hauntings in Chloé Zhao’s *Hamnet* (2025)

**Kyla Whetham, York University (Canada)**

Birth after Death: Maternal Bodies and Reproduction in *28 Years Later* (2025)

**Sami Rafiq, Aligarh Muslim University (India)**

The Representation of Motherhood in Hindi Cinema in India

13:00-14:00 Lunch

**14:00-15:30 Session 3A: Madness, Grief and Maternal Suffering**

Chair: Emma Domínguez-Rué

**Morag Wehrle (Canada)**

Birthing Madness: Reproduction, Risk, and the Rise of the ‘Insane’ Mother in Victorian England

**Lucinda Bolton, University of Keele (UK)**

The Motherload After Midnight: Maternal Insomnia, Identity and the Performance of the Good Mother

**Derya Alim, West University of Timișoara (Romania)**

The Deranged Mothers of Noh Drama and The Five Stages of Grief

**Sarah Caré, Charles University, Prague (Czechia)**

From Mad Woman to Mad Mother: Mothers and Mental Health Disorders in Middle-Grade Fiction

**14:00-15:15 Session 3B:**

Chair: María Laura Arce Álvarez

**Maria Ivars Giner, Universitat de València (Spain)**

In(Ter)Dependence, Ambivalence, and Conflict: Demystifying the Mother-Daughter Bond in 21st-Century US Literature(s)

**Hattie Edwardson, University of Sheffield (UK)**

Sad Girls, Bad Mothers?: Resisting Daughter-Centricity in Sally Rooney's *Normal People* (2018)

**Mabel Verstraaten-Bortier, Independent Scholar (The Netherlands)**

Correcting the Narrative on Mothering My Teenaged Child

15:15-15:40 Tea/Coffee

**15:40-16:30 Session 4A:**

Chair: Natalia Laverde

**Leandra Pilon-Beaulieu, University of Ottawa (Canada)**

Canadian Women's Perceptions of Gender Equality in the Division of Domestic & Emotional Labour

**Sushree Routray, Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee (India)**

Curry and Careers: Neoliberalism Dilemmas in the World of Yin and Yang of Indian Millennial Motherhood

**15:40-16:30 Session 4B:**

Chair: Emma Domínguez-Rué

**Elisa Fernández Rodríguez, Autonomous University of Madrid (Spain)**

The Mother-Daughter Divide: Maternal Relationships in Contemporary US Latinx Fiction

**María Laura Arce Álvarez, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (Spain)**

Maternal Refugeetude and the Mother-Son Relationship in Ocean Vuong's *On Earth We Are Briefly Gorgeous*

Online Sessions

**10:00-11:30 Zoom Session 1:**

Chair: Dubravka Dulibić Paljar

**Auguste Dementavičienė, Marina Pukelienė, Vilnius University (Lithuania)**

"A Successful Birth": Women's Accounts of Obstetrical Care and the Politics of Maternal Experience in Lithuania

**Souhir Zekri, University of Tunis (Tunisia)**

Helpless Mothers and Medical Care in Two of My Unpublished Micro-stories

**Kapeshwar Singh, Central University of Himachal Pradesh (India)**

Reconfiguring Motherhood: Race, Trauma, and Medical Authority in *Corregidora*

**Anwasha Gogoi, Dibrugarh university, Assam (India)**

After the Cradle: Writing Maternal Melancholy Beyond Medical Silence

**11:45-13:00 Zoom Session 2:**

Chair: Shivalika Agarwal

**Merve Arslan, Şirnak University (Türkiye)**

Motherhood, Experience, and Existence in Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*

**Adriana Páramo Pérez, Royal Holloway University (UK)**

Reframing Labour: From Spectacle to Embodiment

**Leandra Joubert, University of South Africa (South Africa)**

Beyond Sacred Suffering: Mater Movens and the Politics of Motherhood in *Outlander*

**13:30-14:45 Zoom Session 3:**

Chair: Auguste Dementavičienė

**Madison Schindele, Freie Universität, Berlin (Germany)**

Breaking the Silence: In/Fertility Narratives in Nineteenth and Early Twentieth-Century Germany

**Giuseppina Scotto di Carlo, University of Naples 'L'Orientale' (Italy)**

Solo Mothers, Solo Fathers: A Discursive Comparative Study of Parenthood by Choice

**Alessia Cofone, University of Oxford (UK)**

The Labour of Reproduction: Surrogacy in Kirino Natsuo's *Swallows*

**15:00-16:15 Zoom Session 4:**

Chair: Gitanjali Singh

**Shivalika Agarwal, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Bengaluru (India)**

Presence of the Absent: Reconfiguring the Mother-daughter Ties in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *Oleander Girl*

**Dubravka Dulibić Paljar, University of Pula (Croatia)**

**Brigita Miloš, University of Rijeka (Croatia)**

Wicked Games of Care: Mothers, Daughters, and the Making of Subjectivity in *La Hermandad de Las Malas Hijas* by Vanessa Montfort

**Hayley Phillips, Louisiana State University (USA)**

Devouring Mothers: *Hereditary's* Monstrous Feminine

**16:30-17:20 Zoom Session 5:**

Chair: Kapeshwar Singh

**Gitanjali Singh, California State University (USA)**

Sikh Women's Representations as Warrior Mothers: Sacrifice, Honor and Heterosexuality

**Diana Aramburu, UC Davis (USA)**

Writing the NICU Story: Queering Motherwork in Cherríe Moraga's *Waiting in the Wings: Portrait of a Queer Motherhood*

**Sunday, 28 June**

Online Sessions

**9:00-10:30 Zoom Session 6: Education, Activism and Maternal Knowledge**

Chair: Giorgia Riboni

**Mollie Etheridge, University of Cambridge, Anglia Ruskin University (UK)**

Making It Work: Mothers and Feminist Activism in 1970s–80s Britain

**Margaret Carmody, Australian Catholic University (Australia)**

Australian Breastfeeding Association's Natural Approach to Maternal Education vs Scientific Approach on the Web

**Sigmund Fletcher D. Tarrayo, University of the Philippines (Philippines)**

Mothers Know Best: A Case Study of Mothers' Experiences and Knowledge of Disaster Resilience in MaDiRR Discussions

**Amrita Mehta, University of Delhi (India)**

From Maternal Destiny to Maternal Choice: Discursive Transformations of Motherhood in Contemporary India

**10:45-12:00 Zoom Session 7:**

Chair: Mollie Etheridge

**Giorgia Riboni, University of Turin (Italy)**

Bakhtin's Echoes: Resolving Conflicts in New Media Motherhood

**Haritha V, Pondicherry University (India)**

Mothers Online: A Matrifocal Analysis of Selected Indian Women's Vlogs

**Vikarun Nessa, Independent University (Bangladesh)**

Tools of Surveillance: Digital Panopticons and the Manufacturing of Motherhood in Social Media

**12:30-14:00 Zoom Session 8:**

Chair: Shaista Irshad

**Ruchi Singh, University of Lucknow (India)**

Bharat Mata as Maternal Ideal: Cultural Construction of Motherhood in the Novel *Anandamath*

**Ali Bahnini, University of Carthage (Tunisia)**

Deterritorialisation Versus Reterritorialization: The True Story of Motherhood in Shakespeare's Hamlet

**Andrea Urbán, University of Debrecen (Hungary)**

Obtaining Integrity – The Representation of Motherhood in Modern Hungarian Poetry

**Katiuscia Darici, University of Turin (Italy)**

Motherhood Narratives in Spain: A Boom of Creation and Procreation in Twenty-First Century Autobiographical Works by Women and the Case of Laura Freixas

**14:10-15:00 Zoom Session 9:**

Chair: Ruchi Singh

**Shaista Irshad, University of Allahabad (India)**

Watery Mothers: Hydrofeminism and Maternal Relationality in *The Hungry Tide*

**Sultana Musfika Rahman, Independent University (Bangladesh)**

Motherhood of the "Non-mothers": Renegotiating Motherhood Beyond Species and Patriarchal Institutions in *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of The Dead*

**15:15-16:30 Zoom Session 9:**

Chair: Sultana Musfika Rahman

**Meggie Boyle, University of Cambridge (UK)**

Mothering Otherwise: Crip Autobiography and the Rewriting of Maternal Subjectivity

**Kalina Janeva, University of Freiburg (Germany)**

“What Kind of Mother Would Let It Come to This?": Prodigious Abstinence and Failures of Motherhood in Victorian Fasting Girls and Emma Donoghue's *The Wonder* (2016)

**Veronica Membrive, University of Almeria (Spain)**

Domestic Experiments: Monstrous Maternity and Posthuman Reproduction in Vivarium