

Rewriting Trauma & Visibility: Motherwork, Pregnancy, and Birth



April 5-6, 2019
Manhattan College, NYC

Calling all sociologists, women's, sexuality, and gender scholars, masculinity studies scholars, birth-workers, doctors, maternal psychologists, motherhood and fatherhood scholars, artists, performers: This conference call is for papers focused on uncovering, naming and rewriting traumas of motherwork, pregnancy, and birth. We especially aim to make visible those topics related to (dis)abilities and other marginalized positionalities, relying on Patricia Hill Collins' conceptualization of motherwork as mothering that is designed for the survival and success of the next generation within the context of oppression. We recognize traumas in multiple forms, originating before, during and after pregnancy and birth and throughout motherhood, framed by the intersectional identities of those traumatized. We encourage presenters to unpack the sociocultured domain and the medicalized environment within which traumas often occur, embracing and analyzing meaning-making, as Barbara Katz Rothman and others would have us do, in the area of maternal health and well-being.

We intend the conference to serve as a site of resistance as we reframe and reconstruct the landscape of embodied trauma within motherwork, pregnancy, and birth and the ongoing labor of mothers and caregivers everywhere. We recognize the scale, variance, and duration of birth-related and illness-related trauma and hope to support and empower those who most need it.

Topics of interest include but are not limited to:

Intersectional identities as the context of motherwork, pregnancy and birth traumas
Motherwork, pregnancy and birthing with (dis-)abilities, illness, and children with special needs
Biomedical and cultural discourses of motherwork, pregnancy, and birth, including issues related to marginalized identities, fertility treatment, gender identity, and intersex identities
Normative constructions of gender in motherwork, pregnancy and birthing
Child and maternal psychology interventions, alternative therapies, and results
Breastfeeding ambivalence, obstacles, and outcomes
Future wombs, including transplants, artificial constructions, cloning, and surrogacy
Art as healing and activism as visible resistance
Embodied resistance to socially constructed proscriptions and conventions about motherwork, pregnancy, and birth, especially as contextualized within marginalized positionalities
Narratives surrounding:

- High-risk pregnancies, pregnancy-related illnesses, and birthing complications
- Cesarean Section, Episiotomy and other Obstetric Violence
- Stillbirths or Therapeutic Terminations

Individuals conducting research, making art, working in hospital or alternative birth settings, and presentations by mothers, family members, and students as well as auto-ethnographic perspectives are welcome. All submissions for this conference should be considered for submission to the *Journal of Mother Studies (JourMS)*, an academic, peer-reviewed journal devoted to Mother Studies. You may also submit for the *conference only* if you wish. Abstracts must include a title and 50-150 words for individual papers, panels, and other submission types (e.g. performance, media, music). Go to MOMmuseum.org and look for the "Conference Submissions" tab or submit a word doc. to info@MOMmuseum.org by Dec. 1st, 2018.