

AHRC-funded Motherhood in post-1968 European Literature Network

Aims and Research Questions for Workshop 1

'Motherhood: Theories, Methods and Narratives' (Friday 11 May 2012)

Aims:

Workshop 1, 'Motherhood: Theories, Methods and Narratives', aims to set out the agenda for the Network and explore a format and methodology for the next four workshops. In doing so, it will highlight current debates and key theoretical approaches and methodologies in the study of motherhood in a range of disciplines, and explore what kinds of insights literature may offer to interdisciplinary discourse on motherhood.

Research questions:

1. How is motherhood understood, conceptualized, or used in your discipline?
2. What are the most important current debates on motherhood in Europe?
3. What perspectives on motherhood does women-authored literature offer?
4. How is meaning produced in the text/reader relationship? What kinds of literary techniques and effects are most relevant to interdisciplinary discussions of motherhood?
5. How do literary texts respond to and/or provoke current debates on motherhood, and vice versa?
6. What insights can literary narratives and representations of motherhood offer to interdisciplinary discussion?
7. What kinds of relationship are there between literature and real life experience, and between literature and contemporary social issues?
8. Which particular issues arise from cross-cultural comparisons of motherhood?
9. How can we create productive interdisciplinary discussion on European motherhood?