

DEMETER PRESS CALL FOR PAPERS

Mothers, Mothering, and the COVID-19 Pandemic

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The central directive of the current COVID-19 pandemic has been conveyed in two words “Stay Home”. Yet, no research thus far has examined how households are functioning and managing under social isolation. In particular, no one has acknowledged, let alone has sought to support the crucial work mothers are doing as front-line workers to keep families functioning in these times of increasing uncertainty. As all studies confirm, mothers do approximately fifty percent more domestic labour and childcare than fathers; with social isolation, the burden of care work has increased exponentially in both time and concern as mothers are running households with little or no support and under close to impossible conditions. Additionally, many mothers are presently engaged in paid labour from home as well as now responsible for their children’s education as daycare and schools remain closed indefinitely. Mothers – in particular single mothers – have no respite from their 24/7 days in this pandemic microenvironment with most outdoor activity cancelled for children and with no one allowed into their homes.

This collection is interested in exploring how mothers are coping with the resulting physical, mental and emotional health of themselves and other family members during this pandemic. When there is no separation between work, family, home, we can expect to see the pressures rise exponentially with added work, stress and anxiety. What toll will/is this taking on mothers/families? What are the implications of being a mother in a stay-at-home family during a pandemic? How can we provide help for mothers? How do we develop social strategies, policies, and provisions to better support mothers as they perform the essential work of caregiving?

Submissions are welcome on the topic of mothers./mothering during the COVID-19 pandemic through the lenses of feminist theory and may include historical, cultural, semiotic, philosophical or sociological perspectives. We hope to include both creative (art, poetry, photography and creative writing) and scholarly submissions to provide a space for women to reflect on the associated gamut of emotions and experiences of these pandemic times. Essays from all disciplinary perspectives are welcome, and interdisciplinary work is especially encouraged.

Topics may include (but are not limited to): Pandemic mothering during income or employment loss; mothering during financial or housing instability; single parenting during COVID-19; disabled mothering in a pandemic, disabled mothers & care support; pregnancy, birth, and breastfeeding; caring for special need children during a pandemic; providing help/assistance for mothers during a pandemic; creating space for mothers to talk about what they are experiencing; developing meaningful social policy to help mothers and families; critiques of COVID-19 emergency economic and social measures put in place for families; mothering as a new immigrant during COVID-19; pandemic mothers in abusive situations; homeschooling; societal expectations and discriminations of mothers during pandemics. Social, cultural and historical aspects; theoretical and philosophical explorations; case studies; critiques of media representations; discussion of artistic explorations; cross-cultural, social-geographical or anthropological investigations of maternal experiences of pandemics; other relevant topics are welcome.

Submission Guidelines: Abstracts (300 words) with a 50-word biography due July 1, 2020.
Completed manuscripts (15-18 pages double-spaced with references in MLA format) are due
October 1/20. Please note, acceptance will depend on strength and fit of the final piece. Please
send inquiries and abstracts to editors: aoreilly@yorku.ca; f.green@uwinnipeg.ca