M/Otherhood: Investing in the future

An academic’s lifetime of research into all matters maternal will shine a spotlight around the narratives of women without children as part of an annual festival.

Dr Sheila Quaid will be giving her talk during the ESRC Festival of Social Science - a week-long series of events, held across the UK for the last 16 years.

Dr Quaid alongside Community Interest Company Thought Foundation is hosting this year’s ESRC Festival of Social Science, on Saturday, November 9, noon-6pm, at The Thought Foundation, Clarity House, Durham Road, Birtley.

In her lecture; “Narratives of women who are not mothers on Nature Nurture Future” Dr Quaid, a Senior Lecturer in Sociology, examines all women whether mothers or not, and how they are impacted, affected, interpreted by assumptions and essentialist beliefs about the biological imperative of motherhood for women.

“Feminist philosophy, sociology, history and politics revolve around contested meanings of motherhood. Motherhood for lesbians was seen as dangerous and transgressive but also the choice not to have children for single heterosexual women creates “Otherhood” and for women in relationships with men produces ambiguities, assumptions and judgements about how women without children are positioned in cultural narratives of the ‘maternal’.”

Dr Quaid is currently drafting a book entitled M/otherhood: Choices, Experiences, Representations and Emotions. The book is a culmination of a life-time of interest of the author in all matters maternal.

Throughout the event there will also be stimulating talks and workshops by artists, academics, poets and performers will explore the subjects of language, parenting, future generations, bodies and art. This event will create a space for appreciating art and discussion.

ESRC Speakers include:

Lauren Reed - Creative Producer of feminist theatre company Forked Theatre. Lauren is in the process of travelling the UK gathering stories and experiences from women on the subject of ‘motherhood’. She curates these tales into a verbatim theatre piece called MOTHERLOGUES, performed locally using local actors.

Sky Hawkins - Poet - Sky will join us to talk about single motherhood.

Dr Lindey Cookson - Somebody’s Child: The Role of Local Babas (Grannies) in the De- Institutionalisation of Disabled Children in Bulgaria

Sam Reveley - Deconstructing Myths of Motherhood: Young Women and the Making of Positive Future Selves

Julie Ovington - What matter, matters to children and families as they encounter school readiness?

To book your place click here.

The ESRC Festival of Social Science is an annual, week-long series of events, held across the UK for the last 16 years. The 2018 ESRC Festival of Social Science took place from 3-10 November, with 303 separate events held in 53 UK towns and cities, attracting nearly 37,300 people and involving 1,100 social scientists.