



## Biomedical Sciences and the Maternal Body

*One day free symposium organised by the Postgraduate Contemporary Women's Writing Network with kind support from The British Society for Literature and Science.*

When engaging new audiences in contemporary women's writing, an increasing awareness of the importance of interdisciplinary methods has served to draw attention to the ways in which literary expertise can be used to engage with science and the field of medicine. Women writers in particular exploit the use of literature as a vehicle for promoting social responsibility and awareness, especially when it comes to concerns surrounding recent developments in the fields of science and technology.

The symposium seeks to examine the relationship between biomedical science and the maternal body as represented in the works of contemporary women writers. The pregnant body has always been a site for much debate, particularly when placed in dialogue with feminist issues of autonomy and subjectivity. When considered alongside biomedical science, these debates are further complicated by women's ambivalent attitudes towards both the freedoms and the constrictions that modern scientific developments bring. In exploring the relationship between women and nature, biology, science and technology, contemporary women writers go some way towards addressing the questions raised by such discussions.

In considering these and other questions, we welcome papers that address this fascinating area of development within contemporary women's writing. Topics may include (but are by no means limited to):

- Pregnancy, subjectivity and autonomy
- Contemporary conceptions of motherhood
- Women's relationship with their own biology
- Choice, control and power
- Binarisms regarding 'natural' and 'unnatural'
- Maternal embracing or rejection of scientific interventions
- Reproductive technologies and roles within reproduction

Additionally, we are delighted to confirm **Professor Clare Hanson** as the keynote speaker for the event. Her research interests lie in the relationship between medicine and culture, with a particular emphasis on theoretical and fictional responses to new reproductive technologies and the cultural implications of modern genetic science.

**Please submit a 200-word abstract for 15-minute papers, along with a brief biographical note to [info@pgcwwn.org](mailto:info@pgcwwn.org) by 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2015.** If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us via this email address or through Twitter and Facebook.

We are also delighted to be able to offer one £50 bursary to cover the travel costs for attending the event. In order to qualify for this bursary, the speaker must produce a review of the event (by 7<sup>th</sup> March) for publication on the PG CWWN blog. Please state in your email if you are interested in applying for this opportunity, and why you think you should be selected.