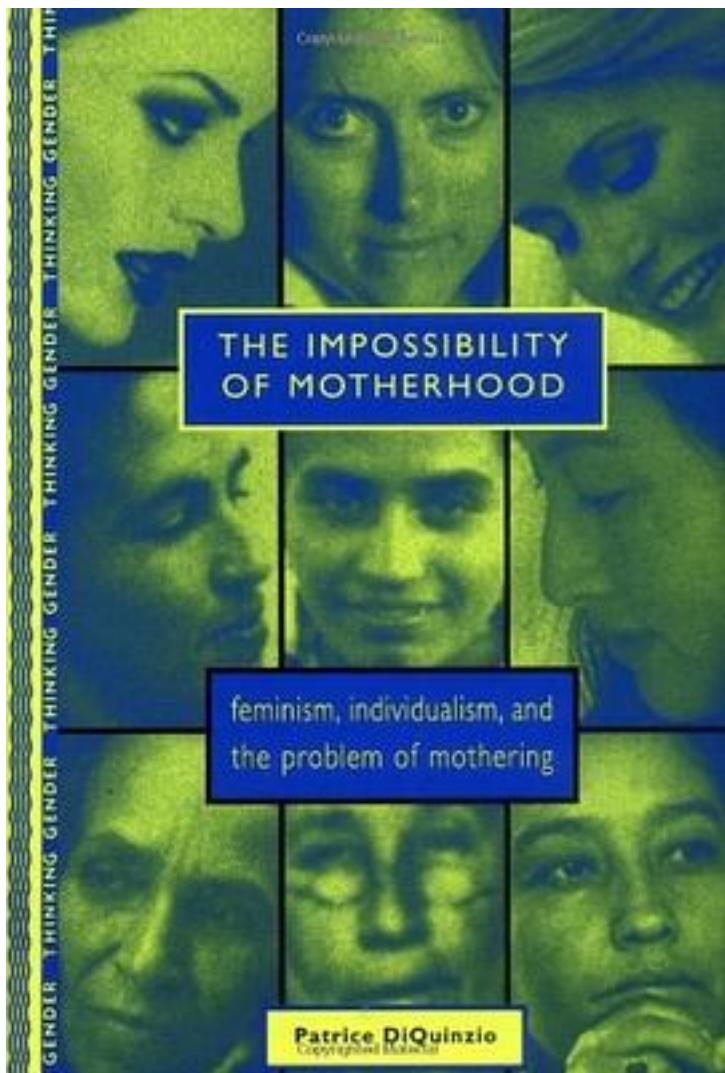


# The Impossibility of Motherhood



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An adequate analysis of experiences and situations specific to women, especially mothering, requires consideration of women's difference. A focus on women's difference, however, jeopardizes feminism's claims of women's equal individualist subjectivity, and risks recuperating the inequality and prpression of women, especially the view that all women should be mothers, want to be mothers, and are most happy being mothers. This book considers how thinkers including Simone de Beauvoir, Julia Kristeva, Nancy Choderow and Adrienne Rich struggle to negotiate this dilemma of difference in analyzing mothering, encompassing the paradoxes concerning embodiment, gender and representation they encounter. Patrice DiQuinzio shows that mothering has been and will continue to be an intractable problem for feminist theory, and argues for a reconceptualization of feminist theory itself, and suggests the political usefulness of an explicitly paradoxical politics of mothering.

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