



Feminist Library Newsletter

No. 25 Spring 2017

Keep up to date with the latest news about the Library by signing up to our e-bulletin - send an email to bulletin@feministlibrary.co.uk or click on the button on our website <http://feministlibrary.co.uk>

Happy Women's History Month

We would like to wish a happy Women's History Month and a happy spring to all our supporters. Thanks to your support the Feminist Library lives to fight another year! We survived a challenging 2016, and are looking forward to an exciting 2017, with new premises and more community events. We are so excited to have survived another year - it was this time last year that we were facing the threat of eviction and closure, and now we're at the beginning of a brand new chapter!

We'd love you to get involved - come along to an event, join our volunteering team or become a Friend. Let us know if you have ideas for things you'd like to see happening at the Library, we'd love to hear from you.

We have a lively fundraising team, if you have time and energy to help, email Caro caroline@feministlibrary.co.uk to discuss your plans, or call on Fridays between 11-5pm on 020 7261 0879.

Become a Friend

If you love the Feminist Library and would like to see us continue for another 40 years, please consider becoming a Friend. From as little as £3 a month (or the equivalent each year), you can help preserve Feminist Herstory and our priceless collection of books, periodicals and archives.

Special Offer: As a special offer this spring, Friends can get 50% off *Vixen* or *Palace of Curiosities* by Rosie Garland. NB Friends can also claim 15% discount on any purchases at stalls and in the bookshop.

Sign up here: <http://feministlibrary.co.uk/support/friends-scheme/>

NEWS

Feminist Library at the Women's March



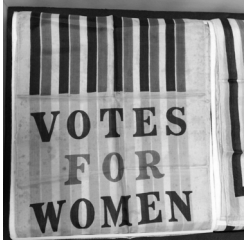
The Feminist Library was very pleased to carry its banner among the thousands of people on the London Women's March on 21st January. As the most visible manifestation for some time highlighting women's struggles, it was very encouraging, but of course it should be seen only as a beginning rather than an end. In an article in the Guardian on 6th February, Angela Davis and other American intersectional feminists ask what the focus might be of a new wave of militant feminist struggle. 'In our view,' they say, 'it is not enough to oppose Trump and his aggressively misogynistic, homophobic,

transphobic and racist policies. We also need to target the ongoing neoliberal attack on social provision and labor rights.' They are calling for an international strike of women on International Women's Day, 8th March, building on recent successful women's strikes, for example in Poland. The call is being taken up in many countries, including Britain, so if any group of women want to meet to discuss this or other possible actions, you are welcome to book a space at the Feminist Library.

Bishopsgate Institute Tour

Many thanks to Bishopsgate Institute for giving a tour of their incredible archive to our Collections team!

Located on Bishopsgate, near Liverpool St station in London's Spitalfields area, Bishopsgate Institute is a hidden gem. Their Victorian Library houses an archive stuffed with treasures – their special collections include a vast range material on subjects including the history of London, trade union and co-operative movements, LGBTQ history, feminism,



protest and campaigning. We were lucky enough to see exciting artefacts including original suffragette sashes, silk scarves and even a tea set!

Call us biased but we think one of the most stunning aspects of the Bishopsgate's archives is the Feminist Library Pamphlet Collection! This ephemeral material was donated to the Bishopsgate by the Feminist Library in 2009 so that it could be preserved and protected, and made available to researchers – or just those who have an interest in the fascinating history of feminist campaigning it provides.

Bishopsgate welcomes anyone interested in their archives to come and use the material – no membership or appointment is necessary and archive staff Stefan and Nicky will be more than happy to welcome visitors, whether conducting research, looking for inspiration for a creative project, or just whiling away a little time doing something unusual. To learn more, and to search the catalogue, including The Feminist Library Pamphlet Collection online, visit Bishopsgate.org.uk/Library Article by Anna Pigott

Support the campaign for Holloway Women's Centre

<https://www.facebook.com/plan4holloway>

<https://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/project/justice-matters-community-plan-holloway>

The closure of Holloway prison in North London – the largest women's prison in Western Europe – offers a major opportunity for redevelopment that genuinely benefits the local community. The campaign calls on the Ministry of Justice to loan the visitors centre to a partnership of local groups. Suggestions include the space being used for an advice centre, women's space, youth centre or community café. There is also a campaign for a permanent women's building on the site. More information from the Women's Resource Centre. admin@wrc.org.uk

EVENTS

B A R D O Audio Walks

Feminist Library – Bloomsbury, Various dates.

Due to popular demand, the B A R D O audio walks will run monthly through 2017.

Running between the Library in Waterloo and the British Museum in Bloomsbury, the walks, lasting between 90-120 minutes, explores fiction writing, the Library's herstory, and selected London landmarks.

B A R D O is devised, written and led by the Library's inaugural Writer in Residence, Caroline Smith, and supported by Arts Council funding. Tickets £5, payable on the door.

Dates: February 26th, starts at Feminist Library, 12pm. March 25th, starts at Feminist Library, 2pm.

Further dates to be confirmed nearer the time. Please see our website www.feministlibrary.co.uk

Joint Book Launch

7pm, Wednesday 29th March 2017, Feminist Library.

Gail and Sarah would love you to come to our Book Launch Party, when we will also be celebrating the refurbishment of the Feminist Library Meeting Room. *Murder Mile and Other Riffs & Rants* by Gail Chester is published by Free Radicals Press and *Making Pink Lemonade* by Sarah O'Mahoney is published by Good Being a Girl. Both books are available to buy from the Feminist Library Bookshop at £7.99.

Sarah O'Mahoney works at the Feminist Library and feels like it's her second home. *Making Pink Lemonade* - her first novel for teenagers tackles the still taboo subject of Periods, and how young Kali begins to love and be positive about hers. goodbeingagirl.tumblr.com For more info and to buy direct, email info@goodbeingagirl.com

Gail Chester was an original founder of the Feminist Library in 1975. She helped to save it from closure in 2004, and has been doing pretty much the same ever since.

Her book of short pieces, which includes the award-winning *Murder Mile*, blurs the distinction between poetry, flash fiction, and creative non-fiction. The book reflects the preoccupations of a radical Jewish feminist, not drowning but waving in Hackney today. For more info and to buy direct, email gailchester@blueyonder.co.uk

Rebels in the Archives

Wed 8th March, 7 - 8:45pm

British Library, Knowledge Centre, 96 Euston Road, London, NW1 2DB

See more at: <https://www.bl.uk/events/rebels-in-the-archives>

The Feminist Library will be helping celebrate International Women's Day at the British Library. Come and have a chat, pick up books, merchandise and info. The event hosts a conversation on the power and potential of archiving feminist movements with Jill Liddington, Abi Morgan, Heidi Safia Mirza and Deborah Withers.

WOW Festival

10th March, Southbank Centre, Belvedere Rd, Lambeth, London SE1 8XX, 11am - close

We will have a stall at the WOW Market, come along to browse, gather ideas, participate in activities and discover great creative products. *WOW – Women of the World* festival at Southbank Centre champions gender equality, celebrating the achievements of women and girls everywhere and examining the obstacles that keep them from fulfilling their potential. <https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on/festivals-series/women-of-the-world>

REVIEWS



See Red Women's Workshop: Feminist Posters 1974-1990 W (Four Corners Books, 2016)

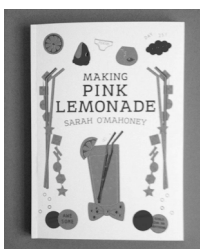
The See Red Women's Workshop book is incredibly useful, not only as an comprehensive archive of the group's graphic output, but also as a document showing women working together in difficult times. I often found the photographs of the women in the workshop together making them as powerful as the posters themselves.

These were women from different backgrounds and experiences, who, through their connection to the workshop, had to deal with being targeted by the National Front; threats and break-ins, as well as the difficulties of organising, funding themselves, and often having to move premises.

Originally called the Women's Image Collective, the group came together in order to counter the systematic sexism in images depicting women (whether presented to them via advertising or other forms of mass media), by destroying these images; teaching the skills needed to visually respond to them, instead disseminating positive, identifiable and varied visions of womanhood and contemporary feminism.

The group, like so many other radical groups, did not last, but reaffirming the demands and clarifications posed by their inventive and intelligent posters seems continually relevant for obvious reasons (not to mention more hidden misogynies) – we can fight back not only with words, but also with images. *Review by Margherita Huntley*

Making Pink Lemonade by Sarah O'Mahoney (Good Being a Girl, 2016)



A topical read for 2016, the year in which tampon tax hit our headlines and Chinese Olympic swimmer Fu Yuanhui spoke openly about her period, Sarah O'Mahoney tackles this topic for her debut book for older children and teenagers. O'Mahoney believes that 'this most important and life defining rite of passage is largely uncelebrated. Our periods need to be honoured and recognised fully in this world.' And through her book *Making Pink Lemonade* that she challenges us to reconsider our relationship with menstruating.

Written from the perspective of twelve year old Kali, the reader follows her journey into womanhood from starting her first period at the age of ten to learning to love her cycle as the book progresses. Beginning with the lines 'The first time it happened I thought I was dying. It seemed the only reasonable explanation', we immediately sympathise with Kali. In some ways she becomes 'everywoman', someone we can relate to through our shared experience.

If you're wondering what *Making Pink Lemonade* (or MPL for short) means, then fear not, as Kali explains on page 19 that this is her euphemism for having a period. This theme is well illustrated with an attractive front cover in pink and blue, designed by the Feminist Library's own Eva Megias. O'Mahoney herself is a prominent figure at the Feminist Library, and so this project, a collaborative effort between writer and graphic designer, in many ways represents what they're about. Although feminism isn't necessarily the main subject of the book, it does feature, with Kali learning about women's achievements within history as well as how women all over the world deal with their periods. *Review by Lorna Harrington*. Read the full review on our website: www.feministlibrary.co.uk

LISTINGS

Where are the Women in Today's Islamic World?

Saturday 25 February 2017 11:00am to 12:30pm, LSE, Houghton Street, London WC1. Hosted by the Gender Institute, Middle East Centre and LSE Literary Festival

Today there seems to be a backlash of patriarchy as women are being pushed back into private spaces and traditional roles as mothers and wives. Even the fundamental rights we thought we had can be lost easily. Not only in the Middle East, but all over the world, women, especially Muslim women, are increasingly asking the most difficult questions and having the most engaging discussions on identity, religion, faith, freedom and sexuality. Join us for a thought-provoking discussion about some of the most compelling issues of our times.

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/Events/LiteraryFestival/2017/Saturday-25-February/Events/02-Where-are-the-Women>

Older Women Rock!

18th February - 12th March

Space Gallery, 7 The Old High St, Folkestone CT20 1RJ

An innovative project using poetry and vintage clothing to raise awareness and explore issues that face women in their mid-50s to 70s.

The Older Women Rock! pop-up shop and exhibition will be open from 18 February to 12 March at Space Gallery, and events will be taking place in the shop and at other locations in Folkestone including at Quarterhouse.

Events include: *Carry Greenham Home* film; Women Over 50 Film Festival; The Common Thread; Stories from the She-Punks; Panel Discussion Day. For more information contact Leah Thorn on leathorn@hotmail.com.

WOW Women of the World Festival

7th – 12th March

Southbank Centre, Belvedere Rd, Lambeth, London SE1 8XX

Hear influential and challenging speakers, take part in mentoring sessions and workshops, and see some of the best female comedians, musicians, performers and writers around.

<https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on/festivals-series/women-of-the-world>

Million Women Rise

Saturday 11th March 2017, 12:30pm

Assemble 400 Oxford Street (outside Selfridges), London W1A 1AB. March to Trafalgar Square. WHO: Women and Children

Million Women Rise (MWR) believes that male violence against women and children is a global pandemic. This year is the 10th anniversary of Million Women Rise, yet women's right to live free from violence and/or the fear of violence has not been achieved. Women continue to be attacked, exploited, and violated in many different ways, in our homes, on our streets, on our public transport, at our places of work. More than ever, we need to gather as a critical mass. Women be ready... get ready... stay ready. Let the rise begin.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH in East London, 1st – 31st March 2017, many different venues.

Women's groups, artists, activists, performers, writers, arts, media and community organisations are celebrating WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH in East London, and International Women's Week in Tower Hamlets, with a remarkably diverse range of events and exhibitions.

Women's History Month in East London is co-ordinated by Alternative Arts www.alternativearts.co.uk
info@alternativearts.co.uk

For a listing of Women's History Month events round the country, please also see women's grid events calendar at <http://www.womensgrid.org.uk/>



The Feminist Library, 5a Westminster Bridge Rd, London SE1 7XW. Opening Hours: Mondays 7-9pm Tuesday 7-9 pm, Wednesday 2-6pm, Thursday 7-9pm, Friday 11-5pm and Saturday 12-5pm for the Feminist Library Bookshop. We are also open outside these hours by appointment only. Please email or phone if you would like to make an appointment. Apologies but owing to circumstances beyond our control you still have to climb six stairs before you can access the Feminist Library lift. Phone 020 7261 0879 or email admin@feministlibrary.co.uk Visit www.feministlibrary.co.uk/hours for the most up-to-date information, including changes to opening hours. Follow us on Twitter [@feministlibrary](https://twitter.com/feministlibrary) Facebook [FeministLibrary](https://www.facebook.com/FeministLibrary)

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