



Feminist Library Newsletter

No. 22 Winter 2015

The Feminist Library will close for our Winter holidays from Monday 21 December and will reopen on Tuesdays (10am-1pm and 7-9pm) and Thursdays (7-9pm) from 10 January 2016. The Feminist Library Bookshop will also close and will reopen from Saturday 6 February 2016 – the Library will not be open on Saturdays during January! We may be able to open by appointment during this time so do please email admin@feministlibrary.co.uk to make an appointment. The Feminist Library collective would like to wish all our volunteers, supporters and friends the very best of the season and look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

YBA Feminist

Women's Studies Without Walls will be running another YBA Feminist course in the New Year. It will be an introduction to various aspects of feminism with plenty of space for discussion. We would encourage you to register for the whole course, but you may also register for individual sessions.

1. **Surfing the Waves: a brisk stroll through 200 years of feminist thought.** Saturday 30th January 2016, 2-6pm.
2. **Work, paid and unpaid.** Wednesday 10th February 2016, 6-9pm.
3. **Race and Ethnicity.** Saturday 20th February 2016, 2-6pm.
4. **Classic feminist films.** Wednesday 2nd March, 6pm-9pm.
5. **Sexualities.** Wednesday 9th March 2016, 6-9pm.
6. **Utopias and Dystopias.** Wednesday 23rd March 2016, 6-9pm.
7. **Physical and Mental Health.** Saturday 2nd April 2016, 2-6pm.
8. **International feminist history films.** Wednesday 13th April 2016, 6pm-9pm.

Cost will be £10 per session, £5 concessions, or if this is still a problem please contact us. Please register your interest in advance, as we expect demand to be heavy. This course is open to all women.

Note that these dates are different to those previously advertised. To register and for more information, contact wsww@feministlibrary.co.uk

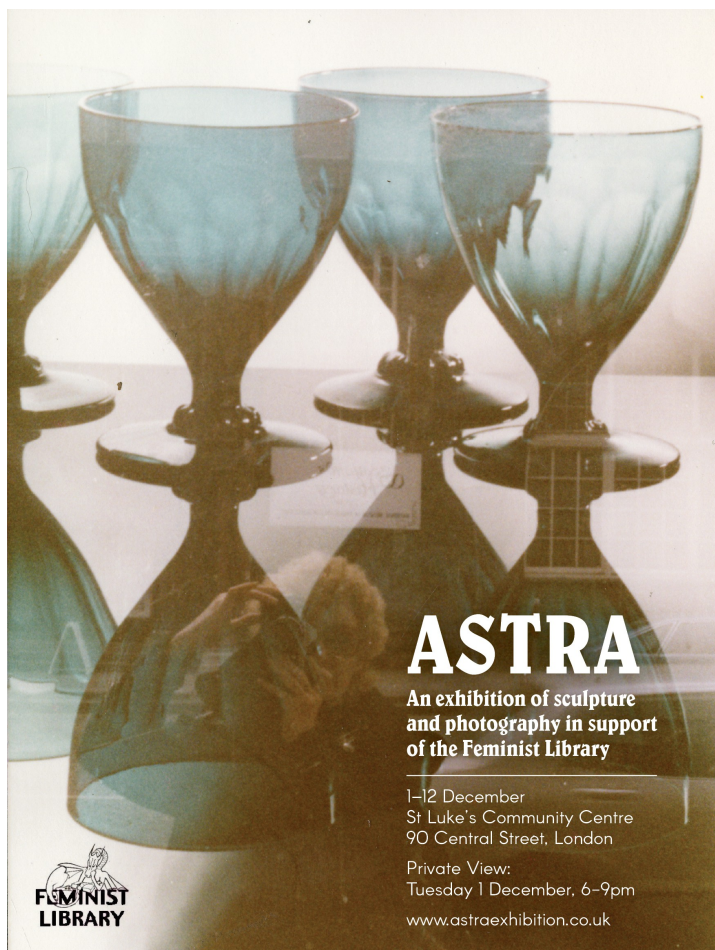
11am-5.30pm, 6 February 2016. Feminist and Women's Libraries and Archives Network (FLA) meeting at Nottingham Women's Centre, 30 Chaucer Street Nottingham, NG1 5LP. PLEASE COME IF YOU CAN. RSVP to Kathy.parker@talktalk.net. Please note that Nottingham Women's Centre is women only space and therefore this event is open to self-identifying women only.

#FL40for40. Help the Feminist Library raise £40,000 towards a new home!

2015 was the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Feminist Library. We used this anniversary year to launch a campaign to find a new, permanent and secure home to house our unique resource and space. Many thanks to all who have thus far donated. However our fundraising campaign is ongoing and we continue to ask for the support of the wider feminist movement and community. For further details on how you can support the Feminist Library please visit feministlibrary.co.uk/support/emergencyfund



The Feminist Library walking library at the Anarchist Bookfair



Astra: An Exhibition of Sculpture and Photography

From 1st to 12th December at St Luke's Community Centre near Old Street, the Feminist Library presented an exhibition of artworks by Astra Blaug, feminist artist, activist and poet (1927-2015). Over 60 people attended a wonderful launch event to celebrate her life and work. The evening included memories of Astra and readings from her poetry, as well as a short talk in response to Astra's photographic works by Dr Patrizia di Bello, Lecturer in History and Theory of Photography at Birkbeck, called 'Fragments from a Feminist "Family Album"'. Astra's photographic subjects ranged from flora and fauna to street photography, documentation of moments of feminist history such as Greenham Common Women's Peace camp, and numerous rallies and demonstrations.

The evening launched an exhibition of Astra's artworks, including a collection of hand-rendered sculptures and limited edition prints of her photography, as well as a catalogue of work in the exhibition. Astra's photographs, as well as her books, poetry and documents, will remain part of the Feminist Library's archives, and can be viewed as part of our collection at the Bishopsgate Institute. In accordance with Astra's wishes, her original sculptures are being sold, with all proceeds supporting the Feminist Library's fundraising appeal.

Astra was perhaps better known for her poetry than for visual art, having published several poetry collections, as

well as contributing to numerous anthologies. Novelist Michèle Roberts describes her as "a major poet in the women's liberation movement whose work has given solace and encouragement to many other women" (quoted by Third Age Press). The exhibition threw light on the passion and creativity of a multi-talented artist. The works in various disciplines that make up Astra's oeuvre are a testament to the artist's nuanced ability to move fluidly between media, bringing to each practice a considered aesthetic sensibility, combined with an immediacy that is deeply personal.

Jevgenija Ravcova, one of the exhibition's co-facilitators, describes Astra's ceramic works: "Astra Blaug's sculpture engages with the dialectic relationship between form and feeling. Her art clearly shows the thinking that is akin to what preoccupied the surrealists with regards to the 'informel', while also owing a lot to the work of Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth, but she brings to it a tension, an emotional charge and a tender touch that is her own."

C-Type photographic prints, on archival paper in editions of 10, are available, priced at £10 each.

Astra's original ceramic sculptures are on sale, starting at £30. The illustrated publication to accompany the exhibition is available for £6.

Remaining sculptures, prints and catalogues will be on display and available for sale at the Feminist Library Winter Fair on Saturday 19th December, and are also available by post. For further information and images email: astraexhibition@feministlibrary.co.uk

Web: astraexhibition.co.uk/feministlibrary.co.uk

Inspired by Astra's work, we will be holding our 3rd Feminist Library Graphic Arts Event on Saturday 19th March – see listing for more information.



The Feminist Library has been globetrotting - Japan in October and November, then to Amsterdam for a conference celebrating the 80th anniversary of Atria, the international feminist archive. Here we are at Atria with other members of FLA: Feminist and Women's Libraries and Archives Network, and with Reiko Aoki from the Japan Women's Education Centre. Full reports in the next newsletter.

Introducing Caroline Smith, our Writer in Residence



"As Writer in Residence at the Feminist Library, I'm looking forward to being here over the next 12 months. I kick-started the residency with scratching new performance work at Camden People's Theatre for feminist festival: Calm Down

Dear! The next development of the work will be shown at the Library in 2016.

My aims are three fold: firstly to develop a piece of writing around voices / the voice of the Feminist Library. Part of my scratched work *Consciousness Raised by Daleks* was about speaking and not speaking; connecting and not connecting. Secondly, I want to bring some of the amazing voices and organisations that support a feminist writing practice to the library, along with a night of *Louche Women*, a live club / chat show I co-host with Sue Kreitzman at the Poetry Place in Soho.

Thirdly, I'll be running writing workshops.

I started off at Women's Art Library in its days at Fulham Palace and have since written for magazines such as *Attitude* where I was Arts Editor and *Black Book* in New York. I've gone on to perform scripted work at the Tate, Royal Festival Hall, ICA, Camden People's Theatre and Chelsea Theatre".

www.carolinesmithonline.com

www.louchewomen.com

Book Review



Code Red: know Your Flow, Unlock Your Super Power and Create A Bloody Amazing Life. Period., Lisa Lister (She:Press, 2015)

In Lisa's own words this book is:

- A rallying cry to any woman who has ever found her cycle annoying and an inconvenience
- been disgusted by her blood and felt dirty and shame-filled at menstruation.

-wanted to hide away and pretend menstruation didn't exist

-talked about her period in hushed tones

-been crippled by pre-menstrual or menstrual-related pain and dis-ease

-hated it because her bleed meant that another month had passed, and she's not pregnant when she desperately

wanted to be

-thought to herself 'there must be a freaking reason as to why we bleed for five or more days each month and don't die?!'

Written in a no nonsense, sassy very much not a biology textbook style voice, *Code Red* is a laugh out loud and inspiring book that demystifies menstruation on the one hand but also lets us in to the best kept secret on the planet - that Periods are the path to unlocking our power! See excerpt below for a feel of the fervour and the force that is Lisa Lister and her specialist subject!:

So, there's this code

A Lady code.

It's ancient, it's deeply spiritual and more than that, it's powerful.

So powerful that its barely been spoken about in over 2000 years!
MENSTRUATION

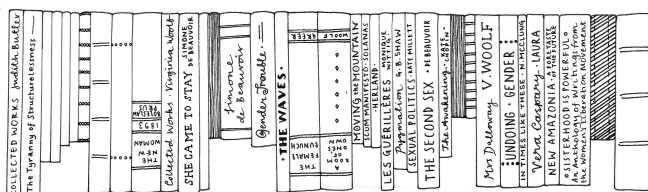
Yep, your period is way more than PMS, carb craving and lady rage...

It's actually a four-part lady code that once cracked will uncover a series of monthly

superpowers that can be used to enhance your relationships, business, sex life and create a 'bloody' amazing life.

For sale at Feminist Library Winter Fair on Saturday 19th December and a copy to be placed in the Feminist Library collection.

Reviewed by Sarah O'Mahoney



THE FEMINIST LIBRARY BOOKSHOP

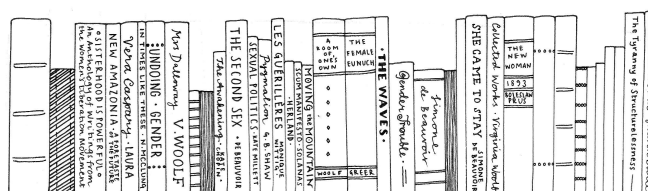
Every Saturday 12-5pm
at The Feminist Library

5 Westminster Bridge Road SE1 7XW
Lambeth South/Elephant and Castle/Waterloo

NEW AND USED BOOKS, PERIODICALS AND ZINES

COFFEE AND CAKE
READINGS AND EVENTS
WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE

www.feministlibrary.co.uk
bookshop@feministlibrary.co.uk



LISTINGS

4-6pm, 16 December 2015. NCVO Society Building, 8 All Saints St, London N1 9RL

Gender Struggles? Feminism? Sociology? – British Sociological Association Sociology and Feminism Event

How does analysing gender inequality in sociology contribute to challenging everyday sexism and gender troubles? Hear an introduction and an update, express your own experience and views. Chaired by Lynn Jamieson, the President of the British Sociological Association.

This event is for all – with or without prior knowledge – from school-pupil to retired academic.

Admission: BSA members and students in full time education – FREE Others – £5

To book, please visit:

portal.britsoc.co.uk/public/event/eventBooking.aspx?id=EVT10477

Please direct any enquires to: events@britsoc.org.uk

12-6pm, 19 December 2016. Feminist Library Winter Fair

Join us at the Feminist Library for a Winter Fair.

Our Writer in Residence, Caroline Smith, has assembled a fabulous line up to holler the holidays and seize the seasonal! Anita Ponton, Caroline Smith, Chloe Cooper, Greta Sykes, Jenny Moore and Rachael House will entertain us with micro performance and flash fiction while we buy our seasonal goodies at the zines and makers stalls, and drink a glass or two of something mulled. Confirmed stalls include Good Being a Girl, House of Astbury, Ladybeard, Love Sex Hate Sexism, Bad Mouth/Sorryyoufeeluncomfortable, Eliza Agar Press, Queer Deco.

If you would like to sell your wares, please email bookshop@feministlibrary.co.uk with a brief description, telling us how your work is influenced by feminism. Donation to the library of £10 per table or £5 per half table. We are asking for donations on the door, all of which go towards supporting the Feminist Library. Suggested donation £4

This is an intersectional feminist event open to all.

1-5:30pm, 31 January 2016. DIY Space for London, 96-108 Ormside Street, SE15 1TF.

Wierdo Zine Fest

A new zine fair privileging radical and marginalised voices. More info at diyspaceforlondon.org.

6pm, 6 January 2016. London Metropolitan Archives, 40 Northampton Road London, EC1R 0HB.

LGBTQ History Club: Bad Language. Good Language

Claire Hayward, an historian based at Kingston University, will present a session which explores the challenges around language used in the heritage setting relating to LGBTQ collections. A regular monthly meeting to explore and share lesbian, gay, trans and bisexual histories. Keep up to date with the programme here: www.facebook.com/lgbthistory Free Drop in

10:30am- 4:30pm, 12th February, Glasgow Women's Library, 23 Landressy Street, Glasgow

#GWLneedsyou – GWL asks 'What can we offer women across Scotland?

An event for women from all over Scotland to stake their claim in GWL now and into the future. Join us at our newly refurbished building and archive in Bridgeton and let us know what you want us to deliver for you and your network. Will include a keynote speech from the writer Zoe Strachan, a screening of our inspiring film *March*, discussion, workshops and poetry slam performances. Numbers are limited so make sure you book your place early! This event is free of charge. For more information and to book visit womenslibrary.org.uk

5-6 March 2016, venues around London.

Femme Fierce.

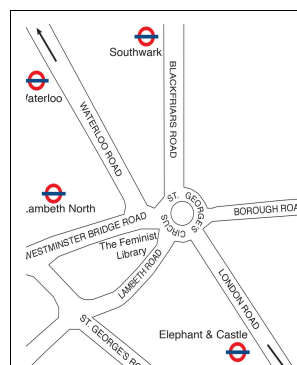
Coinciding with International Women's Week, Femme Fierce is the world's largest all woman graffiti street art festival with over 150 international and UK based artists taking part and lots of workshops, talks and seminars thrown in.

www.femmefiercer.com

2-9pm 19 March 2016 at the Feminist Library Feminist Graphic Art Event

Our third Feminist Graphic Arts event will be a celebration and sharing of work, and we invite all to take part. We will focus on the medium of photography and are looking for artists to give talks on their work or prepare presentations, share their favourite artists, inspirations, theories, techniques, etc. There will be an exhibition and an accompanying zine. Photographic-based artwork should be made in response to the following statement: 'Feminism looks like...'

Please email us your artwork as a high resolution image to feministgraphicarts@gmail.com before January 15.



The Feminist Library, 5a Westminister Bridge Rd, London SE1 7XW.

Phone 020 7261 0879 or email admin@feministlibrary.co.uk

Visit www.feministlibrary.co.uk.

Follow us on twitter @feministlibrary

Opening hours: The Feminist Library is open Tuesdays 10am-1pm and 7-9pm, Thursdays 7-9pm and Saturdays 12-5pm for the Feminist Library Bookshop. We are also open outside of these hours by appointment only. Please email admin@feministlibrary.co.uk or phone 0207 261 0879 if you would like to make an appointment. Please check www.feministlibrary.co.uk/hours for the most up-to-date information, including changes to opening hours.

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