



Feminist Library Newsletter

International Women's Day edition

No.11, March 2012

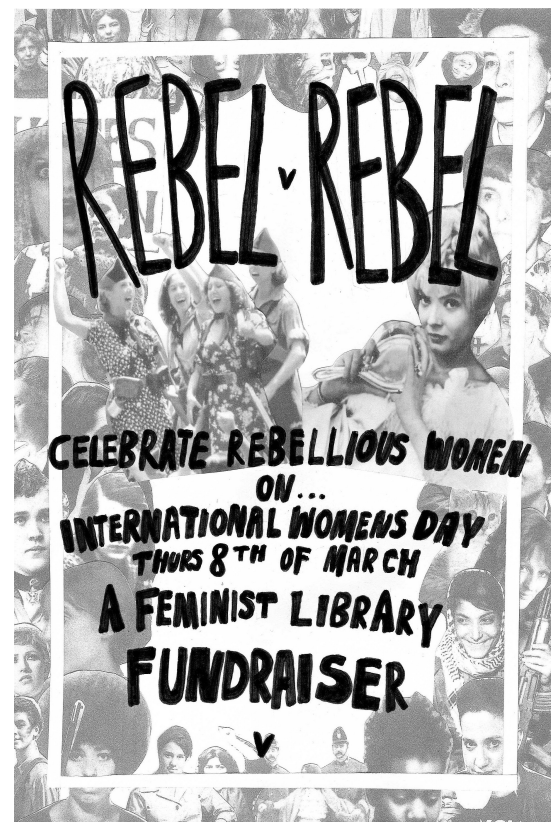
Welcome to the International Women's Day edition of the Newsletter. This is always a busy time for the Library, so look out for us at Million Women Rise on the 3rd, at Women of the World Festival from the 9th to 11th, and at Spitalfields Market on the 10th. And don't miss our own very special fundraising event on the day itself, 8th March, at the library.

2012 is the 101st anniversary of the first International Women's Day. We asked Ruby Kearney to give us a brief outline of some of the background to the day.

At the start of the 20th century, radical ideologies were exploding among the people of the industrialized world. New York City in 1908 saw 15,000 mainly female, garment workers marching for fair pay, dignified working conditions, shorter hours, and for women's right to vote. The year after, the Socialist Party of America declared 28th February the first National Women's Day. Subsequently, during the Copenhagen Conference of Working Women in 1910, Clara Zetkin, a German Marxist theorist and activist, proposed that both the developed and developing worlds should share a globally recognised Women's Day. The resolution was backed unanimously by 100 women from 17 countries and, following suit, a cluster of European countries including Germany, Denmark, Switzerland and Austria declared this day, in March, a positive place in their calendar. Its initiation turned the embryonic movement into a real force for radical gender politics, after a million protesters marched in solidarity on the first official International Women's Day. The movement rapidly gained momentum, and in 1917, demonstrations in St. Petersburg to mark International Women's Day - the last Sunday in February (the 8th March in the Gregorian calendar) - led to the February Revolution, as Russian women and men rebelled in socialist-inspired rallies, political strikes, marches and demonstrations against soaring food prices and bread shortages. Following the October Revolution, Alexandra Kollontai persuaded Lenin to make it an official holiday in the Soviet Union, after which the day was marked as an official holiday in Russia and other communist and socialist countries. The rise of Women's Liberation saw International Women's Day being celebrated in many countries – London's first IWD march was held in 1971. In 1977 the UN National Assembly invited member states to observe 8th March as the UN Day of Women's Rights and International Peace. Since then it has been observed more widely, embracing a variety of historical and national traditions. Since 2008, the Million Women Rise march against all forms of male violence has helped us in Britain mark International Women's Day as a time to commemorate and reflect upon the triumphs of those that have fought for women's economic, political and social equality, and a time when men and women may act together to challenge continuing global gender inequalities.

International Women's Day at the Feminist Library

On Thursday 8th March the Library will open its doors from 2pm to welcome you for a day of bookstalls, food, drinks, discussions and celebration of rebellious women. Colorama Cinema nearby (coloramacinema.tumblr.com) will host our rebel film screenings – Agnès Varda's French mistresspiece *Cléo* from 5 to 7 (at 5pm) followed by *Libertarias*, Vicente Aranda's evocative portrait of female militia in the Spanish Civil War (at 9pm). Our lovely friends from 56a Infoshop will be helping us provide a feast of Spanish and South American food. Copious quantities of tea and cake will abound, as well as a bar and a crèche (please book in advance). Join us in making this a great fundraiser for the library and a wonderful International Women's Day.





International Women's Day is an opportunity to celebrate the legacy of all the feminist women who have gone before us. In January 2012 the Feminist Library was honoured to receive a large donation of feminist material from the estate of recently deceased Natasha Hodson. Linda Shockey wrote this tribute to Natasha, on behalf of herself and Natasha's other friends.

Natasha Hodson was a woman with a loving and charismatic personality. When she was in a hospice towards the end of her life, she asked me "Why have so many people from my past come to see me, even if it meant travelling from abroad?" I replied "Because you're such an unrepentant scoundrel." She liked that.

Tasha's main interests in life were travelling, feminism, art, politics, and documentation. By the latter, I mean that she collected every possible missive from her, to her, or about her from the time she was able to read and kept diaries of most of her activities as an adult. She also collected memorabilia from the rest of her family, books (especially feminist books), music, artworks, and decorative paraphernalia. I referred to her flat as the Hodsonian Museum. Her minor interest in life was (arguably) work. She enjoyed it as a way of meeting people and making money, but otherwise, it didn't motivate her. For her, life was about enjoying yourself, not about drudgery. It was almost as if

she had an inkling that she didn't have much time ... she was only 67 when she died on December 9th, 2011.

Feminism was always high on her agenda. Friends were constantly being asked, "What are you doing for women?", and the reply was never entirely satisfactory. She realised the necessity for reform when she lived in Mexico, where she was a founder member of the Women's Liberation Group in the early 1970s. She returned to England in her 30s to get a degree in Latin American Literature at the University of Essex, and here she was a leading light in the women's group and an indefatigable organiser of events.

She was a great one for coming up with ideas for projects and activities in every sphere, but her ideas, while inspiring, were often not put into practice. There were several reasons for this: one was that ideally the actual work should be done by someone else, second was that her fertile mind went off in many directions at the same time and it wasn't clear to her which one to follow, and third was a perfectionist streak which made her unwilling to declare anything finished until it was 100%. This sometimes gave the impression that she was slow, but in fact "muddling through" was not for her. Her passion for travelling took her everywhere, including most of Europe, Russia, the Americas, Cuba, and China. Her contacts with students from every corner of the globe while teaching English as a foreign language gave her a host of worldwide friends and correspondents.

Though a dedicated good-time girl, Tasha had a stoic streak which stood her well through struggles with health problems and other obstacles throughout her life. Everyone was moved and impressed with her bravery during her last illness, which progressively robbed her of sight and speech. We will miss her very much.

Linen Press Book Launch at the Feminist Library, Thursday 8th December 2011 Yula Burin reports

We were delighted to host this event for the Edinburgh-based Linen Press publishing company, set up by Lynn Michell three years ago to publish works by women that speak directly to women's experience.

A small but dedicated group of women attended the Linen Press launch, which was a real treat, despite having to contend with the evening's wind and torrential rain. The theme of the book launch was **From the Margins to the Page: Women Writers Give Voices to Heroines of Disrepute**, and each of the selected readings offered us an exploration of the nature of women's struggle for independence and self-determination within their particular cultural and political contexts.

Lynn Michell read from her book: *White Lies*, about a rule-bound army wife questioning herself and her life, set in the early 1950s against a background of growing Kenyan dissension with British imperialism. Hema Macherla read from her two works: *Blue Eyes*, about Angela, a teenager who is forced to take part in Suttee; and *Breeze from the River Manjela*, which finds Neela journeying from struggling to cope with being a new bride in a foreign land with a cruel husband and in-laws, to developing self-determination in her quest for love and fulfilment.. Olukemi Amala was unable to attend and read from her book, *Under an Emerald Sky*, about two black girls coming to terms with who they are, given their origins and their formative experiences, in suburban Britain. Fortunately, Lynn's sister was on hand to read a few pages for us. A Q&A followed, generating a wide-ranging discussion about the issues covered in each of the readings, and about independent publishing, and the publishing industry generally.

A thoroughly enjoyable experience, I hope the Feminist Library will get the chance to do this again. For more information about the Linen Press and to order these books, go to: www.linenpressbooks.com

Stuff your Sexist Boss (doesn't want you to know)!

I have recently been assisting the South London Solidarity Federation Gender Working Group's research into practical methods of resisting sexual harassment in the workplace. We found some really interesting pieces of scholarship on the topic at the Feminist Library, as well as a fascinating variety of pamphlets in the library's pamphlet collection at the Bishopsgate Institute (including the Equal Opportunity Commission's catchily titled *'What Would You Do if Your Boss Asked For a Blowjob,'* 2001).

Sexual Harassment of Working Women by Catherine MacKinnon (1979) evidences a huge amount of research - statistics, case studies and legal contextualization - while *Sexual Harassment at Work: Is it just 'fun and games'?* by Sue Read (1982) offers a chapter of 'Practical Solutions', such as keeping a diary of incidents and tips for confronting your harasser. All of the material we found had its drawbacks - Read's 'Practical Solutions' include advice against behaving and dressing 'provocatively' at work - implying victims' complicity in their harassment. We also felt most texts focus disproportionately on official complaints procedures, trade unions and legal action at the expense of individual and collective empowerment. Much of the material we found dated from the 1980s or before - has sexual harassment ceased to be a problem, or have we just become better at ignoring it? Rising

unemployment, an ever increasing proportion of the work force - especially women - in precarious work with fewer rights and less confidence in their job security, and the threat of being penalised, ostracised or forced out for making a fuss about 'harmless banter' can make it difficult to deal with. When unions and complaints procedures are not always there to give the right support, we need to create our own structures for eliminating ingrained sexism and domineering attitudes in our workplaces.

The most compelling material, which all texts shared, were individual case studies and testimonials. In our own discussion we realised that we all had anecdotal accounts of harassment we had experienced or witnessed. To build on this shared experience, SolFed arranged a workshop session to help with producing 'Stuff Your Sexist Boss' - a pamphlet giving practical advice for collective solutions to harassment.

All this reminds me of an Angela Martin cartoon I look at every time I come into the library: a crowd of different women all say to themselves "sexual harassment - I can cope with it." In the last frame they all shout together "But why the hell should we?"

Find out more on SolFed.org.

Anna, volunteer at the Feminist Library

The Feminist Library Ephemera Collection.

The Bishopsgate Institute now houses the Feminist Library Ephemera Collection, containing over 5,000 posters, handbills and leaflets, detailing the activities of the women's movement from the 1970s onwards. The ephemera are wide ranging and eclectic, including political activism, theatre, social gatherings, gay issues and sporting events. All the items from the ephemera collection will be scanned and made available on-line shortly.

An introduction to the Feminist Library Pamphlet Collection

A Study Day on Saturday 26th May 2012 from 11am - 4pm. at Bishopsgate Institute, 230 Bishopsgate, London EC2M 4QH.

Whether you are researcher, a campaigner or generally interested in feminist publications, come and spend a hands-on day exploring the wonderful variety of pamphlets in our collection, and see how lovingly they are being cared for at the Bishopsgate Institute.

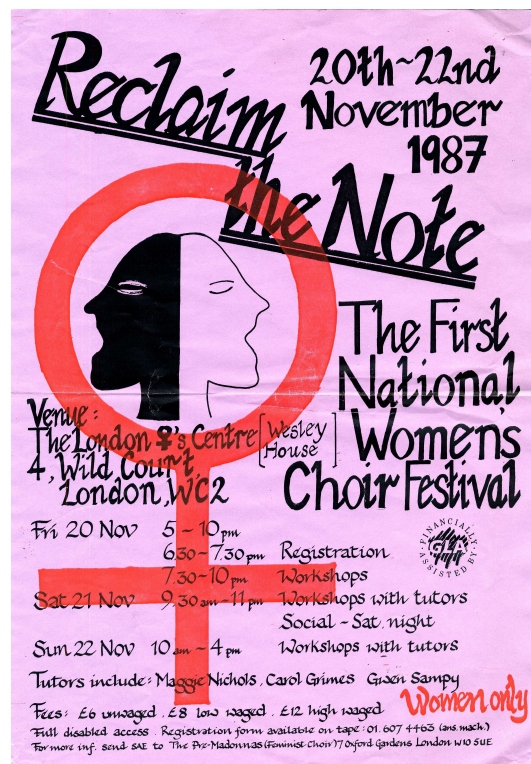
Sliding scale £2-£10. Bookings: library@bishopsgate.org.uk

For more information on the Feminist Library Pamphlet Collection at the Bishopsgate Institute, which is already fully catalogued, visit www.bishopsgate.org.uk/content/1474/Feminist-Library-Pamphlet-Collection

Text Giving

You can now donate to the Feminist Library with your mobile phone by sending a text to 70070, quoting the code "FLIB35" and the amount you wish to donate. Your text is free and there will be no charge to the library, so it is a very easy and cost-effective way to donate. Donations are capped at £10. So, for example, you can simply text "FLIB35 £10" to 70070 and the library gets £10 - yes, it is that easy! You will have to make sure that you have this credit on your phone if you are on a 'pay as you go' scheme. You will receive a text confirmation, with a link to a Gift Aid form.

For more information about donating to the Feminist Library please visit www.feministlibrary.co.uk/support/donate.



"Reclaim the Note" handbill from the ephemera collection

Listings

March is Women's History Month.

Visit womenshistorymonth.wordpress.com for lots of information, resources and details of events across London and the UK.

Wednesday March 7th, 18.30

Quaker Meeting House, 188 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds.
'Meeting the challenges of gender equality in a world of crisis' March 8th is celebrated as IWD throughout the world, but given the multiple crises in both the Global South and North, how optimistic can we be about the prospects for gender equality? Panel discussion with Professor Ruth Pearson, Jane Tate, Dr Jieyu Liu, Dr Emma Tomalin and Salma Amir. www.oxfamleeds.org.uk

7 - 11th March

Southbank Centre, London SE1 8XX.

Women of the World (WOW) Festival

Festival to promote, recognise and celebrate women. Performances, films, comedy, classical music, theatre, poetry and readings, debates, talks, networking, and workshops. www.ticketing.southbankcentre.co.uk/wow

17th March 7pm "SONGS OF FREEDOM"

Hornbeam Centre, 458 Hoe St E17 9AH

An evening of poetic and political song.
Fundraiser event for Iraqi LGBT www.iraqilgbt.org.uk
for more information visit www.hornbeam.org.uk.

Come and join The Feminist Book Group

3rd Tuesday of each month at The Feminist Library, 7pm-9pm. londonfeministnetwork.org.uk/groups/feminist-book-group for more info

March 9th 9.30am till late.

Longford Park Stadium, Stretford, Manchester.

Declaring the Activism of Black Feminist Theory

Convention organised by Trafford Rape Crisis to launch their Black and Minority Ethnic Women's Service
Speakers: Sara Ahmed, Gargi Bhattacharyya, Kum Kum Bhavnani, Kimberle Crenshaw, Carole Boyce Davies, FORWARD, Southall Black Sisters, Ann Phoenix, Sunera

Thobani. For more details or to book a place: email: bme.services@traffordrapecrisis.com, phone: 0161-968-2820 or visit www.traffordrapecrisis.com

Saturday 10 March 2012, 10am – 5pm

International Women's Fair

Spitalfields Traders Market hosts many wonderful creative women, exhibiting paintings and photography, handmade crafts, books, fashion designers, music, poetry, workshops, food, women's groups and organisations (including the Feminist Library) and great entertainment. Admission Free. For more information visit www.alternativearts.co.uk.

Friday 23rd March 9am-7.30pm.

Birkbeck College, 30 Russell Sq, Room 101.

Thinking Through Time and History in Feminism.

Colloquium organised by the Birkbeck Institute for Social Research. Keynote Speakers: Rebecca Coleman and Lynne Segal. £20 /£15 (cons). www.bbk.ac.uk/bisr/events/feminism

March 29th - 31st 2012

Old Refectory, UCL, London WC1E 6BT.

Conference: Emancipation, Slave Ownership and the Remaking of the British Imperial World.

Many interesting speakers, including Catherine Hall, Zoe Laidlaw, Richard Huzzey, Miles Taylor, Heather Cateau, Anita Rupprecht, Clare Anderson, Alison Light, Andrea Stuart, Cora Kaplan, Hilary Beckles, Vijaya Teelock, Françoise Vergès and Andrea Levy. For more information visit www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/nealeconference.

Saturday 19th May 2012

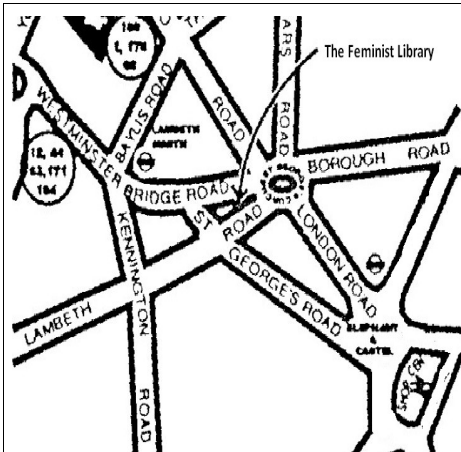
Bishopsgate Institute, 230 Bishopsgate, London EC2M 4QH
Unofficial Histories

A free public conference to discuss how society produces, presents, and consumes history beyond official and elite versions of the past. For more information visit unofficialhistories.wordpress.com.

Friday 25 May and Saturday 26 May 2012

Queen Mary University, Mile End Road, E1 4NS.

FLOSSIE 2012. A free, two-day event for women who work with or are otherwise interested in Free and Open Source Software, Open Data, Knowledge and Education. All women welcome. www.flossie.org



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

Phone 020 7261 0879

Email admin@feministlibrary.co.uk

Visit www.feministlibrary.co.uk.

Follow us on twitter @feministlibrary

Opening hours: The Feminist Library is open every Monday and Tuesday 2-6pm, Thursdays 6.30-9pm and the 1st Saturday of the month 1.30-5.30pm. Please check www.feministlibrary.co.uk/hours for the most up-to-date information, including changes to opening hours.

The Feminist Library Newsletter, March 2012 - ISSN 0951-2837. Contributors: Una Byrne, Ruby Kearney, Yula Burin, Gail Chester, Serena Sardi, Anna Pigott, Sarah O'Mahoney, Linda Shockey. Special thanks to Ruth Murphy.



Feminist Library Newsletter

No. 13 Winter 2012



A massive thanks to everyone who took part in our Summer Fête Fundraising Weekend in August, it was a huge summer highlight and helped us raise over £500 for the library. We were delighted to be invited to appear at the Girls Get Busy zinefest at the Shacklewell Arms on Saturday 25th August. Gail Chester gave a fascinating talk on the history of self-publishing and DIY publishing, and we had a great day checking out the heaps of exciting zines and workshops. Our fête in the library the following day was also a roaring success. Armpits for August gave a fan-

tastic talk on their fundraising for the Verity Polycystic Ovary Trust and pit-power, we heard some funny and moving poetry from Rachael Allen and Catherine Madden, and chilled out with some breathtaking Iranian film-screenings. Thank you to everyone for bringing along home-made cakes and treats, helping out with cooking, serving on the stalls and helping to keep everything together (mostly with gaffer tape) amid the chaos. It was wonderful to see the library full of people sharing food, talking, laughing, arguing and celebrating a very unique place. Thanks for all the fun and generosity you brought to the day – we are already planning another HUGE fundraiser for International Women's Day – 8th of March 2013. See you all there!

Our Volunteer Evening on Friday 2nd November was also a great success. Around 26 women turned up, many never having been to the library before. Gail gave a brief history of the library and explained the current situation, then other Management Group members (Una and Cathy) and our Structured Volunteers (Ruth and Beatriz) described some of what they do in the library. Cathy organised everyone into four teams, and sent us all off to do an orientation exercise in order to learn a bit more about the library. As the first team to complete the exercise would get a prize, an element of competition was apparent and the winning team ran upstairs to the meeting room to ensure that they got theirs! After that we shared some food and the Management Group and our SVs circulated and found out what skills the women had to offer the library. We're hopeful that lots of them will either apply for the new Structured Volunteer roles (Fundraiser, Office Manager, Volunteer Coordinator, Librarian, Outreach & Networking assistant, Marketing assistant, Website assistant, Newsletter assistant) or that they will want to be general volunteers.

The next day saw our Zine in a Day event which attracted many new visitors to the library, including some of those involved in the House of Brag social centre and 56a Infoshop, for a range of drawing, cut & paste, and zine-making activities, focused around the topic of female representation in the media. There was discussion around the fetishising of shallow one-dimensional female characters, access to women's self-defence classes and local queer spaces, and the ultimate guide to not shaving your legs, including the many fulfilling things that could be done with that time instead - suggested activities including drinking tea, masturbating, and bird watching!

A variety of mixtapes were played throughout the day, encompassing genres including Riot Grrrl, Queercore, all-girl Post-Punk and No Wave, alongside more contemporary feminist bands such as Grass Widow, Trashkit, and Skinny Girl Diet.

Feminist Library bags and FemCells zines were available for purchase, as well as cakes and snacks. Concluding the event was a screening of "Grrrl Love and Revolution", Abby Moser's documentary, which included footage shot in NYC between 1993-1996 and more recent interviews. The film deals with the excitement, frustration, and noise that united feminism with subculture at the peak of third wave to make girls active, self-aware central participants.

The first Feminist Library zine will soon be available in both PDF and paper format, and we are looking forward to seeing what comes out of all the new friendships that were made, as well as putting on further related events in the near future.

Book reviews



***Bonds of Love: psychoanalysis, feminism and the problem of domination* by Jessica Benjamin, (Pantheon Books, 1988).**

With a sense of morbid panic, the recent *Fifty Shades of Grey* phenomenon encouraged me to take up this classic feminist text. I wanted to know the cultural consequences of absorbing and

celebrating a publishing sensation that seems to be so politically regressive.

Benjamin attempts to explain the persistence of domination and submission in erotic life; asking why it still appears to be so difficult for men and women to meet each other as equals. The work differs from other feminist works in its lack of a utopian hope for change. Benjamin does not assertively break with academic traditions to forge a new, female-orientated, utopian path. Rather, she subtly weaves through the psychology tradition, challenging the inherent misogyny and drawing out what she considers to be the true and dangerously engrained psychological processes that keep women from asserting their sexual equality. She argues that culture mirrors the psyche, and that to change culture means to challenge the psyche too: a daunting task.

This study feels like a reassuring affront to the tradition of psychology, where the female has faced being depicted as a passive receptacle for the infant subject, or else being ruthlessly judged as either a 'good enough mother', or not good enough. Yet Benjamin's work also feels entirely necessary reading for the current moment. Often, *Fifty Shades of Grey* is described as harmless, romantic escapism that exists in a realm beyond gender politics. However, the Channel 4 documentary, *Sex Story: Fifty Shades of Grey* draws the conclusion that the book is so popular because it addresses 'a lot of women's need to be involved in non-consensual sex'. Declaratory and unexamined statements like this are a painful reminder that the book is far from promoting a post-feminist agenda. As Benjamin states in a slightly different context, 'thus we are often confused by the way gender difference floats in social reality, inconstant but never truly eliminated' (Benjamin, p. 217). It may be the case that books like *Bonds of Love* will be very necessary in both understanding the current fascination with this erotic novel, and for answering some of the insidious attacks to hard won feminist battles which may follow in the wake of this publishing phenomenon.

Reviewed by Katherine Parker-Hay, Library volunteer.

***Mothers in Fiction: The Marvellous, The Mean and Everything in Between*, by Carrie Dunn, (Crooked Rib Publishing, 2012).**



This is an adorable revisionist trail through literary history in search for "the mother" in all her narrative guises. Starting with Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, ending with Sarah Walters and visiting many Victorian novels on the way, Dunn takes us on a tour of her personal favourites. She searches out mothers with personalities and personal flaws, and where she finds information lacking she projects and builds upon what the author left under-developed.

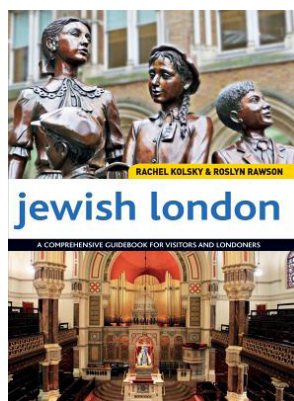
The book is liberating in the sense that it confirms some of our deepest suspicions about classic texts and ask us to really ponder them afresh. Suddenly, instead of asking ourselves what Hardy is saying about the whole social structure in *Jude the Obscure*, we are asking ourselves if Sue Bridehead really was a repressed lesbian. Dunn has the ability to energise classic texts and bring them back to a human level. She reminds us never to be intimidated as critics, or as leisurely readers.

Having said this, the book works best when it is discussing a text in which the author seems genuinely interested in developing the mother as a well-rounded individual, rather than using her as the platform for the real subject of the story. It is a delight to be retold the narrative of *Little Women* from Marmee March's position, mainly because Alcott gave her readers something to work from within her book, and so Dunn had a lot of material from which to project and tease out her inner workings. Where the source material is sparser, it is nevertheless interesting to see Dunn rise to the challenge of creating a tangible sketch of an allusive character.

This is a fun and concise read. It is not subtle, and it is playful to an extent that it cannot be taken seriously. However, it is recommended to anyone who wants to get back into the mind-set of reading the classics, or wants to be reminded of some familiar tales from an unfamiliar perspective.

Reviewed by Katherine Parker-Hay, Library volunteer.

***Jewish London*, by Rachel Kolsky & Roslyn Rawson, (New Holland Publishers, 2012).**



This new guidebook to Jewish London published in 2012 by New Holland Publishers has been beautifully put together. The fantastic photographs bring the areas to life and make you want to rush out and visit all these places. Rachel Kolsky has been a Blue Badge guide in London for over ten years and her walks form a large part of this book,

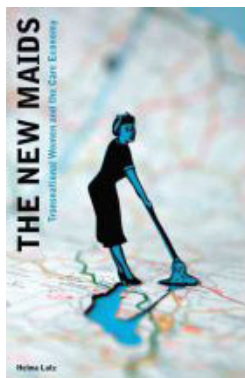
with clear directions and maps to guide you. The text is incredibly informative, explaining not only the history of the places, but also of the people who have been

most influential in the Jewish community of London. Some years ago Rachel was commissioned by the Women's Library to put together two walks about famous women living and working in the East End. One was called 'Wonderful Women of Whitechapel', and the other was 'Battling Belles of Bow'. Both of these walks remain hugely popular and some of the women mentioned on them feature in this book. We learn about Miriam Moses, the first female mayor of Stepney in 1931 and the UK's first Jewish female mayor. Then there's Minnie Lansbury, a communist and suffragette, and the first woman councillor for Poplar in 1919; and Stella Isaacs who founded the Women's Voluntary service. You can see a picture of the outside of the Jewish Maternity Hospital (also known as Mother Levy's), founded by Alice Model and opened in 1911. By the 1930s around 800 children a year were born here. [It was finally torn down this year with the connivance of Peabody and Tower Hamlets council (ed)] The book also mentions artist, and Auschwitz survivor, Naomi Blake, the internationally-renowned sculptor Dora Gordine, and Rosalind Franklin, a researcher at Kings College, London, who missed out on a Nobel Prize for Medicine despite contributing to the isolation of the double helix of DNA in 1953. There's a classical pianist, Dame Myra Hess, and a 1970s songwriter with top ten hits, Lyndsey de Paul. We also learn about Lily Montagu, co-founder of what is now Liberal Judaism, who wanted women to play an equal role in Judaism.

If all the walking and concentrating on the history makes you tired, then the authors have thoughtfully provided information on cafés and restaurants to stop at along the way. There is also information on the various art galleries and museums that you can visit, and details of all the London synagogues. This is an essential guide to Jewish London, for visitors and Londoners alike, in which everyone will discover something new to them. We are very grateful to Rachel for donating this lovely book to the Feminist Library!

Reviewed by Cathy Larkin.

The New Maids: Transnational Women and the Care Economy, by Helma Lutz (Zed books, 2011)



In this book, Helma Lutz provides a thorough investigation of the broad spectrum of issues surrounding migrant domestic labour. While illuminating the various aspects of migrant women's paid care work, Lutz relates her often intriguing findings in a concise, clear and captivating manner, making this book an easy-to-read and essential-read-

ing piece of non-fiction.

Lutz explains that, despite the achievements of feminism, the male breadwinner model has maintained its normative power within Western society, and that the development of an 'adult-worker society', i.e. full-time work for all employable adults, appears today as an economic ne-

cessity as well as an essential movement towards gender equality. However, despite resisting multiple attempts at professionalisation, domestic labour/ care work remains gendered and structurally devalued due to the impossibility of measuring the required skills and productivity of the sector.

As a result, in Western countries, domestic labour has been outsourced from the woman now working as full-time employed adult in the public sphere to the socially and ethnically 'other' woman, in a process called the 'new gender arrangement' - within the scope of Lutz's survey these are primarily Eastern European women, most being mothers who had to leave their children behind in a quest to earn money for their well-being and education, commuting back and forth between countries and thus leading transnational lives.

Lutz's methods of study include a mix of expert interviews with social workers, doctors and church officials fighting for migrant women workers' rights, qualitative interviews with some of these domestic workers and their employers, and participant observation at and away from these women's work.

This book provides a thorough picture of an issue that affects us all in an age of the privatisation of care work, a return to conservative gender roles, and the globalisation of labour. Lutz provides a fertile ground for discussion and calls for a renewal of feminist debate and a re-imagining of the world of work especially with regards to gender and ethnicity.

Reviewed by Anne Korff.

This review has been edited due to space constraints. The full review is available at feministlibrary.co.uk/reviews, along with lots more reviews. All the books mentioned in the newsletter are available for use at the Feminist Library.

Recent acquisitions

Rosalind Franklin: The Dark Lady of DNA - Brenda Maddox (Harpercollins, 2002)

My Porch Is Not A Stoop, My Porch Is Not A Verandah - Anonymous (The S Press, 2011)

Don't Leave Your Friends Behind: Concrete Ways to Support Families in Social Justice Movements and Communities - Victoria Law and China Martens (eds) (PM Press, 2012)

Votes For Ladies: The Suffrage Movement 1867 - 1918 - Sheila McNeil (Bristol Radical Pamphleteer #15)

The Bristol Strike Wave of 1889-1890. Socialists, New Unionists and New Women Part 1: Days of Hope -

Mike Richardson (Bristol Radical Pamphleteer #21)

The Bristol Strike Wave of 1889-1890. Socialists, New Unionists and New Women Part 2: Days of Doubt -

Mike Richardson

(Bristol Radical Pamphleteer #22)

Adventures in Menstruating - a chart your cycle zine (Issue No.1 August 2005)

Restart (Issue 1 October 2012)

The Feminist Library Ephemera Collection has been fully digitised by the Bishopsgate Institute Library and is now available to view on-line. To view and search the collection of fliers, leaflets, posters and letters, visit the Bishopsgate online archives page at www.bishopsgate.org.uk/content/1412/Archives-Online, and then click on the Feminist Library Ephemera Collection link.

The Feminist Library has recently hosted coordinating meetings for feminist students in London. Called by Royal Holloway Feminism Society, feminist activists from many London colleges and universities, meet to discuss ideas and campaign tactics, work towards building connections for future activities and create a support network across campuses.

Issues have included experiences of sexism on campuses, 'lad culture', and the growing anti-choice movement across the country.

The participants of the Feminist Students' Coordinating Meetings are now rapidly building towards a feminist students' conference in the spring of 2013 – one that will be rooted in intersectional feminism, built around discussion-based workshops and free to attend. The meetings have been highly productive and positive, and we are delighted to be able to facilitate such an exciting network in our library's meeting room. We plan to hold the meetings once a month, varying the day slightly each time. Please email office@feministlibrary.co.uk for further details and the date of the next meeting.

The Feminist Library is delighted to announce an exciting initiative, Women's Studies Without Walls, which is intended to return Women's Studies to its rightful place -- informing and encouraging women to take radical feminist action through learning and sharing skills and information. WSWW will be launched with a weekend gathering of assorted workshops, talks, and skill-sharing at the Feminist Library on the weekend of 19th and 20th January 2013, to be followed by a weekly series of one-off evening events. But the sky is the limit! We are very open to all your input, and we want to broaden out to include a wide range of contacts, and indeed, geographical areas -- we are, after all, without walls.

The next planning meeting will be Tuesday 27th November at 7:30p.m. at the Feminist Library. Contact us at wsww@feministlibrary.co.uk if you would like to find out more or get involved, and keep an eye on our website for further updates.

Listings

Saturday 24th November 2012

Reclaim the Night pre-march social and book sale.

From 2pm at the Feminist Library. Bring-and-buy book sale, zines, refreshments, agitprop and more. All genders welcome. Wheelchair accessible.

Saturday 24th November 2012

London Reclaim the Night

Women-only march to mark the UN Day to End Violence Against Women. Assemble at 6pm in Whitehall Place and march through the centre of London to an all-genders rally at the Camden Centre. www.reclaimthenight.org.

29 November – 2 December 2012

London Feminist Film Festival, Hackney Picturehouse, Mare St, London, E8 1HE.

Feminist shorts and feature films from women directors around the world, including films by up-and-coming directors as well as some feminist classics. www.london-feministfilmfestival.com.

30 November-13 January 2013

Music & Liberation: Women's Liberation Music Making in the UK, 1970-1989.

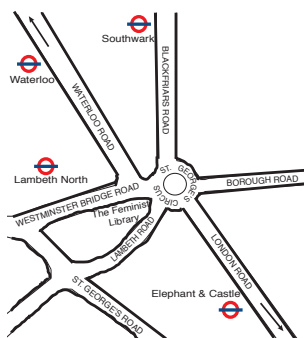
Space Station Sixty Five, Building One, 373 Kennington Road, London SE11 4PS.

Exhibition showing how feminists used music as an activist tool to entertain and empower women during the 1970s and 1980s. Featuring the work of Jam Today, the Northern Women's Liberation Rock Band, Feminist Improvising Group, Ova, the Fabulous Dirt Sisters, Abandon Your Tutu, the Mistakes and many more. Lots more information including other venues for the touring exhibition at www.womensliberationmusicarchive.wordpress.com.

Saturday 16 February 2013 9.30 am - 4.30 pm

Guildhall & Guildhall Art Gallery, London EC2V 7HH
Brave New World :Tenth LGBTI Archives, History and Culture Conference

The conference opens up a range of historical and cultural ideas from community projects, academic research, access to archives, international LGBTI history movements, new writing and theatre, and will be packed with panels, talks, breakouts and workshops. www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/lma



Feminist Library, 5a Westminster Bridge Rd, London SE1 7XW. Registered Charity No. 272410

Phone 020 7261 0879. Email admin@feministlibrary.co.uk.

Visit www.feministlibrary.co.uk. Follow us on twitter @feministlibrary

Opening hours: The Feminist Library is open every Monday 2-5pm Tuesday 10am -6pm, Thursdays 6.30-9.30pm and the 1st Saturday of the month 1.30-5.30pm, and at other times by arrangement.

Please check www.feministlibrary.co.uk/hours for the most up-to-date information, including changes to opening hours.

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Contributors: Una Byrne, Ballu Koroma, Anna Pigott, Ruth Nicholson, Cathy Larkin, Anne Korff, Scarlett Pimlott-Brown, Katherine Parker-Hay, Gail Chester.



Feminist Library Newsletter

No. 12 Summer 2012

Despite the usual difficulties, once again it's been a busy few months at the Feminist Library, with lots of people visiting and using the library, even more getting involved in keeping it going.

Our "Rebel Rebel" International Women's Day celebration event at the Feminist Library and Colorama social centre was a great success, with over £400 raised. Big thanks to South London Solidarity Federation, the Food Fight Catering Collective and 56a Infoshop for all their hard work and support in making the event happen, as well as all the volunteers involved. An especially big thanks to Anna Pigott for organising the whole thing and working tirelessly before, during and after the great event. International Women's Day also saw the Feminist Library stall and volunteers at the Women of the World festival at the Southbank Centre and also at the IWD Market at Spitalfields.

We are also very pleased to welcome to the library many new volunteers, a new management committee member, and the women who have taken up our "structured volunteer" positions. The catalogue digitisation project is progressing at a great speed, and we are hoping to have it completed soon. Also, increasing number of groups are using the library for meetings and events. Please contact us if you would like to use our space.

It has been a difficult few years for women's organisations and feminist spaces and services, with the implementation of 'austerity measures' seeing further cuts to already overstretched women's services. As a totally unfunded feminist organisation in a precarious situation ourselves, the Feminist Library is only too aware of how difficult it can be to survive and maintain services in the current economic climate. The collective response to the threat to Lambeth Women's Project, reported below, is inspirational and offers a very practical model of resistance that unfortunately feminists may need to use more. The problems of the Women's Library and the creative proposal of Rooms of our Own illustrate other aspects of the situation.

Lambeth Women's Project

We were upset in June to learn of threats to the existence of Lambeth Women's Project, which has served the young women of Lambeth for nearly 35 years. In response to calls for support against imminent eviction, women maintained a 24-hour sit-in for 2 weeks, which, alongside protests and demonstrations, resulted in the Project successfully resisting illegal eviction. Legal processes are ongoing to defend the Project's legal right to tenancy, and further support is welcome. The Project is still open and they want to add to their programme of events and workshops for women. Get in touch with LWP at 020 7326 447 if there is anything you can offer, such as art, yoga, dance, counselling, that could be of benefit to women in Lambeth and for more information on the campaign visit savelambethwomensproject.wordpress.com.

Women's Library, London.

The problems of the Women's Library, under threat of closure by London Metropolitan University since earlier this year, have been widely publicised, and the Feminist Library is doing what it can to support another longstanding women's organisation under threat. At the time of writing, staff and campaigners are continuing their fight to procure the best possible outcome for the building and the collection. To find out the latest information on this struggle, please see savethewomenslibrary.blogspot.com, and if you have not already signed their petition, please do so.

Rooms of our Own

As it is so difficult to find safe, suitable, accessible and affordable places for women to meet, a group of architects and other women with experience in developing and managing community buildings have set up a Community Interest Company, Rooms of our Own, to see if they can find a solution. Many feminist buildings and spaces have been lost because of their dependence on grant funding, and in the current economic climate, these are increasingly difficult to obtain. Rooms of our Own is therefore developing a social enterprise model, which will use women's businesses and possibly housing to make the building viable. The Feminist Library itself is proof that there is a need for feminist, women-controlled space, and therefore welcomes this project and looks forward to working with Rooms of our Own in the future. For more information or to get involved visit roomsofourown.wordpress.com.



The stall at the Goldsmiths Row Book Market

Goldsmith Row Book Market - a new Sunday street market, has opened in Hackney E2 8QA from 11am to 4:30pm every Sunday. For more information on the market visit goldsmithrowbookmarket.com.

"Thanks to my involvement with the fabulous Feminist Library, I have been to many events where I have sat behind a pile of books, newsletters and spare Spare Ribs, but none have been as exciting and dynamic as the Goldsmiths Row Book Market.

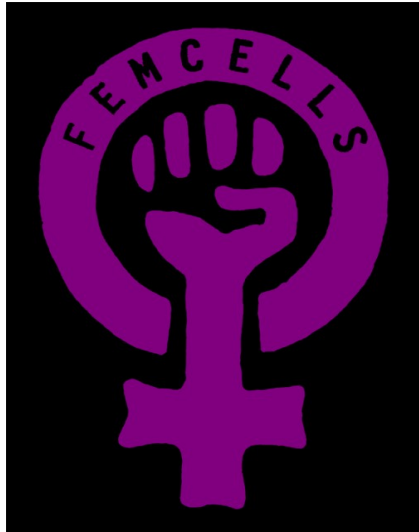
Pages of Hackney, a local community bookshop, had the bright idea of starting an open-air market every Sunday next to Hackney City Farm, and inviting other booksellers to take part. The stalls sell a great variety of new and used publications, from specialist to general, with radical booksellers well represented.

The Feminist Library has gone twice so far and, very luckily, the sun has shone brightly both times! We have sparked considerable interest with our copies of Spare Rib, our out-of-print feminist books and our tasteful tote bags, and it has been a great opportunity to make some money and spread the word about the Feminist Library. Our stall provides a much needed feminist salon of sorts, a focal point for women to gather and talk about feminism. Multi-generational, multi-layered, and multi-memorable!"

We plan to have a stall there at least once a month, so keep an eye on the website for dates and come and visit us.

The Feminist Library bags, newsletters and books were also brought to Sheffield Anarchist Bookfair in June and were very well received, as Yodet Gherez tells us:

"The Feminist Library bags were very popular and immediately were bought by many. The Newsletter drew a lot of interest and from that we got women saying they would go and visit the Feminist Library in the future and possibly volunteer, and some books were also sold. All in all, it showed us the spirit of Anarcha-Feminism is alive and kicking!"



Not a Love Story film showing and discussion.

On Friday 27th April, FemCells held a film screening at the Feminist Library. FemCells is a relatively new group of London feminists, who are predominantly anarchist, and who have groups meeting in north and south London. On the night itself there were women present from all different strains of feminism, including radical feminists who have been organising for a number of years and younger women for whom it was their first feminist meeting. *Not a Love Story: A Film About Pornography* is a documentary about the pornography industry, released in 1982 and directed by Bonnie Klein. Following the film, there was a discussion on some of the issues raised: the pornification of culture and its effects on women's self-image, violence against women, and the oppressive, exploitative nature of the industry. We also discussed abortion rights, the fight against the cuts, and class struggle. For more information about Fem Cells visit femcellsnorth.wordpress.com, femcellssouth.wordpress.com, or email femcells@riseup.net.

Our summer wish list

As you know, the Feminist Library has kept going for more than 35 years on the goodwill and generosity of its many volunteers and supporters. Over the next few months we will be developing big fundraising plans, which we will tell you about in more detail in the next newsletter. In the meantime, we urgently need a few one-off items which will contribute hugely to the smooth running of the library and/or will help us with our fundraising. Let us know which of these items you would like to contribute towards:

A reconditioned Konica Minolta Bizhub C252 A3 printer - £360.00

Pack of 4 toner cartridges for the above - £164.00

The Complete Fundraising Handbook - £30.00

The Complete Membership Handbook - £24.95

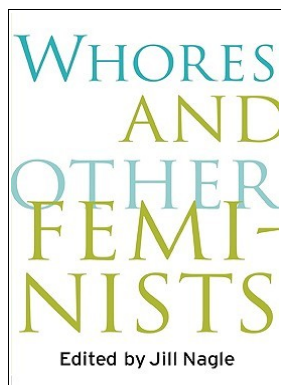
Acid-free archive boxes - £5 each

Catalogue hosting server (monthly) - £14.95

Colour-coded dot stickers - from £1.83 per box

Do please email or ring if you could help us with any of these items.

Book reviews



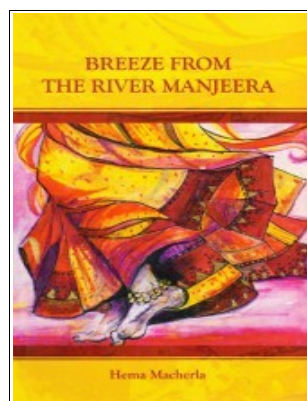
'Whores and Other Feminists' by Jill Nagle, (Routledge, 1997).

This book is a collection of writings about and by sex workers, some of whom claim to be feminists. The selection of sex workers included in this book speak openly about feminism as feminists, which has been a controversial topic for as long as

feminists have existed.

The different perspectives in this book are varied and interesting, enabling us to see how life is for sex workers, through their eyes. For example, a sex protector/pervert speaks out about her deepest darkest desires, a porn star tells of her experience in the sex industry and her arguments with other feminists over this choice, and a 'fat sex worker' confesses her experience of working as a sex line worker then going home to her husband and children. We also learn a bit about the difference between male and female sex workers from their feminist perspective. There are important points raised, such as how female prostitutes are seen largely as 'victims', whereas male prostitutes aged 18 and over aren't.

This book is extremely thought provoking, some parts cause reactions of anger and even sympathy for the sex workers. Well worth a read.



Breeze From the River Manjeera by Hema Macherla, (The Linen Press, 2008).

This book tells the story of the life of Neela, a young Indian woman who is thrust into a forced marriage, causing her to leave her family home in India to move to London with her new husband. When she

arrives in London, she ends up being terrorised and used as a slave by her husbands' family for months. Finally she is allowed to move from his family home to live with her new husband, but her situation then goes from bad to worse, as he repeatedly beats and rapes her, treating her as his object to abuse whenever he pleases.

The account of Neela's suffering is truly harrowing and a gripping read. It is refreshingly accurate about the impact of gendered violence on women both physically and emotionally. This book also shows us as the sexism that can exist within Indian culture, such as arranged marriages and the expectation that a married woman must give her life over to her in-laws and her new husband. Eventually Neela manages to escape from her

abusive husband and gets a job as a childminder for a kind man who restores her faith in people, and she changes her life for the better. Overall, this book was an exciting emotional roller-coaster and covered some important feminist issues in a sensitive and realistic fashion.

Reviews by Shelley Jamaine Iqbal

There are lots more book reviews on our website at feministlibrary.co.uk/reviews and all the books mentioned on this page are available for use at the Feminist Library.

Recent acquisitions

Class and Gender in British Labour History – Mary Davis (eds) (The Merlin Press, 2011).

Half of the Human Race – Anthony Quinn (Vintage, 2012).

I know a girl whoskates Roller Derby – Robert Anderson, illustrated by Emmanuel Hernaez (Scratch Communication, 2011).

My dear Aleister – Marlene Packwood (Marlene Packwood, 2009).

Wonderful Adventures of Mrs Seacole in Many Lands – Mary Seacole (CreatSpace, 2011).

Edith Cavell – Diana Souhami (Quercus, 2011).

Intimate Wars – Merle Hoffman (The Feminist Press CUNY, 2012).

Sexism and the System, A Rebel's Guide to Women's Liberation – Judith Orr (Bookmarks, 2007).

Girls to the Front: The True Story of the Riot Grrrl Revolution – Sara Marcus (HarperPerennial, 2010)

Travels with My Harp: The Complete Autobiography – Mary O'Hara (Shepherd-Walwyn, 2012).

A Brief History of Mothers in Fiction: The Marvellous, the Mean, and Everything in Between – Carrie Dunn (Crooked Rib Publishing, 2012)

How Did I Get Here From There? – Claire Rayner (Virago, 2003).

Feminist Library Pamphlet Collection Study Day

At our inaugural study day at the Bishopsgate Institute, members of Feminist Fightback showed us how they used the pamphlets to develop their pack on gender education for schools, women from the Solved Gender Working Group talked about using the Feminist Library to research their publication on sexual harassment at work, and Patrizia di Bello got us thinking about the relationship between text and image in our pamphlets. Apart from the pleasure of exploring these publications in depth, a highlight of the day was the way the pamphlets provoked debate and discussion amongst the participants, and opened the possibility of developing a network of feminist educators to pursue their concerns further. Attendance was quite small, as the day coincided with the middle of students' exam period, but it was such a success that we intend to run another one in the autumn -- possibly November. Please contact us for further information.

Listings

4th August 2012 - Brighton

Free women-only self-defence session, followed by a talk on combating Fascism on the street level and politically (open to all). A mixture of discussion, learning basic techniques of striking, some simulated situations, group tactics and basics of fitness for defence. **For more information and to book a place email femcells@riseup.net**

10th-13th August 2012

The Long Weekend Summer Camp

Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp(aign)

An extended weekend of women-only non-violent discussion and activity.

For more information visit www.aldermaston.net

16th to 20th August 2012

Women In Tune 2012 Festival, Wales.

A celebration of and for Women in Music. This year the WIT theme is Revolting Wimmin and is a celebration of the ways wimmin have changed the world for the better through time. **For more information visit www.womenintune.co.uk.**

15 - 16th September 2012

UK Feminista Summer School 2012, Bristol.

An inspiring weekend of discussions, practical training, skill-sharing and organising for feminist action. Workshops range from how to use the media, organising effective campaigns', taking direct action and much much more.

For information and to book tickets visit ukfeminista.org.uk/summer-school-2012.

25 - 26th August 2012

The Feminist Library Summer Fête

A Weekend of summer fun in support of the Feminist Library.

Saturday 25th of August - Girls Get Busy Zine Fest

The Shacklewell Arms, Shacklewell Lane, London E8 2EB

Sunday the 26th of August - Summer Fête In The Library.

Open to all – Noon til late.

* Book sale* Agit Prop* Food and cake stalls* Tea, coffee and bar

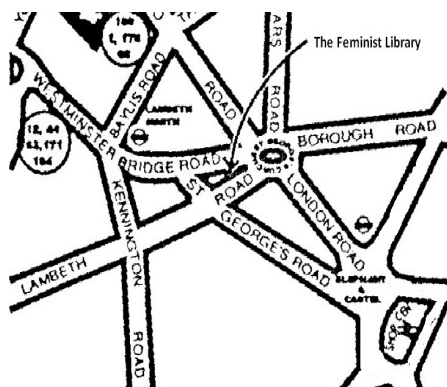
*Kids' Space with Activities and face-painting * Film Screenings

Poetry Reading/Writers' Workshop Girls Get Busy Zine

Free Entry - Suggested Donation £4.



We'd love your input and help - have a stall, suggest an activity, run a workshop, donate a cake, come along and lend a hand. Please get in touch! Email a.t.pigott@gmail.com/ruby.kearney@hotmail.com.



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

Phone 020 7261 0879

Email admin@feministlibrary.co.uk

Visit www.feministlibrary.co.uk.

Follow us on twitter @feministlibrary

Opening hours: every Monday and Tuesday 2-6pm and every Thursday 6.30-9.30.

Additionally, we are open on the 1st Saturday of the month from 1.30-5pm for the Writers Space. Visit by special arrangement is also possible, please email us to arrange. **Please note: The Feminist Library will be closed during August for our summer break. Check www.feministlibrary.co.uk/hours for the most up-to-date information, including changes to opening hours.

The Feminist Library Newsletter, August 2012 - ISSN 0951-2837.

Contributors: Una Byrne, Gail Chester, Yodet Gherez, Shelley Jamaine Iqbal, Becky Aizen, Anna Pigott.