



# Feminist Library Newsletter

No. 24 Winter 2016

**Winter Break:** The Feminist Library will be closed for our Winter holidays from Friday 16th December until Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2017. The Feminist Library Bookshop will close after Saturday 10th December and will reopen on Saturday 7th January 2017.

*Please note that Lambeth North (our nearest tube station) is closed until Feb 2017, while they repair the lift. Speaking of lifts, apologies that owing to circumstances beyond our control you still have to climb six stairs before you can access the Feminist Library lift.*

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](mailto:bulletin@feministlibrary.co.uk) or click on the button on our website <http://feministlibrary.co.uk>

## Good News - the Library is on its way to a new home – but not for a while!

The Feminist Library's future has been uncertain throughout 2016. Last December, Southwark Council asked for an immediate increase in rent and service charges, from £12,000 to £30,000 a year, which meant that we faced abrupt eviction on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016.



We launched a wide-scale campaign to save the library, gaining international support, positive media coverage and 16000 signatures to our 'save the library' petition.

Alongside this we have also been working very hard to secure a new affordable home for our collection.

After this turbulent year we are now very pleased to announce that we have reached an agreement with Southwark Council to let us stay in our current home until we move into new premises.

Our plan is to move into a space at OKRS (Old Kent Road Studios), a new venue on the Ledbury Estate, SE15, which is transforming 60 vacant garages into spaces for workshops, studios, a café, and many learning and cultural activities.



This space will be transformed into our new Feminist Library

We hope our space will be ready for us to move into by next Spring, but of course there is a lot of work (and fundraising!) to be done in the meantime, so we'll keep you posted. Massive thanks to everyone who has supported us so far, signed our petition, donated and volunteered, it has made an enormous difference. We look forward to your continuing support for the next exciting phase of our journey.

We have a lively fundraising team, so as we enter this exciting new chapter in the Library's life, if you have time and energy to help, email Caro [caroline@feministlibrary.co.uk](mailto:caroline@feministlibrary.co.uk) to discuss your plans, or call on Fridays between 11-5pm on 020 7261 0879.

## Support our move - Become a Friend

Although we have found a new home our fight is far from over, as we will still need to fundraise to afford the higher rental costs at OKRS, to make our units ready, and to provide new shelving and other equipment.

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.

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

**Like to know more?** Please email [friends@feministlibrary.co.uk](mailto:friends@feministlibrary.co.uk)

**See Red Women's Workshop: Feminist Posters 1974-1990** With a foreword by Sheila Rowbotham, £19.99. Published by Four Corners Books, September, 2016



**Members of See Red Women's Collective with a copy of the book**

This magnificent large format book features all See Red's original screenprints, alongside posters commissioned for radical groups and campaigns, while See Red members detail the group's history. The power and energy of these images reflect an important and dynamic era of women's liberation, which have continued relevance for today.

Sign up to become a Friend at our Winter Fayre, at forthcoming stalls, or when visiting the Feminist Library bookshop, and you can carry away copies of this wonderful book for the special price of £16. Stunning seasonal gifts for the feminists in your life! NB Friends can also claim 15% discount on any purchases at stalls and the bookshop.

## EVENTS

**Spirit of Women Changemakers Conference - The Fawcett Society 12th November 2016. Full details in listings.** The Feminist Library is delighted to be taking part in this event. We will have a stall there and be part of the 'Making change in our communities' session. Come and say hello.

**Feminist Library Winter Fayre**  
**12:00pm-7:00pm, Sat 10th December 2016.**  
**Feminist Library, 5 Westminster Bridge Road, SE1 7XW**

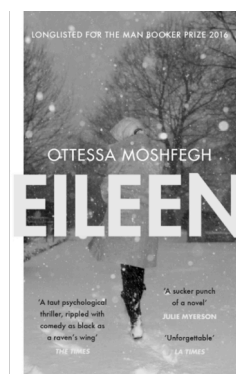
Come to our annual festive occasion and have fun stocking up on seasonal gifts, watching *Feminist Library: the film*, enjoying a feminist open mic, and a glass or two of something mulled.

Suggested donation £5 on the door, to go towards supporting the Feminist Library. This is an intersectional feminist event open to all. Tables selling zines, crafts and much more are already booking up.

To reserve yours, please email [bookshop@feministlibrary.co.uk](mailto:bookshop@feministlibrary.co.uk)

**Review of two great books by women published this year, *Eileen* by Ottessa Moshfegh, (Jonathan Cape, 2016) and *The Lesser Bohemians* by Eimear McBride (Faber, 2016)**

*I looked like a girl you're expect to see on a city bus, reading some clothbound book from the library about plants or geography, perhaps wearing a net over my light brown hair. [...] I looked like nothing special.*



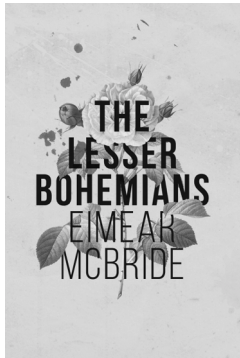
Thus, innocuously, begins Ottessa Moshfegh's Man Booker prize-nominated debut novel *Eileen*. What is quickly revealed, however, is that its central character is something special indeed. In fact, what is striking about this book is just how starkly it shows us how very conventional the female characters we are used to reading really are...

Eileen is a young woman in her early twenties, living in a coastal New England Town in what we assume to be the late 1950s or early 60s. In the first few pages we learn that her Mother has died, that she lives her life dutifully caring for an alcoholic father and dreams of making her escape. So far, so unsurprising, until on the fifth page Moshfegh hits the reader with a passage that made me realise joyously that Eileen is not your typical, meek and long-suffering heroine.

Eileen doesn't weep over her father's alcoholism, but instead joins him in drinking sessions, and suffers the consequential hangovers. The story inhabits multiple genres, at its core being quite simply a (hilarious) coming-of-age portrait of an awkward young woman. At the same time the plot is driven by a noir-esque tone, with its constant suggestion of a dark and dramatic event looming on the horizon.

The practice of storytelling by various means is also a major theme in *The Lesser Bohemians* by Eimear McBride. The author's own innovative narrative style has seen her celebrated as one of the most exciting writers in a generation.

This is McBride's second novel – it centres round a young Irish woman coming to study drama in London in the 1990s. Through the protagonist's relationship with an older, well established actor (who at first remains nameless) McBride explores her characters' interior life and personal history with her trademark dexterity. As they become more entangled in each other's lives, dark secrets begin to unfold. Meanwhile, the novel's setting provides a snapshot of Camden in the 90s, through its pubs and parties, complete with recreational drugs, dodgy landlords and regrettable sexual encounters.



*The Lesser Bohemians* follows McBride's debut novel, *A Girl is a Half Formed Thing* (Galley Beggar Press, 2013). Scandalously, it took 9 years for its author to find a publisher for this brilliant account of a young girl growing up in Ireland, finding her way through the tortures of an abusive home life, her brother's childhood brain tumor, and navigating her nascent sexuality. When the novel was finally released, it was awarded accolades including Bailey's Women's Prize for Fiction (formerly the Orange Prize) and the Goldsmiths Prize (an award for which *The Lesser Bohemians* has also since been nominated), prompting Anne Enright to declare 'Eimear McBride is that old fashioned thing, a genius' (The Guardian, 20 September 2013).

Part of McBride's genius, and perhaps part of the reason publishers lacked the nerve to put her work out, is her distinctive prose style. Jacqueline Rose writes that 'more or less single-handed, McBride has taken us back to the experiment of modernism and ushered it into an eviscerating new phase' (London Review of Books, Vol. 38 No. 18, 22 September 2016). Though McBride can clearly be placed within a modernist tradition, she does more than merely echo her forebears - her writing is often likened to Samuel Beckett or James Joyce.

Like *Eileen*, *The Lesser Bohemians* could sit comfortably within a number of genres – bildungsroman, romance, and perhaps also so-called 'misery memoir' – but it refuses to adhere neatly to any one of these. Between them, these two very different novels, both by and about women, provide a refreshing and exhilarating impression that, in a cynical time, where it is difficult to believe any truly new art could be produced, authors are creating refreshing and electrifying fiction. *Review by Anna Pigott. See the full review on our website: <http://feministlibrary.co.uk/book-review-of-eileen-and-the-lesser-bohemians/>*

## LISTINGS

### **Guerrilla Girls: Is it Worse in Europe?**

**Whitechapel Gallery, 77-82 Whitechapel High St, E1 7QX**

**1st October 2016 – 5th March 2017**

The Guerrilla Girls' new exhibition at the Whitechapel Gallery revisits their 1986 poster stating 'It's Even Worse in Europe'. It explores diversity in European art organisations, presenting responses to questionnaires sent to 383 directors about their exhibitions programmes and collections.

<http://www.whitechapelgallery.org/exhibitions/guerrilla-girls/>

### **National Libraries, Museums & Galleries**

#### **Demonstration**

**12:00pm–3:00pm, 5 November 2016**

**Assemble 12 noon: British Library, 96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB. March ends with a rally outside the National Gallery, Trafalgar Square.**

Libraries, museums and galleries are at the heart of our communities but they are under attack. Hundreds face closure or cuts to opening hours. Join UNISON and other unions and community organisations (including the Feminist Library) to defend for these vital services

### **Flagship Music Event in aid of Solace Women's Aid**

**6:30pm, 10 November 2016**

**O2 Academy Islington, N1 Centre, 16 Parkfield St, Islington N1 0PS.**

Tickets are £15 from [RAV2016.eventbrite.co.uk](http://RAV2016.eventbrite.co.uk) and £20 on the door. All proceeds help to support women

and children impacted by domestic and sexual abuse.

Join [Solace Women's Aid](#) for a night of fun, entertainment and charity with Rock Against Violence 2016 - back for a 5<sup>th</sup> year! The line-up includes Hunter & the Bear, Patch & the Giant, We Use to Make Things and The Wild Things.

### **Spirit of Women Changemakers Conference - The Fawcett Society**

**10:00am – 5:00pm, 12th November 2016.**

**St Thomas' Hospital, Lambeth Palace Road, London, SE1 7EH.**

Tickets £12.50 - £25 available here:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/spirit-of-women-changemakers-conference-london-tickets-27699633349>.

Speakers include Dame Jenni Murray of *Woman's Hour*, Phyll Opoku-Gyimah of UK Black Pride, Stella Creasy MP, journalist June Eric-Udorie, plus many more. Part of a wider Spirit of Women initiative to mark and celebrate some women winning the right to vote in 1918. It will focus on the power of women and men to drive forward change. There will also be a Fawcett Society conference in Manchester on 19<sup>th</sup> November covering the same themes, but with different speakers. The London Conference will also include Fawcett members' AGM.

### **B A R D O Audio Walks**

**2:00pm – 3:30pm, 13<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 27th November 2016. Start location will be emailed to walkers.**

Tickets are £5, or pay what you can afford. Email [admin@feministlibrary.co.uk](mailto:admin@feministlibrary.co.uk) to book. An experiential audio walk led by writer-in-residence Caroline Smith

visiting feminist landmarks both real and imagined, exploring London's feminist literary history through the voices of a book character and a librarian at the Feminist Library. The walk ends with tea and a chat. Duration approx 1.5 hours.

### **FLA - Feminist and Women's Libraries and Archives Network meeting**

**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November, Feminist Library**

An opportunity for women's repositories and their users to discuss issues of common concern. This meeting will include a discussion of copyright issues with Naomi Korn, Chair: LACA (Libraries and Archives Copyright Alliance). Come and visit the Library from noon and bring your lunch. The formal meeting will start at 1:30pm. More details from [kathy.parker@talktalk.net](mailto:kathy.parker@talktalk.net)

### **Herstory Evening**

**7:30pm – 10:00pm, 14th November 2015.**

**The Book Club, 100-106 Leonard Street, London, EC2A 4RH**

Tickets £10 + booking fee from

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/herstory-evening-tickets-27664481208>

Take your seat at Herstory's recreation of Judy Chicago's canonical feminist artwork 'The Dinner Party' and introduce yourself to the rest of the table as one of the Herstory Sheroes. Whether you are Claudia Jones, Qiu Jin or Sophia Duleep Singh, you will be in good company, as we spend a celebratory evening journeying through this unrecognised herstory. For the last year students have been transformed into incredible historical women, championing women's history and doing feminism. Due to popular demand, now it's your turn.

### **Reclaim the Night 2016!**

**6:30pm, 19th November 2016.**

**Assemble at Great College Street, London SW1P.**

Put your feet on the streets to shout a loud NO to rape and all forms of male violence against women. A women-only march to St Paul's Cathedral followed by a social (mixed) at the Paternoster Bar, Paternoster

Row, EC4M 7DZ. The route can be downloaded here: <http://tinyurl.com/pp9vu4t> and is about 2 miles in length. Girls of all ages and boys aged under 12 are welcome to attend. More details at: <http://www.reclaimthenight.co.uk/>. The White Ribbon Campaign are organising the men's vigil, which will meet near Trafalgar Square. Contact them for more details on: [info@whiteribboncampaign.co.uk](mailto:info@whiteribboncampaign.co.uk).

### **WAGfest - London Bike Kitchen**

**11am - 3pm, 20th November 2016.**

**Feminist Library, 5 Westminster Bridge Road, SE1 7XW**

WAGfest is London Bike Kitchen's annual celebration of women and bikes. This year, the Adventure Syndicate will talk about how to start going on adventures/ultra-cycling, and WAG is launching their inclusive cycling club to get more women riding together. Entry by donation. London Bike Kitchen is a not-for-profit DIY bike workshop based in Hackney which runs fortnightly Women and Gender-variant (WAG) nights for people to learn about maintenance and bike culture.

### **First Ever Women's Equality Party Conference 25-27<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

**Victoria Warehouse, Manchester, M17 1AB.**

A chance to take a fresh look at politics in the UK!

There are so many reasons to come, including: YOUR chance to decide what YOUR party looks like - you can help to decide on the Party's priorities and policies and pick the people who will steer the boat until next conference; make friends from around the UK who are committed to equality - for the very first time 1,500 Women's Equality Party members and supporters will be under the same roof; sharing, creating, planning and celebrating together.

### **AND DON'T FORGET...**

**Feminist Library Winter Fayre**

**12:00pm-7:00pm, Sat 10th December 2016.**

**Feminist Library, 5 Westminster Bridge Road, SE1 7XW**



**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.**

**Phone 020 7261 0879 or email [admin@feministlibrary.co.uk](mailto:admin@feministlibrary.co.uk)**

**Visit [www.feministlibrary.co.uk/hours](http://www.feministlibrary.co.uk/hours) for the most up-to-date information, including changes to opening hours.**

**Follow us on Twitter: @feministlibrary Facebook: FeministLibrary**

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