



Mar 08, 2016 14:30 GMT

## **Celebrate International Women's Day with Northumbria University**

**Academics from Northumbria University, Newcastle, will celebrate this year's International Women's Day with a Festival of Feminist Ideas and Actions.**

International Women's Day – which falls on 8 March – is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. To mark the day, academics will host a series of free lectures, discussions and film screenings throughout March and April.

The festival launches on Sunday 6 March with a walking tour of Newcastle

celebrating the life of suffragette Emily Wilding Davison who was born and buried in Morpeth, Northumberland. The Deeds Not Words walk will give a compelling insight into how local women fought to win the vote and will highlight key locations in the city where the groups met, marched and behaved badly.

During the 1913 Epsom Derby, Emily paid the ultimate price in the fight for women's equality when she stepped in front of the King's horse and was fatally injured. This tragic scene is revisited in the 2015 blockbuster *Suffragette* and the Tyneside Cinema is screening the film on International Women's Day, followed by a Q/A with staff from the University.

Activism of a different kind is taking place in the contemporary world with social media providing a new platform for political activism. But has the online world – once heralded as a haven for free speech and democratic dialogue – come to be characterised by the same gender inequalities as the offline world?

Academics from Northumbria will attempt to answer this question and more in *Feminism, Activism and Social Media*. Staying with the activism theme, the contribution that Lesbians in Feminism have made to the feminist movement is the topic of another of the Festival's events.

Several Festival events focus on writing. Book lovers can attend a *Words to Inspire Deeds: Pop-up Feminist Reading Group* to participate in discussions based around short extracts from feminist texts published between the 1970s to the present day.

Fans of crime fiction will have the opportunity to attend *Murder She Wrote: Gender and Crime Writing* and hear two contemporary crime fiction authors - Yrsa Sigurdardottir and Alexandra Sokoloff – talk about the reasons why violence against women is a staple of this genre and how women crime writers are responding to this challenge.

The relationship between feminist magazines and activism is the topic of *Feminist Magazines and Print Culture* with speakers who are researching the topic and active within it.

The festival concludes with screened extracts and a discussion by the

filmmaker, Lizzie Thynne, about the Sisterhood and After project, a major oral history project which charted the lives of women who fought for equality in the 70s and 80s.

[Professor Karen Ross](#) from Northumbria's [Department of Media and Communication Design](#) and a member of the organising committee members said that "the Festival's programme is an excellent example of engagement between university staff and students and the wider community, bringing alive a shared interest in the role of and contribution made by women to a society's political, economic and cultural life."

Northumbria's Festival of Feminist Ideas and Actions 2016 has been scheduled by the University's Gender & Society Research Hub and supported by internal funding provided by the Faculty of Arts, Design and Social Sciences. All events are free and will be hosted at Newcastle City Library, apart from the walking tour and film screening which require separate booking.

**For full event listings and to book your place, please visit:**

[www.eventbrite.co.uk/feministideas](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/feministideas)

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