

A Note from *Sinister Wisdom* Editor and Publisher

This book is a gift to you from the Women's Liberation Movement. Now you can never say feminism did not give you anything.

I say these two sentences to undergraduates when I give them a copy of an issue of a feminist journal as a part of teaching. For me, teaching with feminist periodicals began with copies of [Conditions](#). As a part of my dissertation research, I connected with Cheryl Clarke, one of the members of the [Conditions](#) editorial collective, and agreed to help [distribute twenty-one boxes of back issues of Conditions](#). Now feminist periodicals, including back issues of [Sinister Wisdom](#), are fixtures on my syllabi.

Teaching feminist periodicals—and giving students a book—is joyful. Giving students free books brings them pleasure, particularly working class and poor students for whom purchasing books and class materials can be a hardship. Giving students a feminist periodical opens a world of creativity to them; it invites them to see themselves as creators of meaning in the world just like the women who published, edited, and wrote for feminist periodicals. Teaching *Sinister Wisdom* invites students to engage meaningfully and critically with lesbian-feminism, exploring key areas of feminist epistemology, vital debates about the politics of separatism and assimilation, the construction of sex, gender and gender roles, and an array of other ideas still crucial to life today.

These [Sinister Wisdom Teaching Guides](#) offer an array of ideas for teaching back issues of [Sinister Wisdom](#). The teaching guides feature concise issue summaries, key thematic elements from the issue connecting different pieces within each issue, discussion questions, classroom activities, profiles of contributors and more. The [Reading Guides](#) are shorter guides extracted to particularly meet the needs of peer-led reading groups. The [Teaching Guides](#) and [Reading Guides](#) are available as PDFs of the full series covering all ten issues as well as individually. In addition to the beautifully designed guides, ideal for reading online or on an electronic reading device, we have plain text [Reading](#) and [Teaching Guides](#) that are easy to print and photocopy. I hope that you will find these a useful resource to exploring and sharing back issues of *Sinister Wisdom*.

At [Sinister Wisdom](#), I am committed to stewarding the journal and continuing to publish the very best art and literary work by lesbians; I also am committed to [preserving our herstory](#) and [helping new generations](#) understand and tell meaningful stories about lesbian-feminist pasts. These [Teaching Guides](#) and [Reading Guides](#) invite new readers to experience some of the conversations, arguments, insights, and dialogues in *Sinister Wisdom* that were meaningful to lesbians and their sistren.

I invite you to read and teach back issues of [Sinister Wisdom](#). [Sinister Wisdom is happy to provide, free of charge, classroom sets and reading group sets of journal issues.](#) For people who are able to make a contribution to cover the cost of postage, we will provide an invoice; postage reimbursement is voluntary though greatly appreciated. Most of all, we want to move back issues of [Sinister Wisdom](#) from our storage shelves into the hands of readers. We like to imagine what new sinisterly wise ideas and actions will emerge from the alchemy of new people reading these old printed, bound pages.

In sisterhood,

Julie R. Enszer, PhD
Summer 2017