Modern Records Centre

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UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK



What are Archives?

What are the similarities & difference between an archive and a library?

What kind of items will be held in the library vs an archive?









What are Archives?

Records created, used, received or assembled by organisations and individuals.

Considered **primary sources** that are **unique.**

They can be formal, official, financial, legal, private and personal.

Can be analogue or born digital.



What are Archives?

Most archives are **working documents** created for a specific job or interest at a specific time

Usually an **incomplete** record – some records are lost, damaged or deliberately destroyed

Bias exists through underrepresentation and exclusion



Types of Records

Legal documents

Minutes of meetings and internal communications

Personal diaries, journals, letters

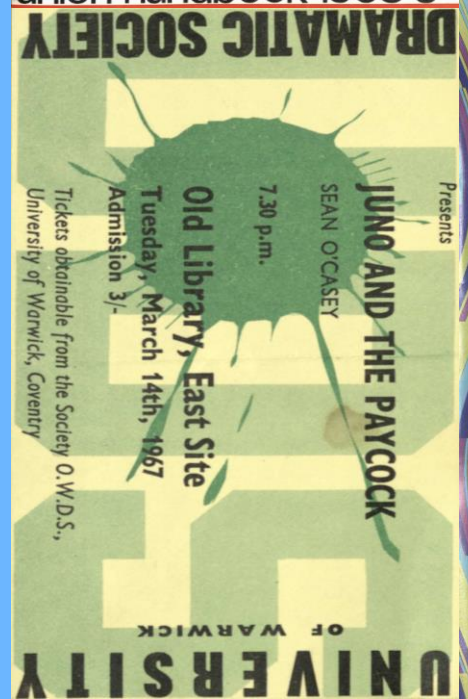
Pamphlets, leaflets, newspapers, magazines, zines, official publications

Photographs, graphics

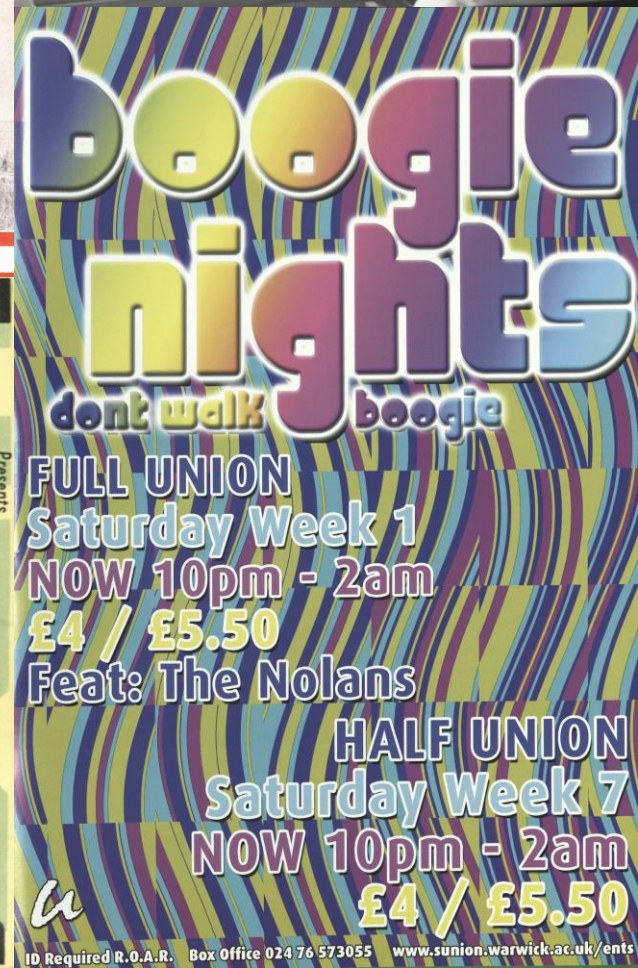
Audio-visual recordings

Born-digital records









Provenance

Archives are catalogued by their origin and source.

- Who created, accumulated, or maintained them?
- How they came to the archive?
- Where does the document come from?

Items are kept with related records, preserving their context and meaning.



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Archival Arrangement

Collection

University of Warwick Archives (UWA)



Section

Photographs (Photos)



Series

Main Site – Academic Buildings

Sub Series

Library Building

UWA/Photos/II.A.6/1



Item

Student using a microfilm reader in the Library, 1979

UWA/Photos/II.A.6/1/57



The Modern Records Centre

Established 1973

Over 1600 collections

More than 16km of archive material

Has the longest moving storage shelves in Europe

Collecting Archive

Includes a Seminar Room, Research Room and Exhibition Space



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The Modern Records Centre

Unions and Politics

- National-level collections for major British trade unions
- Most notably Trades Union Congress (TUC)
- Employer's organisation and trade associations
- Campaign, pressure and protest groups
- Radical politics (most prominently far-left)
- National Union of Student (NUS)


THEY TRIED PUTTING A COLOUR BAN ON HARVESTS

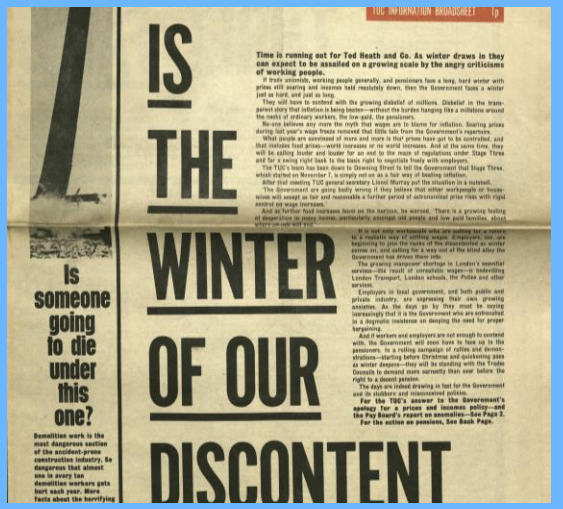
This is Amelia King.
She was refused work on the land because of her colour.

Colour doesn't prevent her father and brother fighting in the Merchant Navy.

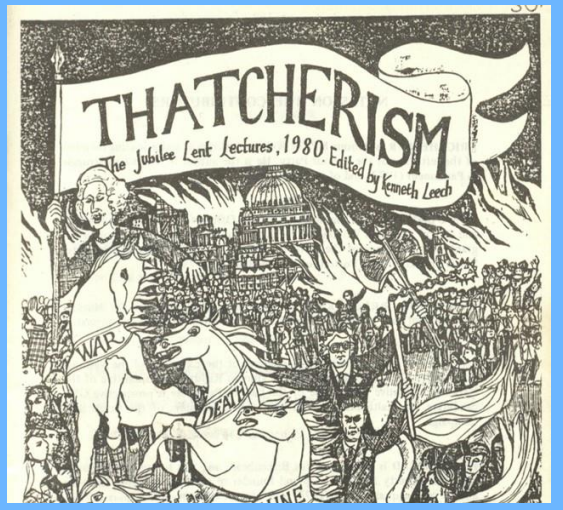
Press and public clamour exposed this shameful treatment of a Stepney-born girl.

THAT IS ONE CASE, HERE IS ANOTHER.

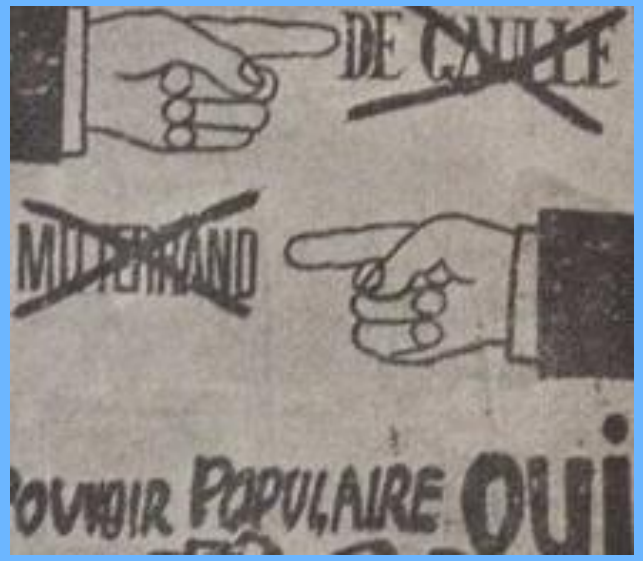
Leary Constantine, well-known broadcaster and sportsman, was turned out of the Imperial Hotel.

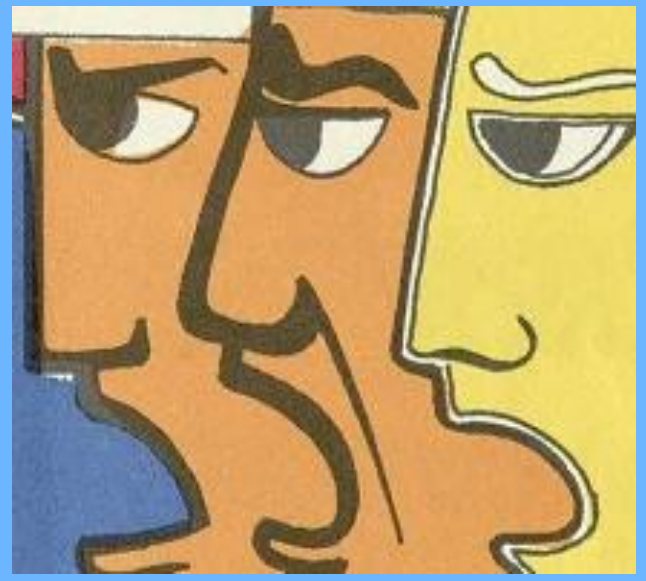














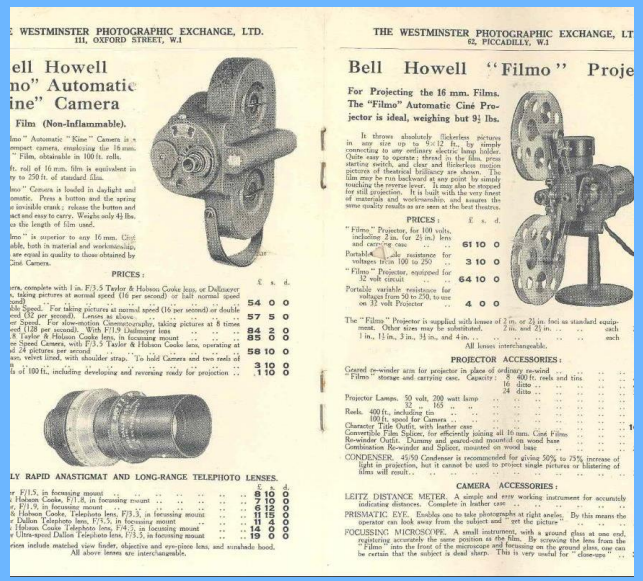
Modern Languages and Culture

- **France**
  - Revolution, political ephemera, Paris Commune, History of, French resistance newspapers and leaflets
- **Germany**
  - History of, Anglo-German Relations, Revolutionary Germany, War and struggle, Film, Nazi Germany
- **Spain**
  - Spanish Civil War
- **Latin America**
  - History of Human Rights, Chile Solidarity



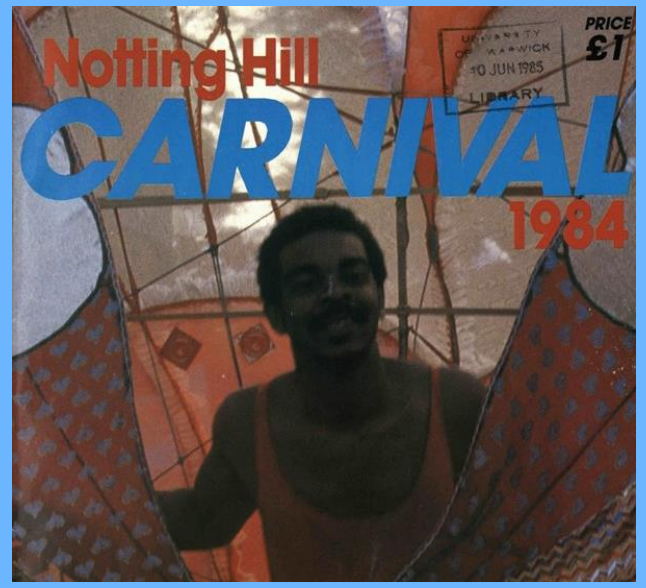


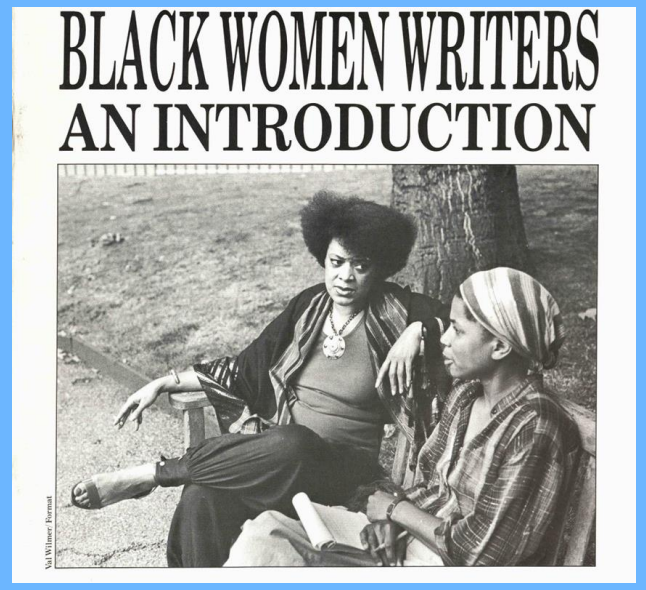




Media/ TV

- **German Film**
  - Film in the Weimar Republic and under National Socialism
- **Power of the Cinema**
  - Film in the 1920s and 30s
  - Confederation of British Industry and its predecessors
  - Film Industry Employees' Council (Transport Salaried Staffs' Association)
- **Cinema History Sources Research Guide**





Literature and Performing Arts

Library Special Collections

Hall Collection of Prompt Books

- Approx. 600 English plays mostly from the late 18th and early 19th centuries

The Marandet Collection of French Plays

- Collection of 18th- and 19th-century French plays

Clive Bush Audio Poetry Collection

- digitised cassette recordings of UK poetry events from the 1970s to the early 2000s.

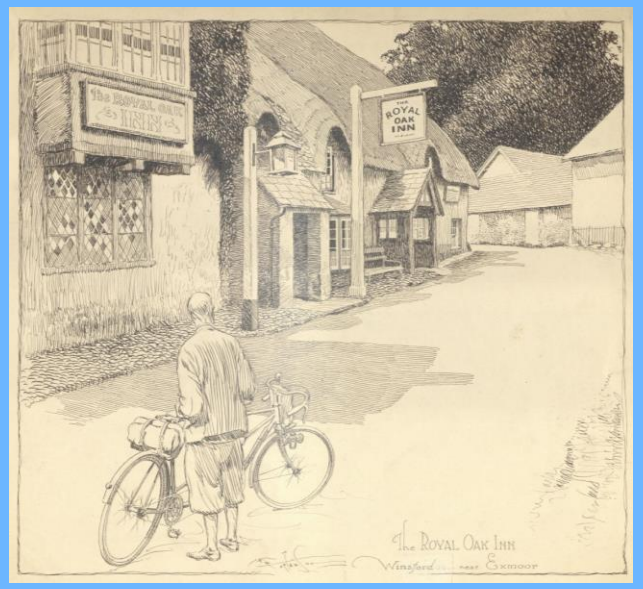
British political theatre, 1930s-1950s

Minority Arts Archive

- Collection held on behalf of the Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations (CRER)









History of Art

<u>Maitland Sara Hallinan collection</u>

- Journals, Pamphlets, Notes for Speakers, Books, 1864-1963

Minority Arts Archive

Cartoons

Photographs

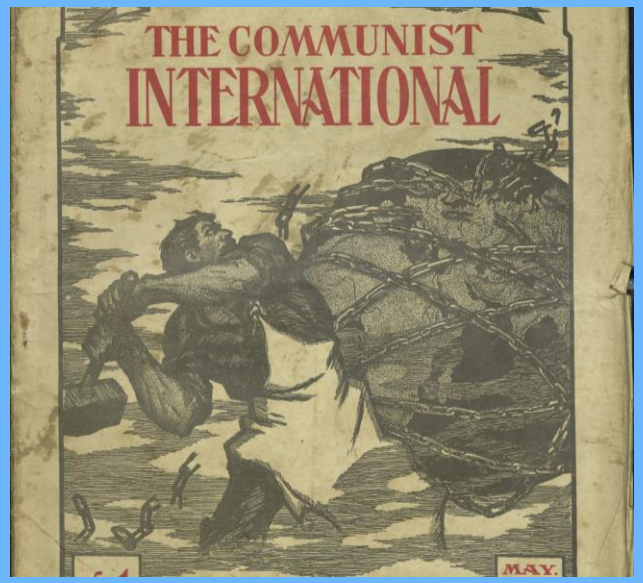
- <u>Online image galleries</u>

Letters

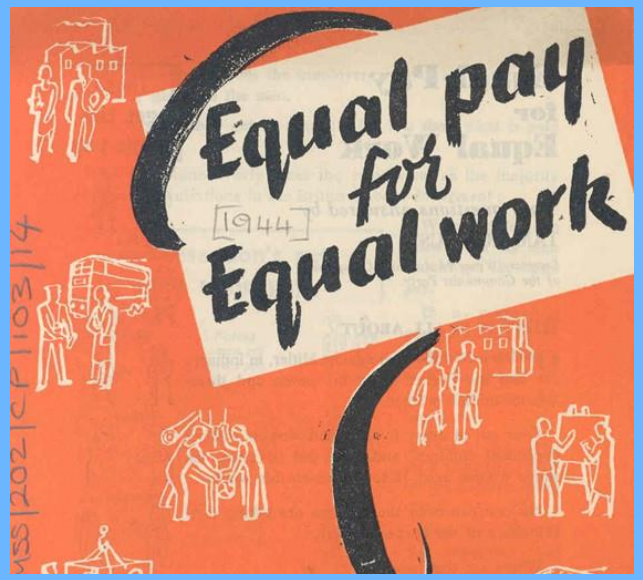
Papers of Sir Victor Gollancz

- Artist Lady Ruth Gollancz









Other Themes

- Ireland/India/China
- LEO: The first business computer
- Race and Migration
- Crime and Punishment
- Feminism and the role of women
- Stalinism
- National Cycle Archives

Accessing Archives

In-person:

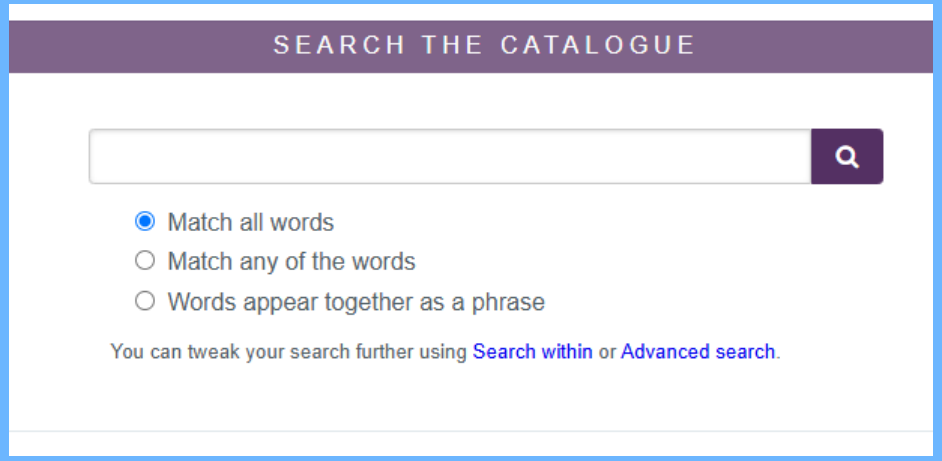
Open Monday-Friday.

Don’t need an appointment, but recommended.

Can order documents in advance of your visit

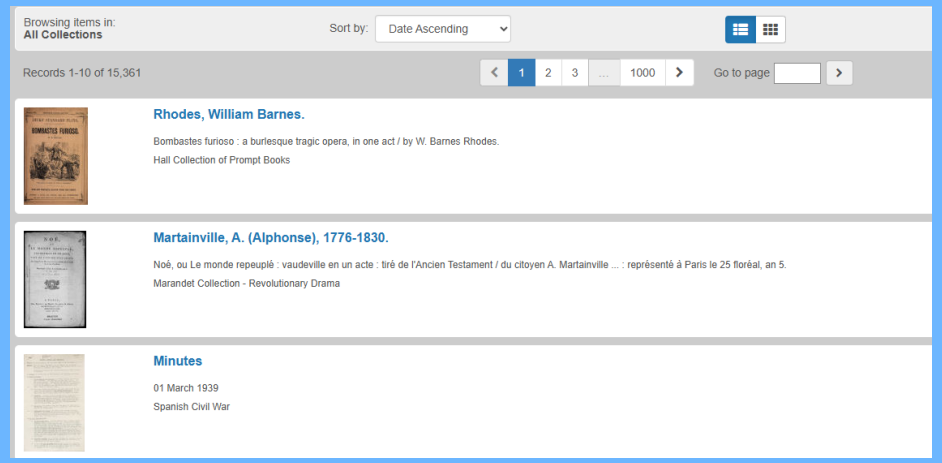
Online:

MRC Catalogue



https://mrc-describe.epexio.com/

Digital Collections



https://mrc-describe.epexio.com/

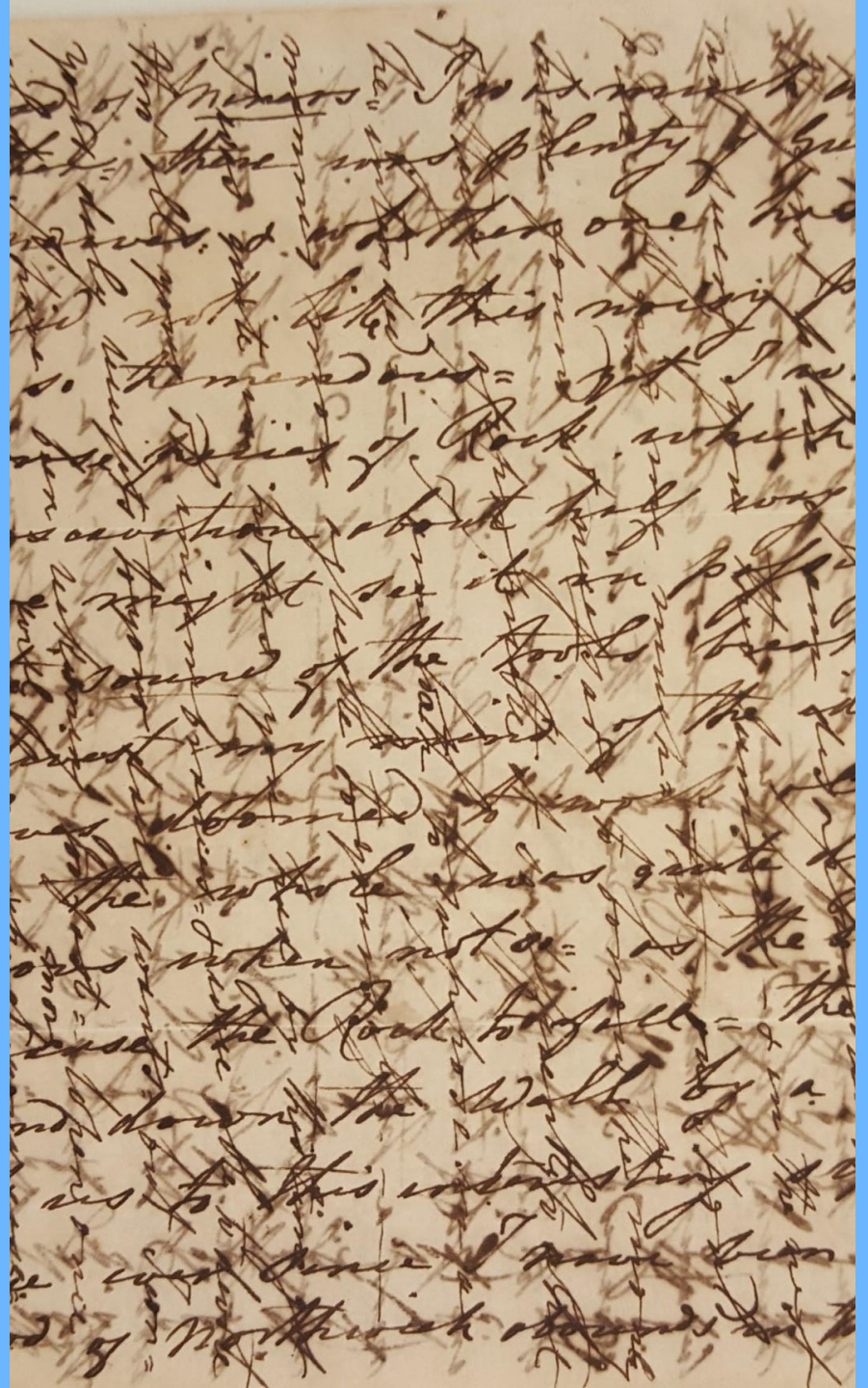
Researching with Archives

Benefits of Archival Research

- Primary sources
- Deeper historical context
- Original discoveries
- New perspectives on modern issues

Potential Pitfalls

- Limited online access
- Large amounts of material to sift through
- Time-intensive research
- Gaps in the historical record
- Difficult handwriting or terminology



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Developing your archival research

Come with a manageable question or a broad topic area

Find and explore archives on a specific organisation, person or event.

Evaluate evidence and re-evaluate your question

Build an argument



Finding Archives

Search using names, organisations, events, places and appropriate terminology.

Think laterally

Be prepared to refine your question as new evidence emerges.

Ask an archivists for help identifying relevant collections.

Search tips:

Trade Union: 40,000+ results

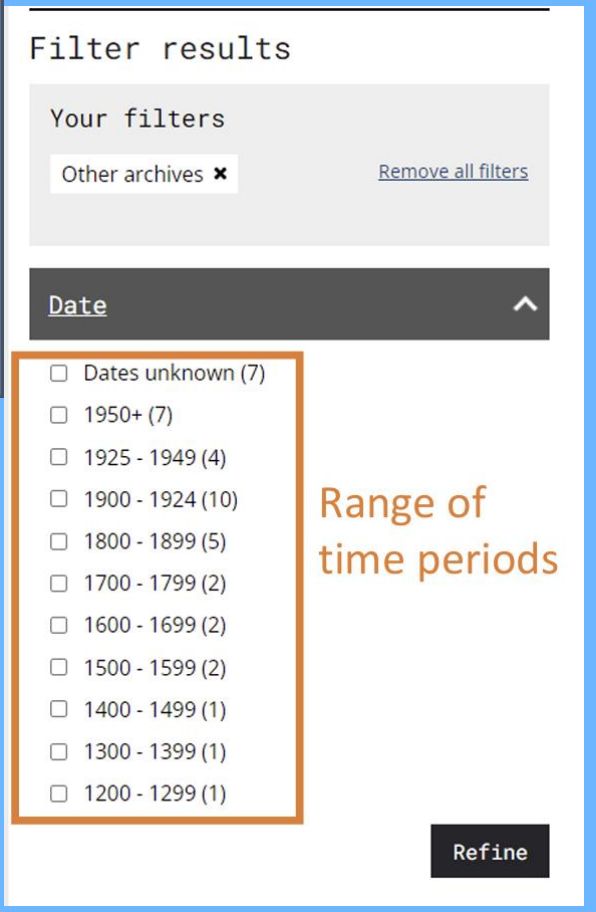
"Trade Union": 23,000 results

Trade OR Union: 143,000 results

Trade AND Union: 40,000 results

Trade NOT Union: 14,000 results

Trade Un*: 49,000 results (trade union, trade unions, trade unionist, trade unionists, etc.)



Evaluating the evidence

For each item, ask:

- Who created it, when and why?
- Who was the intended audience?
- What perspective does it represent?
- What does it leave out?
- Is it typical or exceptional?
- Can it be compared with other sources?



Building your argument

Compare several items rather than relying on one source.

Look for patterns, changes, contradictions and gaps.

Combine different source types to gain multiple perspectives.

Record full archival references as you work.

Distinguish between what the evidence shows, suggests and cannot tell you.

Acknowledge uncertainty and missing evidence in your conclusions



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Organisational notes and minutes

What is it?
Working records of how groups operate. Minutes usually summarise decisions and formal discussion, while notes may preserve uncertainty, alternatives and informal detail.



Examples
- Committee and annual meeting minutes
- Agendas, briefing papers and handwritten notes
- Reports, memoranda and action lists

How it could inform a project
- Reconstruct how a policy, campaign or institution changed
- Connect organisational history with politics, sociology or management
- Examine who had authority, who was absent and what was left unrecorded

Newspapers

What is it?

Periodical publications that select, organise and present events for readers.

They provide evidence of contemporary debate, but also reflect editorial priorities and intended audiences.



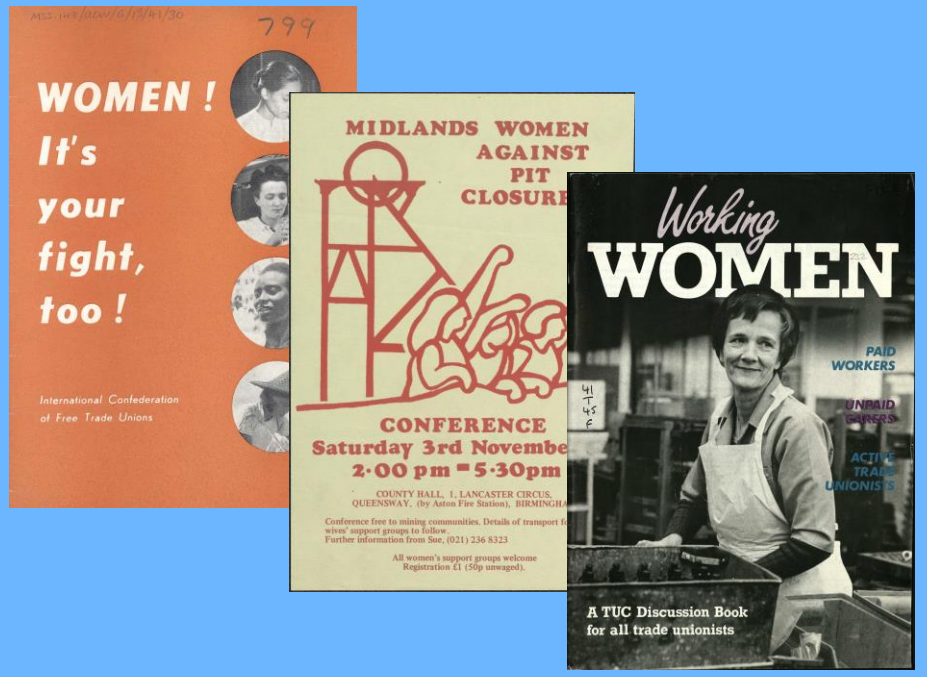
Examples

- National and local newspapers
- Student and trade-union newspapers
- Campaign, community and specialist press

How it could inform a project

- Compare how the same event was represented by different publications
- Track language, themes or public debates over time
- Combine history with media studies, linguistics, politics or digital methods

Flyers, posters, and zines



What is it?

Material produced to communicate quickly with a particular audience. These sources often combine image, wording, design and format to persuade, inform or mobilise.

Examples

- Campaign leaflets and protest flyers
- Event posters and publicity
- Independent magazines and self-published zines

How it could inform a project

- Trace how an issue was framed for different audiences
- Combine politics, visual culture, design and media studies
- Compare official messaging with grassroots or marginal voices

Photographs



What is it?

Visual records created for a purpose, from documentation to publicity. Photographs show selected moments and viewpoints; captions, cropping and archival context affect interpretation.

Examples

- Campus, workplace and protest photographs
- Portraits and group photographs
- Contact sheets, negatives and publicity images

How it could inform a project

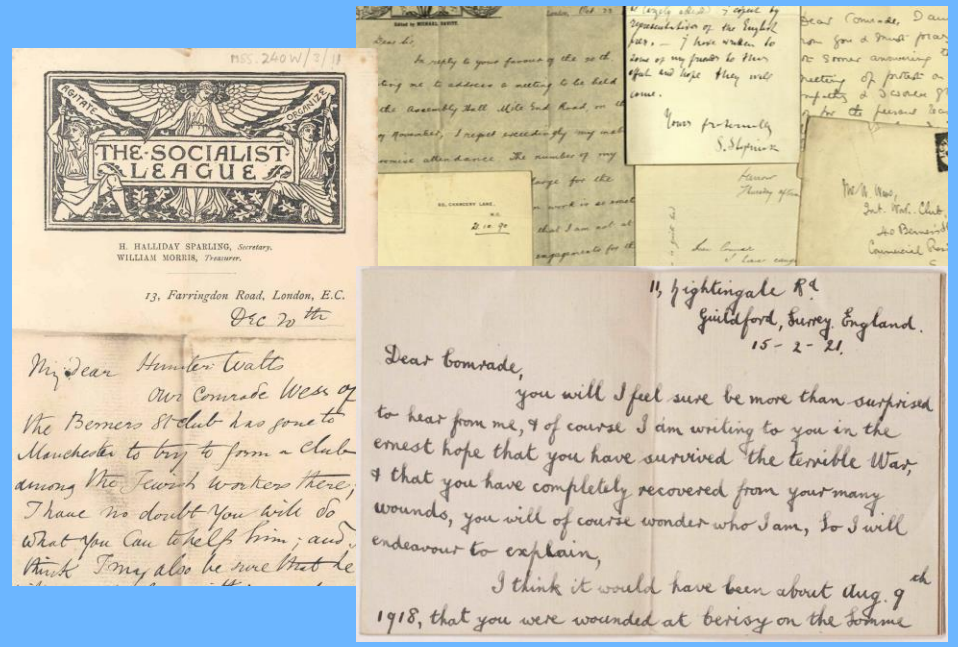
- Research changes in place, technology, work or social life
- Analyse representation using history, geography and visual methods
- Compare images with written records to identify gaps or contradictions

Correspondence and letters

What is it?

Messages exchanged between people or organisations.

A letter records communication at a particular moment and may reveal relationships, networks, negotiations and disagreement.



Examples

- Personal letters and postcards
- Campaign or constituency correspondence
- Internal memoranda and circular letters

How it could inform a project

- Map networks of people, ideas or influence
- Study persuasion, language, authority and decision-making
- Compare private discussion with public statements or later outcomes

Diaries



What is it?

Personal records written over time. Diaries can capture routines, observations and changing viewpoints, but they are selective accounts rather than transparent records of experience.

Examples

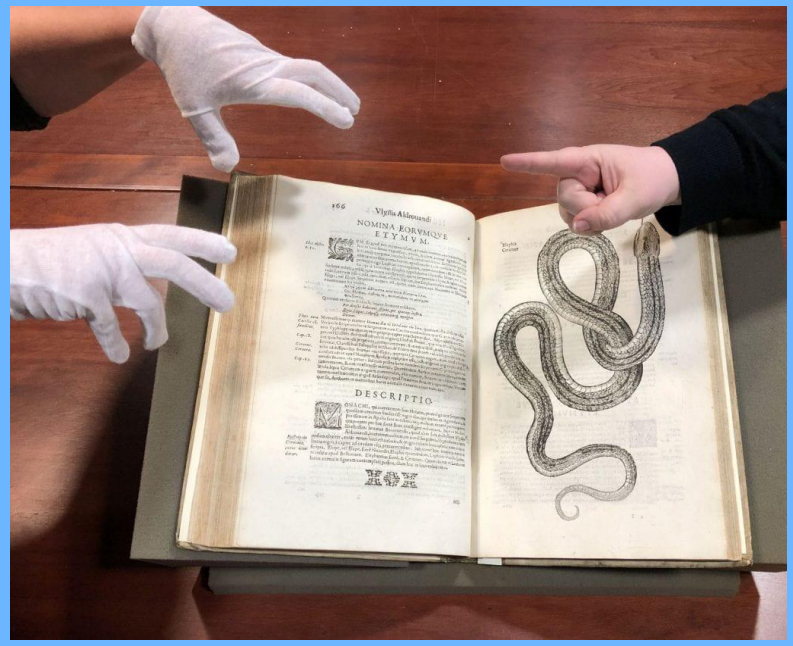
- Daily or travel diaries
- Research notebooks and journals
- Appointment diaries with annotations

How it could inform a project

- Explore everyday experience alongside larger historical change
- Bring together history, psychology, literature and material culture
- Ask how memory, privacy and self-presentation shape evidence

Handling

- No food, drink, pens, or highlighters.
- Leave bags and coats outside the handling area.
- Keep paper documents flat and books fully supported.
- Use book supports, cushions, and weights as instructed.
- Use both hands and turn pages carefully.
- Don't lean on, mark, fold, crease, or trace over documents.
- Keep documents in their original order.
- Keep lanyards, jewellery, and loose clothing clear of materials.
- Tell staff if you find damage or are unsure how to handle an item.



Feedback Form

Locating Sources

CADRE 2026-27

Sarah Akhtaruzzaman
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Andy Calvert
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Aims of the session

Know who your Research & Academic support Librarian is

Understand how to search in a more advanced way

03 Identify key collections or resources to search

04 Know about the further help and support that is available

Research & Academic Support Librarians

We are here to help with:

- Literature searching
- Referencing
- Access to resources
- Citation searching
- Open access & RDM

- Contact us to arrange a meeting – in person or online



Meet the Team: Arts & Humanities



Sarah Akhtaruzzaman
s.e.akhtaruzzaman@warwick.ac.uk

Chinese Studies, Creative Writing, Centre for Cultural Policy Studies, English and Comparative Studies, French Studies, German Studies, Hispanic Studies, Italian Studies, Language Centre, School of Modern Languages and Cultures, Theatre Studies, Translation

Andy Calvert
Andrew.Calvert@warwick.ac.uk



Classics, Film and TV Studies, History, History of Art, Renaissance Studies, Liberal Arts,
Global Sustainable Development (GSD), Design Studies

LibGuides:

https://warwick.ac.uk/services/library/subjects

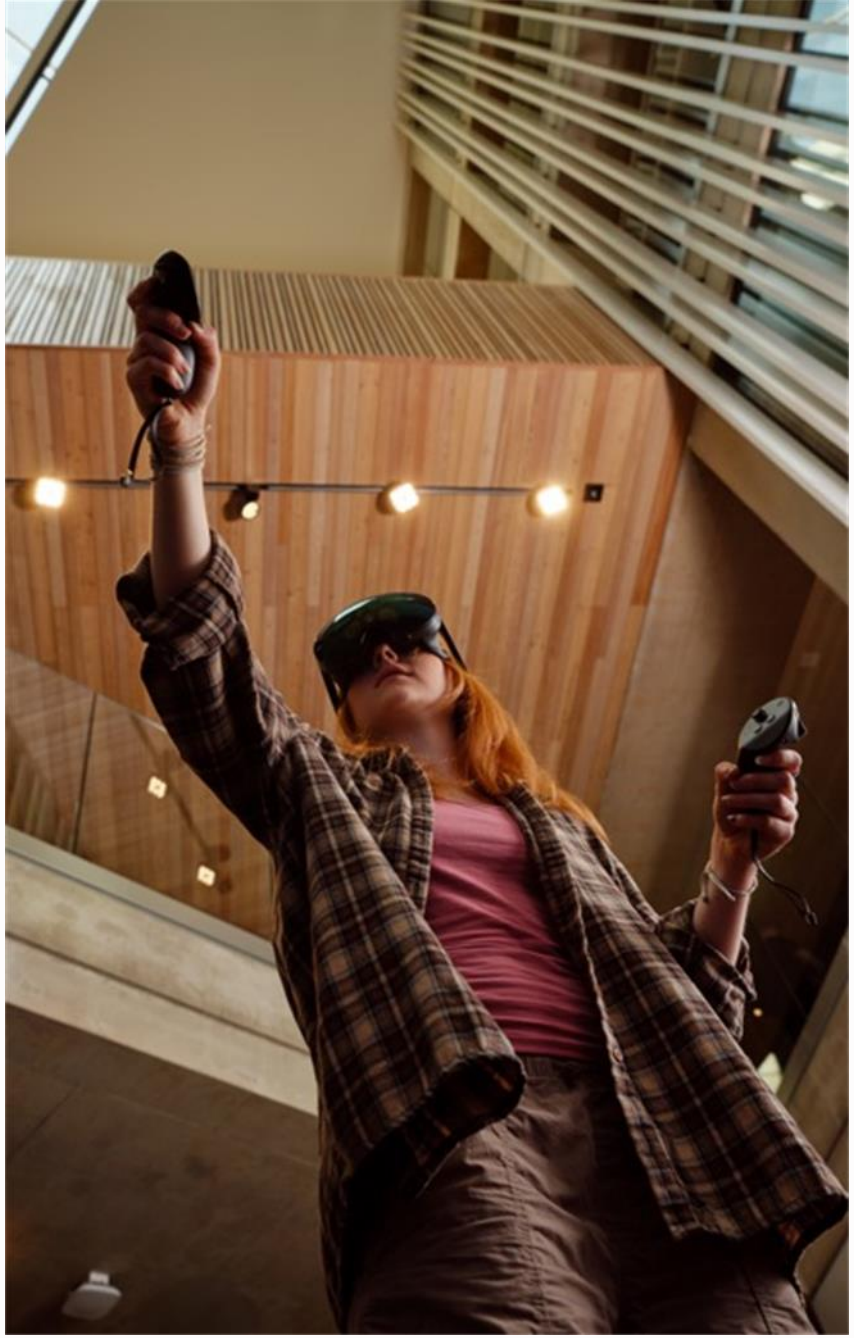
- **Subject Guides**
  - Books and journals
  - Databases and online tutorials
  - Referencing
  - Research Support
  - Contact details
- **Topic Guides**
  - Copyright
  - Artificial Intelligence
  - Search & Explore
  - Newspapers
  - Official publications Research Data Management

Search Strategy

A structured plan that guides how and where to look for information relevant to a research question or topic.

Ensures that the search can be:

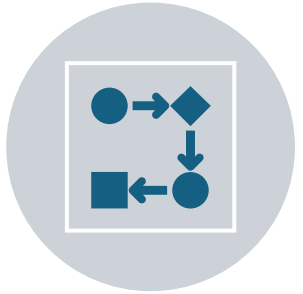
- **Systematic**
- **Comprehensive**
- **Potentially reproducible**



A Note on Searching



Searching can be very time-consuming and frustrating



Iterative process – your question and searches will change and need to be adapted



It will always take longer than you think



Ask for help and advice – your RASL can often be more objective and ask the “daft” questions

Developing a search strategy

Think about the aim and objectives

Consider your question – breadth

What are the key concepts/ideas?

Not all of your research question needs to be in your search strategy

Developing a search strategy



What information might you need to investigate your topic?

Historical records or accounts, interviews, letters, diaries, original research, analysis, theory, context, commentary, review, historiographical ... etc.



From what source might you get this?

Types of sources, media etc. ... books, journals, website, archive sources, primary sources, objects and artefacts, maps, images, audio, video, people ... etc.



Where will you search; which search tools would be most appropriate for these sources?

Library catalogues, archive collections, museum collections, journal databases, image databases, moving image databases, surveys and interviews.



How will you describe what you're looking for?

Keywords and variations (synonyms, antonyms), Names, Phrases, Core and related subjects

Developing a search strategy



Break your question down into the different concepts/ideas



Think about the different keywords that describe the concepts/ideas



Are there keywords that you are going to exclude? Why?



How are you going to combine the keywords together?



Can you limit the search?

Language
Year range

Geography/Location
Population group

Strategic Searching: Context Based

Task/directive: intention, methods

Actors

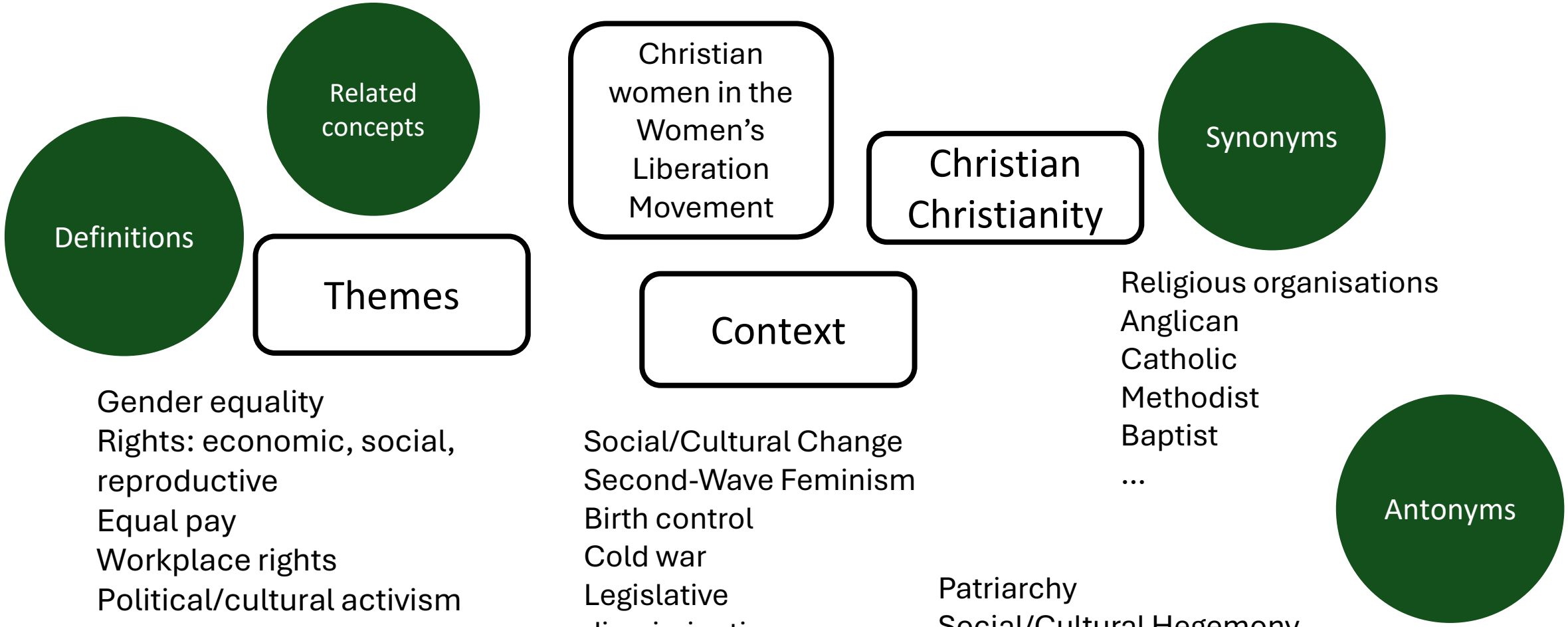
How did Christian women contribute to and shape the Women's Liberation Movement in Britain during the 1970s and 1980s, and what tensions existed between religious identity and feminist activism?

Topic area of focus

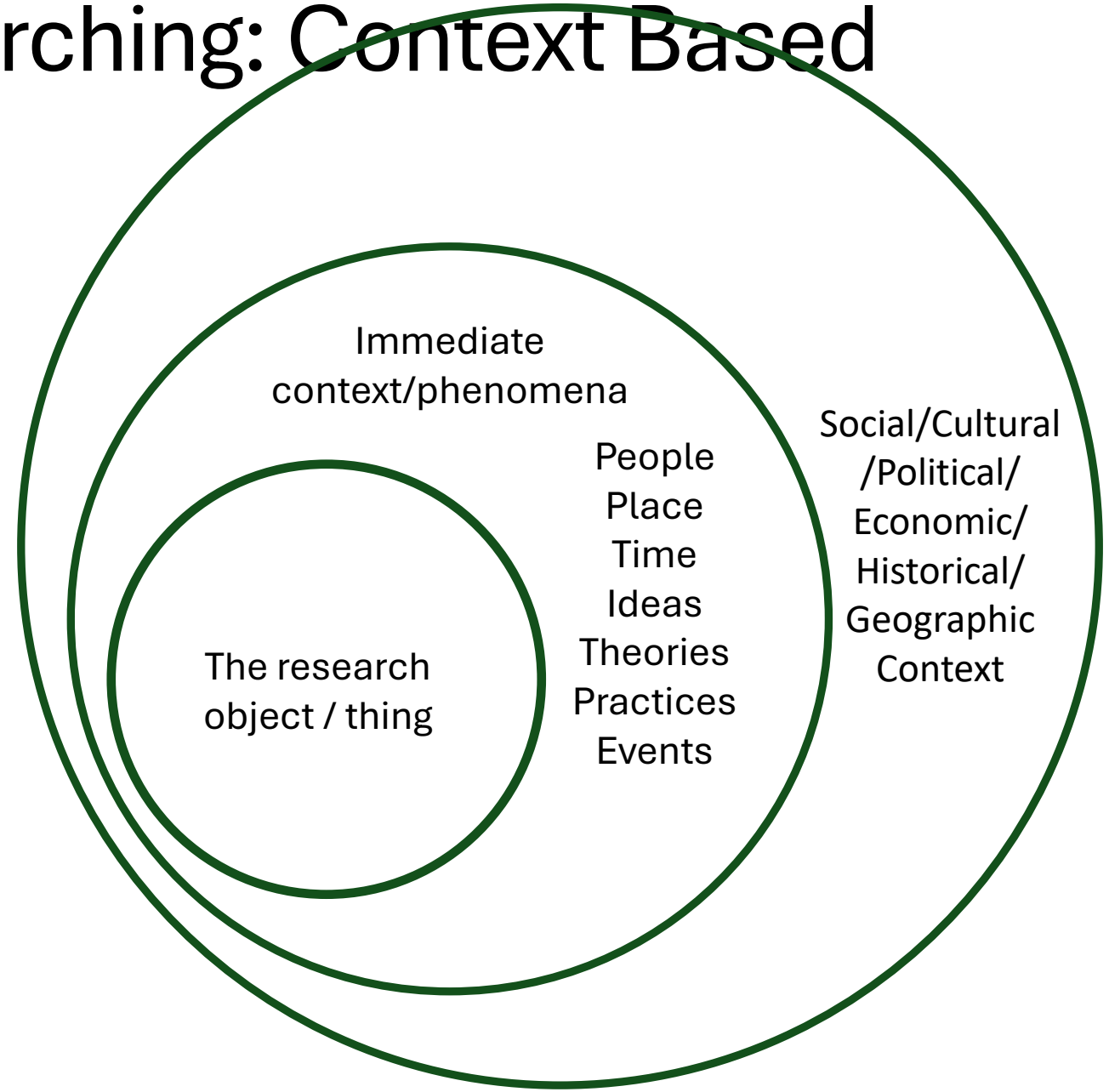
Period focus?

Wider context within which the topic is framed?

Strategic Searching: Context Based



Strategic Searching: Context Based



Strategic Searching: Problem Based

What are the most effective mitigation and adaptation strategies against climate change effects in the urban environment at the city, borough or ward scale?

Problem	Research object, question, hypothesis	Cities need to adapt to climate change
Intervention	Application of a theory, method, action or practice	Examples of effective strategies, innovations or implementations
Comparison	Alternative theories, methods, action or practice	Critiques, pre or post-implementation/use studies Alternative solutions
Outcome	Knowledge generation	Conclusions and outcomes

Putting a Search Together

“Quotes” search for an exact phrase

Parenthesis groups like concepts and applies search order logic

OR for similar concepts any or all of the terms present

AND requires all terms to be present (**AND** is a limiter)

*** Truncation**: alternative endings from a word stem

(“climate change” **OR** “global warming” **OR** “net zero” **OR** “net-zero”)

- **AND**

(“extreme weather” **OR** drought* OR flood* OR wildfire*)

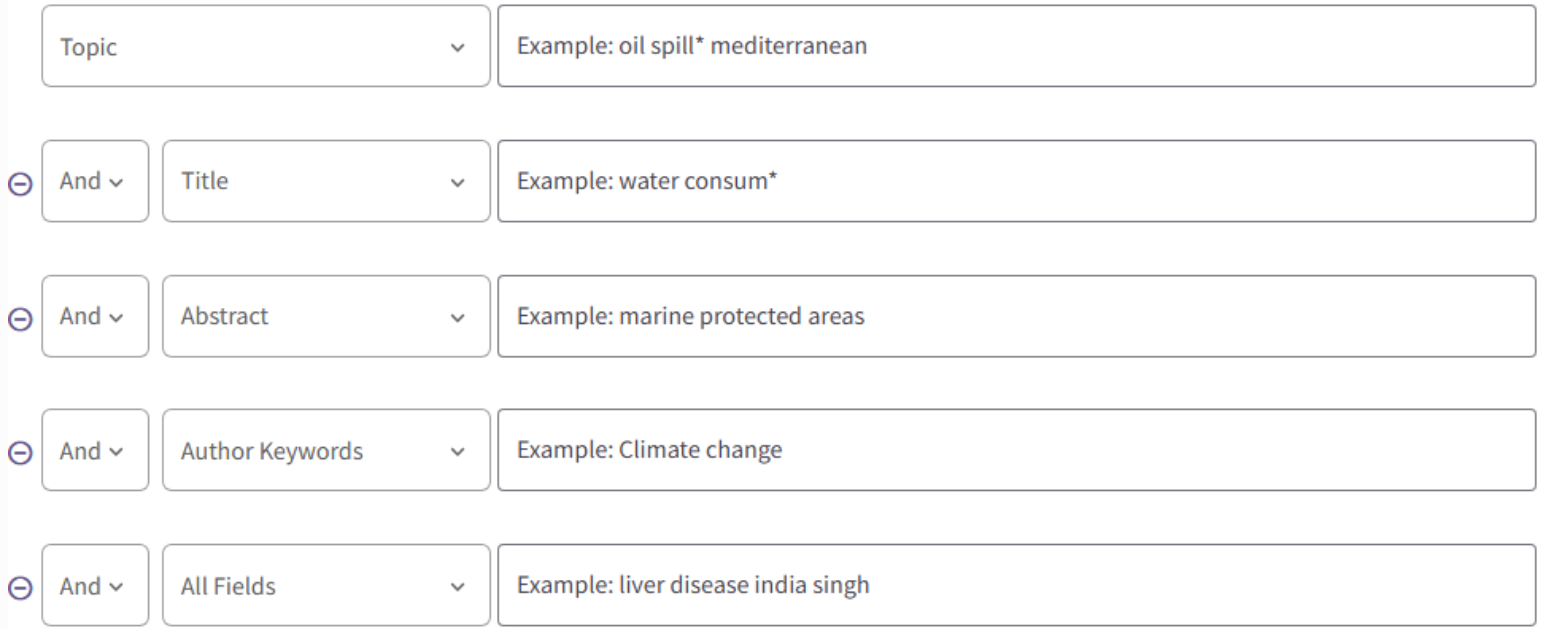
- **AND**

(“population movement” **OR** “human migration” **OR** “population migration” **OR** “population displacement”)

Putting a Search Together

Other operators

Field Search – Finds your search terms in specific fields in the record



Putting a Search Together

Other operators

NOT – Excludes records containing terms from results - needs use with caution

Model NOT Fashion

Wildcards – substitute for any characters in a word using * ? and others (database dependent) Example use (Web of Science)

wom?n – single character wildcard – women or woman

S*food – multi character wildcard – seafood or soyfood

Putting a Search Together

Other operators

Proximity – Offered by many databases. Finds records with terms within x number of words. Example use (Web of Science)

America NEAR/5 independence
Germany NEAR/10 unification
teacher NEAR/0 student

Look for Search Help in databases to find full instructions and search rules.

Citation searching

Find related, connected papers; follow the scholarly conversation

Check the reference list of relevant papers: these papers will be going back in time

Find out who has cited your key papers since they were published

Clarivate Web of Science™

Scopus

Finding the full text



Lib Key Nomad: find the full text access.
Need to install to own devices.

https://warwick.ac.uk/services/library/find-resources/e-access/tools/



Library Links in Google Scholar: tell Google Scholar that you are a Warwick person to see Warwick Access links next to search results.



Browzine: create your own collection of important journals

https://warwick.ac.uk/services/library/find-resources/e-access/tools/



Get if for Me: free and fast requests for material that we do not have access to.

Databases

- Access to published literature
- Regularly updated
- Thesaurus for terminology and ensure consistency

- Specialist, subject focused databases – check out your **LibGuide**
- Multidisciplinary/Interdisciplinary databases:
- Scopus
- Web of Science



Databases

- Journals: locating published articles in the literature.
- Full-text

JSTOR fiaf Art Full Text ProQuest ONE LITERATURE EconLit with Full Text GreenFILE

- Indexes

Design & Applied Arts Index (DAAI) Humanities Index MLA International Bibliography

- Archives: digitised archival material.



Databases

- Newspapers: Current and istoric newspaper collections





pressreader





HT LA Times





- Media: image, audio and video collections.

bob kanopy BFI





bridgeman education

JSTOR

DIGITAL THEATRE+

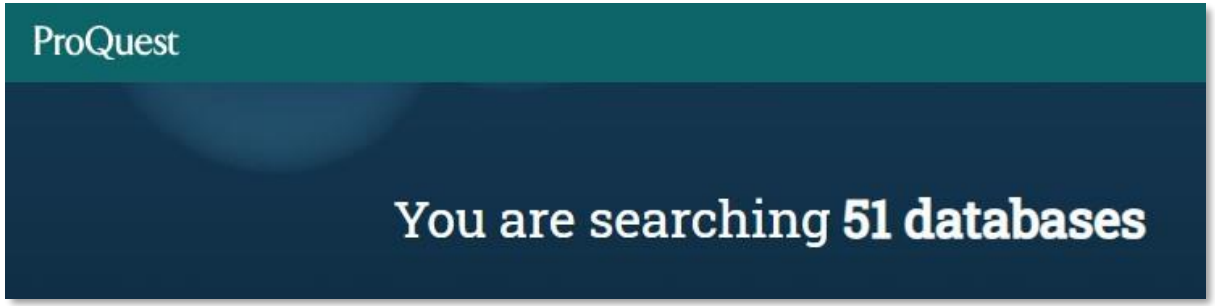


Databases

- Cross-searching tools





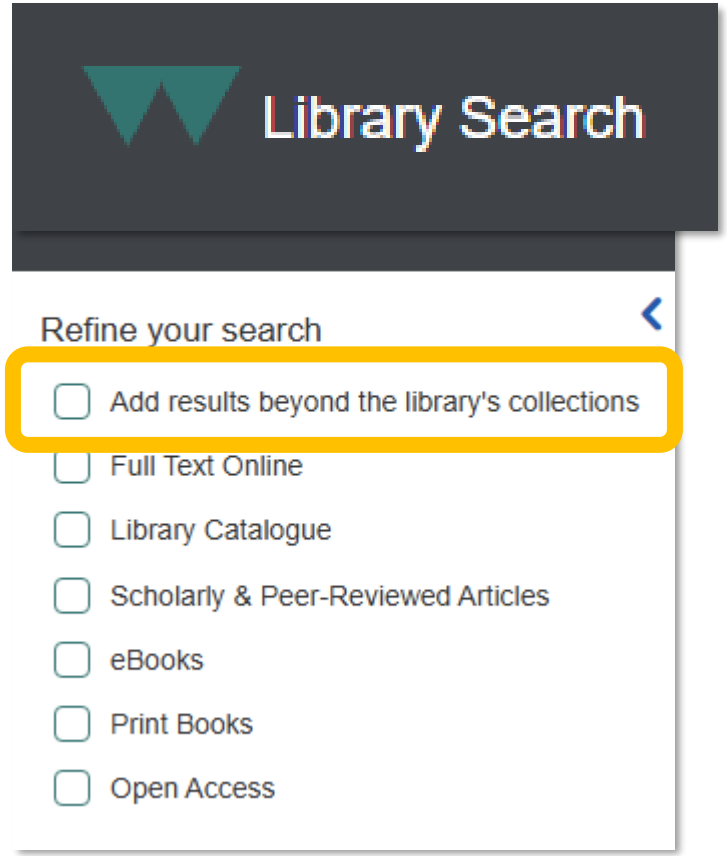


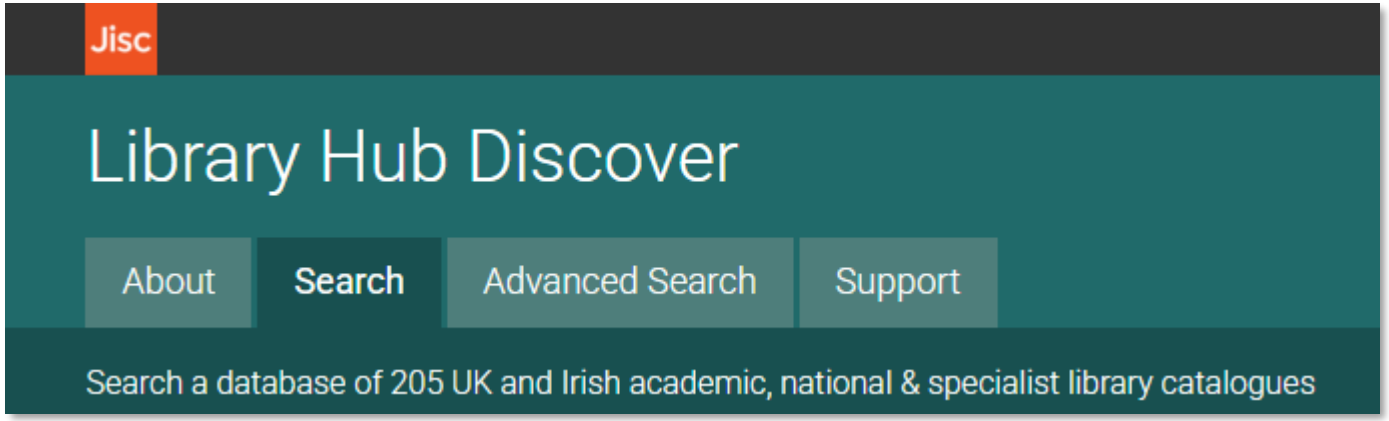
Other sources of information

- **Policy documents**
  - Social Policy & Practice
  - Dimensions (citation database)
- **Theses**
  - Dissertations & Theses Global
  - **Maps**
    - Digimap (UK)
  - **Data**
    - UK Census (ancestry.com)
    - UK Data Service
- **Statistics**
  - Statista
- **Social media**
  - Dimensions

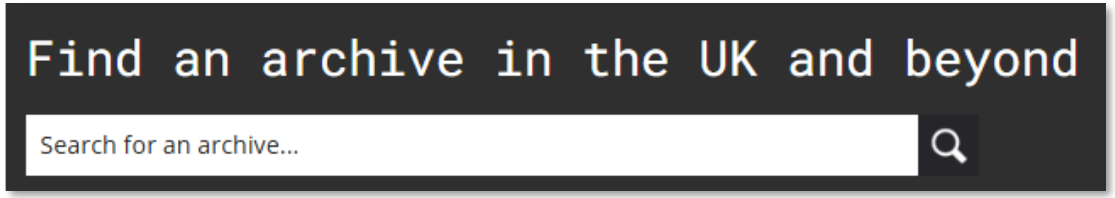


Looking beyond Warwick



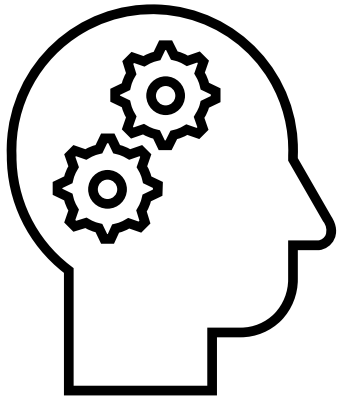
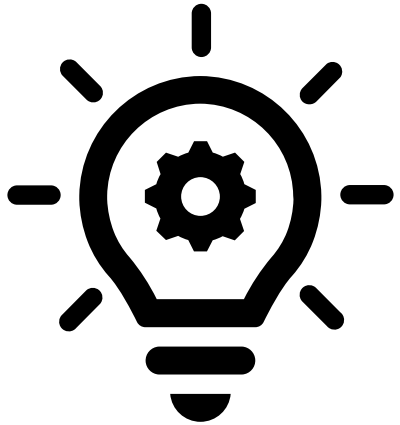










Google Google Scholar

To Google or not to Google (Scholar)?



Good starting point

Try out some keywords

Identify some useful papers

Identify key authors, journals?



Good ending point:

Finding full texts: set Library Links to Warwick

Chasing citations



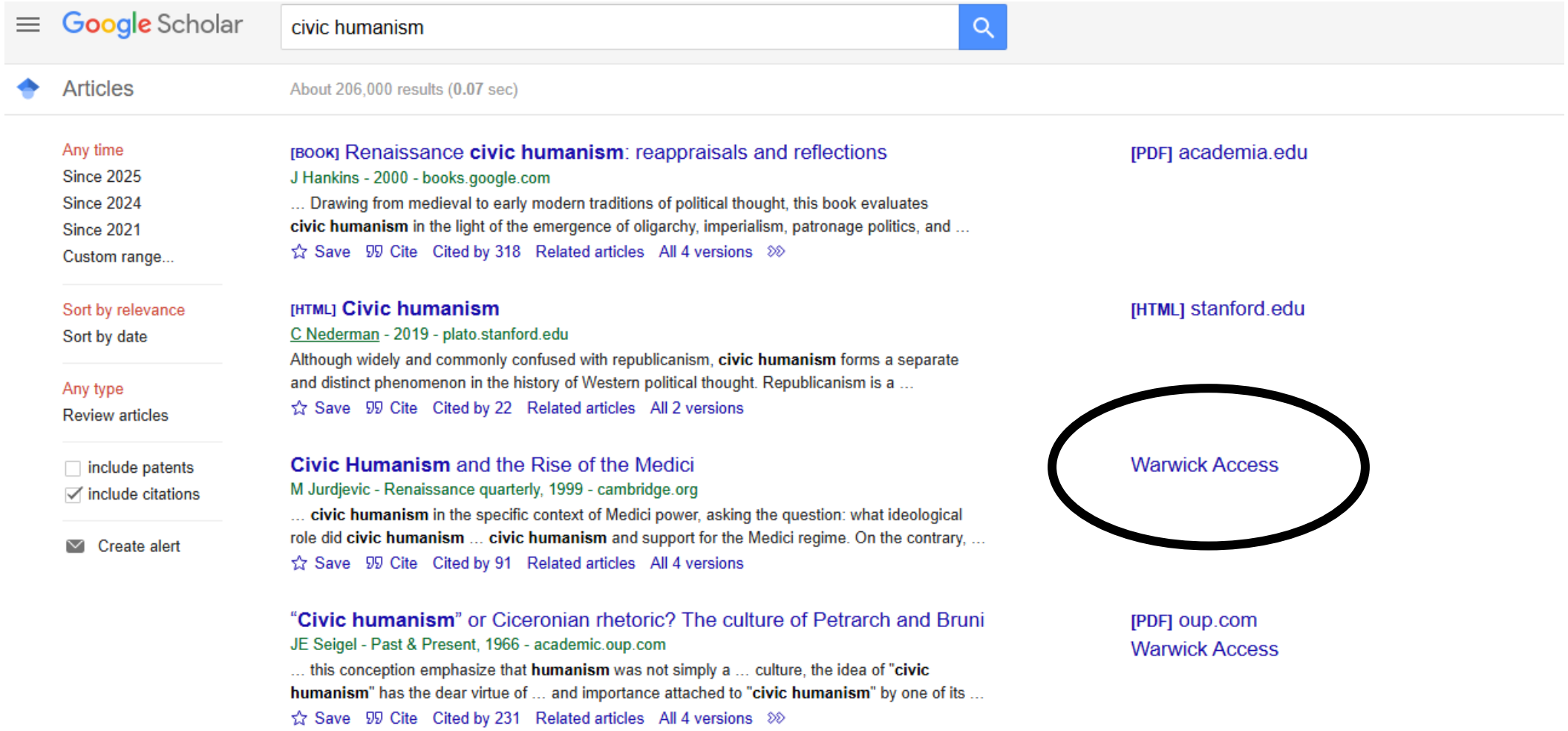
BUT

Impossible to replicate searches

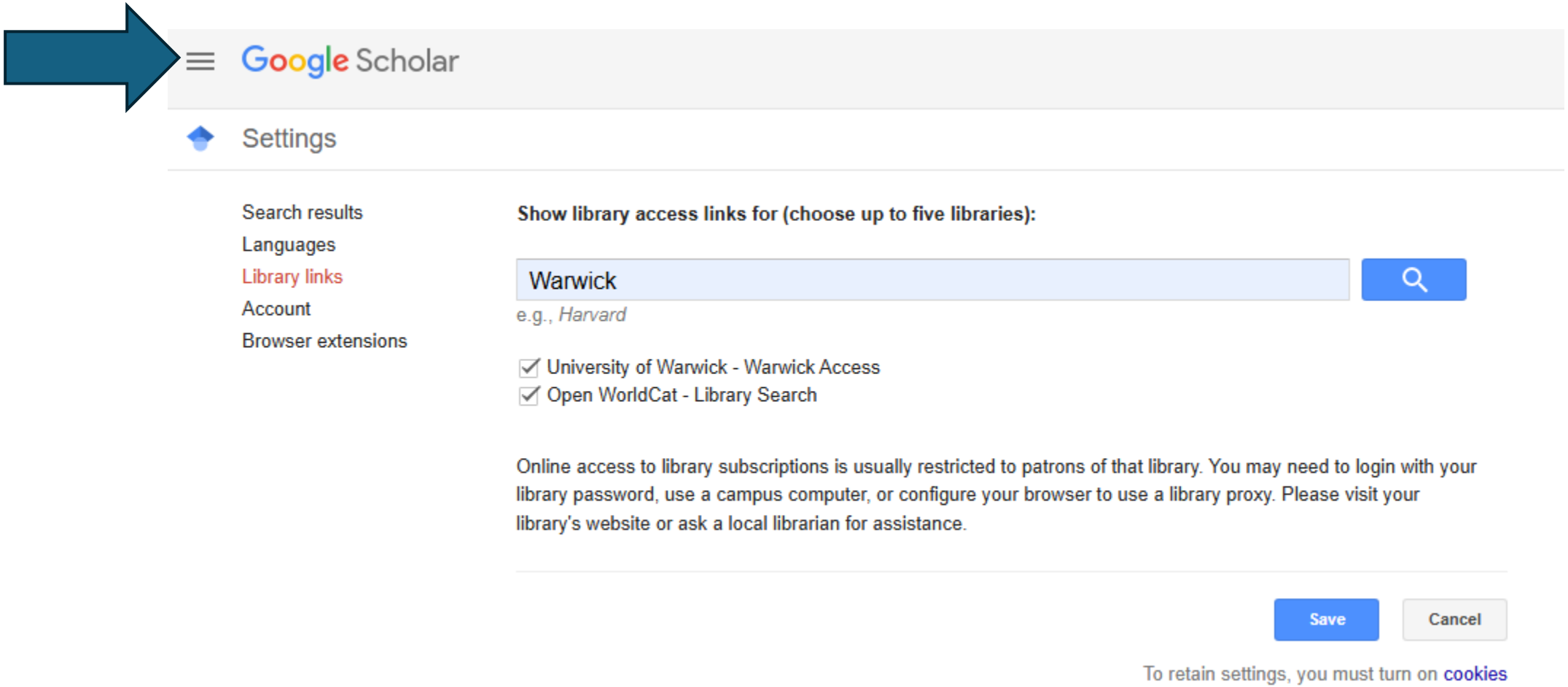
No clear list of sources used

Need to evaluate results

Google Scholar



Google Scholar



Further help and advice



Contact your Research and Academic Support Librarian



Have a look at your LibGuide



Investigate further training opportunities



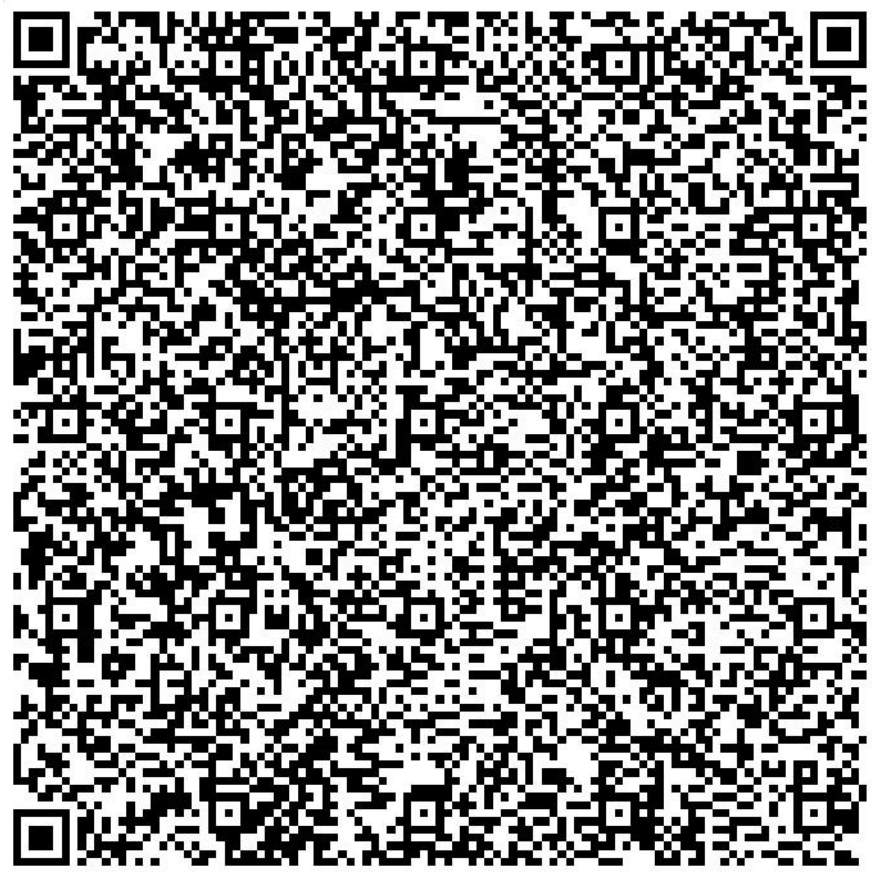
General Library email: Library@warwick.ac.uk

Questions?



UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Feedback: please let us know what you thought of the session



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