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Disability History Month

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Women's History Advent Calendar 2023

A new feminist archive for the East Midlands

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Editorial

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Archiving activists: A new feminist archive for the East Midlands

*Sarah Colborne, Collections Archivist, Manuscripts and Special Collections,
University of Nottingham*

Women's History Advent Calendar 2023

Editorial

Welcome to the latest edition of ALISS Quarterly. It has been published by ALISS (Association of Librarians and Information Professionals in the Social Sciences).

In this issue, we highlight a recent event for disability history month which was hosted by ALISS in November 2023. Find further information on our website at <https://alissnet.com/aliss-showcase-2023/>

a padlet of useful resources created by speakers, aliss members and attendees https://padlet.com/h_dawson/disability-history-month-2023-6yvyc2h3fasmdgkm

presentations included:

National Paralympic Trust Digital projects

Vicky Hope-Walker of the NPHT who described the work of the organisation and its plans to create a virtual museum. Preliminary work on 3D digital objects can be seen on the website. A key concept is the inclusion of the voices of lived experience of 'disability'.

<https://www.paralymphicheritage.org.uk/pages/category/digital-explorations-project>

Collections on the go: A walking tour app for Paralympic heritage.

<https://alissnet.files.wordpress.com/2023/11/sharable-aliss-app-talk-presentation.pptx>

Samuel Brady (He/Him) and Bethany Watrous, The talk covered the background historical research and technical innovations. In the previous edition of ALISS quarterly the project was explored in more detail

“Lucy: A Story from the Normansfield Archives” by Dr Sarah E Hayward

Sarah recently completed a PhD at Kingston University London in the field of Museum and Heritage Studies. She is now a freelance researcher, podcast editor for the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, and a heritage assistant at the Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability, Putney. This presentation was based on research carried out in the Normansfield Archive Collection. Her article in this issue describes her research finds and the innovative ways she has presented them. It really is an astonishing achievement in attempting to recreate the human histories behind the records.

“Be not denied access”: improving Accessibility to Collections at Shakespeare's Globe

Philip Milnes-Smith is an archivist with lived experience of disability. He works part-time as the Digital Archivist at Shakespeare's Globe where he has been leading the archive's work in decolonising and inclusive practice. His presentation presented a work in progress in improving accessibility. This extended beyond improving physical access to the reading room.

He spoke about improving audio descriptions. Providing visual stories to audiences in advance so they know what to expect from performances in terms of storylines, settings and actions enhancing catalogue records of archive collections to make resources about disability traceable. This involves indicating which plays include disabled characters or disablement as a theme in the text of production. It includes listing props related to disability such as crutches or eye patches. Listing the availability of texts, captioned recordings and audio descriptions of productions.

Aims to develop subject guides to disability, gender, queerness and race in the collections during 2024. In association with an advisory panel and to update them annually. The panel will include representatives from local communities and those with lived experience.

Also, in the disability section we have short articles from two of the contributors to the padlet. Artist Gill Crawshaw discusses her research into disabled mill workers in the textile industry in the North of England introducing her recent zine on the topic. PhD student Beck introduces their work in creating a website which highlights primary sources featuring disabled innovation. This is such a valuable and labor-intensive resource it is certainly deserving of reaching a wider audience.

Finally in a women's history section we hear about the establishment of:

A new feminist archive for the East Midlands

By Sarah Colborne from the University of Nottingham and get a run down on our 2023 womens history advent calendar

We hope you enjoy the issue. Keep up to date on the website

<https://alissnet.com/>

and Twitter

@aliss_info

Best wishes

Heather Dawson

ALISS Secretary

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Lucy's Story: A Gift from the Normansfield Archive

by Dr Sarah E Hayward

Lucy's Story is what I will forever consider to be a gift from the archives. A gift which presented me with three rich characters and a compelling plot of tangled secrets and conspiracies. A gift which comprised a complete story arc – with beginning, middle, end, and epilogue – from multiple perspectives.

My discovery of *Lucy's Story* was the result of a period of concentrated research at the London Metropolitan Archives (LMA). At the time, I was working towards a PhD project about the early years of Normansfield Hospital, a former residential institution for people (mainly children) with a learning disability.

As I read through thousands of archived letters dating from the late eighteen hundreds, I found myself not merely gathering tantalising glimpses of the past, but actually (re)assembling the substantial building blocks of people's lives and stories long forgotten to history.

Lucy was one of those people, and the correspondence written by her mother, Alice, her father, William, and her formidable grandmother, Lady Audrey, gradually established three distinctive characters and revealed a fascinating narrative.

I broadened my search and gathered everything I could find about Lucy, garnering a fourth, formal perspective on her story from her various medical records. By now intimately familiar with the material – and wishing to pass on something of the power of discovery which makes archival research so captivating – I was convinced that, through considered selection and revision, that material could speak for itself.

The final outcome, *Lucy's Story*, is a 47-minute video essay in which the letters of Alice, William, and Lady Audrey drive the narrative. Each one is given a fitting visual representation, and their words are read aloud by three different voice actors. A calendar in the corner of the screen heralds the passing months and years of Lucy's life.

Lucy was just five years old when she was admitted to Normansfield Hospital in 1879. Upon arrival, she was clinically classified as having epilepsy, and (in the terminology of the day) as being an "Imbecile"; the purported cause being an "emotional disturbance of the mother". Further notes describe her as "a pretty child with perfectly uncontrolled instincts; screams, bites, kicks and has sensual habits of the worst class. She speaks but it is the echo only of what one says to her".

Within a couple of months, Lucy is noted to have settled in happily. Although she remains somewhat “boisterous”, she is “much more orderly and talks better”. Her medical records spanning her first year at Normansfield repeatedly describe her as “improving”: she now “sings very nicely and takes part in the school exercises”, although she is “still very excitable”. Moving into her second year and beyond, however, there is little further mention of improvement.

In one of Alice’s earliest letters, she recounts with enthusiasm: “how much pleasure it gave me to see so marked an improvement in Lucy’s looks and behaviour. I went down twice to Normansfield during my stay in London with Mother and on the last occasion Miss Jones allowed Lucy to remain a little time quite alone with me, which was a test of her behaviour. I was much pleased at her gentleness, also appearing more intelligent. She pointed out and admired the ornaments in the drawing room but told me I must not touch them as they were Dr Down’s. Then I sang nursery songs, which she highly appreciated, and ‘Goosey Gander’ I had to repeat many times. I left her singing and most joyous and happy, and it is a great comfort to my mind to see how well and bright she is”.

A couple of years later, Alice requests: “I should be glad of a few lines to let me know how little Lucy is getting on. I hope the east winds have not upset her, for any physical derangement always retards and throws back her mental progress. Does she write? And can she read a letter? Her youngest sister Beatrice wished to write to her, so I enclose a note from her for Lucy. If she cannot read it perhaps Miss Jones will kindly read it to her. I have spoken to my little girls about their sister and how kind Miss Jones was to her”.

In 1885 – by which time Lucy, now aged 11, has been living at Normansfield for more than half her young life – Lady Audrey reports from a recent visit that Lucy: “appears to me to have made no progress during the last year, and this I regret very much as an affection like hers never stands still – but as she keeps her bright happy look and physically is the picture of health, and so well developed, I trust I may yet hope for better things as her years increase”.

Whilst her mother and grandmother write regularly and at length, her father’s notes are generally brief, and often begin with apologies for delayed payments for Lucy’s care. It is towards the end of 1885 that William moots a change which provokes Alice and Lady Audrey to mobilise their efforts (often secretly) against him.

The following brief excerpts from the script to Lucy’s Story demonstrate how the letters – which have not been addressed to one another but, rather, have all been sent to the Hospital’s proprietors – are transformed into a dialogue which reveals the story.

November 1885, from William:

My dear Dr Down, I want to consult you on a change which I will be very reluctantly compelled by circumstances soon to make. I have, you will be sorry to hear, lost a very considerable sum in one or two of my investments. This of course makes a great difference in my income, and I fear it will be necessary at no very distant date to remove my poor little one from your valuable and valued guardianship.

November 1885, from Lady Audrey:

Dear Mrs Down, it is not nice to open up one's private affairs, but I don't believe his losses have been such as to necessitate his current plan. My belief is that temper, and the wish to annoy his wife, and make her feel his power, has as much influence in the way he is now acting as anything.

I shall, like the mole, work quickly and leave no stone unturned. I shall go and see the place he proposes, and I hope I may be able to arrange for her not being removed there.

December 1885, from William:

Private. Confidential.

My dear Dr Down, I would ask you if in case of my being able to arrange for Lucy's coming to Scotland, you could – and would – kindly send a trustworthy servant to bring her. But before making any final arrangement, I venture to propose this last ultimatum, and I hope you will not feel offended at my doing so. Would you be willing to take Lucy for £65 per annum till such time as our income would admit of an increase in that sum? Of course, at Lady Audrey's death we shall be much better off. All this I say to you in confidence and trust you will treat it as strictly private.

January 1886, from Alice:

Dear Dr Down, I have done all I can to prevent Lucy being removed from your care, but my husband is determined to do the opposite of what I wish. The move will be a dreadful change for her, and I am concerned that they will not keep her. She is different to any of the children they have, for they are all gentler, and physically weaker. Lucy will electrify them when she gets there. With her restless and active disposition, I fear she will prove too troublesome. I only hope that, if Lucy cannot stay there, perhaps you will be charitable enough to let her return to you.

Lady Audrey ultimately offers to make up the difference in cost herself, and William relents, soon thereafter returning to his former pattern of sending repeated apologies for forgotten and late payments. Chancery records reveal a separation deed granted to William and Alice in 1895.

Meanwhile, Lucy remained at Normansfield. She died there at the age of 26 in August 1900. Within the day, an emotional letter arrived from Lady Audrey: "It would be impossible for me to say that I am not very much distressed to hear that my dear Lucy has passed over to the spirit land. It is to me inexpressibly sad to think that she has passed away without any one of us seeing her". Alice soon followed with her own wishes that she would: "much prefer cremation. I must seize this opportunity to thank you. Lucy had a truly happy, comfortable home at Normansfield, and both Lady Audrey and I feel we have reason to be grateful to you and the staff for all you did for that poor child". William sent a telegram: "Please cremate. Keep expenses down".

Having shared some of the final content of *Lucy's Story*, I also want to mention what I decided to leave out. Through wider research, I discovered fascinating points of connection between Lucy's close relatives and the 'Lady with the Lamp' Florence Nightingale; the celebrated actor Sir Henry Irving; the blossoming world of 'cat fancying'; and even to 'the wickedest man in the world', Aleister Crowley.

The decision to omit this information was not an easy one – if one were looking to sell a story, these facts would surely headline the poster. But this brings me to a critical point about *Lucy's Story*. There is no documentation produced by Lucy, and thus she possesses no voice in her own narrative. Her presence is conjured up through the words of others. Her existence is delicate and nebulous, and the introduction of any such famous and colourful characters would only serve to draw precious limelight away from her.

I have been fortunate to present *Lucy's Story* on screens large and small, to academic and non-academic audiences, and to people with a learning disability. Every experience was unique and rewarding, and responses to the story revealed that audiences found this cast of characters, and the tale they had to tell, just as fascinating as I did.

As I stated at the beginning of this piece, *Lucy's Story* was a gift from the archives. Everything required of a compelling, affecting story was contained within the raw research material. My own role, then, was as conduit and coordinator, working to bridge the gaps in the story without distorting history, and to expose the most pointed gap: the lack of Lucy's own voice. Even though I could not give Lucy a voice of her own, I was able to give her, just briefly, a meaningful and memorable presence in the world.

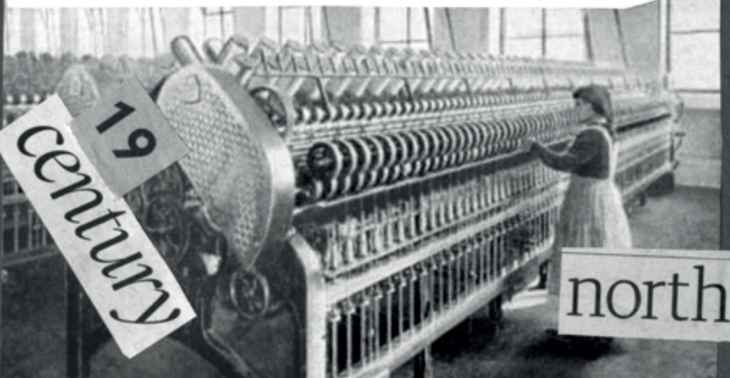
[The Normansfield Archive collection is held at the LMA, ref. code: H29/NF]

Bringing hidden histories of disabled people to life

Gill Crawshaw

Introduction

Disabled people have always been part of the textile workforce in Leeds, as well as the wider region, but their contributions have often gone unrecognised. Once the industrial revolution got underway, particularly in the 19th century, the narrative that disabled people were unable to work and had to depend on the workhouse or on charity took hold. This idea of disabled people as being dependent and needy continues to this day. But it's not the whole picture.



I've been trying to give a more balanced view by researching the lives of disabled mill workers in the north of England. These stories aren't always easy to find. The mills didn't keep any records of disabled workers, it wasn't considered to be important. And few mill workers were able to read and write so didn't record the details of their lives. However, local archives, libraries, censuses and other sources reveal some nuggets of information.

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I've been researching the stories of disabled people who worked in textile mills in the north of England, to challenge persistent and harmful stereotypes of disabled people, and to acknowledge the contributions that disabled people have made, and continue to make, to our history and culture.

These contributions have often gone unrecognised, but I hope to change this by sharing my research in accessible and creative ways.

A Handsome Testimonial is a zine which focuses on James Scott, a Deaf mill worker in 19th century Horbury, near Wakefield. While James is the focus of the zine, his story presents opportunities to explore wider issues around attitudes to disabled people, now and in the past.

James was alive during the Victorian era, when negative and limiting stereotypes of disabled people developed. Disabled people were both feared and pitied, viewed as either undeserving scroungers or saintly, brave strivers. This was a period when institutions, such as workhouses, asylums, special schools and charities, overshadowed the lives of poor and disabled people. The idea that disabled people had to depend on the workhouse or on charity, on the goodwill of others, really took hold. This idea of disabled people as being dependent and needy continues to this day, but it's not the whole story.

James Scott is a great example of a disabled person contributing to his community. He wasn't dependent, in fact, others depended on him, as he supported his mother throughout his working life. He was a reliable worker, which led to the "handsome testimonial" from a previous employer.

We rarely hear stories like this, of ordinary disabled people living purposeful, productive lives. This is despite disability being a prominent feature of industrialisation and of the campaigns to improve conditions in the textile factories.

Disabled people's voices were a key part of the factory reform movement. Many disabled people, who had become disabled through the punishing working conditions in early 19th century textile mills, gave evidence to the parliamentary commissions set up to investigate the factories. There was a drive to reduce the hours of child workers and to raise the age at which children could start work.

From workers' evidence, it became clear that the most harmful effects of long hours of hard work were on people's bodies. Worker after worker described - and showed - how their limbs were bent and how their mobility had been affected.

These workers, rather than being passive victims of industrialisation, spoke up, often in the face of opposition from factory owners. They had agency and solidarity, and were a vital part of the movement to improve workers' rights.

The title of an exhibition that I curated last year at Leeds Industrial Museum, *Any work that wanted doing*, is taken from the testimony of one of those workers. John Dawson of Leeds gave evidence to the Factories Inquiry Commission of 1833, where he spoke of his resilience in the face of exploitative factory work.

The website for the exhibition, anywork.org.uk, continues as a legacy of the project. It brings together disabled people's voices from the past and present, showing work made by disabled artists in response to my research and to the issues it raises for disabled people today. Through sculpture, painting, textiles, film and sound, the artists tackled topics including integration, housing, care and employment rights. They questioned the way that disabled people are perceived and valued, noting that being able to work hard should not be the only measure of a person's worth. As well as being a platform for the artists' work and statements, the website includes an overview of the research into disabled mill workers that was the starting point for the exhibition. This has also been turned into a zine, available on the website.

This zine highlights some of the lives of disabled mill workers in 19th century Leeds, although my research also covers the following century, until the decline of the textile industry in the UK. There are doubtless many more stories of disabled workers to discover. They perhaps challenge some widely-held notions of disabled people. They are important because they show that disabled people were, and are, part of the world and part of their communities. Not dependent, not tragic, not inspirational, but reliable colleagues, neighbours, friends and family members with valuable contributions to make.

Gill Crawshaw

A Handsome Testimonial was funded by Unlimited. It's available at https://issuu.com/gillcrawshaw/docs/a_handsome_testimonial_lo_res_zine/1

Any work that wanted doing was curated by Gill Crawshaw, working in partnership with Leeds Industrial Museum, and supported by Leeds 2023 with funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The zine of the same name was funded by a grant from Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society. If you would like a hard copy, contact gill.crawshaw@gmail.com

Disabled Innovation

Beck Heslop

<https://disabledinnovation.wordpress.com/blog/>

During my final year as an undergraduate student, I took a module on disability history led by newly appointed lecturer Dr Coreen McGuire. Aside from providing a crash course in disability studies and interwar technologies, she introduced us to what she called 'disabled innovation'. Although she did not explicitly define the term, I took it to mean the ways in which disabled people and their families created, modified and improvised technologies and systems to allow them to navigate their environments and bodies throughout history.

Writing essays for the class, I delved into online collections searching for primary sources. I found disabled innovation scattered everywhere. Even after graduating, I continued to trawl the Internet Archive, British Library, and many smaller websites for more examples. But I had no space left to share them. That is when I decided to create a website to do just that.

This was over three years ago. In the intervening years, I have continued to add sources to the website alongside completing a masters and starting a PhD on this very topic. Today, the website has five pages dedicated to dozens of primary sources highlighting disabled innovation. Each page showcases a selection of primary sources that touch on the ways disabled people have interacted with, and shaped, technologies throughout history.

Anybody can go there and find out how disabled people in the past have engaged with technologies concerned with movement, daily life, family, listening, and leisure. Many of the sources are available elsewhere in online collections to read in full, but would be difficult to find without already knowing what is there.

It might give you some ideas for where you can go looking for more traces of disabled people in the past, or arm you with new terms to search with. Feel free to use any of the sources in your own work, whether that involves academic research, teaching, or public engagement. Sharing these often ingenious solutions of years gone by is a brilliant way to introduce wide audiences to disability history in a way that centres the agency of disabled people.

The stories collected on the website evidence the contributions of disabled people stretching through time. They are a powerful reflection of how both disability and technology have shaped the world at every scale from public infrastructure to individual lives. Disabled innovation shows people that we have always been here; we have always had something to offer.

The website is still small and by no means captures all of the cases of disabled innovation I have come across. All of the sources are English language and regrettably Anglo-centric due to my own language limitations. As this is a product of my own research, which centres on the twentieth century, most sources on the site also date from around that same period. Where possible, I have included examples of innovation from those underrepresented in current literature (such people with arthritis and diabetes). Still, my personal expertise is evident through the disproportionate number of sources about travel aids used by visually impaired people.

With these limitations in mind, I hope that the website can do for others what Coreen did for me. That is: to excite people about disability history and introduce them to the hidden worlds of innovation, adaption, and lay expertise that it contains.

Additional Resources

- Coreen McGuire and Jaipreet Virdi have recently launched an online collection called 'Objects of Disability' which includes thought-provoking essays and many objects which showcase disabled innovation. <https://objectsofdisability.omeka.net/>
- The Crip Technoscience Manifesto is an evocative essay on the radicalism of disabled innovation, in the past and present. It is open access and free to read. <https://catalystjournal.org/index.php/catalyst/article/view/29607>
- My weekly newsletter often contains updates about my research and other ongoing activities. <https://beckchamberlain.substack.com/>

Disability, Higher Education, Teaching and Learning Bibliography December 2023

Staff, T. P.-F. C. (2023, September 27). *On Searching for the Unknown with Unspeakable Names: Searching PubMed for Disability Research - Bill of Health*. <https://blog.petrieflom.law.harvard.edu/2023/09/27/pubmed-disability-research/>, PubMed special queries are master search strategies on common, important, but challenging health topics, which are usually peer-reviewed. Disability certainly qualifies as a common, important health topic that is challenging to search – and yet, no PubMed special query exists for it.

This oversight is concerning. Put simply, it's important that disability as a topic is easily identifiable in the scholarly record. While there are specialized databases for the topic, such as NARIC's REHABDATA, the global research community is most likely to begin with PubMed. Currently, structured vocabulary terms related to disability are scattered throughout PubMed's medical subject heading (MeSH) trees, often without cross references to facilitate discovery, forcing discovery to largely depend on the unstructured language of whatever words were chosen by the authors to describe their research topics. This lack of consensus and consistency across professional disability terms, categories, and definitions contributes to a lack of comparability, discoverability, and access for disability data as well as research. As research partners with the University of Michigan's Center for Disability Health and Wellness, we decided to address this gap. It's been an adventure, and the deeper into the project we go, the more complicated it becomes. This article describes just a few of the challenges we've encountered.

Teaching and Learning

Aceituno-Aceituno, P., Madrigal-Barrón, P., Vázquez-López, S., & García-Barrera, A. (2023). Organization and planning of university faculty training in virtual classrooms for the inclusion of people with disabilities. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 10(1), 817. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-023-02333-2>

Abstract Despite the proliferation of conventions, declarations, and recommendations for inclusive education, many students with disabilities do not complete their university studies. To overcome this situation, university faculty must have skills in inclusion and motivation, but the training of teachers in these subjects is still limited. For all these reasons, this work conveys a basic training proposal -adjusted to the teacher's reality- to improve the organization and planning of this training. With this training proposal, this study aims to answer how training can facilitate online university teachers to acquire knowledge to improve their skills and motivation in students with disabilities inclusion.

For this purpose, qualitative research has been carried out based on the responses to an open-ended questionnaire by 20 expert teachers in online university training who have received and evaluated this training. Although the results have shown that the proposed online training of university teachers may be effective in improving their competencies and motivation in the inclusion of students with disabilities, they still need some improvement -according to the suggestions made by the teachers participating in the study-. Most of these suggestions made by high-level teachers especially recommended the ones related to conceptual clarification, presentation of case studies or examples, and description of actions in the didactic field.
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Augustus, J., Goodall, D., & Williams, B. (2023). Does the role of personal academic tutor have an impact on staff wellbeing? *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 28(4), 693–719. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13596748.2023.2253656>

Abstract: This paper explores the experience of acting as a personal academic tutor (PAT) at a medium sized University in the West Midlands. The researchers aimed to establish the robustness of the PAT system, with a focus on wellbeing of both staff and students. This research took place within the context of growing concerns for student and staff wellbeing. A thematic analysis (n) 26 full time employees with at least 1-year PAT experience identified 3 key themes; self, others/ systems and resilience. Subordinate themes within each include; Burden, self as context, mental health, resilience, boundaries, deployment, experience systems and support. The researchers then re-examined the thematic data through the lens of Transactional Analysis. Karpman's (1968, 40-42) drama triangle became evident in the development within the PAT student relationship and its incumbent complexity. The effects on staff wellbeing were discussed and found to have both positive and negative consequences. As part of future PAT training the researchers would suggest using the drama triangle for staff to reflect honestly on current positions in their PAT relationships. This should present possibilities in each relationship of movement towards the winner's triangle and reduce the emotional burden of the PAT while increasing student self-efficacy.

Armstrong, N., & Byrom, N. C. (2023). The Impact of Mitigating Circumstances Procedures: Student Satisfaction, Wellbeing and Structural Compassion on the Campus. *Education Sciences*, 13(12), 1230. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13121230>

Abstracts: For several decades, universities have sought to promote better mental health amongst students. For example, universities now have formal institutional arrangements to postpone deadlines for students where there are mitigating circumstances, such as ill health. Such provisions might be understood as praiseworthy cases of institutional compassion.

But, empirical research is needed to investigate how these measures play out in practice. This paper draws on ethnographic research in several UK universities to explore the experiences of staff responsible for the enactment of mitigating circumstance provisions. We find staff members sympathetic to the aims of the measures but also skeptical, and in some cases angry, because they find that the provisions have unwanted and undesirable effects. This paper uses the wider social science literature on bureaucracy to consider why this might be the case and raises questions about the capacity of institutions to enact ethical ideals.

Disabled Students UK. (n.d.). *Access Insights 2023 Report*. Retrieved December 5, 2023, from <https://disabledstudents.co.uk/research/access-insights-2023-report/>
Abstract: The Access Insights 2023 Report has been created by our research team from the findings of the Annual Disabled Student Survey. Over 1300 disabled students shared their experience with Disabled Students UK from over 100 universities and Higher Education institutions in the first year of running the survey, making it the largest survey of its kind.

López, E. J., Watts, G. W., & Davis, M. T. (2024). Considering Time: Practical Applications for Supporting Students With Disabilities in Hispanic Serving Institutions. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 23(1), 47–55.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/15381927231185318>

Abstract:

Time is a concept often spoken and written about, but rarely identified as an asset for individuals with disabilities, particularly in Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI). The following discusses how systems and processes are impacted by time. The article further focuses on practical applications associated with time in supporting students with disabilities transitioning and acculturating to HSI. © The Author(s) 2023.

Sépulchre, M. (2023). Intersectional Praxis and Disability in Higher Education. *Social Inclusion*, 11(4). <https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v11i4.7085>

Abstract: This article explores whether intersectional praxis can be discerned in the provision of disability/accessibility resources in higher education in Sweden and the United States. Analysing interviews with administrative staff based on hypothetical scenarios (vignettes) that could qualify as situations of disability discrimination, this article identifies several situations of (missed) opportunities for intersectional praxis. It then proceeds with a discussion of participants' conceptions of disability and organisational possibilities for collaborations with other offices at their university or college. Although opportunities for intersectional praxis are generally absent or missed in both countries, the article argues that American participants were closer to such critical praxis because they tended to consider disability in terms of barriers and as a structural issue, and advocated for the recognition of disability as diversity.

By contrast, the Swedish participants seemed further away from an intersectional praxis because they tended to view disability as a difficulty that requires individualised support measures and as a situational issue regarding the learning environment. The article proposes that these differences are connected to differences regarding disability and anti-discrimination politics in both countries. In the US, disability politics have been characterised by a civil rights and social justice approach, while in Sweden disability politics have been conceived in terms of welfare services and a relational approach to disability. This article concludes that the conception of intersectionality as a critical praxis offers an original lens to gain new insights into how disability inclusion is promoted in different contexts.

Simons, R. N., Mallary, K. J., Nikiema, J., Dorman, E. J., & Copeland, C. A. (2023). Below the Surface: Analyzing the Level of Detail and Depth of Coverage in Library and Information Science Syllabi Addressing Disability and Accessibility. *Proceedings of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, 60(1), 697–701. <https://doi.org/10.1002/prs2.842>

Abstract:

While accessibility is a core part of diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and social justice (DEIASJ) considerations, disability and accessibility are rarely centered in Library and Information Science (LIS) curricula. The lack of disability and accessibility coverage is problematic since information professionals must have the required knowledge and skills to effectively serve patrons with disabilities. This paper presents preliminary findings from a content analysis of 39 pre-filtered syllabi examining how disability and accessibility topics are covered in LIS courses. While nearly all of the syllabi analyzed contained a high level of detail, only 13 were ultimately determined to contain a “partial” depth of coverage of disability- and accessibility-related content and two a “detailed” level of coverage. Even fewer syllabi included a conceptualization of disability or accessibility beyond simply including the words alone. The paper offers suggestions for LIS instructors to better address disability and accessibility within their syllabi and course content.

Upsher, R., Percy, Z., Cappiello, L., Byrom, N., Hughes, G., Oates, J., Nobili, A., Rakow, K., Anaukwu, C., & Foster, J. (2023). Understanding how the university curriculum impacts student wellbeing: a qualitative study. *Higher Education*, 86(5), 1213–1232. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-022-00969-8>

Abstract: There is increasing pressure within universities to address student mental health. From a whole university or settings-based perspective, this could include curriculum-embedded approaches. There is little research about how this should work or what approaches might be most effective.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with fifty-seven undergraduate students from five disciplines (Psychology, English studies, Nursing, International Politics, and War Studies) to understand students' perspectives. Students reflected on wellbeing module content and, more broadly, on curriculum processes (teaching, pedagogy, assessment) within their degree. Reflexive thematic analysis was applied to transcripts, generating three themes: embedding wellbeing in the curriculum; assessment, challenge, and academic support; and social connection and interaction. The findings provide evidence for teaching, pedagogy, and assessment practices supporting higher education student wellbeing. These align with recommended good teaching practices, such as considering appropriate assessment methods followed by effective feedback. Students saw the benefits of being academically challenged if scaffolded appropriately. Strong peer connection, teacher-student interaction, and communication were crucial to learning and wellbeing. These findings provide implications for future curriculum design that can support learning and wellbeing.

Stigma

Wolbring, G., & Lillywhite, A. (2023). Coverage of allies, allyship and disabled people: A scoping review. *Societies*, 13(11), 241. <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc13110241>

Abstract: Disabled people face many problems in their lived reality, as evidenced by the content of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Disabled people are constantly engaged in activism to decrease their problems. However, disabled people cannot do all the work by themselves and need allies (who can be so-called non-disabled people or disabled people of a different background to other disabled people) given the many barriers disabled people face in being activists, given the precarious lived reality of many, and given the many problems in need of solving. At the same time, the expectations linked to being an authentic ally of disabled people pose many challenges and stressors and a danger of burnout for the ally. Therefore, the aim of this study was to better understand the academic coverage of allyship and allies in relation to disabled people in general, and specifically the coverage of challenges, stressors, and danger of burnout for allies of disabled people. To fulfil this aim, we performed a scoping review of academic abstracts and full texts employing SCOPUS, the seventy databases of the EBSCO-HOST and the Web of Science. Of the 577 abstracts, covering allies and allyship in relation to disabled people that were downloaded, 306 were false positives. Of the 271 relevant ones, the content of six abstracts suggested a deeper coverage of allyship/allies in the full texts. Within the full texts, two mentioned ally burnout and four mentioned challenges faced by allies. Among the 271 abstracts, 86 abstracts mentioned allies without indicating who the allies were, 111 abstracts mentioned specific allies with technology as an ally being mentioned second highest.

Sixty-three abstracts covered specific topics of activism for allies. Furthermore, although searching abstracts for equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) related phrases, terms, and policy frameworks generated sixty-three abstracts, only three abstracts mentioned disabled people. Abstracts containing science and technology governance or technology focused ethics fields terms did not generate any hits with the terms ally or allies or allyship. Searching abstracts and full texts, phrases containing ally or allies or allyship and burnout had 0 hits, ally terms with stress* generated four hits and phrases containing anti-ableism, or anti disablism, anti-disablist, anti-disablist, anti-ableist, or anti-ableist with ally terms had 0 hits. Our findings show many gaps in the coverage of allies and allyship in relation to disabled people especially around the barriers, stressors, and burnout that authentic allies of disabled people can face. These gaps should be filled given that disabled people need allies and that there are many challenges for being an authentic disabled or non-disabled ally of disabled people.

Wolbring, G., & Lillywhite, A. (2023). Burnout through the lenses of equity/equality, diversity and inclusion and disabled people: A scoping review. *Societies*, 13(5), 131. <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc13050131>

Abstract: Burnout is a problem within the workplace including in higher education, the activity of activism, and in reaction to experiencing systemic discrimination in daily life. Disabled people face problems in all of these areas and therefore are in danger of experiencing “disability burnout”/“disablism burnout”. Equity/equality, diversity, and inclusion” (EDI) linked actions are employed to improve the workplace, especially for marginalized groups including disabled people. How burnout is discussed and what burnout data is generated in the academic literature in relation to EDI and disabled people influences burnout policies, education, and research related to EDI and to disabled people. Therefore, we performed a scoping review study of academic abstracts employing SCOPUS, the 70 databases of EBSCO-HOST and Web of Science with the aim to obtain a better understanding of the academic coverage of burnout concerning disabled people and EDI. We found only 14 relevant abstracts when searching for 12 EDI phrases and five EDI policy frameworks. Within the 764 abstracts covering burnout and different disability terms, a biased coverage around disabled people was evident with disabled people being mostly mentioned as the cause of burnout experienced by others. Only 30 abstracts covered the burnout of disabled people, with eight using the term “autistic burnout”. Disabled activists’ burnout was not covered. No abstract contained the phrase “disability burnout”, but seven relevant hits were obtained using full-text searches of Google Scholar. Our findings suggest that important data is missing to guide evidence-based decision making around burnout and EDI and burnout of disabled people.

Dwarfism

Pritchard, E. (2023). Choice is not an option. *Alter. European Journal of Disability Research*, 17–4, 53–68. <https://journals.openedition.org/alterjdr/2714>

Abstract: In the UK, for several decades disabled people have advocated for equal access to public spaces, evident in the work of the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation. However, whilst spaces continuously change, including the provision of more self-service technology it is important to investigate the impact this has on disabled people. Oliver (1990) contends new technologies should be used to liberate disabled people as opposed to further disabling them. However, new technology can further disable people with impairments (Ergard & Hansson, 2021; Jokisuu et al., 2016; Sheldon, 2003). Whilst existing research shows that self-service technologies are disabling for a range of consumers, this paper seeks to understand the particular experiences of people with dwarfism and how they interact with them due to a mismatch in height. Drawing on interviews with people with dwarfism, living in the UK, this paper engages with Mick and Fournier's (1998) paradoxes of technological products conceptual framework to explore their consumer experiences, including the resultant emotional impact when using self-service technology. The results show that people with dwarfism engage in numerous coping strategies to deal with them, including dependency, interacting with the facility differently and avoidance.

Dyslexia

Casali, N., Meneghetti, C., Tinti, C., MariaRe, A., Sini, B., Passolunghi, M. C., Valenti, A., Montesano, L., Pellegrino, G., & Carretti, B. (2024). Academic Achievement and Satisfaction Among University Students With Specific Learning Disabilities: The Roles of Soft Skills and Study-Related Factors. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 57(1), 16–29. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00222194221150786>

Abstract: Understanding the individual qualities sustaining students with and without specific learning disabilities (SLDs) is key to supporting their academic achievement and well-being. In this study, we investigated the differences between students with and without SLDs in terms of intraindividual factors (soft skills and study-related factors), academic and nonacademic outcomes (achievement, academic and life satisfaction), and the relationships between such intraindividual factors and the three outcomes. A total of 318 students (79 males; $M_{age} = 22.7$; $SD = 3.56$; age range = 19–45 years; 147 with SLDs) completed self-reported questionnaires and a measure of fluid intelligence. The results showed that students with SLDs reported higher creativity but lower academic self-efficacy, study resilience, and academic achievement, with small-to-medium effect sizes.

In both groups, achievement significantly positively related to academic self-efficacy and negatively to creativity. Life satisfaction was positively related to study resilience; and academic satisfaction was related to critical thinking, curiosity, and academic self-efficacy. Nurturing such intraindividual factors can benefit students with and without SLDs. © Hammill Institute on Disabilities 2023.

Mental Health

Allen, R., Kannangara, C., & Carson, J. (2023). Long-term mental health impacts of the covid-19 pandemic on university students in the UK: A longitudinal analysis over 12 months. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 71(6), 585–608.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2023.2215857>

Abstract: University students in the UK have encountered many challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This research aimed to track the mental well-being of a large sample of British university students (n = 554) over a one-year period of the COVID-19 pandemic, capturing data at four time points between May 2020 and May 2021. Overall retention after 12 months was 34.73%. Findings showed the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a significant, negative impact on the well-being of British university students. Students are suffering from prolonged and high levels of psychological distress and anxiety. Levels of flourishing in students are still very low. The different phases of the pandemic appear to have played an influential role in student mental health. The practical implications for higher education and recommendations for future research are discussed.

Cohen, D. A., Boyer, B. P., Stevens, L., McCormick, K., Morpeth, E., Caporale-Berkowitz, N. A., Brownson, C., & Strakowski, S. M. (2023). Do Mobile Mental Health Applications Increase Access to University Mental Health Supports? Lessons Learned During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Journal of Technology in Human Services*, 41(4), 259–279. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15228835.2023.2258513>

Abstract: Use of mental health applications (MHAs) is often proposed as way to expand access to mental health resources to address increased mental health needs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Investigators partnered with two MHA companies to offer university students complimentary access to either a module-based, cognitive-behavioral intervention or a virtual, peer support network. Findings suggest that offering access to no-cost apps without active encouragement will not meaningfully broaden the reach of mental health resources to student populations.

Cook, A., Egan, H., Wood, J., & Mantzios, M. (2023). Examining the relationship of depression and anxiety to academic entitlement, and the potential mediating role of mindfulness. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 47(9), 1211–1220. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2023.2241382>

Abstract: Higher Educational Institutions across disciplines have seen an increased number of students who are highly distressed over grades, and this distress is often accompanied by pervasive demands on academic staff. The current study explored the relationship between academic entitlement and mental health and how it is mediated by mindfulness. Participants completed three scales (academic entitlement, depression anxiety and stress, and mindfulness). Results showed that as symptoms of depression and anxiety increase, academic entitlement increases. Furthermore, this relationship is mediated by acting with awareness, a facet of mindfulness. Findings from the current study support the use of mindfulness interventions in potentially disrupting the link between academic entitlement and mental ill-health. Future directions are discussed. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]

Moran, M. K., Flynn Makic, M. B., McGladrey, L., Cook, P. F., & Peterson, K. (2023). Student-Led Stress Reduction Support Groups: A Qualitative Program Evaluation. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 62(12), 711–715. <https://doi.org/10.3928/01484834-20231006-09>

Moran, R., & Litwiller, F. (2023). University Student Perspectives Negotiating Positive and Negative Mental Health on Campus. *Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health*, 42(3), 81–95. <https://doi.org/10.7870/cjcmh-2023-023>

Abstract: This study explored university students' perspectives on negotiating and navigating their fluctuating mental health on one specific campus, with particular interest in their experiences of campus-based mental health services. Given the dearth of evidence across paradigms that establishes a concerning prevalence of poor mental health among post-secondary students, this study sought to give voice to students with respect to what changes they felt were most pressing. Seven semi-structured interviews were completed with undergraduate students (second through fourth year) at a mid-sized Canadian institution. Data were analyzed thematically, integrating critical and recovery-oriented social theories. Findings, from the perspective of the students themselves, generated through this process included barriers to help seeking behaviours related to formal services included perceived and actual stigma, lack of confidence in the effectiveness of services, roundabout intake processes, and the perceived need for formal diagnosis as a prerequisite to access.

Nails, J. G., Maffly-Kipp, J., DeShong, H. L., Lowmaster, S. E., & Kurtz, J. E. (2023). A crisis in college student mental health? Self-ratings of psychopathology before and after the COVID-19 pandemic. *Psychological Assessment*, 35(11), 1010–1018. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pas0001241>

Office for Students. (2023, November 29). Student mental health: Higher education and NHS joined-up working - <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/student-mental-health-higher-education-and-nhs-joined-up-working/>

Abstract: The Office for Students has published an independent report (from consultants Nous Group) summarising discussions and recommendations on student mental health and joined up working between providers and the NHS, based on a collaborative project involving higher education and healthcare professionals.

Prakash, N., Votta, C. M., & Deldin, P. J. (2023). Treatment for graduate students: Blunting the emotional toll of postgraduate education. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 91(12), 708–716. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ccp0000844>

Abstract: Objectives: Graduate students are at greater risk of developing mental health concerns than other adults in their age group. Despite the need for care within this population, there is a lack of literature on accessible interventions designed specifically to meet the needs of graduate students. The present study examines the efficacy of a novel intervention: Mood Lifters for Graduate Students (ML-GS). Method: This study is a clinical trial with randomization. The sample size consisted of 131 participants. The average age was 25.95 years, and the sample was 88.5% women, 61.8% White, and 65.6% straight or heterosexual. Participants completed the same survey before and after participating in ML-GS, as well as 1-month after completing ML-GS. Three measures from those surveys were examined in this study: Patient Health Questionnaire–9, Generalized Anxiety Disorder–7, and Perceived Stress Scale. Two-way mixed-design analyses of variance (ANOVAs) and repeated measures ANOVAs were used to analyze these data. Results: Results indicated that participants enrolled in ML-GS experienced significant, clinically meaningful reductions in depression, anxiety, and stress, when compared to their waitlist counterparts. The changes made during the ML-GS program were also maintained at the 1-month follow-up. Conclusions: These findings suggest that ML-GS is effective in reducing depression, anxiety, and stress among graduate students. It may be a good solution for the large demand for mental health support in that population. (PsyInfo Database Record (c) 2023 APA, all rights reserved)

Singh, S., Melendez, K., & Sezginis, N. (2023). Examining the effect of discrimination and stigma on utilization of mental health services among college students. *Journal of American College Health*, 71(8), 2398–2405.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2021.1970561>

Abstract: Even though onset of three-quarters of mental disorders occurs by age 25, few young adults seek help for their mental health needs. The objectives of this study are to examine the relationship of discrimination and stigma of mental illness on the help-seeking behavior for mental health among college students. Undergraduate students (N = 557) at a Midwestern university were surveyed online. Descriptive and logistic regression analysis was conducted using STATA15. College students reporting higher discrimination were more likely to seek help for mental health services (OR = 1.04, CI = 1.01-1.06), after controlling for all covariates. Students with higher personal stigma reported lower odds of help-seeking behavior (OR = .89, CI = .80-.97). Students with higher perceived public stigma did not have an independent significant association on help-seeking behavior initially, but full model revealed a significant association (OR = 1.02, CI = .99-1.05). Developing targeted interventions addressing discrimination and stigma of mental illness is critical among college students.

Sweetman, M. M., Tripathi, N., Danella, K., Hupp, S., Muse, M., Rothrock, T., & Williams, A. (2023). The lived experiences of health science graduate students with anxiety and depression. *Learning Environments Research*, 26(3), 709–726.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10984-022-09448-4>

Abstract: Health science graduate programs are intensive experiences in students' lives which can contribute to perceived symptoms of anxiety and/or depression. The consequent impact of these symptoms can have an overall effect on the graduate students' ability to participate in their daily lives, along with their program of study. The purpose of this study was to understand the lived experiences of health science graduate students who experience perceived signs and symptoms of anxiety and/or depression. An open-ended, qualitative phenomenological survey was used to understand the experiences of 56 Doctor of Occupational Therapy, Doctor of Physical Therapy, and Doctor of Pharmacy students at a university in the south-eastern United States. Three themes were identified from the data: the cyclic effect of symptoms and triggers; the importance of support systems; and the benefit of coping skill utilization. Future research is needed to understand the effects of preventive and rehabilitative measures to address health science graduate students' mental health.

Van Der Weijden, I., & Teelken, C. (2023). Precarious careers: postdoctoral researchers and wellbeing at work. *Studies in Higher Education*, 48(10), 1595–1607. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2023.2253833>

Abstract: The purpose of our research is to understand how postdoctoral researchers (postdocs) at Dutch research universities experience their working conditions, their further career prospects and opportunities, in relation to their mental health and wellbeing. The postdoc population is substantial and growing. Given that their lack of career prospects and invisibility do not coincide with their highly educated status and contribution to research, we diagnosed a dual controversy. Our recent multi-method research based on a survey amongst 676 postdocs revealed that this dual controversy results in high stress levels amongst the postdocs working at nine Dutch universities; evidence suggests that about 40% of the respondents reported serious problems concerning their mental health. Main stress factors involve lack of academic career prospects; publication and grant pressure; work–life imbalance; and the absence of institutional support. Also, several compensating factors were found, which resulted in an ambivalent or balanced situation. Encouragement from supervisors and colleagues can generally result in a better mental health.

Wang, Y. (2023). The research on the impact of distance learning on students' mental health. *Education and Information Technologies*, 28(10), 12527–12539. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-023-11693-w>

Abstract The mental health of students learning online is a critical task for many countries around the globe. The research purpose was to analyse the factors affecting the quality of mental health of young individuals who learnt under conditions of not total lockdowns but adaptive quarantine restrictions. The research involved 186 volunteers from Zhengzhou University of Technology, 94 were first-year students, and 92 were fourth-year students. The experimental group involved first-year students, and the control group involved fourth-year students. An average age of the participants in the experimental group was 18.3 years, and in the control group, the average age was 22.4 years. The scholars conducted the research after four months of distance learning under the adaptive quarantine. The students could be involved in their usual entertainment activities and interpersonal communication outside the home. The Behavioural Health Measure, better known as BHM-20, was the core psychometric tool. The research finds that distance learning is less effective for first-year students than for fourth-year students because the former cannot effectively adapt and communicate in a new social environment, and develop trusting interpersonal relationships with fellow students and teachers. The research results coincide with other research on this issue and demonstrate a low degree of mental resilience during and after the pandemic.

Previous research is not suitable for the analysis of the mental health of students under adaptive quarantine, including the freshmen, considered the most vulnerable group. The article will be useful for professionals interested in distance education in higher educational institutions, workers of socio-psychological services at universities or individuals involved in adapting curriculum materials for distance learning.

Neurodiversity

Anderson, A. M., & Robinson, B. (2024). We adapt as needed: Autism services at liberal arts college libraries. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 50(1), 102817. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2023.102817>

Abstract: Over the past two decades, researchers have analyzed the role of disability in liberal arts colleges (LACs). While students find LAC faculty and disability service professionals to be a positive influence in their educational experience, these institutions face some challenges in ensuring the best possible education for students with disabilities and, in particular, autism. Building on previous research on autism in academic libraries and the LACs library context, this study analyzes the results of a survey sent to LAC library leaders across the United States. Findings suggest that LAC libraries are well-positioned to serve autistic college students, given their small student populations and ability to provide personalized service. However, librarians and staff would benefit from more training and a more systematized approach to best meet these students' needs. © 2023 Elsevier Inc.

Hand, C. J. (2023). Neurodiverse undergraduate psychology students' experiences of presentations in education and employment. *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, 15(5), 1600–1617. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JARHE-03-2022-0106>

Abstract: Purpose: Audio-visual presentations – delivered either in real-life or virtually – feature heavily in educational assessments and employer recruitment. This study explored neurodivergent undergraduate students' experiences of presentations. The aim was to understand how neurodivergent students describe experiences of presentations in educational and workplace contexts and how neurodivergent students experienced training, support activities and learning technologies associated with presentations. Design/methodology/approach: An exploratory qualitative phenomenological approach was taken, from students' perspectives. Overall, 12 neurodivergent undergraduate students (Mage = 21.89 years, SDage = 2.57; nine women, two men, one non-binary) discussed their experiences of presentations within educational and/or professional contexts via semi-structured remote interviews. The sample included individuals with diagnoses of anxiety, depression, dyslexia, borderline personality disorder, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, and panic disorder.

Findings: Thematic Analysis of interview transcript data revealed four main themes (with sub-themes in parentheses): Control (preparedness; delivery); Audience Perceptions and Behaviours (expectations of “normality”; shared knowledge; audience “expertise”); Intervention Efficacy (early access; individuality; learning technologies) and Value of Presentation Skills (reciprocity between education – workplace; self-efficacy; self-esteem; learner development). Research limitations/implications: The dataset was extracted from a relatively small sample from a single university and indeed a single academic discipline. Furthermore, the dataset was collected during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic – although this gives us a valuable snapshot of students' experiences and perceptions during this time, whether the author can extrapolate these findings in future is unclear. Practical implications: The findings help understand how we better support students. Better ways to support learners can be developed in developing presentation and audience skills. This research shows that alternative assessment provisions must be based on individuals and their own specific needs and skills, rather than their divergence label. This research can inform the development of digital learning technologies. Social implications: This research can inform how educators, coaches, trainers, and facilitators “train” audiences to be more inclusive and less prejudicial/biased. We can understand how to better construct social spaces for presentations, in the classroom and the world of work. Originality/value: This report presents a valid and valuable methodological approach, conducted and reported transparently. This research was conducted during a crucial, unprecedented and precarious time period for learners and education professionals. Implications are considered with respect to the design of teaching, learning and assessment activities; facilitator, learner, and peer behaviours; the role of digital learning technologies; and employment/employability.

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Archiving activists: A new feminist archive for the East Midlands

*Sarah Colborne, Collections Archivist, Manuscripts and Special Collections,
University of Nottingham*

The Nottingham Feminist Archive Group and Manuscripts and Special Collections are delighted to announce the creation of two new research collections at the University of Nottingham:

- FME: The Feminist Archive (East Midlands)¹
- FPC: The Feminist Publications Collection²

The collections are the result of a collaboration between the University and a group of women, some of whom were involved in the Women's Liberation Movement in Nottingham in the 1970s and 1980s. The group have been reaching out to local activists who have been contributing their photos, papers and memories for future generations to explore. The collections document the battles fought by second-wave feminists in the region and other women involved in activism in their own communities.

Background

The idea for the collection was instigated by Val Wood and Tina Pamplin. The Heritage Lottery funded Women's Liberation and After in Nottingham (WoLAN) project³, which was completed in 2015, had gathered oral histories concerning, primarily, the establishment of Nottingham's Women's Centre⁴. Val and Tina wanted to build on this to collect the life stories of the women involved in other campaigns/actions in Nottingham and the wider East Midlands region. They were aware that time was running out to document the achievements and hard work of these women as some were succumbing to age-related ill health. They also wanted to find a permanent home for the papers, photographs, and memorabilia collected by the women involved. It was important to them that students, academics and researchers could access this material. They approached the University of Nottingham in 2018 knowing that Manuscripts and Special Collections⁵ already held the papers of activists such as Fred Westacott and socialist and MEP, Ken Coates. Val had previously volunteered with Manuscripts helping to catalogue collections and research the significance of women in the University Archives.

Nottingham Feminist Archive Group

In 2018, Margaret Davies, Barbara Hewitt and Lee Harrison, who had all been active in the Women's Liberation Movement, joined Val and Tina in conducting oral history interviews and they successfully obtained funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund in 2021 to have the interviews professionally transcribed (the Voices of Women Activists oral history project). Later Jayne Muir and Linda Shaw (a retired archivist) were recruited, and the women formed the Nottingham Feminist Archive Group.

Co-curation of the collections

A project board had been established in June 2019 for the purposes of applying for a scoping grant from the National Archives, with representatives from the University and the Women's Centre. The grant paid for a consultant, Katy Thornton, to assess the archive materials gathered by the Group and the feminist magazines from the 1970s and 1980s held by Nottingham's Women's Centre, which included rare survivals of newsletters and zines produced by local groups. Members of the Nottingham Feminist Archive Group set about building on the Women's Centre's extensive Women's Library by helping to develop, preserve and facilitate access to these feminist magazines. They negotiated for the duplicate copies to be gifted to the University to form the basis of the new Feminist Publications Collection (FPC). The Group volunteered their time at the University from January 2022, working with Manuscripts staff to arrange the archive material, researching its context, and explaining its significance.

Promotion of the collections

The Nottingham Feminist Archive Group has also advocated on behalf of the collections, holding stalls at various events to gather further stories/material for the archive. They have helped advise on the content for an upcoming exhibition which will showcase the new collections. They presented at the Nottingham Trent University conference 'Grassroots Activism in History and Memory' and at the University of Nottingham's Volunteer Awards. They also signpost researchers to feminist materials held elsewhere such as Nottinghamshire Archives, Nottingham Black Archive and the Sparrow's Nest Library and Archive for anarchist and radical history.

Content

The material reflects the emergence of the Women's Liberation Movement from the 1970s onwards, covering all issues raised by and responded to by second wave feminism in this locality. The collections are unique to Nottingham which had a significant WLM membership. They show where ideas began and how feminist politics were put into practice. There is evidence of the role local women played in establishing a women's centre for the city (one of the oldest in the country), material demonstrating the pro-active stance women in the region took in respect of peace campaigns, and the role undertaken to support miners and their wives in the 1984-1985 strike. The archive also demonstrates the strategic operational role that the Nottingham Women's Liberation Group held in the Movement's national conferences, the National Abortion Campaign and the Childcare Campaign, and evidences involvement in the Labour and Trade Union movement, for example in relation to the campaign for Equal Opportunities and the Women's Working Charter.

Facts and figures:

- c.30 boxes of publications (magazines, pamphlets, books)
- 32 boxes of archive material (papers, photos, files, badges, T-shirts)
- Donations from 25 different women
- 31 oral history interviews
- 10.82 GB of digital materials (oral history recordings, photos, etc.)

The Nottingham Feminist Archive Group continue to conduct interviews and gather material seeking to address existing gaps. The aspiration is for the collections to document a wide range of women's activism from across the region, in keeping with the East Midlands focus of Manuscripts and Special Collections' Acquisition Policy. The exhibition *dear sisters: activists' archives* opens on 21st March 2024 at Nottingham Lakeside Arts and runs until the 1st September 2024⁶.

The collections are accessible to all in the reading room at the King's Meadow Campus of the University of Nottingham.⁷

¹ FME: The Feminist Archive (East Midlands):

<https://mss-cat.nottingham.ac.uk/Calmview/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=FME>

² FPC: The Feminist Publications Collection: https://nusearch.nottingham.ac.uk/primos-explore/-search?query=lsr04,contains,FPC,AND&tab=44notuk_complete&search_scope=44NOTUK_COMPLETE&sortby=rank&vid=44NOTUK&mode=advanced&offset=0

³ Women's Liberation & after in Nottingham: <https://wolannottingham.wordpress.com/>

⁴ Nottingham's Women's Centre: <https://www.nottinghamwomenscentre.com/>

⁵ Manuscripts and Special Collections, University of Nottingham: <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections/index.aspx>

⁶ Exhibition *dear sisters: activists' archives*: <https://www.lakesidearts.org.uk/exhibitions/event/5937/dear-sisters.html>

⁷ Manuscripts and Special Collections Reading Room: <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections/readingroom/introduction.aspx>

Women's history Advent calendar 2023

During December 2023 we created a special 2023 advent calendar – of favourite new (and sometimes not so new) sites and resources of the year for women's studies and women's history. Each day you could open a window and view a treasure inside!

Here is the full list for those who might have missed any!

Feminist Periodicals Guide

<https://liberatinghistories.org/resources/periodicals-guide/>

This amazing site Liberating Histories highlights feminist magazine titles written by and for women during the 1970s-1990s. The project is led by Dr Victoria Bazin (Principal Investigator), Dr Melanie Waters (Co-Investigator), Professor Kaitlynn Mendes (Co-Investigator) and Dr Eleanor Careless (Postdoctoral Research Fellow), in partnership with Women's Library@LSE.

It now has a feminist periodicals guide. This includes coverage of Mukhti (A collectively-run British Asian feminist magazine)

Outwrite. Spare Rib, Shocking Pink and more. Each section has publication history, prices, accounts from readers, and selected articles.

Suffrage Banners Collection.

<https://lse-atom.arkivum.net/uklse-dl1sb01>

Moved to a new home online in 2023. Great digital images of 58 banners used during early 20th century events by women's suffrage campaigners. Also available online is the Design Album of Mary Lowndes which includes sketches and fabric swatches for many of them. This is really worth exploring. Here is a favourite banner celebrating the life of Elizabeth I. They also include other famous female historical figures, banners of regional branches, tax freedom campaign banners and those representing specific professions and trades. All held at TWL@ LSE Library

Black Mothers in the Forefront

<https://www.bcaexhibits.org/mothers-in-the-forefront>

An online exhibit from the Black Cultural Archives. Amazing images and oral histories which focus on activism by black mothers in the UK in the 1970s includes campaigns for health, education and work.

Howl (History of Women's Liberation) — UK-based women building an archive of resources relating to the Women's Liberation Movement

<https://howl-uk.org/>

The main aim of the HOWL website is to collect the memories and stories of feminists involved in women's liberation movement in the UK. Features of the site include a timeline, link to archive collections and other resources. The site is developing oral histories and photographic archives.

Autograph Letter Collection.

<https://lse-atom.arkivum.net/uklse-dl1al01>

LSE digital library is releasing online its amazing autograph letter collection. Contains over 5,000 letters dating from 1851 to 1975. The original deposit was made in 1930 by Philippa Fawcett of letters received by her mother, Millicent Garrett Fawcett, who died the year before.

Many of these letters were considered 'Autograph' letters written by famous correspondents such as William Gladstone and Queen Victoria. They include thematic collections on women in medicine, education and law and sections for famous individual authors.

The first batch contains letters by Rosa May Billinghurst and Alice Ker concerning their fight for women's suffrage. You can see the original handwriting and typeface which is fascinating. An example of a police summons from 1912 for damaging postal mail

- <https://lse-atom.arkivum.net/uklse-dl1al010050010002-uklse-dl1-al01-005-001-0002-0001-pdf>

Disturbing and shocking accounts of force-feeding in prison written to her mother, even more so when one considers she was disabled and often used a wheelchair

Anne Lister Research Resources

<https://www.annelisterresearchsummit.org/home>

View academic research resources, including videos from the 2023 research summit, on the world of 'Gentleman Jack' Anne Lister. These cover queer theory, the lives of gay women in English history

Woman, Life, Freedom Movement of Iran web archive

<https://archive-it.org/collections/20200>

Aims to preserve web archive snapshots from the Woman, Life, Freedom movement of Iran, which emerged in the wake of the 2022 police killing of Mahsa Jīna Amini. Her arrest by the morality police, on alleged grounds of non-compliance with the compulsory Hijab Law, caused mass protest. The websites are chosen by library staff from Ivy League universities. Covers over 30 resources created in Iran and over 40 from the diaspora

Mapping the Arts and Humanities

<https://www.humanities.org.uk/>

A great new tool from staff based in the School of Advanced Study at the University of London, which has been commissioned by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and Research England.

It aims to provide a tool and visual map for researchers to discover individuals, organisations, depts and research organisations working in specific subject areas. Search by keyword or explore or browse the maps to get contact details. Includes entries for feminism and women's history. The intention is to add and build. The site also offers a dashboard of data and visualisations relating to the nature and interconnections of arts and humanities infrastructure in the UK

Judy Chicago research portal expansion

judychicagoportal.org

Curated jointly by Nevada Museum of Art, the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation Schlesinger Library for the History of Women in America at Harvard University, the National Museum of Women in the Arts and Penn State University Libraries. Includes chronological and thematic sections. See the marvelous section on the Dinner party which includes photos, installations, audiovisual discussion from the artists and others.

Women in Social and Public Policy Research Hub

<https://www.lse.ac.uk/social-policy/research/Research-clusters/WISPPRH>

A new hub created at the LSE

Which aims to act as a network and website for scholars working on the causes and impact of gender inequality in education, labour markets and the family. It includes details of projects, full-text papers and events. Explore the events section to find podcasts and recordings of public lectures on the topic

Lesbians Talk Digital Issues (Scarlet Press, 1992-1996)

<https://www.bishopsgate.org.uk/collections/lesbians-talk-issues>

An influential collection of 7 pamphlets by feminist non-fiction publishers Scarlet Press, between 1992 and 1996. Now online via the Bishopsgate institute. They provide a fascinating insight into concerns and viewpoints from the Lesbian community at the time. Topics covered include: HIV, transgender activism and the experiences of black and Asian lesbians.

#WINspiration

<https://www.cilips.org.uk/feminism>

This amazing series of events - feminism for Libraries and Librarians is organised by CILIPS - Scotland's Library and Information Professionals is so inspiring. See this example from August: #WINspiration with University of Dundee Period Library and Bloody Good Employers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QRb-U0ID5S4>

Find out about the Period Library at the University of Dundee which is tackling misinformation, reducing stigma and driving social justice by normalising menstrual education and day-to-day conversations about periods, as well as providing free period products just like libraries of many different sectors across Scotland.

Gertrude Bell archive

<https://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/home>

Based at Newcastle archive. The Gertrude Bell Archive contains over 10,000 items including correspondence, diaries, photographs (albums and negatives as well as loose prints), notebooks, lecture and photographic notes, and memorandum relating to her archaeology and travels in the Middle East. They include annotated images of photos on the peoples of Iraq.

Important for the history of colonialism there are also some online exhibitions including one on Bell's anti-suffrage attitudes

Beyond Notability Re-evaluating Women's Work in Archaeology, History and Heritage, 1870 – 1950

<https://beyondnotability.org/about/>

This project brings together academic researchers in partnership with the Society of Antiquaries of London in order to recover the broad landscape of women's work in archaeology they are creating a wikicloud of biographies and entries to women they are 'discovering' and resources on 'linked data

The Norwich Women's Film Weekend Digital Archive

<https://norwichwomensfilmweekend.wordpress.com/>

The Norwich Women's Film Weekend (or NWWF) was a two-day annual event created by Cinewomen that ran for 10 years, from 1979 to 1989, at Cinema City in Norwich. The NWWF lasted longer than any other women's film festival in the UK. In 2021 the NWWF archive was deposited with Norfolk Heritage Centre and in 2022 the collection of posters, leaflets, and programmes was digitised and an online archive created. Browse by year under each entry see the list of films and speakers plus digitised posters, leaflets and more

Indian Women and War (1939-1945) project

<https://www.bimcic.com>

Created by Believe in Me CIC with funding from National Lottery Heritage Fund. It is working with young people to explore the impact of the Second World War on Indian women It aims to make visible their contribution to the war effort. The website includes videos, booklets and other educational resources

Gender Responsive Resilience and Intersectionality in Policy and Practice (GRRIPP) -Lexicon

<https://www.gripp.net/other>

A 4-year global collaboration and knowledge-exchange project, implemented by a collective of universities. It aims to bring together theory, policy, and practice to promote a gender-responsive approach to disaster management and development. It has developed a lexicon which contains presents concepts and ideas in English and other languages that have emerged from different feminist, and decolonial practices and experiences.

Women's Weeds

<https://blackthornandstone.com/womens-weeds/>

Fascinating audio installation prepared for the Museum of the Home but also useful [independently via this website https://blackthornandstone.com/womens-weeds/](https://blackthornandstone.com/womens-weeds/) which explores the hidden history of women in medicine and herbal sciences. It was Researched, written, and produced by [Dr Romany Reagan](#) and is comprised of 20 different stories mapping a walk around the museum's gardens.

The Catholic Suffragist & The Catholic Citizen (1915 to 1966)

<https://lse-atom.arkivum.net/uklse-dl1wr040010010003>

Produced by the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society. The newspaper is interesting in that it represents a history of religious organisations and suffrage. The catholic women sought to 'modernise' the role and status of women in their church as well as in the wider society. They originally wanted to call the magazine the 'Newer Eve' after a line in a poem by Francis Thompson to emphasize its feminist values. This was considered too provocative but it was retained in the masthead. [In the July 15th 1916 issue p. 47](#), Leonora de Alberti criticises articles relating to women in the Catholic Encyclopedia. She asks 'Why had the encyclopedia's editor asked for an article on women by the Austrian anti-feminist Father Augustine Rossler? Her scathing comments include: 'like many men he is better able to judge the physical capability of women than any woman born'.

Exploring Menopause Through Collections and Collaboration

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OAhEhkPlxEk>

Artist and photographer Marge Bradshaw discusses the process of delivering the 'Whose Menopause?' project, which she worked on with three community groups in Bolton, Greater Manchester earlier this year. The groups used a range of material from Wellcome collections to investigate and challenge typical menopause narratives, which often exclude people identifying as LGBTQ+, working class or from the global majority.

Women in revolt! podcast series

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/f/feminist-art/women-in-revolt-podcast>

Supporting the current Tate exhibition

This 6-part mini-series explores art, activism and the women's movement in the UK in the 1970s and 80s.

Anti-Colonial Research Library

<https://www.anticolonialresearchlibrary.org/>

Amazing site led by Caroline Lenette, Associate Professor, UNSW and funded by UNSW Faculty of Arts, Design and Architecture. It aims to provide free access to articles, books video content covering the values of indigenous research methods in a variety of subject areas. New content will be reviewed and updated annually. The site can be browsed or searched by theme. It includes materials on indigenous women and intersectionality.

AWA Magazine Archive

<https://www.awamagazine.org/>

Free access to an online archive made available by several partners. It contains the full run of one of the earliest independent African women's magazines: AWA: la revue de la femme noire. 1964-1973. <https://www.awamagazine.org/>

It has amazing photos of fashion. Guidance on health and careers and discussion of women's rights across Africa. All materials in French

This article discusses its importance.


<https://africanarguments.org/2023/01/blackness-pan-african-consciousness-and-womens-political-organising-through-the-magazine-awa/>

Urania.

<https://lse-atom.arkivum.net/uklse-dl1wr04003>

This remarkable journal was published 1916-1940. Its editors felt that a gender binary did not exist. They drew on articles from biology, psychology, and sociology to argue that 'sex is an accident'

Issues were international in scope. This edition from May-August 1929 reviewed *The Well of Loneliness*. It makes comments on the style of writing and criticises the portrayal of lesbians as 'masculine'. It also has articles on women soldiers and a lady doctor in Egypt as well as the regular "Star Dust " feature of press clippings from around the world. Readers were invited to send in their own examples of stories which challenged the binary



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