

Research Resources in the College Archives

Sociology

The College Archives, housing the records of Bedford College and Royal Holloway College, contain some of the earliest, most comprehensive and diverse collections relating to women's higher education and history in Britain since the mid-nineteenth century. However, the archives are not limited to those of the two colleges, or to the subject of women's history and education. A large number of personal papers and several theatre company collections provide abundant and varied sources for the study of social concepts, issues, relationships, events and developments. The long history of Social Studies and Sociology as academic disciplines at Bedford College, and latterly Royal Holloway, is particularly well documented in departmental, staff and student papers. In providing a historical perspective on social ideas and values, and the contribution of social research to social work theory and practice, the archives provide an accessible and rich resource for undergraduate and postgraduate students to develop research and critical-thinking skills.

The Royal Holloway and Bedford College collections can be used to research a variety of subject areas, including:

- History of education, notably women's higher education in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries
- The academic and social impact of co-education in universities
- The development of degrees in Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work
- Sexuality and female relationships
- Social and cultural history of university life
- Women's career opportunities and employment
- Attitudes towards women's education
- Gender and patriarchy
- Victorian and Edwardian femininity
- Women's fashion (see online ['College Fashion Exhibition'](#) on the Archives website)
- Women's social and political activity and status in nineteenth and twentieth century Britain
- Life in wartime and the war effort
- Victorian and Edwardian domesticity
- Life in nineteenth and twentieth century London
- Visual representation through photography
- Student politics
- Nineteenth century economic and social history
- Nineteenth century medicine
- Nursing studies from the late nineteenth century
- Teacher training from the early twentieth century
- Victorian philanthropy

- Leisure pursuits and sports
- Student drama
- Medical advertising

Catalogued records relating to social studies, sociology and psychology held in the archives include:

- Bedford College Sociology Department departmental files (1930-1984)
- The personal papers of Steve Schenk (1941-1987), lecturer in Sociology at Bedford College. Records include research notes and papers on educational sociology and teaching, the family, religion and morality, ageing, social pathology, and material relating to Schenk's teaching career, course descriptions and seminar topics.
- Papers of the Bedford College Social Studies Department relating to the teaching of the MSc. in Medical Sociology at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (1979-80)
- Papers of the Bedford College Social Studies Department relating to the MSc. in Medical Sociology (1968-1975)
- University of Maryland Sociology exam papers (1964-5)
- Correspondence between Margaret Tuke, principal of Bedford College 1907-1929, and Sociology Department staff
- Reports on the development of the Medical Sociology course at Bedford College (1968-9)
- Minutes and reports of the Bedford College Sociology Department Staffing Committee (1964-73)
- Proposals for course modifications in the Bedford College Sociology Department (1971-2)
- Papers relating to the teaching link in Medical Sociology between Bedford College and the Medical Schools of St. Bartholomew's Hospital and the London Hospital (1974)
- Papers of the 'A Calendar of Murder' project undertaken by Louis Blom-Cooper (University of London) and Terence Morris (LSE) from 1961-63 to record every case of homicide in England since 1957.
- Papers of the 'Homicide Project' carried out by the Bedford College Sociology Department (1965-69)
- A collection of questionnaires used to retrieve data used for Bedford College research into the sociology and psychopathology of murder from 1957-67 (1969)
- Report of a study on one-parent families and the social and the financial results of the exercise of matrimonial jurisdiction by magistrates courts carried out by Bedford College Department of Sociology between 1966 and 1971
- Papers relating to the establishment of the Legal Research Unit, Department of Sociology, Bedford College (1965-1972)
- Nina Boyle Memorial Prize administrative papers (1945-53) – the Bedford College Nina Boyle Prize was an essay-writing prize for History and Sociology
- Lecture notes of Margaret Pearce Blair (1932-35), a Sociology student at Bedford College. Topics covered include social psychology, social conditions, ethics, social institutions, theories of society, and political theory in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries
- Papers of the Bedford College Psychology Department (1923-77)

- Copies of the Bedford College Psychology Society Magazine (1972-74)

Other relevant highlights from the collections include:

- Bedford College and Royal Holloway College student registers and individual student files containing information on their family background and previous education
- A large collection of formal and informal staff and student photographs dating from the 1880s, including several personal albums
- Student diaries from the early twentieth century. These include the diaries of Winifred Seville (1906-1910), providing a detailed and personal account of life at Royal Holloway College, and of Mary Doreen Wainwright, a Bedford College student in the 1940s
- Former staff and student reminiscences, correspondence and oral history memories, including a large collection of nineteenth and twentieth century correspondence
- Case books of the Royal Holloway College Nurse (1935-1940)
- Chapel correspondence 1932-1945: Reports on the College Waif (1932-1936) (1936-1945)
- Royal Holloway War Work Committee Papers (1915-1942)
- Records of the Royal Holloway Christian Union (1900-1928)
- Minutes of Christian Union Committee Meetings (1901-1936)
- Records of the Sharp Practice Society – A Royal Holloway debating society (1896-1906)
- Papers and correspondence relating to the Royal Holloway College Lambeth Association (1909-1940) – a philanthropic society which donated money towards improving residents' lives in the London boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark
- Student Union records
- Student magazines, containing articles, observations and commentaries on student academic, personal, social and political concerns.
- Press-cuttings and newspaper and magazine articles relating to Bedford College and Royal Holloway College, providing examples of nineteenth and twentieth century advertising, journalism and contemporary concerns
- Papers relating to the Public Hygiene course and the Nursing Studies and (teacher) Training Departments at Bedford College, documenting the professionalisation of women's employment
- Lecture notes and correspondence relating to the 'Fawcett Lectures', a series of public lectures relating to women's issues held at Bedford College between 1930 and 1980 – notable speakers included Vita Sackville-West, Eleanor Rathbone and Louisa Garrett Anderson, suffragette, medical pioneer and social reformer
- Records relating to Elizabeth Jesser Reid, founder of Bedford College, anti-slavery campaigner and philanthropist
- Papers relating to Thomas Holloway, medical entrepreneur and philanthropist, and the foundation of Royal Holloway College
- Records relating to the Sanatorium at Virginia Water, including articles, annual reports, deeds and regulations
- Advertising records relating to Thomas Holloway's manufacture of pills and ointments

- The manuscript diaries of Anne and Frances Dickinson (1814-1881), which throw light onto the domestic lives of nineteenth century women
- Papers of the controversial Red Shift, Half Moon and Gay Sweatshop Theatre Companies (1972-2007), providing insight into contemporary social and political issues

A number of reference works on the history of Bedford and Royal Holloway Colleges, women's education, and the life and work of Thomas Holloway are available for consultation in the Archives Reading Room.

NB. Collections range in size from small single items to large personal, departmental and organisational items and series.

Sources do not only provide information on single topics, but can be used to study a variety of issues, for example:

- **Photographs** can provide insight into women's fashion, material consumption and domestic interiors, leisure pursuits, sporting activities, architecture and social relationships.
- **Reminiscences and diaries** contain information on student life, life in London, family life, social and political values, female relationships and life in wartime.

Courses and modules for which the archives, in providing a historical perspective, may be particularly useful:

- **BSc. in Social Work**
- **BSc. in Criminology and Sociology**
- **MSc. in Social Work**
- **MSc. in Medical Sociology**

Examples of some previous dissertations and theses researched using records from the College Archives (available for consultation in the Archives Reading Room):

Bosley, M., *Sexuality, Society and Style: An analysis of the diaries of Winifred Mary Seville*, (MA, RHUL, 1997)

Broad, A., *'Abundant and splendid work for those who are brave enough': Bedford College and Royal Holloway College Graduate Teachers in the Dominions, 1890-1939*, (MA, RHUL)

Clayborough, S., *Discovering Social Experiences: Women staff and students at Royal Holloway College, 1887-1920*, (University of Sussex, 1996)

Hamlett, J., *Gender and the Social Interior: Personal rooms at Royal Holloway and Oxford and Cambridge Universities, 1890-1910*, (MA, RHUL, 2001)

Kirk, E.L., *'Nice Girls'? The regulation of feminine conduct at Royal Holloway, Bedford and Girton Colleges between the wars*, (MA, RHUL, 1995)

Kirk, E.L., *Femininity and Female Community at Royal Holloway and Bedford Colleges, 1945-65*, (MPhil, RHUL, 2002)

Okubo, I., *Philanthropy and its Role in the Establishment of Women's Higher Education: A study of Bedford College and Royal Holloway College in the nineteenth-century*, (MA, RHUL, 1996)

Stevens, A., *'Women and Cricket: 1880-1926'*, (MA, University of London, 2003)

Stevens, S., *The Life of Thomas Holloway: An example of the values and status of the Victorian nouveau riche*, (RHUL, 2003)

Wiggins, S., *'Mine was the Motion': Political activity and activism at Royal Holloway College, 1890-1920*, (MA, RHUL, 1998)

Wilcocks, M., *'Socks fit for heroes': War work at Royal Holloway College and Bedford College during the First World War*, (BA, RHUL, 2004)

Wong, S., *'Brazen Amazons and Gentle Ladies': The Royal Holloway Hockey Club, 1890-1914*, (MA, RHUL, 1998)

Appointment and Contact Details:

An appointment is necessary if you wish to view records from the archives. Please contact us at archives@rhul.ac.uk to arrange an appointment.

However, you are welcome to visit the Archive Service without appointment to enquire about the collections and to view our corridor displays.

Further information about the Archive Service, including the online catalogue, facilities, location details, opening hours and contact details can be found on our website at <http://www.rhul.ac.uk/archives>.