



SOURCES FOR THE STUDY OF WOMEN AND GENDER ISSUES IN THE TUC COLLECTIONS

The TUC Library Collections, established in 1922, transferred to the London Metropolitan University in September 1996. The holdings include reference and historical works on the trade union movement, union publications from the UK and overseas, documents relating to working conditions and industrial relations in various industries and countries, and material collected from the various campaigns and policy areas in which the TUC has been involved since its foundation in 1868. A major strength of the Library are the large holdings of pamphlets, periodicals and other ephemera, produced by unions, government, international and other organisations, relating to women at work from the 1870s to the current day. These have been collected to support the policy-making and campaigning work of the Women's Trade Union League [which merged with the TUC in 1921], the TUC Women's Committee, and the TUC Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee.

The Collections hold the printed publications of the TUC and its affiliated unions, including organisations primarily for women, such as the Women's Trade Union League, National Federation of Women Workers, National Union of Domestic Workers, Association of Women Clerks & Secretaries, Health Visitors' Association and Society of Women Welders. They also hold large pamphlet collections from the Labour Party, Communist Party and other relevant political groups and campaigns. Also held are the publications of other organisations concerned with working women such as the National Institute of Houseworkers, National Union of Women Workers, Women's Cooperative Guild and the Equal Opportunities Commission. The Library holds documents from international women's organisations, eg the International Federation of Working Women and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, as well as relevant material from international organisations, such as the ILO, ICF TU and ETUC, and overseas unions.

The TUC continues to deposit material on a regular basis and the Library acquires recent publications relating to gender issues at work and to women's organisation and working conditions - covering issues such as equal pay, hours, parental leave, discrimination at work, employment rights, older women, women in unions, health, childcare, black and ethnic minority women. Some 200 current trade union periodicals are received. Recent acquisitions relating to women/gender issues can be seen on the online catalogue at <http://catalogue.londonmet.ac.uk>, but the majority of documents are only accessible via a card catalogue in the Library.

The press cuttings collection includes files on individuals, organisations and industries and is an invaluable source. For example, a search on the online cuttings database on the [Collections web page](#) (see below) for **women** reveals 40 folders of cuttings 1913 - 1979 covering strikes, equal pay and the marriage bar.

Special Collections deposited in the Library include the papers of individuals eg Gertrude Tuckwell 1861-1951, Margaret Bondfield 1873-1953, Marjorie Nicholson 1914-1999, Dorothy Elliott 1895-1980, Yvonne Kapp 1903-1999. The Tuckwell Collection includes printed and manuscript documents from 1890-1921 covering issues relating to women's political and employment rights, anti-sweating campaigns, union organisation, health and safety, suffrage campaigns and issues relating to women and World War 1. The Bondfield papers include her diary of a visit to Russia and documents relating to the International Congress of Working Women 1921 and the International Federation of Working Women 1922-1925. Catalogues of the Tuckwell and Nicholson collections can be searched online from the [Collections webpage](#) (see below) Other special collections of relevance to women's studies are listed on the *GENESIS* database, hosted by the Women's Library, at <http://www.genesis.ac.uk>.

A new online resource *The Union Makes Us Strong* at www.unionhistory.info provides many digitised photographs and documents relating to women's history in its *Timeline* and has a fully searchable database of the *Trades Union Congress Annual Reports* 1868-1968. The website also has a whole package dedicated to the famous 1888 strike of women match workers in London.



The University also houses [The Women's Library](#), which holds the most extensive collection of women's history in the UK. Visitors should note that the TUC Archive, including correspondence files and committee minutes has been deposited in the [Modern Records Centre](#) at the University of Warwick.

The TUC Collections are open by appointment only, Monday-Friday 9.15-16.45. Email enquiries should be sent to tuclib@londonmet.ac.uk.

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TUC Collections web page www.londonmet.ac.uk/libraries/tuc

The Union Makes Us Strong : *TUC History Online* at www.unionhistory.info

<http://www.socialhistoryportal.org/sites/default/files/tucgender.pdf>

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