



archives 101

or, how to google things

October 22, 2025




types of archives

Physical archives:

- College/university archives
- Museum archives
- Government archives
- Special collections
- Community archives

Digital archives:

- Digitized collections from a physical archive
- “Born-digital” materials



you might use
one or *both*
types of these
for your
projects!

where to even start?

- Think about keywords you'd use to describe your topic: names, dates, places, people
 - ***WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHY, WHEN***



If you were starting from square one on researching your topic, what are some search terms you might use?

finding your archives

- Searching **FOR** an archive vs searching **WITHIN** an archive

ArchiveGrid pulls together finding aids and collection records from different institutions and makes them all searchable in one place!



[Let's check it out:](#)




dissecting a finding aid

Guide to the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA) Records WAG.324

Collection Overview

Request Materials

 External Links

FOR PRINTING OR SEARCHING

View This Guide all on one Page

CONTENTS

View Inventory

Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA) Records

CALL NUMBER

WAG.324

DATES

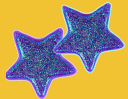
1970s-ongoing, inclusive; 1990-2010, bulk

CREATOR

Caoile, Gloria T.

Lee, Jin Sook

Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance



let's check it out:

all about booleans

a system that runs on AND, OR, NOT, quotation marks, and parentheses

For example:

chinatown AND "new york" vs. "chinatown" AND "new york"

(basement workshop OR chinatown) AND "new york"

chinatown NOT new york

"chinatown" AND new york AND "unions"



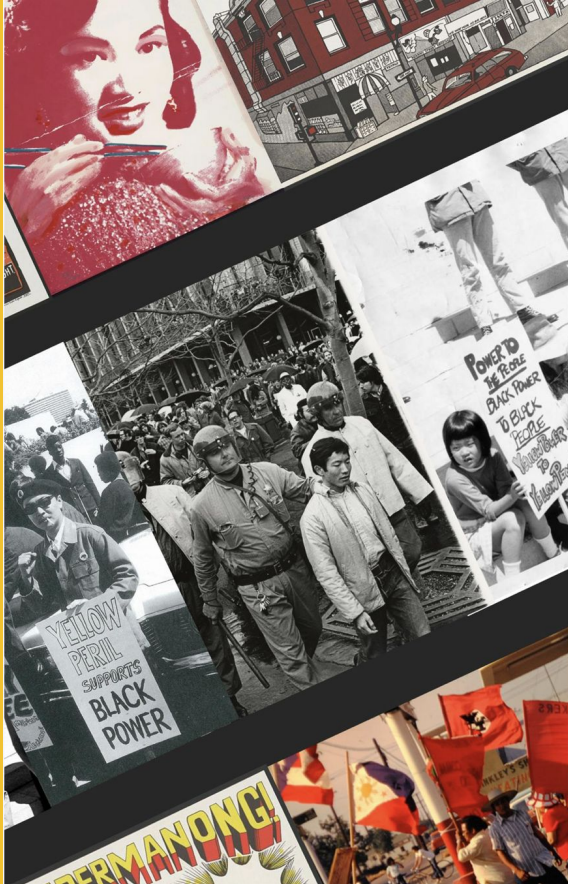
**Think of it
kind of like
PEMDAS?**

search strategies



- Broad, general search within a subject-specific archive (i.e., searching “New York” in the Densho archive)
- Detailed, more specific search within a broad, multi-subject archive (i.e., searching “Uzbek” and “Brooklyn” in the Library of Congress archive)
- Finding research guides or LibGuides created by archivists/librarians
- *More words = more results, but less precise*
- *Less words/more precise terms = less results, but more relevant*

other methods: libguides!



Building Identity and Solidarity: Asian American activism of the 1960s and '70s. *A Library of Congress resource/user guide*

Olivia Hewang
2023 [Connecting Communities Digital Initiative](#) Junior Fellow

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- Created by an archivist/librarian
- Links to relevant collections
- Bibliography with additional resources

**search formula:
(libguide) + THEME**

South Asian Studies

This South Asian Studies Research Guide is a library tool to assist scholars and students at NYU in finding useful resources (in print

Home

Finding Scholarly Articles in
Databases

Journals

South Asian History Primary
Sources

South Asian Art & Art History
Resources

Museums & Galleries

South Asian Art History

South Asian Literature

South Asia Gender & Sexuality

South Asia
Documentaries@Bobst

South Asia Data & Maps

South Asia NGO Links &
Resources

South Asia Government

Introduction

SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES is the interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary study of t

Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and S

Guide is a library tool to assist scholars and students at NYU in find
South Asia.

For further assistance, or to make an appointment for an individual

[Aruna P. Magier](#), South Asia Librarian.

--- see also: [South Asian Diaspora Research Guide](#)



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[South Asia Commons](#)

**Research
guides/LibGuides
are excellent places
to find *more*
sources. They are
not an archive!**

ACTIVITY!

GROUP 1

[loc.gov](https://www.loc.gov)

* national archive

GROUP 2

[dp.la](https://www.dp.la)

* multi-collection
database

GROUP 3

[densho.org](https://www.densho.org)

* subject-specific
archive

GROUP 4

findingaids.library.nyu.edu

* university archive

archival scavenger hunt

Using your group's archive, try to find...

- An oral history
- An item from the 1960s
- A postcard
- A newspaper from New York
- A personal journal/diary entry
- A family photo
- An item from the 2000s

Or records with themes of...

- Counterschooling
- Asian American labor organizing
- Cross-racial solidarity
- Student protest
- Community organizing groups
- Asian American art and culture
- Post-9/11 organizing
- Prisons and incarceration

If you finish these, start searching for resources for your own project!

~ independent work time ~

Key Sources/Archives/Interviews

- i. Where do you think you can find answers to these questions? Is it in archives? Oral history interviews? Does it not really exist? Tell me about this. **Find secondary sources and primary sources like the list on page 1 in the sample.**

[Doc \(in progress\) with various archives](#) - please use as a resource!