

# Historical Research Websites

*Once you have an idea of “what” to look for in history, you then have to know “where” to look or investigate different topic areas, authors, formats, countries, etc. Most of my research centers around physical education, health, leisure, parks, playgrounds, outdoor recreation, movement, and philosophy. While some of these sites are better than others in my primary areas, all of them have been productive for me. Here are my favorite sources along with a few secondary sources worth noting too. Happy hunting and gathering! -RJ*

**Search Tips:** I have learned over time...if your source does not come up, verify author's “exact” name, try a different way of listing author, and check to make sure you have the exact title too. Sometimes my reference source listed a book title inaccurately which prevented me from finding the source. I then had to Google the title and find other references to the book in order to get the exact title for conducting a successful search.

## **Primary Sources:** These are my favorites! ☺

- **Abe Books:** (PAY) This is my #1 source for finding old books and even some newer books. You can find almost any vintage book on this site if you do enough searching. Some of my best books came from here for only a few dollars! [www.AbeBooks.com](http://www.AbeBooks.com)
- **Archives.Gov:** (FREE) It's a very deep source, but I find it cumbersome for finding books, film, and photographs. To me, the search system is not easy to navigate. It's difficult to find PE or movement sources here, but because of its extensive holdings, it's still on my primary list. <https://www.archives.gov/>
- **Archive.Org:** (FREE) I really like this site, and it's one of my most productive too. This is an amazing source for books, photographs, film, audio, and more. You can learn a lot browsing by category or date range which is how I mostly use it, but you can also search by specific author or title. It's pretty easy to browse around, and you'll be amazed at where it can take you! <https://archive.org/>
- **Google Books:** (FREE) I've located some great journals and books here. It's extensive and worth browsing. If the book is not available digitally, they will show a link to sites like Abe Books where you can find a hard copy. <https://books.google.com/>
- **Library of Congress:** (FREE) You can find some really nice original and high-resolution sources here searching by category including ones specific to PE and movement. Be prepared to stay a while and dig around a bit. <https://www.loc.gov/>

## **Secondary Free Sources:**

- **ARTSTOR:** Access to original photos and posters in digital format. <https://library.artstor.org/#/home>
- **JSTOR:** Extensive catalog of scientific and educational journals. <https://www.jstor.org/>
- **Libri Books:** This site features audio books but does not have much in the

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Physical & Health Educator • Historical Kinesiologist

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PE or movement areas. <https://librivox.org/>

- **Picryl:** You can find some really interesting material here if you browse around by category especially on the art side of research. It can be a bit cumbersome as books are listed page by page with thumbnail images. There are many high-quality photographs and drawings on this site, and some are related to anatomy and movement or medicine. <https://picryl.com/>
- **Stark Center:** This site is known for its history of body building and physical culture, so it's at least more specific to fitness and movement; however, I find what they have actually listed as downloadable rather sparse and how they have it posted is not intuitive. There are not many downloadable photographs or booklets or posters here. Regardless, it's worth looking around a bit and knowing it's there. Another option is to visit their actual physical museum in Texas where some of the best body building memorabilia in US history is located. <https://starkcenter.org/>
- **The Online Books Page:** This site is okay for locating some free books, but it also links to other sources. Some of the outside sources might require membership or purchase, but at least you can locate the sources and decide. <https://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/>

## Pay Sources:

- **Alibris:** This site is similar to Abe Books with many newer books and multiple formats from film to audio. <https://www.alibris.com/>
- **British Pathe':** I love this site for browsing by category! It's an amazing resource with a massive amount of film and photo archives. Viewing is free, but you can also purchase original files. <https://www.britishpathe.com/>
- **Critical Past:** While you can purchase the actual film files here in various digital formats, I mainly use this to look around by topic area. This is a very nice browsing site. Most of the video clips are only a few minutes long. You can also download some files for free with their watermark, but how they process this is fairly cumbersome and requires some technical knowledge regarding file types preferred. <https://www.criticalpast.com/>
- **E-Books Library:** Very extensive catalog but not very deep in the PE or movement areas. Small yearly access fee required. <https://www.ebooks-library.com/>
- **Hathi Trust:** This site is impressive in printed holdings, but you can only access through an approved university membership. However, you can access books for free to read on-line, and, you can download up to "one page" at a time for free. <https://www.hathitrust.org/>

*Dig around. Spend some time. Open up an inquisitive mind and a sense of wonderment to historical wisdom because it has so much to offer for the future.  
Enjoy the journey as it's a long one—stay the course. -RJ ☺*

\* Updated 3.9.21

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