

The best bookshops in York

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Canan Bolel shows us around the best bookshops in York, England. If there's a bookshop that you think other students and academics should visit when they're undertaking research or visiting a city for a conference, find more information about contributing after this article.



“The way to read a fairy tale” said York-born poet W.H. Auden, “is to throw yourself in”.

Following this advice is not hard in York. While strolling around this city, it's easy to believe that we have been stuck in a medieval fairytale. With its 13th-century walls, narrow streets, gothic cathedrals and peculiar bookshops specializing in secondhand and antiquarian books, York is one of the best places to have a literary time travel.

Located in the centre of York, **Lucius Books** is the frequented venue of book lovers and collectors. In this bookshop you can find first editions, signed copies and manuscripts. Last year an unbound first edition of Jane Austen's *Emma*, one of the best versions in the world, was sold at Lucius Books. I would highly recommend browsing through their beautifully illustrated books. They also have an active web page and a [Facebook page](#) in which you can find their carefully edited catalogues.

Fossgate Books is another bookshop where secondhand and antiquarian book lovers might enjoy themselves. The shelves are jammed with books on various subjects and, with its wide price range, everyone can find a book suitable for their budget. For some international visitors, the challenge will be not to exceed the baggage limit if you are traveling by plane. Based on my experience, I can say that Fossgate Books is also a great place where you can meet with other bibliophiles and talk about niche literary interests.



Credit: [John Connell](#) CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Situated very close to the York Minster, **The Minster Gate Bookshop** is located on a street which has been historically linked with literary activities. This shop has been welcoming readers from all around the world for the last 450 years. In this calm atmosphere you can spend hours with the fulfillment of self-discovery without any distractions from the 'real world'. With books divided into little rooms, you can also experience the possibility of having a house full of books. The Minster Gate Bookshop has a great collection of old prints and engravings of the region. If you are specifically interested in British history and Arthurian literature, you are in the right place.

York is an outstanding city and its historical heritage can be the perfect setting for spending an afternoon reading. For example, York Museum Gardens is a great spot to read Virginia Woolf, while you can enjoy Mary Shelley at one of the haunted pubs located at the city centre.

Canan Bolel has a Masters degree in Political Science from Sabanci University, Istanbul, a masters degree in Sociology from London School of Economics. Currently, Canan is a PhD student in Near and Middle Eastern Studies Program at the University of Washington. Her research examines the comparative formation of urban identity and sense of belonging in Mediterranean port cities of the Ottoman Empire.

Do you have a favourite bookshop? If there's a bookshop that you think other students and academics should visit when they're undertaking research or visiting a city for a conference, then now's your chance to tell us all about it.

As part of a new feature on LSE Review of Books, we're asking academics and students to recommend their favourite two or three bookshops in a particular city, with the aim of building an exciting online series for our book-loving community of readers the world over.

Bookshops could be academic, alternative, foreign language, hobby-based, secret or underground institutions, second hand outlets, or connected to a university. We'd like to cover all world regions too.

If something comes to mind, we're looking for around 150 words per bookshop, detailing why this place is a must-see. Our editorial team can then find suitable photos and links to accompany the piece, though you're welcome to supply these too. We only ask that you focus on just one city or region, and two or three bookshops within it.

Email us now if you'd like to contribute: lsereviewofbooks@lse.ac.uk

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