

CHAPTER 12

Hearing Our Own Voices: The Importance of Archives

Key Questions

1. Why is history important? Why is trans history important?
2. How do archival materials differ from other research sources?
3. Ephemera refers to printed materials like fliers, postcards, and announcements that are usually seen as useful only in the short term. Why is it important to keep various types of ephemera?
4. Why is it important to have archives that focus on specific topics or specific groups?

Chapter Overview

This concluding chapter is different from the other chapters in this textbook. It begins with my own voice and an example of a brief newspaper article that mentions my summer visit to my grandparents' farm in the Ozark Mountains in Arkansas. The chapter then offers examples of how we can use archival materials to uncover stories and histories. The chapter ends with a look at specific transgender archives and the importance of keeping trans history alive.

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