

Beyond the Archives: Research as a Lived Process



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This collection of highly readable essays reveals that research is not restricted to library archives. When researchers pursue information and perspectives from sources beyond the archives—from existing people and places— they are often rewarded with unexpected discoveries that enrich their research and their lives.

Beyond the Archives: Research as a Lived Process presents narratives that demystify and illuminate the research process by showing how personal experiences, family history, and scholarly research intersect. Editors Gesa E. Kirsch and Liz Rohan emphasize how important it is for researchers to tap into their passions, pursuing research subjects that attract their attention with creativity and intuition without limiting themselves to traditional archival sources and research methods.

Eighteen contributors from a number of disciplines detail inspiring research opportunities that led to recently published works, while offering insights on such topics as starting and finishing research projects, using a wide range of types of sources and methods, and taking advantage of unexpected leads, chance encounters and simple clues. In addition, the narratives trace the importance of place in archival research, the parallels between the lives of research subjects and researchers, and explore archives as sites that resurrect personal, cultural, and historical memory.

Beyond the Archives sheds light on the creative, joyful, and serendipitous nature of research, addressing what attracts researchers to their subjects, as well as what inspires them to produce the most thorough, complete, and engaged scholarly work. This timely and essential volume supplements traditional-method textbooks and effectively models concrete practices of retrieving and synthesizing information by professional researchers.

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