Genealogy-NARA

Anonymous_9: Some of these need to have subcategories, like the numerous Native American related cards, and the indexes to microfilm cards

Anonymous_13: If you have several topic lists like records for African Americans, Why not also provide a list to clarify other "ethnic" records like- Irish history records. I.e. Irish can be found throughout our holdings but a influx of irish is reflected in the Passenger Arrival records of 1841-1855. I think people expect to see a subject category and if one exists it needs to be comprehensive or if one doesn't, we need to clarify. It is all about reminding people that our holdings are comprised of various agencies and not identified as an "African -American " records but one record may have more potential for a particular topic.

Anonymous_17: The titles in general of the items to be sorted needs clarification. Titles of items also need to be standardized.

Anonymous_50: I had difficulty deciding whether to organize the cards according to type of record (census, microfilm) or by content (ethnic, military service). I tried to go with the content-based organization because I think I could find my way around either (because I approach a genealogical search with an idea of a specific record that I want in mind), but I suspect less experienced users will come to it with less of an idea of what sorts of information which records contain, but it was difficult to organize purely by content.

Anonymous_57: I'm not sure that lighthouse records are a major category of genealogy research.

Anonymous_60: I think the Genealogy Pages are among the better organized pages currently on the site. http://www.archives.gov/genealogy/ is a good portal. There is some redundancy, but compared to other parts of the site, it makes sense.

Anonymous_78: You could further break down the "specific Records" category into: Census, Military, Immigration, Other Legal Documents

Anonymous_81: The categories that I labeled "Records" and "Indexes" feel that they could be broken into smaller, more specific categories. However, I don't have the knowledge to decide what belongs together.

Anonymous_84: I don't know what Maritime or Lighthouse records entail.

Anonymous_90: Why must everything be described and labeled in terms of worth as a "genealogical" topic? Many other researchers usre these records and the information in them for other topics. Tell people what kind of materials we have and what's type of information they'll find therein, and let them decide how to use it. I've heard complaints from people about the way that all articles and information for researchers must be approached on the current site must be approached on from "Genealogists and Family Historians" page. Put the 1890 veterans' census on BOTH the military and census topic pages.

Genealogy-Public

Anonymous_8: These are "topic" entries. Any topics that fall into a Record Group should also be arranged by Record Group number and separately by title. NARA and non-NARA items should be separate (maybe I didn't get those right).

Anonymous_24: There are some categories that I would like to place in multiple groups. For example, "Locating Native Americans in Archival Records" is something I'd like to pace in both the getting started group and also a more specific Native American folder. Pre-Federal (Colonial) Records feel like what we had before the census so I have grouped it there. However, I feel it could also fit into the "Records" group.

Anonymous_25: census records military records immigration records, Passport Records, Enemy Aliens Vital Records (Birth, Marriages, Death, Bankruptcy, Land Records, Living Individuals) General Genealogy Native American Records

Anonymous_26: Recommend starting with Beginner or Expert portals, thereby allowing an experienced person to bypass intro or basic materials, without multiple mouse clicks. Under the major categories, such as Census provide subcateggories such as Census Help, Census Indexes, etc, and grouping the associated links. Provide a decision tree, (color code possibly?), to guide the inexperienced. Please clarify if records are to be found in DC or College Park.

Anonymous_27: Need to allow multi-category selection for items. need two levels of organization.

Anonymous_30: Need to make accessing the records quick and easy at a glance

Anonymous_47: i'm not ocntent with this == i think categories whould be "wide" not "deep" but it's too hard to manipulate on my tiny screen....

Anonymous_52: I am glad you are reorganizing the website. I have also found the "plan a trip" information to be circuitous. Thank you for the excellent work!

Anonymous_59: I think this user-preference sort input is a great idea. As you can see I prefer a hierarchy based on records type. It is most useful to me to have "about X records in general," "what X records are at NARA," "other online resources about X records" together. By using drop-down or expanding menus I can navigate methodically page by page and be certain to explore all of the web pages devoted to the topic I am researching. (By contrast, it is extemeely annoying to be shuttled back and forth by hyperliniks to entirely different parts of a website.) I know NARA tries to put "hot topics" at the website user's fingertips, but it is confusing to have

tons of links and buttons thrown at you on the first page. Like it or not, an introduction to the vast records resoiurces at NARA requires some background information and step by step instruction. (It might be necessary to cross-index a few specific pages. For instance, links to Rev. War records page(s) might be found under both military and pre-Federal.)

Anonymous_60: The "About Record Types" group needs to be hierarchical, but it was impossible to show that. Where is the category for the 1790-1920 census microfilm indexes?

Anonymous_66: would like to order within categories by year where applicable

Anonymous_71: 1. The item descriptions in "Genealogy Records" didn't give enough information to tell me if these items described how to use the records or how to find the records. 2. What does "resources" mean? Records? Resources other than records? 3. The present website infuriates me because it holds out the possibility that I can do some genealogy online. There is little indication that all I am going to find are finding aids and explanations of how to use NARA materials whose online or offline presence is not specified. Each link holds the promise that I might be able to do some genealogy online. But after exploring the twisty maze of passages that all look alike for nearly an hour, I give up in frustration, never quite knowing if there are records online or not.

Anonymous_77: It is not clear from these if you are naming RECORDS (databases) or ARTICLES with information about records. Get rid of most of the stuff not related to NARA - vitals, living people. Do you mean "Online tools for genealofgical research" here at NARA or links?? By "US Customs Records 1820-1891" do you mean Customs Passenger Lists?? Categories move around making it neext to impossible to add items. Lots of this I would leave off. there would be a very clear, simple front page, then detaiol once a broad category is chosen i.e. census or immigraiton and naturalization or military records or learn or shop or Explore More.

Anonymous_82: Can divide the Records into further groups, i.e., War records, Land Records, Governmental Records, etc... The same can go for Indexes.

Anonymous_90: It would be nice to be able to assign subcategories under broader topics. Some items should be listed under more than one heading, but this can't be done using this exercise. For instance, Native Americans & Census, or Other Ethnic... & Chinese arrivals. Also, the Census record section might be diveded into Population Schedules and non-population!

Anonymous_92: What a great tool!

Anonymous_93: Some of the Category names are to broad like pension records are those Miltitary pension (which war Revolution Civil, WWI or WWII) or government employess or members of Congress. It is hard to do this exercise with out knowing what you have as data.

Anonymous_94: I approached this as a means of grouping records by type, but I strongly hope that, in a new index , it will be possible to search for these categories in many different ways rather than having to guess which category to search for a specific record. For instance, "Overview of African American Records at the Archives" should be able to be found under African American Records, under Genealogy How-to's, under Resources Available at the Archives, and even by its own title. I hope a keyword search is available.

Anonymous_95: Pension records unclear as to whether military or federal employees or other. Also many records could be placed in more than one category

Anonymous_96: I did it, but don't know why!

Historical Topics-NARA

Anonymous_3: Why does Cartographic and Architectural Documents warrent it's own category? Categorizing information by the presentation media makes no sense. What is important is the information; this is the problem with the current search function; too much emphasis on the media, not enough on the actual CONTENT.

Anonymous_29: Things need to be more cross-referenced better and ARC needs to be tagged better, thats why we need citizen archivists or archivists 2.0. I think the big photo collection (American Cities, Civil War, World War II, etc) that are currently on the site and discuss how to order, need to become "exhibitized". These categories, when you see them together, show that the site is just so random. This site http://www.archives.gov/research/topics.html is just a non-useful page. Like this list is full enough to explain what we have. It seems like it was randomly added to over time by a ever changing group of people and not well thought out. This is the hardest to categorize because there are not that many common themes (which is why I gave up after two tries; it literally hurt my head)...this area of the website, which actually describes what we are, needs the most attention. It is such a laundry list of things...if anything, it could be eliminated or consolidated if search was improved dramatically...Couldn't re If anything, combining this with the how to research or through ARC would make sense. How to do that, i have no idea.

Anonymous_30: I realize that my choices reflect pretty much the way these topics are currenly grouped on the NARA public web site, but I find that most of it makes sense--to me at least. I think the bigger problem is how to make all categories equally acessible to visitors.

Anonymous_40: 1. The items list does not contain 73 items. Only 18 2. Only one item seems out of place. All others can remain under the category of Historical Topics. The card that looks out of place is "Federal Laws and Regulations." If this is a topic with content in it about all federal laws and regulations, and not just those related to NARA, then this one stays as a historical topic.

Historical Topics-Public

Anonymous_3: I am having reservations re the premise that NARA's holdings can or should be be grouped by subject - historical topics if you will. First, it appeals to the lowest common denominator e.g. "dummying down" history, and second, users may be beguiled into thinking that having consulted these they have actually performed exhaustive historical research.

Anonymous_6: This was a lot of FUN!!! Some of it I wanted to make sub-categories with, and I imagine you will with links to new pages and such. Such as I listed all the wars under Military History, but I would want then to take my Revolutionary War, World War II categories and link them to the broad list. Just as one does historical research by starting off with a broad topic and narrowing down, so would I expect the National Archives website to work...After all, the primary usership will be those interested in history. It would be best to parallel the experience of research. Yet, it is also good to appeal to the general public and I think it would be kind of neat to have a formal page, but perhaps a page highlighting all of the really cool historical topics which don't come up so often. Kind of like Google's "I'm Feeling Lucky" search button. It could be a place where new ways of looking at history would be located. This is why I created such categories like America's Historical Trends or Illegal History...they are broad and just a bunch of neat stuff could fall under them. For historical interest to grow, I think at first it needs to be engaging and fun. This would give the opportunity.

Anonymous_8: Many of these need to be cross-referenced/linked, e.g. I put Social Security Records in a Records category, but they also need to be linked from the 1930s. Same with Military: the Mexican War, Civil War etc. belong both in their relative time period and in the Military category.

Anonymous_19: The entire section I have called "Records Created Because of War" should also be an item in the "Major Genealogical Sources" list also.

Anonymous_20: Had no idea what was even meant by the category of federal civilian employees--information about them? Information for them? Could this fall into genealogy or of general interest?

Records Management-Government

Anonymous_6: In the Federal Records Storage Facility Standards category, add two more cards: The 36 CFR 1234 Standards and Facility Standards for Records Storage Facilities Inspection Checklist. In the General Records Schedule category, the card says "Index of . . . ". That category should also include the

actual text of each GRS. Include a category entitled NARA Federal Records Centers and with one card which would be a link to the FRC homepage.

Anonymous_11: I would put Contacts up at the top right - couldn't get the tool to do it

Anonymous_34: I have the hardest time finding RM policy on the current web site.

Records Management-NARA

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Research-NARA

Anonymous_24: "documents listed by format" is a bit unclear. Is that ARC or AAD? Also, a mini tutorial (preferably using camtasia or other animated presentation software) showing the process that a researcher expects to experience when performing research at the archives would be incredibly helpful. Not knowing what to expect when you walk into the archive can cause a lot of anxiety.

Anonymous_34: It would have been good to have categories pertaining to NARA's regions.

Anonymous_36: Need an Education Area....

Anonymous_48: The "Order Online" and Microfilm being together is ridiculous. To see which places have a microfilm, you basically have to pretend like you are going to buy it. Make it more of an actual catalog. Heck, integrate it within ARC and make ARC better. Search for microfilm through it as a part. Having to go out and do another search through ARC for digital copies is also ridiculous. Digital Copies should come up first, be commentable, annotatable, etc, especially if NARA is only doing minimal processing. Need to really integrate Education and Research so that it is more seamless. Educators/Students should really be able to go from the Education pages to these pages without having to get a 2 page how to search in ARC. If you need two pages to explain about searching in ARC, it is too difficult for 99% of people.

Anonymous_50: I probably have arranged it pretty much the same way it currently is arranged. Clearly thought-out linking (and please avoid circular links!) is a great help in navigating.

Anonymous_51: Starting Historical Research and Tools to Use

Anonymous_54: 1. see same category in card sort for sitewide - should some of the categories on the sitewide card sort be moved to this one, or vice versa? Are we overlapping categories across the pages? 2. What's new. But how new is new? Will it go here and in the "Find stuff link" so that it's integrated with all the "stuff" 3. Resources to aid in research - from getting copies, to obtaining secondary source material about the primary source material. Possibly move obtaining copies of records to the "Find stuff" category since finding stuff and wanting copies are sequential and related tasks. (Question - is "how to get started doing research..." generic or only focused on Archives I and Archives II? 4. Should news go into the sitewide category that contains news, press releases, etc? 5. Can this also be on the sitewide category of "who are you and what do you want to do?" 6. In addition to "information on presidential Libraries..." under resources, can the cross archives.gov search be added to the "Find stuff at the National Archives?"

Research-Public

Anonymous_3: Another category that would be helpful-links to other institutions holding documents that pertain to the subject being rsearched. For example-lighthouse logbooks. At least one set of logbooks I know, the earlier set is held at the Bowling Green University. The later set at NARA D.C. If a researcher could leave a comment or link to the material(perhaps as it is done on facebook), it would be very helpful to other researchers). As it is now, for first time visitors to the NARA site there is an over-whelming amount of information. Navigation is very difficult. The staff are very helpful. Also an email address box to the appropriate department for further questions on the main page would really be helpful. Good title: Still Have A Question? Then under that title have the appropriate department listed, just click on the department and the appropriate email box pops up. Thanks for you dedicated work.

Anonymous_4: When did the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) become the National Archives ? It is a distinction with a difference. You need to distinguish between NARA the agency, and the National Archives, which are the records of enduring value of the Federal Government and which are held by NARA. Once you've sorted this out the proper citation fto Guide (see Publications above) and the misguided reference to National Archives' "collections" should sort themselves out.

Anonymous_8: Re: my "useless to me" category: I'm interested in the subject of the document, not their format. Although the format is nice to know, it's not a major category for me in trying to find what I'm looking for.

Site Wide-Government

Anonymous_5: some of these items should be in sub-menus or left out

Anonymous_9: Publications would only be included as online resources if they are available electronically

Anonymous_48: Wow, not enough categories.

Site Wide-NARA

Anonymous_6: I have placed FOIA information under "Research", but it should probably also be accessible via the "Information Security" and "Business" categories...Also, "Business" is not the best term, but is meant to represent something to do with legal issues, transparency and openess...

Anonymous_12: too long, difficult to read and see all items at once to better group/evaluate. I became so frustrated with this that I don't wish to continue with the exercise

Anonymous_14: Educational Resources should link all NARA ed resources across the libraries and regions. While I understand the Boiing Learning center is foundation run, and a distinct operation, all education should appear seemless to the public.

Anonymous_23: Would have liked to duplicate some of the sites to go multiple places

Anonymous_51: --I would not group the order forms, grant application forms, and employment application forms together. I would place each one separately in the category it belongs with ("Employment" or "Order Online" or "Grants") --It is not clear what is meant by "resources for federal employees" so it is impossible to put it into a category

Anonymous_55: Hard to tell by these titles what the interior pages actually are. Its odd to see something like World War II being considered the same level of category as Contemporary African Art and

Anonymous_69: Need to integrate Education better into the pages as a whole. Based on WebTrends, a significant portion of web traffic to Archives.gov goes to the Education pages (archives.gov/education). Across the agency, that is one of our biggest online customers. Incorporating them as a major audience would increase numbers. As a former teacher, I really only went to the Education page cause it had lessons and the documents were easily there. I never went to ARC, etc because when I did a search, I would just get descriptions and no digital copies for 99% of my searches. The calendar and the regional locations need to be more easily at the top of the page. They don't get anywhere near the right amount of hits. Our national network of locations is one of our main strengths as an agency, esp to educators, genealogists, etc. Plus, the fact that both search and navigation are or main weaknesses. (Did the survey differentiate between searching around the site using the upper right and searching for records using ARC?) Main Constituencies: Researchers, Educators, Genealogy, Veterans, Records Managers/Government. Does legal counsel need to be at the top level of organization? Grant forms with Grants; Employment forms with Employment. Other forms where they belong. Why have a page of just forms.

Anonymous_74: Too many cards. Part of the problem is forcing users to make choices among too many options.

Anonymous_75: Used some of the same categories currently used, but I realize that I should have probably broken the topic down into smaller groups.

Anonymous_76: Did not understadn how to combine objects into categories. Starting over.

Anonymous_77: Add "blogs" in the Social Networking card that ends in Twitter, etc. Insert "blogs" between Twitter and etc. N's blog should be first seen. This becomes difficult because it isn't clear what may be behind some of the cards and I'll need more time (beyond April 16) to do justice to this task. How about after the initial card sorts are done, convene a review panel that I'd like to be part of to spend whatever time is necessary to hash out the best course of action. Rick Blondo

Anonymous_86: Collection of useful forms should be split up so that the forms for a particular activity are with the appropriate subject. I.e., order forms for copies of records are with research/getting copies; employment is with "About Us"

Anonymous_93: I would like to see the microfilm catalog link in the "Our Historical Records" section I think the Finding Aids should all be on one page. there only seems to be one on this list. I would like to see all of the educational materials at least linked on one page (NW, NR, NL)

Anonymous_94: 1. "Find stuff" pulls together groups that offer primary sources or information about primary sources in one location. 2. "Separate into..." is where I placed groupings that don't have much meaning on their own if we're thinking of task-based use of the site. Recommend putting FAQs, or info in the FAQs into the category that FAQ information pertains to. Same for forms - put the forms related to the task of the grouping (order forms with "find stuff...") 3. Can we contract out for a call center with a single 800 number? In addition, include in the contact us link (available on all pages through the SSI) pertinent conact information based on (a) geography of National Archives sites; (b) general topic of interest; (c) purpose of visit to the site; (d) how does the user categorize themselves and link the appropriate contact information to this self-categorization drop-down box. 4. "Who are you.." offers information about the agency based on who a visitor to the site is and what they want to accomplish. See notes on folding "conducting research" into this category. I included all the "resources for..." topics in this group as well. If we have a drop-down box that asks the user to select who they are (teacher) and what kind of "business" they want to conduct that day (find photos), possibly with a content management system, just those two elements of self-identification can consolidate into one area the buckets that might interest them. 5. Conducting research. Researchers aren't interested in only one branch of government. For example: government's story on The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 can only be understood if someone looks at Judicial records of desegregation suits; legislative records on developing the legislation, executive branch records, especially the FBI and DOJ and various commissions on civil rights issues (RG 220); and presidential library records. By shoehorning a user's web experience into our own organization (which makes sense in light of the laws and regulations governing the many things we do) we are forcing researchers to take a myopic view of

history, or, if they are sensitive to the interplay of all branches of government, to guarantee increasing how long it takes for them to make important connections in their research. 6.Visiting the National Archives. Combine the first two cards (nationwide network and DC facility and events) into one XML database from which a user can (a) plan a trip based on location information; (b) view events across the country related to a single topic (the recent lectures, exhibits, and commemorations of Apollo 11 landing on the moon); (c) view events by type of event (exhibit, symposia, lecture.... As we move toward broadcasting these over the internet, the geographical boundaries will be less important than the boundaries of subject or type of event - for example, I went from the Eisenhower Library to the Hoover Library. Each library just happened to be having exhibits on quilts. A visitor who heard me mention this got all excited, and then wondered why both exhibits weren't advertised in the same place. If these exhibits had an online component, it is all that much more important to offer people the chance to see and experience related events, either online or through planning a trip to see all 5 moon exhibits.) 7. Employment: tough category. If EEO stats are there for reporting purposes, this needs to go in a section on National Archives reports, initiatives, congressional testimony, etc. If EEO stats are here to inform current and potential employees about the diversity levels of the agency, then put it here. 8.Info about the organization: include cards for all offices, staffs of the agency. But split up the information currently stovepiped into NW (I think NW is represented by the majority of archives.gov, plus the events in the DC area), the NR site, and Presidential Libraries and group this content based on who a user is and what they want to accomplish. 9. "look at us and tell us..." features information about the National Archives (press releases, National Archives news, various initiatives, and possible commenting by the public on these initiatives. 10. "More places to explore..." actually, I didn't have a category for this one. How are the web sites related to the National Archives? If how they are related fits with task based site, then possibly split out the "related sites" to those pages where the "related" sites are related to that task. 11. Money. The cards say it all. Well, maybe publications should go in the who are you and what do you want to do category.

Site Wide-Public

Anonymous 1: I had trouble with Finding Aids & Records relating to WWII war crimes: too specific for these otherwise general categories. No other finding aids listed, why not? Difficulty with How to Comment on Draft Regulations & Policies - whose regulations? Items publicized in Federal Register? How do we indicate sub-categories in the card sort process? For example, I might put press kits and press releases together under a category called Press Information, but it would still be within my Basic Website Tabs set. Not sure how to show that, or whether that level of detail is desired.

Anonymous 2: I wish you had used an accessible interface. This interface is not accessible to blind or keyboard-only users. I had to get a coworker to help me do it. also, this interface doesn't let you put something in more than one place.

Anonymous_17: You might want to hire a professional taxonomist for this. Some of the cards were difficult to sort without some prior knowledge of the Archives. Also, the granularity of the different cards differs which also makes it difficult to sort, e.g, some items were broader, others were narrower.

Anonymous_28: Would have liked to put some in more than one category

Anonymous_40: For the category about research, I would break those topics down into subcategories. I wish this website would allow me to create an even more detailed heirarchy of what the website should look like.

Anonymous_41: This was difficult. Information overload. The front web page needs to immediately move visitors towrds their informational goal. But a line called "Information about the Washington DC facility, events, and holdings" encompasses just about the entire website and is not useful. Not sure of usefulness of "A Collection of Useful Forms." If a person is seeking employment, have a link to the employment form on the employment page. Grant form from grant info. page. By trying to put too many direct links on the "home page" you actully limit the new visitor's experience by making it disjointed and frustrating, rather than laying out clear directional paths.

Anonymous_54: need 1621 Georgetown, Va info; native American records; Civil War USCT pictures

Anonymous_57: Too much stuff. Make far fewer thing to start with: About US -- RESEARCH -- EXHIBITS -- ARCHIVES AND RECOrDS MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS -- GOV AGENCIES

Anonymous_61: Some of these items obviously fit into multiple categories--such as an exhibit on digital records, which I personally could have put into at least two different places.

Anonymous_63: General Research Resources could possibly be divided further, i.e., databases, resources, etc. However, if this will appear on the front page, then the groupings may make the most sense.

Anonymous_64: I don't know what "draft" regulations are, I put it under press because I figured it meant press comments.

Veterans-Government

Anonymous_3: The box "How to Request Replacement Medlas, Awards, and Decorations" is important enough to be on itself own.

Anonymous_7: FAQs lumped together aren't necessarily helpful

No comments were made in the following card sorts:

Genealogy-Government
Historical Topics-Government
Records Management-Public
Research-Government
Veterans-NARA
Veterans-Public