



NATIONAL
ARCHIVES

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Archivist's Task Force on Racism Town Hall

May 11, 2021

Agenda

- Welcome
- Opening Remarks from the Archivist of the United States
- Update on the Task Force on Racism
- Subgroups
 - Thought Process
 - Recommendations
- Q&A
- Closing

Opening Remarks



David S. Ferriero
Archivist of the United States

Update on the Task Force on Racism



Erica Pearson
Task Force Chair

Main Task Force Presenters

(b) (6)
(b) (6)

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(b) (6)



Main Task Force

Charged with making recommendations to the Archivist of the United States (AOTUS) related to matters concerning racism at the National Archives.

- Divided into three subgroups: Diversity & Inclusion, Employee Experience, and Race-Based Harassment.
- Explored Management Directive 715 (MD-715) to determine and address inequality at NARA.
- Met with NARA's subject matter experts (SMEs) to assist with the development of recommendations.
- Consulted scholarly articles, staff recommendations, and external anti-racism experts.



Main Task Force

Diversity & Inclusion

- Charged with examining diversity, inclusion, and equity at NARA relating to
 - Workplace culture
 - Recruitment and retention
 - NARA's interaction with customers
 - Transparency
- Key Themes
 - Lack of diversity in management and leadership positions
 - Recruitment of Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) for employment and internships
 - Limited awareness of histories and cultures of BIPOC
 - Resistance to the Task Force



Main Task Force

Employee Experience

- Charged with examining employees' challenges relating to
 - Recruitment and retention
 - Supervisor and management accountability
 - Hiring practices
 - Career development and advancement
- Key Themes
 - Transparency
 - Celebration of diversity
 - Low morale among BIPOC Staff



Main Task Force

Race-Based Harassment

- Charged with contextualizing staff's recommendations by researching NARA's statistical data on Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) racial harassment complaint cases for
 - Racial biases
 - Procedures for hiring staff
 - Equal opportunities for new and current NARA staff
- Key Themes
 - More interest in camaraderie
 - Desire for a safe space to express/address diversity issues and incidents
 - Interest in accountability and action



Main Task Force

Main Task Force Recommendations

- Rebrand the Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Program by Creating a Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (DEAI) Program
 - Enhance and provide support to the DEAI program
 - Evaluate if job, detail, and cross-training announcements at certain grade levels have been implemented as a restrictive barrier to professional development for all employees
- Create and Promote Education Opportunities to Raise Employee Awareness about EEO Complaint Process and RESOLVE Program
 - Create a small permanent task force
 - Create an environment with a direct supervisor or a third party to communicate racial harassment claims
- Audit and Reevaluate NARA's Hiring Practices and Policies for Bias, Unfairness, and Legality
 - Implement blind hiring procedures
 - Develop a strategy for recruitment and retention to ensure a more diverse staff on a senior level



Main Task Force

Main Task Force Recommendations (cont.)

- Evaluate the Performance Management System to Ensure that Prohibited Factors are not Considered, and Develop Guidance to Support Management
 - Evaluate performance plans for racial barriers
 - Provide supervisors and management with the resources needed to evaluate based on work performance and not on race and/or other discriminating factors
- Recruit and Retain BIPOC
 - Recruitment strategy that targets BIPOC candidates
 - Mentorship program for NARA employees
 - Develop internal career pathing tools
- Develop a Centralized Internship Program
 - Provide more internship opportunities across NARA
 - Recruit and bring awareness to students of diverse backgrounds
- Develop Training and Development Programs at NARA
 - Training for diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion
 - Training for career development and hiring practices

Museum Subgroup Presenters

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Museum Subgroup

“Not My Charters of Freedom”



Guests viewing documents in the Rotunda. Image from the National Archives [Giphy Channel](#).

Museum Subgroup

Our Process (key steps)

- Active listening
- ICN feedback/comments
- Focus groups
- Peer institutions
- Limited public comment review



Dr. George Washington Carver demonstrating a “process” in creating a crochet project. Image from the National Archives [Giphy Channel](#).



Museum Subgroup

Exhibits Recommendations

- Listen (to staff, to the public, to communities)
- Seek partnerships
- Present difficult history—but sensitively
- Fill gaps in the record
- “Reimagine the Rotunda”



National Archives Building in Washington, D.C. Image from the National Archives [Giphy Channel](#).



Museum Subgroup





Sharon Robinson, daughter of baseball player Jackie Robinson, discussing one of her books at the first Virtual Pajama Party in 2020. Image courtesy of the Museum Programs Division (LO).

Outreach and Partnership Recommendations

- Virtual presence for the long haul
- Strategic alliances
- Deliberate outreach to BIPOC communities
- Customer feedback tools

Museum Subgroup

Customer Experience

- NARA lacks customer data/information
- Research in order to avoid assumptions
- Seek external opinions
- Recognize stakeholder (customer) feedback is key in next steps



Residents from the local Guaymi Indian tribe wait patiently in line to sign up for a free medical exam during a Medical Readiness Training Exercise (MEDRETE) at Quebrada Guabo, Panama, on March 31, 2003, as part of New Horizons 03. National Archives Identifier [6678618](#).

Museum Subgroup

Additional Information and Resources



Manzanar Relocation Center, Manzanar, California. A barrack building has been turned into a library, 7/1/1942.

National Archives Identifier [538175](#).



Museum Subgroup



Image from "The March" (1963). Image from the National Archives [Giphy Channel](#).

Thank you!

Archival Description Subgroup Presenters

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Archival Description Subgroup

- **Approached recommendations from the viewpoint of the user's experience**
 - Examined:
 - Catalog for racist and harmful language in legacy descriptions
 - How the Lifecycle Data Requirements Guide (LCDRG) addresses this terminology
 - How NARA presents information to the public
- **Consulted with NARA staff and external experts**
 - NARA staff suggestions (Task Force call for comments, ICN, etc.)
 - NARA specialists in description work (DAS, the Catalog, and the LCDRG)
 - External institutions (e.g., Library and Archives Canada)
 - Professional literature and benchmarking
- **Addressed NARA staff concerns and questions**
 - Some suggestions/feedback fell outside the Archival Description Subgroups' (ADS) scope
 - Some staff were concerned that the ADS would suggest changing original records
 - NO, the ADS is **not** suggesting changing original material



Archival Description Subgroup

Recommendations:

- Develop an alert for online users regarding potentially harmful content in the NARA Catalog
- Review the list of racist and otherwise harmful terms identified in the Catalog
 - Create a road map for addressing them
 - Clarify creator-supplied titles as distinct from NARA-created titles

No. of Total Occurrences (TF)	No. of Total Occurrences (V)	Title Field (TF)	Title Field (V)	Scope & Content	Shot List	Public Contributions	OCR Digital Object Estimated Count	Other Fields
419	1,665	25	26	66	6	42	1,518	7
22,746	152,259	1,018	1,022	1,043	59	1,677	148,436	22

Screenshot of the ADS's Harmful Language Search Spreadsheet



Archival Description Subgroup

Recommendations (cont.):

- Develop processes to correct under-described and over-described records

The screenshot shows the National Archives Catalog interface for Harriet Tubman's authority record. The page title is "Tubman, Harriet, 1820?-1913 Person Authority Record". The record includes the following information:

- Person Name:** Tubman, Harriet, 1820?-1913
- Role(s):** Related to 4 catalog description(s), Contributor in 1 description(s), Subject in 3 description(s)
- Variant Name(s):** Tabman, Garriet, 1820?-1913; Tubman, Harriet Ross, 1815?-1913

The interface also features a search bar, navigation links (ARCHIVES.GOV, LOGIN, REGISTER, VETERANS' SERVICE RECORDS, HELP, API, CONTACT US), and a sidebar with tags (SIL!ppl/htub, wikidata=Q102870) and a comment section.

Screenshot of Harriet Tubman's Catalog authority record (NAID 10581353)

Archival Description Subgroup

NATIONAL ARCHIVES CATALOG
≡ MENU

ARCHIVES.GOV LOGIN REGISTER VETERANS' SERVICE RECORDS HELP API CONTACT US
About Us Privacy Policy Accessibility FOIA USA.gov

Advanced Search
Login Register

Share | Export

Tag
Add a tag...

Enter new tags... Add

Comment
Add a comment...

[Login](#) | [Policy](#) | [Need Help?](#)

Beau, Lucas V. (Lucas Victor), 1895-1986 Person Authority Record

Person Name: Beau, Lucas V. (Lucas Victor), 1895-1986

Role(s): Related to 3 catalog description(s)
Subject in 3 description(s)

Biographical Note: Lucas Victor Beau (1895-1986) was born in New York City. He served with the New York National Guard as a corporal on border patrol duty from June to December 1916. Appointed a flying cadet in August 1917, he entered the School of Military Aeronautics at Cornell University, and the following March became an instructor at Eberts Field, Arkansas. A month later he entered gunnery school at Wilbur Wright Field, Ohio, and in June 1918 was commissioned a temporary second lieutenant in the Air Service. Going to France that September, he served at St. Maxient, and later that month entered the Pursuit School at Issoudon, becoming a ferry pilot with the 3rd Aviation Instruction Center there in December 1918.

The following February General Beau was assigned at Mitchel Field, N.Y., served from March to November 1919 as recruiting officer and instructor at Hazelhurst Field, N.Y., and then returned to Mitchel Field. Commissioned a second lieutenant in the Air Service, Regular Army July 1, 1920, he was immediately promoted to first lieutenant. Assigned at Langley Field, Va., from May to October 1921, he then returned to Mitchel Field for duty with the First Observation Squadron. A year later he joined the Air Service Headquarters Detachment at Bolling Field, Washington D.C., becoming engineer and supply officer of the 18th Headquarters Squadron there in July 1924, and assuming command of it a year later.

Going to the Philippines in November 1926, General Beau was engineer officer at Kindley Field, joining the Second Observation Squadron there in March 1927. He became an instructor for the Colorado National Guard at Denver in July 1928 and entered the Air Corps Tactical School at Maxwell Field, Alabama, in August 1933, and graduated the following June. Joining the Fifth Composite Group at Luke Field, Hawaii, in October 1934 he assumed command of the 50th Observation Squadron there.

Screenshot of Lucas V. Beau's Catalog authority record (NAID 10679549)



Archival Description Subgroup

Recommendations (cont.):

- Develop processes to correct under-described and over-described records
 - Under-description:
 - Support augmented processing for records related to BIPOC
 - Focus future digitization efforts on records related to underrepresented communities
 - Over-description:
 - Reassess OurDocuments.gov, DocsTeach.org, and other online content for superlative, subjective language
 - Create and disseminate guidelines to staff that encourage discoverability without embellishing

www.ourdocuments.gov

DOCSTeach
The online tool for teaching with documents, from the National Archives

ARCHIVES.GOV



Archival Description Subgroup

Recommendations (cont.):

- Consult with members of marginalized communities
 - Develop and sustain relationships with communities to demonstrate our commitment
 - Provide language translation in the Catalog and other Archives.gov sites
- Improve the Catalog's basic technology and user interface for overall discoverability
- Develop a dedicated working group to implement these recommendations



Task Force Members

Main Task Force Members	Archival Description Subgroup Members	Museum Subgroup Members
<p>Erica Pearson, Director, Office of Equal Employment Opportunity (NEEO), Chair</p> <p>Ovnelle Millwood, Director of Workforce Strategy and Analysis (H), Co-chair</p> <p>Jena Cochran (ANDC), National Declassification Center</p> <p>Jametta Davis (ACO2), Oversight Team 2</p> <p>Michael Davis (SC), Communications and Marketing Division</p> <p>Gabrielle Hutchins (RR2A), Accessioning & Basic Processing Section</p> <p>Willie M. Johnson (AFOE-FW), Fort Worth Federal Records Center</p> <p>Tina L. Ligon (RR2R), Augmented Processing</p> <p>Ashney Randle (RRPO), Personnel Records Division</p> <p>Stephanie Sizemore (AFN-MC2), Military Reference Core 2</p> <p>Beverly Versey-Riley (AFN-MC2), Military Reference Core 2</p> <p>Ashley Young (AFN-MC2), Military Reference Core 2</p> <p>Jennifer Pollock (RR2R), Coordinator, Augmented Processing</p>	<p>Pamela Wright, Chief Innovation Officer (V), Chair</p> <p>Daniel Rooney, Director, Special Media Division (RRS), Co-chair</p> <p>Rose Buchanan (RR1R), Archives 1 Reference Branch</p> <p>Alex Champion (RR2A), Accessioning & Basic Processing Section</p> <p>Elise Fariello (RRFC), Field Records Division, Chicago</p> <p>Brittany Gerke (LP-WJC), William J. Clinton Library</p> <p>Daria Labinsky (LP-JC), Jimmy Carter Library</p> <p>Alexandra Lange (RRSS), Still Pictures Branch</p> <p>Katharine Seitz (RZA), Digitization Archival Services</p> <p>Crystal Gail Shurley (RRFE), Field Records Division, Seattle</p> <p>Kathleen Brown (VPA), Coordinator, Office of Innovation</p>	<p>Alan Price, Director, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum (LP-JFK), Chair</p> <p>Meredith Evans, Director, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library & Museum (LP-JC), Co-chair</p> <p>Catherine Brandsen (VH), Innovation Hub</p> <p>Netisha Currie (RR2RA), Augmented Processing</p> <p>Michael J. Hancock (RR2RM), A2 Pulls and Monitoring</p> <p>Alice Kamps (LO), Museum Programs Division</p> <p>Rachael MacAskill (LP-JFK), John F. Kennedy Library</p> <p>Amanda Melancon (LP-LBJ), Lyndon Baines Johnson Library</p> <p>Kimberlee Ried (LO), Museum Programs Division</p> <p>Ian Shepherd (LP-JFK), John F. Kennedy Library</p> <p>Sabrina Suggs (SE), Coordinator, Special Events</p>

Questions



Closing

