

Archivist's Task Force on Racism Town Hall



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. FerrieroArchivist of the United States



Update on the Task Force on Racism



Erica Pearson Task Force Chair



Main Task Force Presenters





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.



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



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



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 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
 - O Develop a strategy for recruitment and retention to ensure a more diverse staff on a senior level

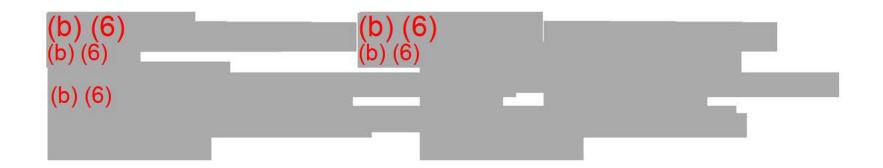


Main Task Force Recommendations (cont.)

- 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





"Not My Charters of Freedom"



Guests viewing documents in the Rotunda. Image from the National Archives Giphy Channel.



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.



Exhibits Recommendations

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



National Archives Building in Washington, D.C. Image from the National Archives Giphy Channel.











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



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.



Additional Information and Resources



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

National Archives Identifier <u>538175</u>.



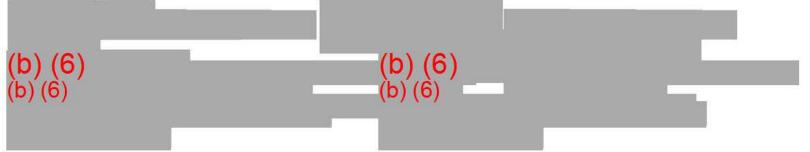


Thank you!

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



Archival Description Subgroup Presenters





- 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 <u>not</u> suggesting changing original material



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



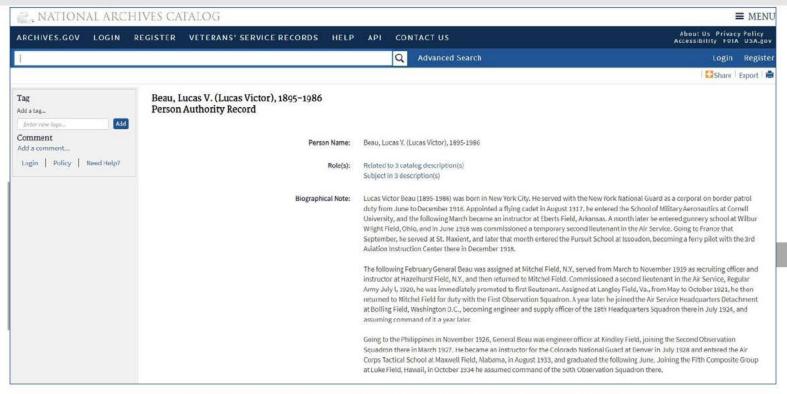
Recommendations (cont.):

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



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





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



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





ARCHIVES.GOV



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
Erica Pearson, Director, Office of Equal Employment Opportunity (NEEO), Chair Ovnelle Millwood, Director of Workforce Strategy and Analysis (H), Co-chair Jena Cochrane (ANDC), National Declassification Center Jametta Davis (ACO2), Oversight Team 2 Michael Davis (SC), Communications and Marketing Division Gabrielle Hutchins (RR2A), Accessioning & Basic	Pamela Wright, Chief Innovation Officer (V), Chair Daniel Rooney, Director, Special Media Division (RRS), Co-chair Rose Buchanan (RR1R), Archives 1 Reference Branch Alex Champion (RR2A), Accessioning & Basic Processing Section Elise Fariello (RRFC), Field Records Division, Chicago	Alan Price, Director, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum (LP-JFK), Chair Meredith Evans, Director, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library & Museum (LP-JC), Co-chair Catherine Brandsen (VH), Innovation Hub Netisha Currie (RR2RA), Augmented Processing Michael J. Hancock (RR2RM), A2 Pulls and
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Questions





Closing

