

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES ^{AT} RIVERSIDE



Selecting a
Research Topic

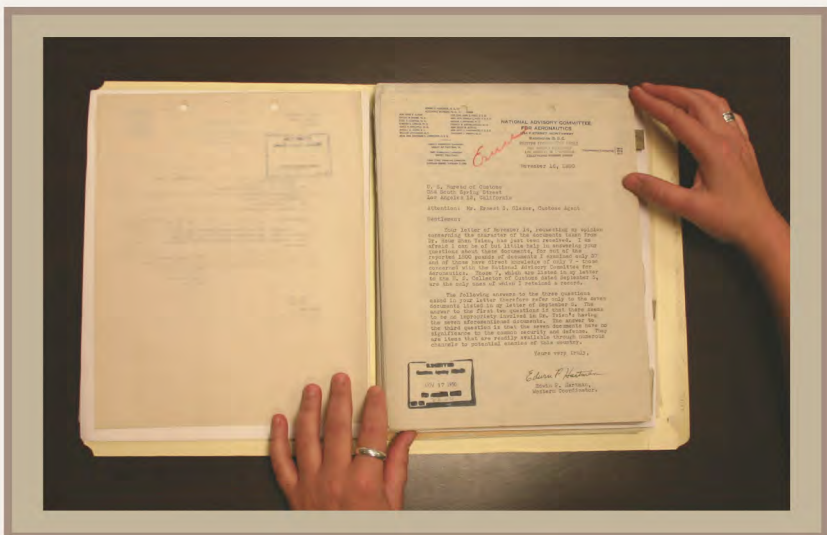
Welcome *to the National Archives*

Do you need a research topic? The National Archives at Riverside has over 60,000 feet of primary source material created or collected by federal agencies in southern California, Arizona and Clark County, Nevada. These records, which date from the 1850s to the 2000s, are unique - they do not exist elsewhere in their original form.

Our research facility can provide you the chance to examine real historical records on significant national and local topics, federal programs and individual experiences spanning more than 150 years of American history.

We have experienced and knowledgeable archivists who work with students and seasoned scholars to help find materials to support their research.

In this pamphlet, we will share information about what an archives is, where to begin your research, and provide you with some sample research topics from our holdings.



All About *primary sources*

Archives exist to preserve historic materials and to make them available for use. The National Archives was created to preserve records of continuing value for federal government operations as well as those which protect both public and private rights. Our primary sources provide research value for anyone with an interest in the history, social, economic or political history of our country.

We're not a library!

The National Archives at Riverside is an archival repository, which means that we hold unique, primary source materials. Our records cannot be checked out or loaned, and they cannot be replaced. People generally visit us on-site to do their research, though some records may be available online.

Different archives collect different things. It is important to know the archives' focus. The National Archives' focus is the history of the federal government.



Our oldest record dates from 1789, early in the history of the United States. It documents the lands granted to Torivio de Otero by the Spanish King. The records about the Otero's rancho near Tubac, Arizona, document early Spanish settlement in this country and the eventual challenges to those land rights by the United States beginning in the 1850s.

Archives *finding aids*



Examples of archival materials can include: manuscripts, letters, photographs, artwork, moving images and sound recordings, and artifacts. When the records were created at the time of an historical event, they are referred to as primary sources.

How can you find out what we have?

Archival repositories often describe their collections, in online catalogs, like the National Archives' Online Public Access (OPA) catalog, and in finding aids. Finding aids are specialized documents which provide descriptions of the contents of a collection. They can include the history of the creator or collector, the size of the collection and listings of the files in each box. Finding aids can be found online, through sites like the Online Archive of California (OAC), or may only be available by contacting the repository.

If you have never done archival research, let us introduce you to the treasure trove that original research can offer.

the basics Research *where do I start?*

If you have never done research, the thought of visiting the archives may seem intimidating. You may have been told you need to get primary sources, but you really don't know where to start. Let us help you understand the process to locate archival materials.

Where do I begin?

Start with secondary and tertiary sources. Reading textbooks or collections of historical essays can be a quick and easy way to decide what topic interests you. Choose a topic that excites you. You will be spending quite a bit of time with it!

Work with a reference librarian to locate scholarly journals and books about your topic. These contain citations and bibliographies created by the author, listing all of the primary and secondary resources they consulted. Write those citations down, and follow them! Check out those books and journals, and contact those archives.

Look for primary resources or archival collection finding aids which relate to your topic. You can find them on collaborative websites, such as the Online Archive of California (OAC) or Arizona Archives Online (AAO). Archival repositories often post their finding aids, or images of their materials, on these sites for researchers to use. Write down the contact information for those repositories and contact them!



Once you are ready, contact the repository and speak with an archivist. You can learn more about the collection, and other related materials they may hold. Give the archivist as much information as you can to help them find materials for you.

Get to know your archivist!

Remember, archivists know a lot about their records. Together, you may uncover materials that have not been used by other researchers! Archivists can be excellent partners on your research journey.

If you are still stuck, talk to archivists about their collections. There are always unexplored topics in every archival repository. You can follow and analyze well-worn paths through the written record or blaze your own path with the assistance of an archivist.

Come and talk to us, there are millions of pages just waiting for you at the National Archives. Yours could be the next great discovery!

Native *culture* *religion*

The Mission Indian Federation



In 1919, California Indians from over 30 different reservations met to form the Mission Indian Federation. They agitated for Indian self-rule on local reservations. The records document friction between the Federation and representatives of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, resulting in the indictment of 57 Federation members in 1921 for alienating Indians from the government.

The Native American story did not end with American settlement of the west. Our records document the stories of over 50 Native American groups in southern California and Arizona throughout the 20th Century. The stories of individual Indians, Indian agents, tribal leaders and non-Indian activists are all documented here. Stories of how people obtained American citizenship and struggled for the right to vote; developed the economies of their reservations; worked against disease and poverty; served in the military and eventually created their own tribal governments can be found here.

SAMPLE TOPICS

Westward Settlement & Conflict: The Camp Grant Massacre

The Indian New Deal: The Wheeler-Howard Bill

Assimilating Indian Women through Domestic Employment

Indian Relocation: The Employment Assistance Program

Native American Autonomy: The Mission Indian Federation

Oil & Greed: Jackson Barnett, the World's Richest Indian

Working for the Government: Apache Indian Scouts

American *history*

From government paternalism to the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, the changes in government policies and the responses of Native American communities are documented here. From the Relocation Program of the 1940s and 1950s to self-determination in the 1960s, individual stories are documented here. Our records document local Native peoples' history and culture; seen through the prism of the Bureau of Indian Affairs' constant attempts to Americanize them. Here the researcher can witness the resilience of these determined peoples. The records are exciting, diverse and waiting to be used.

Indian Boarding Schools

The original goal of Indian education was to assimilate Native Americans into American society. Many children were forced to attend schools far away from their family. Their hair was cut, their traditional clothes were replaced with American style clothing and their native language and religion was banned.



SAMPLE TOPICS

Indians in the Depression: The CCC-Indian Division

The Navajo Code Talkers in World War II

Struggles Over Indian Religion: Silas John Edwards & the BIA

The Development of Indian Arts & Crafts

Indian Employment During the Depression

Phoenix and Sherman, the Boarding School Experience

Enforcement of the Major Crimes Act of 1885

Our *speech* Rights *religion*

Freedom of Speech at Brawley High



In 1969, Chicano students returned from a Chicano Student Conference at San Diego State University. Excited by the conference, they returned to school wearing these pins. The school demanded they remove them. The students filed a lawsuit in Federal court claiming the school district violated their civil rights.

In America, grievances against the government are addressed in the courts. The U.S. federal courts are where Americans bring their concerns over violations of their Constitutional rights. Our records document citizens' complaints and concerns over violations of the freedoms of speech and religion. They also document the Government's role in restricting those rights and censoring speech. In the post-WWII years, public schools, parks and swimming pools became the front lines of the battle to end desegregation. Those struggles are documented here.

SAMPLE TOPICS

Desegregation of Public Schools, including *Mendez v. Westminster*
Violations of the Espionage Act of 1917

The Freedom to be Silent - The Hollywood 10 and the Blacklist
Conscientious Objectors during the Vietnam War

Freedom of Speech in the U.S. Mail

Freedom of Religion: The Use of Sacramental Wine during Prohibition

Cold War *red scare* *space race*

The X-1: Breaking the Sound Barrier



The Bell X-1 aircraft was the first to break the sound barrier in 1947 under the control of legendary pilot Chuck Yeager. The project was a clear example of the cooperative union between U.S. military needs, industrial capabilities, and research facilities in post-war America.

Following the Second World War, the United States entered a period of unparalleled economic growth. Much of the individual prosperity came as a result of the expanding military-industrial complex. Federal government involvement in research and development reached a new high as the military sought new and improved equipment and weapons. The government was involved in scientific research through NASA and the space program. And at the core of the Cold War period lay the ever-present fear of the expanding red menace within our midst. The issues of the Cold War permeate many of our records.

SAMPLE TOPICS

The Smith Act: Prosecuting Communists in Los Angeles

The Building and Flight of the Spruce Goose

The A-Bomb in the Pacific: Testing in the Atolls

Astronaut Training in Arizona

NASA and the Aerospace Industry: Building Military Aircraft

The Navajo Army Depot

service World War II *homefront*

Japanese Removal from Terminal Island



In the 1930s, Terminal Island was busy with fishermen, cannaries and the U.S. Navy. A small fishing village, known as "Little Tokio," had grown on the island. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Japanese men were arrested and taken to a detention center in Los Angeles. By February 1942, their families were removed and the Navy seized the remaining private property on the island.

The War had an incredible impact on communities throughout our area. The Japanese community was relocated, the U.S. Navy became a driving force and industry re-tooled to support the war effort. Individual lives were affected in so many ways. These topics are just a small sampling of what is available.

SAMPLE TOPICS

Civilian Defense: Protecting our Local Communities

Japanese Removal, Expatriation and Repatriation

The Zoot Suit Riots

Treason: The United States v. Tomoya Kawakita

Women in the Military: WAVES and WACS in WWII

Japanese-American Draft Resistance at Poston

the great Depression *struggle*

The Los Angeles Needletrades Strike

Costureras! **preparaos para la** **HUELGA GENERAL**

Diferencia de hacer todo cuanto este de nuestro poder, para obtener de sus dueños sus verdaderos derechos.

La huelga general es la única manera de vencer a la burguesía general, es decir, a toda la clase que nos da la vida y nos la quita y a la vez nos la quita.

— en huelga general se gana más que en huelga parcial —

El reconocimiento de la unión,

Por la abolición de los "sweat shops",

Por 35 horas a la semana,

Por el derecho al trabajo,

Para abolir el tiempo extra,

Por mayores sueldos de acuerdo con

costo para la industria del vestido.

Preparamos a vencer a todos los patronos

en la huelga general para la

Internat'l Ladies Garment Workers Union

116-17 West 9th Street

In 1933 and 1934, the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) was involved in a large strike of needle trade workers in Los Angeles. They published bilingual materials to attract Mexican and Mexican-American workers to their cause. They gained strong support in the Mexican community, especially among the women workers. The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) became involved as they mediated the strike, working to bring the workers and factory owners together.

The Great Depression saw a large increase in the amount of federal government involvement in the lives of individual Americans including farmers, business owners and workers. Public works projects, price controls and Prohibition were a few ways that Uncle Sam made his presence felt.

SAMPLE TOPICS

The Farmers Home Administration and the Farm Loan Program
Creating a Monopoly: Citrus Regulations during the Depression
Farm Workers in the Imperial Valley
Enforcement of Prohibition
They Control the Price: The Office of Price Administration
If You Build It: The Bureau of Public Roads in the National Parks
The Civilian Conservation Corps in Arizona

Our *natural beauty* Resources *land & water*

Controlling the Los Angeles River



In 1938, a massive flood devastated the Los Angeles and Orange County. Locals demanded that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers develop a solution. The Army Corps eagerly pursued flood control along the Los Angeles River. The resulting system of dams, spillways and concrete channels is how most Americans recognize the river today.

The federal government has been involved in the management of natural resources throughout the history of the United States' presence in the American west. The U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service were created to preserve and exploit our natural resources for the common good. The Bureau of Land Management for managing the use of public lands by homesteaders and miners. The Army Corps of Engineers played a prominent role in flood control and the development of local harbors.

SAMPLE TOPICS

Conflicting Promises: Mexican & Spanish Land Grants in Arizona
Snowbowl and Big Bear: Recreational Spaces in the National Forests
The Development of Scenic Tourism in the National Parks
Individuals and the Homestead Act
Harbor Development in Southern California
Native American Water Rights
Arizona v. California: The Fight for the Colorado River

Intersections

religious • cultural
national & political

Ricardo Flores Magón & the Mexican Revolution

At the beginning of the 20th Century, a group of revolutionaries from Mexico, living in the United States, recruited fighters to join the movement against the government of Porfirio Díaz in Mexico. One was anarchist, Ricardo Flores Magón. Flores Magón and his followers were arrested and prosecuted by the American government for neutrality violations.



The history of the United States is one of intersections of cultures, faiths and ideas. Inevitably, where these intersect, conflict results. Ideas such as anarchism and polygamy came into legal conflict with the federal government, often resulting in prosecution of individual adherents. Our records document the intersections between individuals and the government. They document cultural misunderstanding and struggles between radical ideas and the mainstream.

SAMPLE TOPICS

Soil Conservation or Theft: Navajo Stock Reduction

Labor v. Industry: The Bisbee Deportations

In Their Own Words: Braceros and Their Families

The United States vs. the "I Am" Ascended Master Religious Activity

Religious Freedom: Polygamy on Trial

The Los Angeles Times Bombing

The Catholic Church & Violations of Neutrality in the Cristero War

diversity Immigration *a new life*

Immigration has long been a part of the American national story. At the National Archives at Riverside we hold records which document the immigration and naturalization of groups from around the world who have settled in southern California, Arizona and near Las Vegas, Nevada. Some immigrant groups met with intense resistance from Americans, which, in some cases, was formalized in immigration law.

Individuals & the Chinese Exclusion Acts

In 1882, Congress passed the first of the Acts which severely limited the immigration of Chinese nationals. Only select classes of people were exempt from the restrictions of the law. Thousands of people were affected by these laws until they were repealed in 1943 when China became America's ally during World War II.



SAMPLE TOPICS

**Denaturalizing White Russia's General Nicholas Bogomoletz
China and The Chinese Exclusion Acts
Anti-Chinese Sentiment in the Mexican State of Sonora
World War II's Enemy Aliens: Italian Immigrants
Enemy Aliens in Two Wars: German Immigrants
Hollywood's Exiles: German Jews in the Film Industry
American Citizen Detained: Gaetano Territo v. United States**

& Citizenship

becoming American

Women & The Expatriation Act of 1907



American women who married foreign-born men in the early 20th Century lost their citizenship as a result. Congress wanted to limit the political influence of European aristocrats who were marrying daughters of wealthy American businessmen. Instead, women whose husbands were farmers, shopkeepers, and mechanics found themselves without the rights of American citizenship.

The Chinese, and other immigrants from Asia were banned from immigrating or becoming American citizens from 1885-1943. For a time, American women lost their citizenship when they married immigrants. Our records document the reasons that immigrants were not granted citizenship, or lost it altogether.

SAMPLE TOPICS

Smuggling Chinese Across the Mexican Border

High Caste Hindus and the Fight for American Citizenship

Communists, Anarchists and Beggars: Contested Naturalization

Denaturalizing the German-American Bund

Anna May Wong: Hollywood's Chinese Movie Star

World War II's Enemy Aliens: Japanese Immigrants

Contact Us

for more information



For more information about potential topics or
to begin your research at the
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