# How to Access the 1940 Census
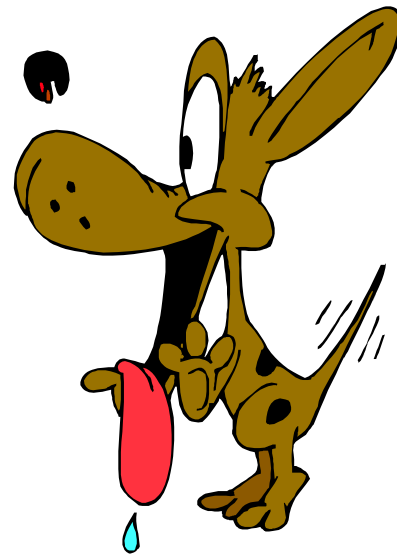
Louisiana Division

New Orleans Public Library

Presented at the Main Library, April 13, 2012
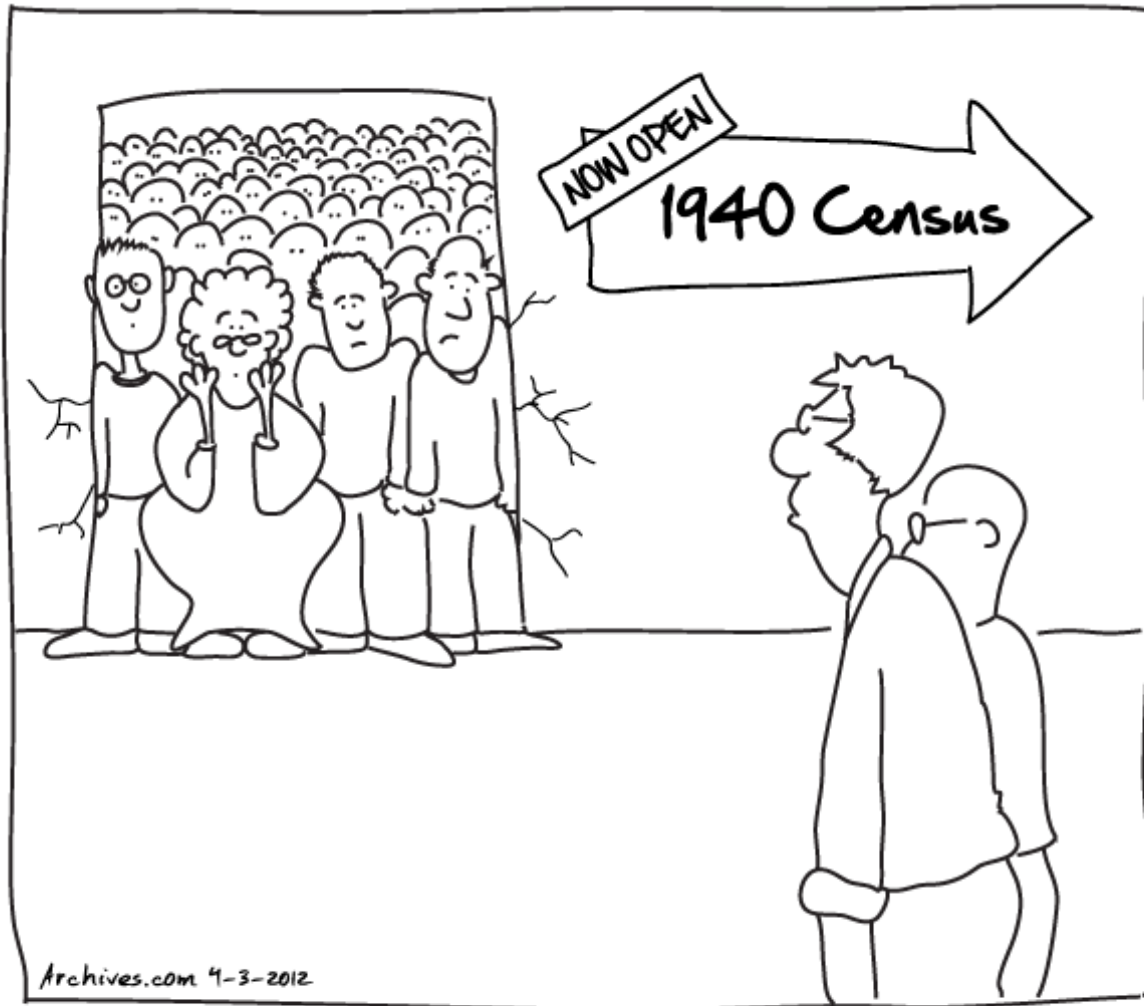
**NEW ORLEANS PUBLIC LIBRARY**

SPEAKING VOLUMES

# Are we excited?

- First census to be released digitally
- Digital images made from microfilm
- Savings of $11,500 to NOPL!
- Released initially on April 2 by the National Archives, in conjunction with Archives.com, at 1940census.archives.gov
- Day 1: the site got 22.5 million hits in the first 3 hours and averaged 100,000+ requests per minute during the day
- Day 2: the site got 40.1 million hits during a peak 3-hour period and averaged 200,000+ requests per minute during the day
- There were 1000+ news articles written on day 1 and it was the #1 topic trending on Twitter

# The first few days did not go particularly well . . .



"..we're gonna need a bigger door.."

## FREE

**NARA**
1940census.archives.com
Archives.com

**FamilySearch.org**

**MyHeritage.com**
Or FamilyLink.com
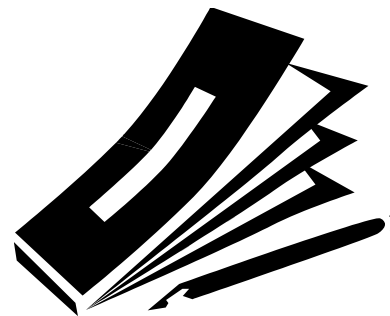
**FindMyPast.com**

## PAY

Ancestry.com

But free of charge at any NOPL facility

**The images are now available at a number of free sites and all is working much more smoothly.**

# What's new in 1940?

- Informant is identified (circled x next to name)

- What was household income for 12 months ending December 31, 1939?

- If born in a foreign country, what were the borders of that country on January 1, 1937?

- What was the place of residence on April 1, 1935?

- Did individual work for CCC, WPA or NYA the week of March 24-30, 1940?

- Supplemental questions for two households (5% sample) on each page

- Separate pages for people living in a hotel tourist home, or trailer Counted on April 8th and 9th. Their census information begins on page 81A for each enumeration district.

- The 1940 census includes territorial censuses for Alaska, American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, Panama Canal, Puerto Rico, and American Virgin Islands.

**You can find a list of all questions asked at**
**1940census.archives.gov/questions-asked/**

# But There's No Index Yet!



You can join the indexing effort sponsored by NARA, FamilySearch, FindMy Past and Archives.com

Go to
**the1940census.com**
for more information

Several states are already indexed at Ancestry.com

# What's an "ED" and why should you care?

- Without name indexing, you must know where someone lived in 1940 to find them in the census

- The census is arranged by state > county/parish > town/city (sometimes) > enumeration district

- "Enumeration District" (ED) is an area determined for the purposes of the census covered by one enumerator (or census taker). There are often many enumeration districts within a city or county.

- The size of a district was determined roughly by the number of households an enumerator could reasonably visit within a 3-week period.

- Enumerators were not obliged to visit households in any set order

# Find Out Where They Lived

- *City Directories* and *Telephone Books* (Available at NOPL for New Orleans and its suburbs)

- *Voter Registration Records* (Available at NOPL for New Orleans)

- The *1930 Census* (Useful to locate people who stayed put)

- Items that you might have at home: photographs, yearbooks, envelopes, newspaper clippings, military papers

- *Ask relatives* who might remember

# Identify the ED (the Easy Way)

**Use the search utility developed by**

**Stephen P. Morse, PhD  &  Joel D. Weintraub, PhD**

**www.stevemorse.org/census/unified.html**

**This tool allows you to start with an address and end up with the enumeration district that you need to search.**
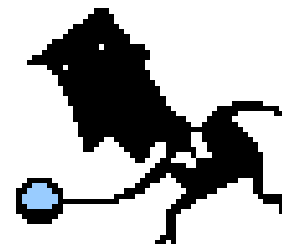
**Let's try it!**

# Cities included

- Shreveport
- Lake Charles
- Baton Rouge
- New Iberia
- Lafayette
- Bastrop
- Monroe
- Alexandria
- Morgan City
- Hammond
- Houma

# Identify the ED (the Hard Way)

**Use the ED maps put online at the National Archives' site**

- Go to the National Archives' Online Public Access search (OPA) **www.archives.gov/research/search**

- Enter "1940 census maps + the county + the state"

  (**1940 census maps Orleans Louisiana**)

- You can narrow the search by including a town in the string:

  (**1940 census maps Jefferson Kenner Louisiana**)

## Let's try it!

# The real "fun" begins . . .

- Once you've determined which ED (or Eds) your family lived in, go to one of the websites providing the images
- Follow the instructions on the page to retrieve the first image of the relevant ED
- Begin looking, page by page

## Right now, there is no easier way

# WHICH WEBSITE SHOULD YOU USE?

## NATIONAL ARCHIVES

[1940census.archives.gov](1940census.archives.gov)

- [ ] FREE
- [ ] Get ED first
- [ ] Download image to view or print
- [ ] Archives.com is the "official host" of the 1940 census, sanctioned by NARA

  [www.archives.com](www.archives.com)

## FamilySearch

[www.familysearch.org](www.familysearch.org)

- [ ] FREE
- [ ] Get ED first
- [ ] Viewer works well
- [ ] Download image to print
- [ ] Partnering with NARA to index the census, using volunteers

# My Heritage

www.myheritage.com

☐ FREE

☐ Search provides link to Steve Morse utility

☐ Image browser is a bit slow

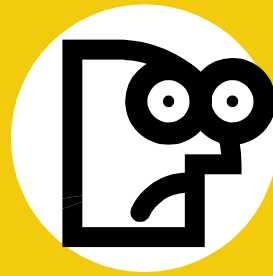☐ Printing works well enough

# Family Link

www.familylink.com

☐ FREE but requires registration

☐ Skip Registration by clicking on "View All Collections" & finding link to the 1940 census on the right

☐ Image browser and printing work well

# Ancestry.com

## (or Ancestry Library Edition)

NOT FREE
Unless you use it in any NOPL facility

Indexing independently

Get ED first

Browser and printing work very well

It's QUESTION TIME !!