

Let's look at Document B – Draft Registration

1

Original, Derivative or Authored?

2

When Was the Record Created?

3

Who Provided the Information?

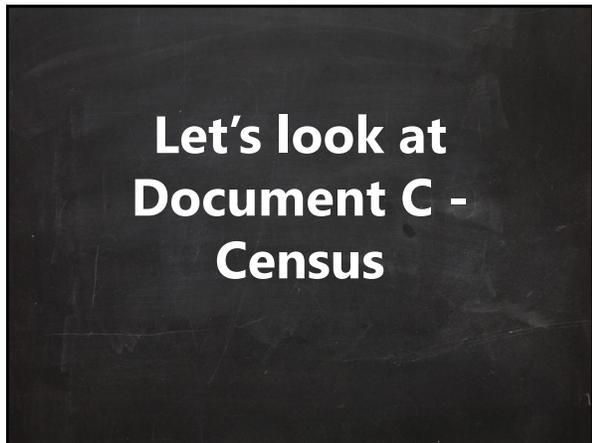
4

What Genealogical Information Is In the Record?

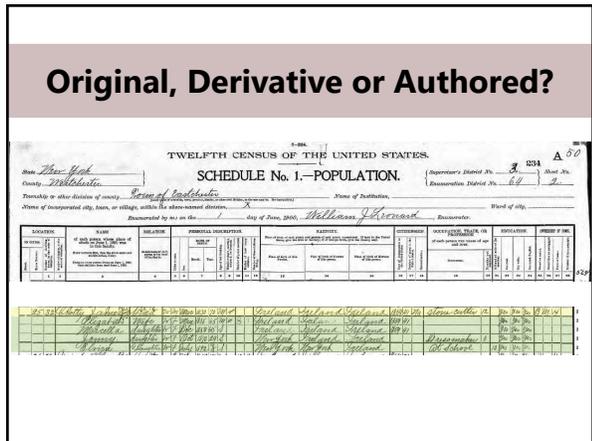
5

Information Primary, Secondary, Unknown?

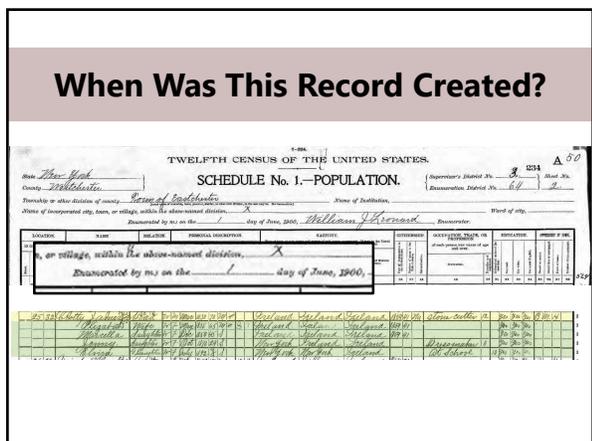
6



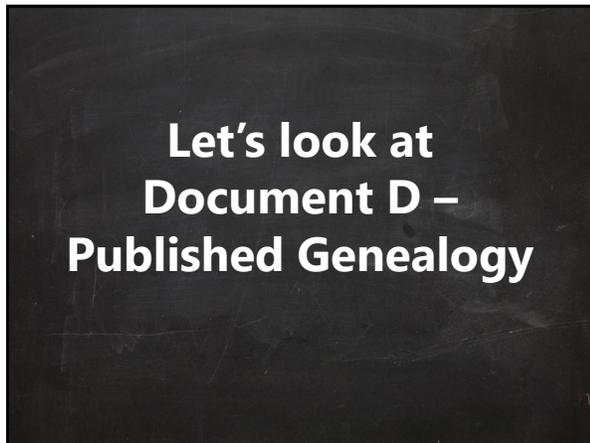
7



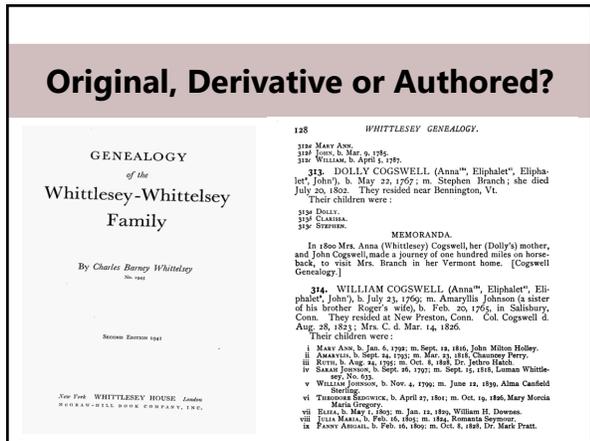
8



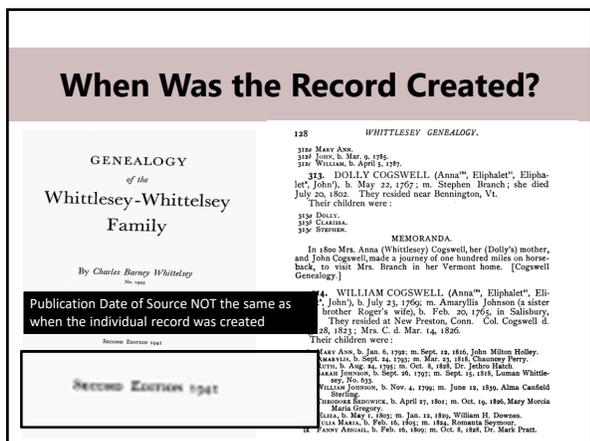
9



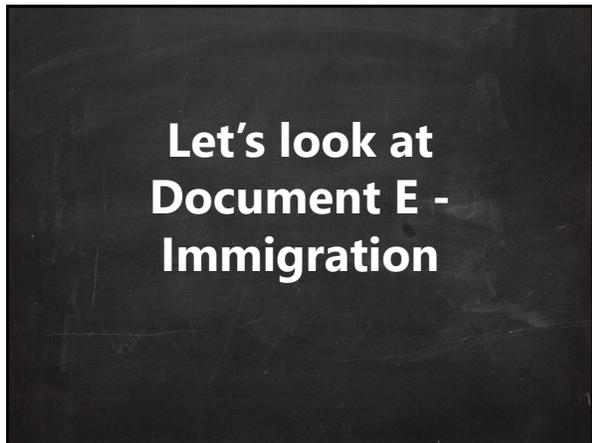
13



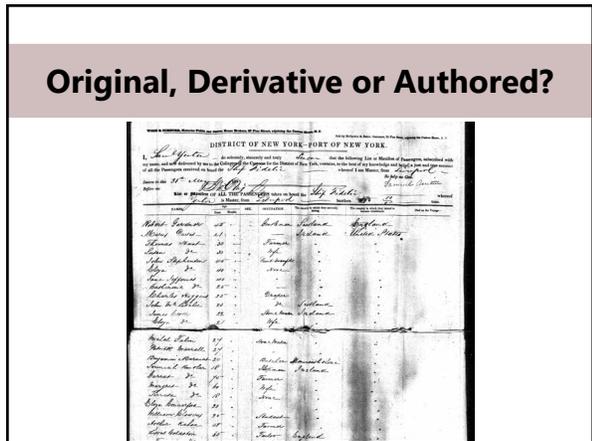
14



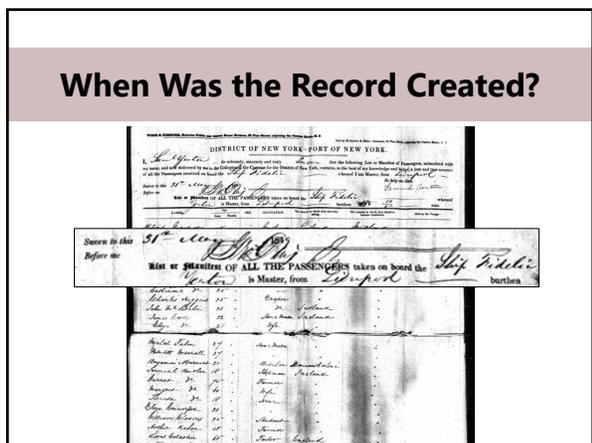
15



19



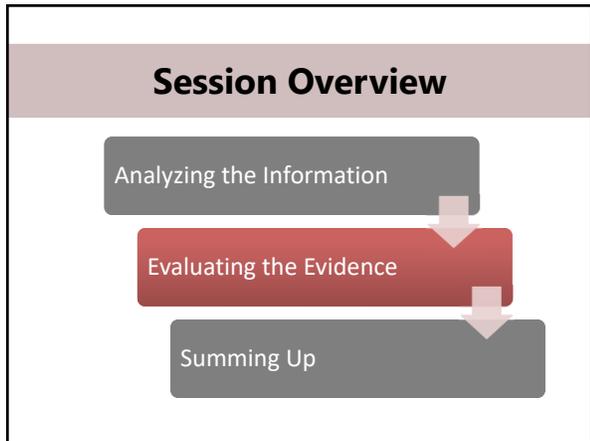
20



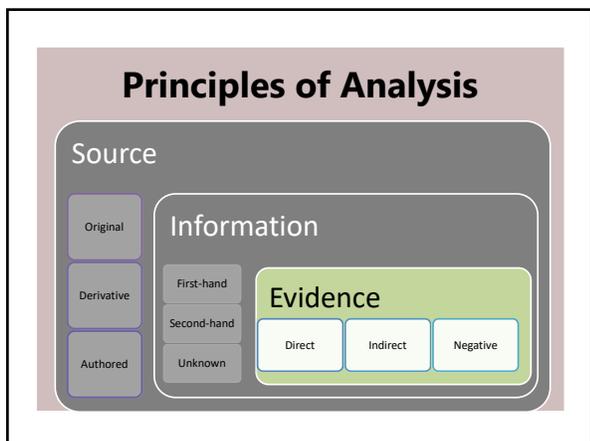
21



25



26



27

Definitions: Evidence

- Direct Evidence
 - Straightforward statement of fact
 - Directly answers the genealogical question
 - Caveat: may answer the question, but may not be accurate, e.g. mother's maiden name on a death record
- Indirect Evidence
 - Potentially relevant information
 - Does not answer the question directly
 - Need to assemble pieces of the puzzle to answer the question
- Negative: Absence of information
 - No children on 1820 census, but four children on 1830 census – Provides evidence that children had to have been born after 1820

28

Information Versus Evidence

The diagram illustrates the process of moving from information to a proof argument. It starts with 'Information' (Primary and Secondary) leading to 'Evidence' (Direct, Indirect, Negative). A dashed red circle around 'Evidence' is labeled 'Resolve Conflicts', which then leads to 'Proof Argument'.

29

Not All Information Is Evidence

- Identify the genealogical information in the record and ask:
 - Does this answer my question directly?
 - Can this be used with other evidence to answer my question (indirect evidence)?
- Most records contain multiple pieces of information; only some will be evidence for your question

30

Maud Bell Plowman's Death Certificate

Information	Evidence
Date and place of death	Who are Maud's parents?
Cause of death	When did Maud die?
Date and place of birth	Whom did Maud marry?
Names of parents	When was Maud born?
Name of Spouse	

31

Types of Evidence

- Always applies to a specific fact, e.g.
 - Who is the father of Nehemiah Smith?
 - What is the date of birth of Anna?
- Direct: Answers the question by itself, e.g.
 - Record specifies the parent's names
 - Record includes date of birth

32

Types of Evidence (cont.)

- Indirect: Relevant, but does not stand alone, e.g.
 - Owns a plot of land that was documented as being owned by father, in a time period where land was typically passed father to son
- Negative: Absence of information
 - No children on 1820 census, but four children on 1830 census – Provides evidence that children had to have been born after 1820

33

Evidence Questions

- Does a single piece of evidence answer my question? (Direct)
- Do multiple pieces of evidence when combined answer my question (Indirect)
- What evidence should have been present if the hypothesis was correct?

34

Resolving Conflicting Evidence

- State the conflict
- Give possible explanations why the conflict exists
- Solve the conflict through source and information analysis and correlation of different pieces of evidence

35

When Was George W Northup Born?

Source	Information	Evidence
Wickford Standard (Wickford, Rhode Island), 13 January 1899, page 3, column 6.	George W. Northup died 7 January 1899 in his 90th year.	Birth year about 1809 (Indirect)
Find a Grave, Elm Grove Cemetery (North Kingston, Rhode Island), memorial for George Washington Northup, memorial number 61202610, created 6 November 2010 by Billy.	Gravestone give birth year as 1809	Direct for year
U.S. Army, Register of Enlistments, 1798-1914,	Age as 21 in 1830	Birth year about 1809 (Indirect)

36

Correlate and Resolve Conflicts

- One piece of evidence directly gives the birth year of 1809
- Two pieces of indirect evidence agree that birth year was 1809. This year is consistent with the direct evidence
- Conclusion? Birth year was 1809.

37

When Did Elizabeth Northup Die?

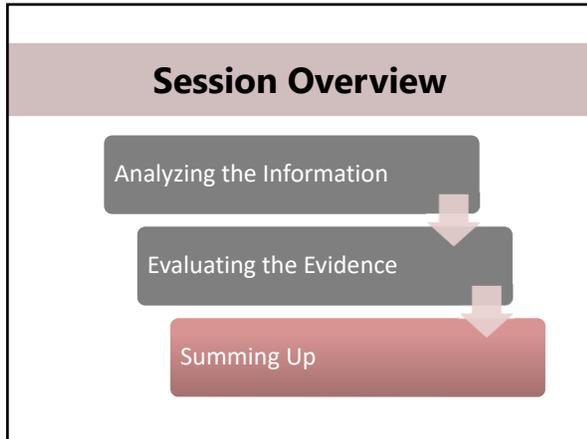
Source	Information	Evidence
Ancestry Trees	Died 1855; died 1820	Death in either 1820 or 1855
Will of Samuel Northup, 20 June 1840	"My wife Elizabeth" given bedding and other personal items	She is alive in 1840
U.S. 1840 Census	She is living in North Kingston	She is alive in 1840
U.S. 1850 Census	She is not enumerated	If she were alive, she would have been enumerated. Negative evidence for death before 1850
<i>Graveyards of North Kingstown, Rhode Island</i> (North Kingstown, RI : A.H. McAleer, 1992).	Cemeteries in North Kingston were family owned. Most plots contain unmarked fieldstones as the community was heavily Baptist and Quaker	Will not find a gravestone record for her death.

38

Correlate and Resolve Conflicts

- Two conflicting dates from Ancestry trees. Both trees lack any attached documented. These dates will be discarded.
- She was alive in 1840 per her husband's will and the 1840 census.
- She is missing from the 1850 census. This is negative evidence
- Conclusion? Died between 1840 and 1850.

39



40

Putting It All Together

- Clearly state the question you are trying to answer
- Assemble your evidence (*related to question*)
- Plan for writing (Choose one)
 1. Building blocks – lead with strongest piece of evidence; support with additional pieces
 2. Syllogism (If A=B and B=C then A=C)
 3. Multiple hypotheses (useful for same name situations)

41

When Was George W Northup Born?

Information	Type of Evidence	Quality of Source and Information
Obituary state age of "in 90 th year"	Indirect for year	Original source, notice created soon after death, informant unknown
Gravestone give birth year as 1809	Direct for year	 Original tombstone, modified in 1930's, unknown date of creation and informant
Army enlistment gives age as 21 in 1830	Indirect for year	Original source, informant known (George W.), creator known (army clerk), date of creation not known

42

Presenting the Evidence

- Overview and research question
- Item 1 – analysis and correlation
- Item 2 – analysis and correlation
- Item 3 – analysis and correlation
- Conflict resolution (if you haven't yet woven it in)
- Final statement

43

Written Summary – Samuel Northup Death

Overview with Question Neither a vital record nor a gravestone with a date of death has been located for Samuel Northup. Nonetheless, his death date is known thanks to the Smith family and a book by Marston Watson, corroborated by a probate filing and the existence of a family cemetery plot.

Item 1 Samuel Northup died 13 November 1841 according to a Smith family compilation of old almanacs. The compilation was undertaken after a fire destroyed most of North Kingston's vital records in 1870. Marston Watson also gives a 13 November 1841 death date in his book *Royal Families - Americans of Royal and Noble Ancestry*. The informant for both these works is unknown

44

Written Summary (cont.)

Item 2 A death date of 13 November 1841 is supported by the proving of his will on 10 January 1842 when he names his wife Elizabeth, six sons and one daughter who all were still living. Since courts usually met quarterly, the first opportunity to file probate for a November death would be the January 1842 court.

Item 3 Early cemeteries in North Kingstown are family plots. It wasn't until 1851 that a town cemetery was opened. The McAleer book, *Graveyards of North Kingstown, Rhode Island* notes that since many settlers of the area were Baptist or Quaker and thus prohibited from making "graven images," many of the family graveyards lack names and dates on a sizeable number of stones. The book notes that the graveyard where Samuel's father Zebulon is buried has between 14 and 20 unmarked fieldstone graves. Zebulon died in October of 1841. His grave has a marker. Samuel's grave is probably one of the 14 to 20 unmarked fieldstone graves mentioned in the McAleer book.

45

Written Summary (cont.)

Conclusion Although a gravestone with a date has not been located for Samuel Northup, his death date is known thanks to the Smith family and Watson's book. It is highly likely that Samuel and his wife Elizabeth are buried in the same graveyard as Zebulon, but with a simple, undated, fieldstone marker. The evidence consistently points to a death date for Samuel Northup of 13 November 1841.

46

Genealogical Proof Standard

- ✓ Reasonably exhaustive research
- ✓ Complete, accurate citations to the source or sources of each information item
- ✓ Tests—through processes of analysis and correlation—of all sources, information items, and evidence
- ✓ Resolution of conflicts among evidence items
- ✓ A soundly reasoned, coherently written conclusion.

<http://www.bcgcertification.org/resources/standard.html>

47

Summary

- Evaluate each piece of information in a record:
 - How soon after the event was it captured?
 - Who was the informant?
 - Is the information first or second hand?
- Not all information is evidence
 - Evidence is specific to your question
- Is the evidence direct, indirect or negative?
- To write up your proof – state your question and introduce the evidence a piece at a time, evaluating the quality of the source and information for each piece.

48



49



50
