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## Access Denied: Government Web Sites: the Disappearing Act?

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# Access Denied



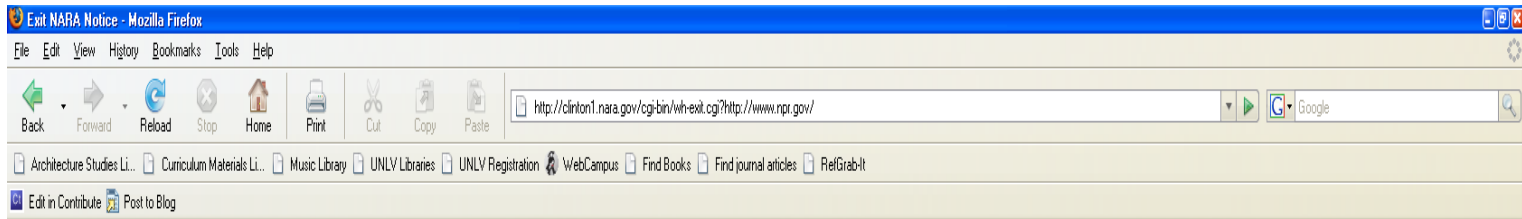
Government Web Sites – the  
disappearing act?

# In 2001, the LA Times reported:

"For months, after Bush jettisoned thousands of documents that former President Clinton had placed on the site, the White House home page had been little more than a place holder on the information superhighway...Clicking an old White House link offering Clinton media briefings, for instance, returned the message: Due to the change of administration, all publications have been removed from this server."

*LA Times. Sept 1, 2001. pg A15*

# Government Web sites like this:



The link you just selected ( <http://www.npr.gov/> ) was once available from the White House Web Site during the Presidency of William Jefferson Clinton. This link has not been maintained because the web site is an historical record and is no longer being updated.

Although this link no longer works, it is possible that the content may still exist on the site that hosted the content at the time the link originally was made. Suggestion: type the address, shown in the link, into your browser's address window.

You'll be returned to your previous page in 15 seconds or click on the button below to return now.

[Return](#)

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[National Archives and Records Administration](http://www.nara.gov)  
[clinton.library@nara.gov](mailto:clinton.library@nara.gov)

In a change of administration, web site disappearance is not limited to the previous office holder, but can also include agencies.

# Agency Web Sites like this:



*Where did ERIC/REC go?*

In the future, you'll use one URL, <http://www.eric.ed.gov> to:

1. search the ERIC database
2. search the ERIC Calendar of Education-Related Conferences
3. link to the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS) to

[Notice to ERIC Database Contributors, Partners, and Vendors](#)

The U.S. Department of Education required that ERIC/REC telephone services and Web site close on December 19, 2003. The Clearinghouse will close permanently on December 31, 2003. We thank you for your support and patronage for the past 36 years.

[http://www.indiana.edu/~eric\\_rec/](http://www.indiana.edu/~eric_rec/)



# Why did the sites go?

- Web sites for the federal government are a relatively new thing.



- Ok, so it started during the Clinton administration, in the early 90s.

# Reasons why sites disappear

- Change in administration.
- Agencies focus on the present – to accomplish their legislated missions.
- New directions in policy.
- Reorganization may cause a new title for an agency, thus a new URL for the agency.



# Reasons why sites disappear

- Departments or agencies met their goal and have disbanded.
- Moved to a different server.
- Different software – e.g. html/pdf/etc.
- Or, they did not have a preservation plan for their websites.

# Example of local agency & websites

Record: [Prev](#) [Next](#)

[more info](#)

Title **Community assessment, health & quality of life in Santa Clara County / Community Benefits Coalition, Hospital Council of Northern & Central California, Santa Clara Section.**

Publication Information [S.L.] : **Community** Benefits Coalition, Hospital Council of Northern & Central California, Santa Clara Section, [1999]

| LOCATION                                       | CALL #                                   | STATUS        |
|--|--|---------------|
| <a href="#">King 8th Floor</a>                 | <a href="#">R172.S36x C66 1999</a> vol.1 | CHECK SHELVES |
| <a href="#">King 8th Floor</a>                 | <a href="#">R172.S36x C66 1999</a> vol.2 | CHECK SHELVES |
| <a href="#">King Ready Reference 2nd Floor</a> | <a href="#">R172.S36x C66 1999</a> vol.1 | LIB USE ONLY  |
| <a href="#">King Ready Reference 2nd Floor</a> | <a href="#">R172.S36x C66 1999</a> vol.2 | LIB USE ONLY  |

Description 2 v. ; 28 cm.

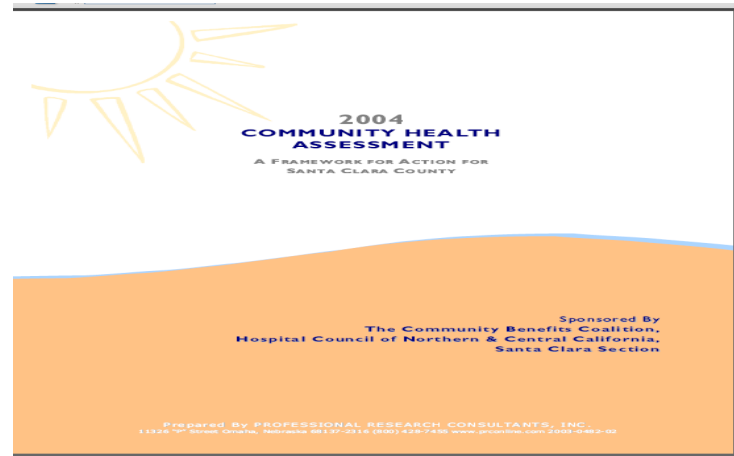
Contents [v. 1] **Community** report -- [v. 2] Key findings.

Subject [Medical care -- California -- Santa Clara County.](#)  
[Health facilities -- California -- Santa Clara County.](#)  
[Santa Clara County \(Calif.\) -- Population.](#)  
[Santa Clara County \(Calif.\) -- Social conditions.](#)

Done

- Santa Clara, CA health coalition produced Community Assessment handbook up to 1999.
- In 2000, the handbook went on-line & was not available in print

# Here is what you see today



[http://www.hospitalcouncil.net/upload/2004\\_Community\\_Health\\_Assessment\\_Report\\_Santa\\_Clara\\_County.pdf](http://www.hospitalcouncil.net/upload/2004_Community_Health_Assessment_Report_Santa_Clara_County.pdf)

- The online version is for 2004.
- The 2000 & 2002 versions are no longer on the site.
- When asked about the earlier versions, the response was who would want an earlier version?

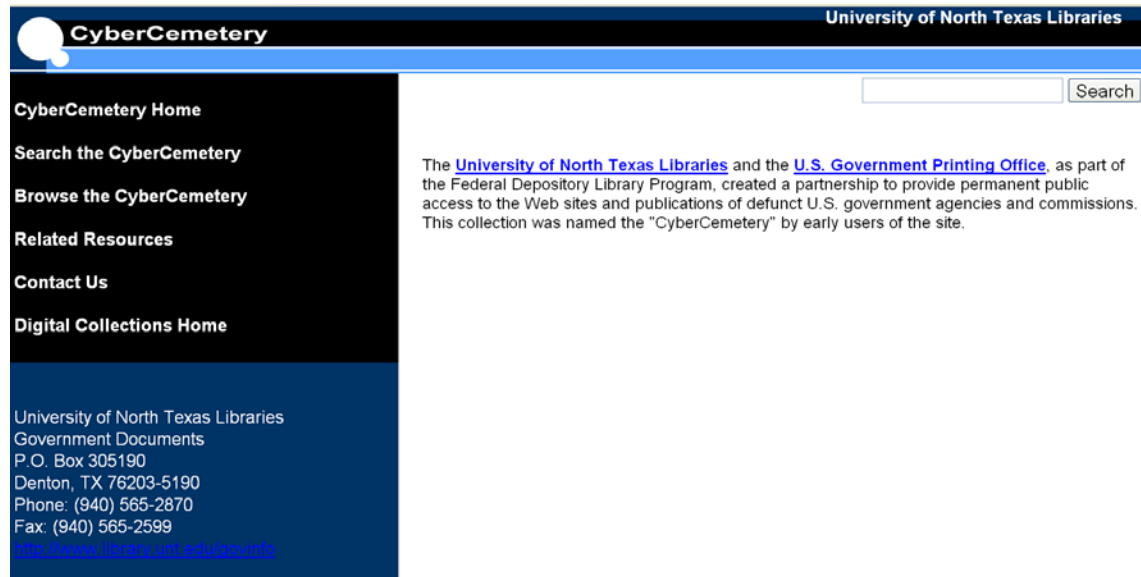
# What is being done to preserve these sites?



# Several libraries and organizations have set up archival sites

The University of North Texas Libraries (UNT) has established CyberCemetery for defunct sites.

<http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/>



The screenshot shows the CyberCemetery website interface. The header includes the "CyberCemetery" logo and the "University of North Texas Libraries" name. A search bar is located in the top right corner. The left sidebar contains navigation links: "CyberCemetery Home", "Search the CyberCemetery", "Browse the CyberCemetery", "Related Resources", "Contact Us", and "Digital Collections Home". The main content area features a paragraph explaining the site's purpose: "The University of North Texas Libraries and the U.S. Government Printing Office, as part of the Federal Depository Library Program, created a partnership to provide permanent public access to the Web sites and publications of defunct U.S. government agencies and commissions. This collection was named the 'CyberCemetery' by early users of the site." The footer of the sidebar provides contact information for the University of North Texas Libraries, including the address, phone, fax, and website URL.

University of North Texas Libraries

**CyberCemetery**

Search

CyberCemetery Home

Search the CyberCemetery

Browse the CyberCemetery

Related Resources

Contact Us

Digital Collections Home

University of North Texas Libraries  
Government Documents  
P.O. Box 305190  
Denton, TX 76203-5190  
Phone: (940) 565-2870  
Fax: (940) 565-2599  
<http://www.library.unt.edu/govinfo>

The [University of North Texas Libraries](#) and the [U.S. Government Printing Office](#), as part of the Federal Depository Library Program, created a partnership to provide permanent public access to the Web sites and publications of defunct U.S. government agencies and commissions. This collection was named the "CyberCemetery" by early users of the site.

# University of Illinois, Chicago project

- Electronic Research Collection
  - <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/>
  - A partnership between the University library and the US State Department.
  - Has archived electronic information products from 1990-1997.
  - Also provides reference service to these products.

# Web-At-Risk project

- Partnership between:
  - California Digital Library (Univ. of California)
  - University of North Texas
  - New York University
- Additional assistance from:
  - Stanford
  - San Diego Supercomputing Center
  - Arizona State Library
  - Library of Congress

# Goal of the Web-at Risk Project

- To develop tools that enable librarians and archivists to capture, curate, preserve, and provide access to web-based government and political information.
- The primary focus of the collection is state and local government information, but may include web documents from federal and international government as well as non-profit sources.



# For more information:

Project is just beginning. Check out their wiki:

<http://wiki.cdlib.org/WebAtRisk/tiki-index.php>

Are there any other organizations capturing government website information?

# The Internet Archive

- <http://www.archive.org/index.php>
- Developed to archive Internet websites
- The main search feature is called the Wayback Machine

The screenshot shows the Internet Archive homepage with a navigation bar at the top containing links for Web, Moving Images, Texts, Audio, Software, and About IA. A search bar is present with a dropdown menu set to 'All Media Types'. The main content area is divided into several sections: 'Announcements' with links to library updates and upload/download systems; 'Web' featuring the Wayback Machine search interface with a search box and 'Take Me Back' button; 'Welcome to the Archive' with a description of the digital library; and four category-specific sections: 'Moving Images' (83,903 movies), 'Live Music Archive' (42,299 concerts), 'Audio' (173,398 recordings), and 'Texts' (247,092 texts). Each category section includes a 'Browse' link, a 'This Just In' section with recent uploads, and a 'Curator's Choice' section.

# The Wayback machine--

Sometimes it does not go “wayback”

For the Coast Guard, now a part of Homeland Security, old sites are not found:



Enter Web Address:

http://

All

Take Me Back

Ad

## Blocked Site Error.

http://www.uscg.mil is not available in the Wayback Machine. Try another request or click here to see if the page is available, live, on the Web.

<http://www.uscg.mil>

See the [FAQs](#) for more info and help, or [contact](#) us.

# LOCKSS

- Lots of copies keep stuff safe (LOCKSS)
- Pilot project at GPO
- Investigating government e-journals and archiving techniques
- [http://www.access.gpo.gov/su\\_docs/fdip/lockss/index.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdip/lockss/index.html)

# What can we do?

- Join the ALA government publications roundtable listserv (govdoc-l) for recent discussions on web site preservation
- Add ***Free Government Information blog*** to your rss feeds <http://freegovinfo.info/blog>
  - This is an excellent site that states current issues in thoughtful contexts.
  - Because it's a blog, people can easily comment.
  - And more importantly what agency or legislator should be contacted is noted.

# In the words of President James Madison



“Knowledge will forever govern  
ignorance,  
and a people who mean to be their own  
governors  
must arm themselves with the power  
which knowledge gives.”

# Sites Reference List

- US National Archives  
<http://www.archives.gov/index.html>
- Santa Clara Health Assessment  
[http://www.hospitalcouncil.net/upload/2004\\_Community\\_Health\\_Assessment\\_Report\\_Santa\\_Clara\\_County.pdf](http://www.hospitalcouncil.net/upload/2004_Community_Health_Assessment_Report_Santa_Clara_County.pdf)
- University of North Texas Libraries' CyberCemetery  
<http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/>

# Sites Reference List

- University of Illinois – State Department Project <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/>
- Web at Risk project -- <http://wiki.cdlib.org/WebAtRisk/tiki-index.php>
- The Internet Archive -- <http://www.archive.org/index.php>



# Sites Reference List

- LOCKSS --  
[http://www.access.gpo.gov/su\\_docs/fdip/lockss/index.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdip/lockss/index.html)
- Free Government Information blog --  
<http://freegovinfo.info/blog>
- ERIC/REC --  
[http://www.indiana.edu/~eric\\_rec/](http://www.indiana.edu/~eric_rec/)

# Thank you!

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This presentation is posted at

<http://calneva.blogspot.com/>

