

# Deeper Analysis: Techniques for Successful Problem Solving

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When analyzing genealogical evidence, there are some common techniques which help us think about the data collected around a research question in ways that we might not otherwise see. Common patterns or threads help us to tie the evidence together to create a clearer picture of what the truth might be. The Genealogical Proof Standard states that analysis and data correlation is necessary, but what techniques should we employ to achieve that goal?

## **What is a Problem?**

- Something that has an unknown answer.
- A question that has a working theory but is not proven.
- Research answers which conflict with each other.

## **The Research Process**

Research Question: one of identity, relationship, or event  
↓  
Research Plan  
↓  
Research in Quality Sources producing Evidence  
↓  
Evidence Analysis  
↓  
Conclusion  
↓  
“Proof”

## **Standards**

Genealogical Proof Standard

“Tests—through processes of analysis and correlation—of all sources, information items, and evidence contributing to an answer to a genealogical question or problem”

### **Reasoning from Evidence (nos. 37–50)**

46. Evidence independence.
47. Evidence correlation.
48. Resolving evidence inconsistencies.
49. Unresolved evidence inconsistencies.
50. Assembling conclusions from evidence.

## Strategies

### *Proof Argument*

- The process of proving each step will make you revisit your data.
- Shows you where assumptions may be and where you need more evidence.

### *Comparison charts*

- by grouping a certain record set about a person or a family
  - compare all census years, deeds, military service, death cause, occupations, ...
- by common family characteristics in a chart

### *Correlation*

#### By sources

- correlate related record groups together such as plot plan, tax lists, and census

#### By chronology

- identifies missing data
- highlights illogical and contradictory data
- shows who lived concurrently
- can help sort out multiple individuals with the same name
- can see what events shaped their lives when compared with historical events

#### By geography

- migration map
- plot maps

### *Narrative family history*

- Helps to see where the holes in our knowledge exist.
- Tests our logic and progression of events.

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Free personalized timeline intermixed with history: [www.OurTimelines.com](http://www.OurTimelines.com)

Hardiness Zones: interactive map at <https://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/PHZMWeb>

Charts and forms: <http://www.cyndislist.com/charts/printable-charts-and-forms>

Gen Detective software program and charts: <https://www.rumblesoftinc.com/index.cfm>

## TIMELINE FOR TWO COUPLES AND CHILDREN

	(him)	(her)	(him)	(her)
Birth				
Marriage				
Married 2nd				
Death				
Children Date, Place				

**COMPARISON TABLE**  
**Age, Birth Place, Father Birth Place, Mother Birth Place, Occupation**

Person									
1870 Census Age / Place									
1880 Census Age / Place									
1900 Census Age / Place									
	BIRTH PLACE FOR FATHER AND MOTHER OF PERSON								
1880 Census Father/Mother									
1900 Census Father/Mother									
	OCCUPATIONS								
1870 Census Occupation									
1880 Census Occupation									
1900 Census Occupation									