

Uncle Sam. Access: <http://www.lib.memphis.edu/gpo/unclesam.htm>.

The Government Publications Department of the Regional Depository Library at the University of Memphis has taken on the task of providing access to and information on many government publications available through the Internet. The result is Uncle Sam, an easy-to-use and informative site for anyone with an interest in government information.



The heart of Uncle Sam is "Migrating Government Publications," a list of government publications that are migrating from print to electronic versions. They are listed by title and SuDoc number, and are marked as available in electronic only or in electronic and print versions. The links are annotated if the publication is available from more than one site, or for title changes or other irregularities. The listing is limited to serials and periodicals, which make up a large percentage of government publications, and links are provided to the GPO Access site for finding available monographs.

Although there is no search engine (one is planned for the future), finding a known item is very easy. Some subject access is provided through the annotated pathfinders found in the "Internet Resource Guides" section. The University of Memphis librarians have created 14 subject guides that list Internet resources plus some essential print publications. "Geography and Map Information," with links to government and commercial sites as well as how-to and ordering information, is a separate section.

More useful information for all libraries is available under the "GPO Resources" and "Hot Links" sections. "Hot Links" includes pointers to other sites that have organized government publications by one criterion or another, plus the very useful "Reference Recidivism," a FAQ/Ready Reference page. Depository libraries can check out "Depository Library Information" and "Current Concerns," a listing of news sources about government documents.

Uncle Sam is a valuable starting place for students or faculty in subjects that rely heavily on government publications, and it is an excellent resource for librarians who need to locate government information in a reference setting. Its consistent, uncluttered look, good organization, and comprehensiveness all work together to provide access to information previously available only at depository libraries. Highly recommended for all libraries.—*DeAnne Luck, Austin Peay State University; LuckDL@apsu01.apsu.edu*

The Whyfiles. Access: <http://whyfiles.news.wisc.edu/index.html>.

At first glance this site appears to be both limited in its coverage, and geared towards a young audience. The initial pages are sparse, containing only "teasers" of stories. The graphics are small and clean. After a few clicks, you'll realize there is actually quite a bit of information here after all, but it still appears to be geared towards the high-school crowd. The articles are on current topics, but the writing certainly isn't dry and academic. Soon, however, you've gone through about seven screens worth of information about El Nino, and you realize that a) you enjoyed reading this article more than any others you can recall on the subject, and b) you actually learned something. Quite a bit in fact!



The theme of this site is "science behind the news," and the (at review-time) 75 articles posted certainly run the gamut. Included are articles on forensic science, spinal cord repair, volcanoes, and sandcastle science. A particularly interesting article dealt with grief, with the lead-in in asking, "When Diana died, why did millions mourn?"

The opening page contains only two articles, one current, and one two weeks old. There is a search option, and a link to the archives, where older stories are arranged ac-

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cording to the following categories: biology, environmental science, health, physical science, social science, sports, and technology.

The Whyfiles are published by the National Institute for Science Education, funded by the National Science Foundation. According to the information page, "the NISE is a collaborative effort to ensure that all students who leave the educational system can make informed decisions about science, mathematics, engineering and technology." While the implication is that this information is geared towards students at a pre-college level, the easy-to-read style of writing and selection of current topics should also appeal to the undergraduate student.

The site does a good job of staying fresh—every article has a different background and graphics theme. Some articles are only a page, while others are quite lengthy. There is also a section for an online forum—basically Web-based discussion groups.

After spending some time exploring this site, my opinion of it changed considerably. I came to appreciate the non-technical writing style and the simple interface. I learned a lot. I'll bet your students will too.—Paul Pival, Nova Southeastern University; paulp@nsu.nova.edu

Africa News Online. Access: <http://www.africanews.org>.

Through a partnership with Africa's leading news agencies, newspapers, and magazines, Africa News Service produces Africa News Online. Africa News Service is a non-profit U. S. news agency that started in 1973. This agency boasts being "directly or indirectly responsible for a significant percentage of U. S. media coverage of Africa." Africa News Online is the online version of the widely read news periodical *Africa News*, which has been an exclusively electronic publication since 1993.

The homepage contains an abundance of links for contemporary news in politics, entertainment, sports, business, science, and health. The "Resources Cuisine" link provides access to special reports, interviews, profiles, and even a link for ordering an African cookbook. "Internet Gateway" links to Web sites for news topics such as United Nations & Africa, United States & Africa, and Africa's Great Lakes Region. Links can also be found

to Web sites for African news organizations, newspapers, and news agencies. For daily,



full-text articles from the largest

news gathering agency in Africa, there's the "PANA News" link, which includes searchable archives. Additional current articles from news magazines and newspapers can be accessed by clicking on the "News Central" link. Included are links to news reports from various regions and countries in Africa. It offers searchable archives that are in the testing stage.

African News Online fills an information gap for faculty, undergraduate, and graduate students in the fields of African studies, government, and international affairs. Although the link for information resources is labeled "Resources Cuisine," a user will find navigating through this Web site is easy. This Internet resource opens up Africa to the rest of the world.—Nancy Allen, USF at Sarasota/ New College ■

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time to experience another. But perhaps when the need is strong enough we will seek out the word on the page, and the work that puts us back into the force field of deep time. The book—and my optimism, you may sense, is not unwavering—will be seen as a haven, as a way of going off-line and into a space satisfied by subjectivity.²²

If you are convinced that we need to do more to recognize and support reading, I recommend the Library of Congress's Center for the Book's 1997–2000 campaign, "Building a Nation of Readers." Their web page at <http://lcweb.loc.gov/loc/cfbook/readbro.html> contains excellent ideas about promoting reading, both in our libraries and as individuals. As we academic librarians skillfully surf the shoals and tidal waves of the Internet, let's heed the words of Franz Kafka who said, "The book must be the axe for the frozen sea within us."

Notes

1. Toth, Susan Allen and John Coughlan, *Reading Rooms* (New York: Doubleday 1990).

2. Kernan, Alvin, *The Death of Literature*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990. ■