

allAfrica.com. Access: <http://allafrica.com/>.

Started in 1973 as the Africa News Service, AllAfrica Global Media continues today as the world's largest provider of full-text electronic news and information on Africa. The



allAfrica.com Web site, available in its current form since 1999, builds on a legacy of partner-

ship with African news agencies and periodicals to make content on African life, politics, and culture more accessible in the United States.

The strength of allAfrica.com is the breadth of content provided. The site contains more than 900,000 current and past articles pulled from the Africa News Service archive dating back to 1996. However, only articles from the last five years are available freely on the site. Older content, along with advanced keyword searching, is reserved for subscribers. Roughly 1,000 articles are posted each day in English and French. Users must click the "Site Français" link to access most articles in French. Content is aggregated from more than 125 African news providers, and more than 130 government and nongovernmental organizations in Africa, Europe, and North America. African sources include government-controlled, opposition, commercial, and independent papers.

The "content providers" link on the homepage lists "active" and "archived" (discontinued) sources. Original pieces from allAfrica.com staff writers and guest contributors are also available.

Content can be located in three different ways from the homepage. Current major headlines, some with pictures, appear cen-

trally on the homepage. Links to other current top headlines appear above and below these major stories. Keyword searching is available via a small, single box near the top. Powered by Google, allAfrica.com states that searches yield articles from the last five years. Content can also be found using two category pull-down menus labeled country/region and topics. Users can select from more than 80 topics or 54 countries and five regions.

The strengths of allAfrica.com are somewhat hindered by its busy look and feel. While understandable for such a content-rich site, this problem is compounded by advertisements that completely surround articles. Navigation can also be tricky, especially trying to find the "latest news" articles. With these concerns aside, allAfrica.com is an excellent resource for students, teachers, professionals, and anyone else seeking news and information from Africa.—*Jason Schultz, University of California-Berkeley, jschultz@library.berkeley.edu*

Alternet.org. Access: <http://www.alternet.org/>.

Alternet is produced by the Independent Media Institute, a nonprofit organization that focuses its efforts on promoting, and providing support for, alternative news sources. Anyone with an interest in the alternative press and political coverage is sure to find the site useful, but it would be equally worthwhile for students working on assignments that require a range of viewpoints or an analysis of arguments. Alternet would be especially valuable for students studying communications, journalism, or political science. The site draws on a variety of content sources, including op-ed columns, blogs, and articles written specifically for the site. The site editors add new content consistently, and Alternet also includes a good deal of backfile. In most cases, the archival material dates back as far as 2000. Alternet has broad audience appeal because of the range of topics it ad-

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dresses. Many of the articles, especially those with a political focus, generate quite a bit of commentary and discussion.

At first glance, the site seems a bit busy. On the homepage, and many of the secondary pages, there are two navigation bars at the top of the screen and as many as four columns of links and pictures (five if you count the rollovers). The site designers have managed to include all of the features that users have come to expect in a Web site: RSS feeds, tag clouds, embedded videos, and streaming links. There's a wealth of content, but the overall effect can be a little overwhelming due to the presentation. Those who overcome the initial overload will discover that, as a whole, the site is really quite manageable and well organized. The tabs at the top of the page provide links to the main categories of Alternet's coverage, including "Media," "Elections '08," "Human Rights," "Iraq," "Environment," "Water," "Health," "Drugs," "Sex and Relationships," "Corporations and Work," "Democracy," and "Books" (reviews).

The site is searchable, and the search interface is intuitive. It is highly advisable to use the search function to locate articles instead of browsing. If your library doesn't already have a subscription to Alternative Press Index, or even if it does, adding Alternet to your library's Web site would be a good way to provide users with access to a broad collection of alternative press materials.—*Steven Hoover, Trinity University, steven.hoover@trinity.edu*

Memorial Hall Museum Online: American Centuries. Access: <http://www.memorial-hall.mass.edu/>.

If you are researching the history of New England online, the Memorial Hall Museum's American Centuries site is a valuable place to start. It is geared toward educators and elementary through high school students, providing users access to primary sources and interactive activities from the Memorial Hall Museum in Old Deerfield, Massachusetts.

The site represents a cumulative effort by the Center for Computer Based Instruc-

tional Technology at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, museum scholars, public school media experts, teachers, and a nationally recognized Web designer.

The site's main menu is located within the central part of the homepage, offering links to several pages, including "The Digital Collection," "Activities," and "Turns of the Centuries Exhibit." "The Digital Collection" provides users the opportunity to research approximately 2,000 scanned items. Each of these items has an image page that contains age-appropriate text created by museum staff.

"Activities" provides a list of interactive exercises that students can use to learn more about American history. For example, there are activities for costuming individuals in historical clothing. The "Activities" page also provides a link that directs readers to interviews given by individuals who made history within the 20th century. These oral history interviews are provided as both audio files and transcribed documents.

"The Turns of the Centuries Exhibit" is another interactive part of the site for users. Addressing the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries of American history, this section of the site provides interactive slide shows and activities to explore various historical themes and eras.

The site's overall design is easy to navigate. There is a reasonable balance between text and graphics, so the site never seems overwhelming.

Further, the homepage contains "Site Search," a feature that enables the user to access a database of scanned images of artifacts, articles, and lessons.

The bottom of the homepage contains the headings "About," "New Features," and "Visit Our Other Sites." The "Visit Our Other Sites" heading includes a link to the Deerfield Teachers' Center Web site. This site offers professional development programs that support the teaching of American history.

The Memorial Hall Museum's American Centuries Web site is informative, dynamic and user-friendly, thereby enabling educators
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Chad Therrien has joined the University of North Carolina-Greensboro as Web usability and library assessment analyst.

William Thomas has been appointed collections coordinator of East Carolina University's J.Y. Joyner Library in Greenville, North Carolina.

Anne Thomason is now assistant archivist at Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana.

M. Elaine Thornton is now education/social sciences librarian at Texas A&M University.

Tamara Weatherholt is now a serials/metadata librarian at Florida State University.

Angela Whitehurst has been named distance education co-coordinator of East Carolina University's J.Y. Joyner Library in Greenville, North Carolina.

Susan Wiesner has accepted one-year appointment at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro as a postdoctoral Fellowship Program recipient.

Beth Filar Williams has been appointed networked information services librarian at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro.

Norman "Trip" Wyckoff has joined Florida State University as subject specialist librarian.

Retirements

Elizabeth Fairley has retired as Florida State University (FSU) librarian. Fairley joined FSU Libraries in 1983 and was the serials department head. Prior to joining FSU, Fairley was reference/cataloger librarian at Wilmington Public Library in North Carolina.

Mary Osielski, senior assistant librarian at the M. E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives at the University at Albany-SUNY, has retired after 40 years of service.

Barbara Doyle-Wilch, L. Douglas and Laura J. Meredith dean of library and information services at Middlebury College since 2001, retired on July 1, 2008, completing a 39-year career in Library and Information Services. Prior to joining Middlebury, she served in leadership roles at Skidmore College as director of library services; at Augustana College as dean of academic services, where she oversaw the building and program of the Thomas Treadway Library (Shepley Bulfinch, architects) and the Olin Technology Center; at the Colorado State Library as head of library development; and at Loretto Heights College as director of library services. While at Middlebury, Doyle-Wilch merged the library and information services departments, worked on the design and planning of the new Main Library building, and implemented the campus-wide installation of the SunGard Banner system. She was also active in state and regional library communities, serving as vice-president/president elect of the Vermont Library Association (2006-08) and on the NELINET Board of Directors (2006-08). Her publications include articles on topics ranging from issues facing liberal arts college libraries to the role of the librarian in the educational process. ♪

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and students to further their understanding of American history.—*Tom Sommer, University of Nevada-Las Vegas, thomas.sommer@unlv.edu* ♪

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