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Everyone loves a freebie ...

Cambridge Scientific Abstracts (CSA) [http://www.csa.com/csa/hottopics/hottopics-main.shtml] are giving away samples of journal articles and other resources through their newly launched Hot Topic series. There are currently thirty topics on offer, ranging from the Immunology of Ageing (under biomedical) to Millennial Cults (under social sciences). There are also topics for materials and the environment. Each topic gives an overview of the subject, key citations with abstracts, a list of related websites, a glossary, a comment form, and the source from which the resources were culled. This is a handy way to get a taste of CSA's online services.

... but sometimes you have to pay

As journal subscriptions go through the roof, pay-per-view may become more and more common. That is what ISI eSource [http://isiesource.com/] is banking on with this new service offering record views in pre-purchased bundles of ten. The service allows you to access key scholarly literature in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities. Once you have found your area of interest, you can link directly to specific articles. Searching alone is free.

Public libraries of Europe

If you are interested in browsing public libraries abroad from your desktop or study, this directory of libraries in European countries will be a hit with you. Want to check out Norwegian public libraries? Romanian ones? Or Danish ones? Go no further. For Denmark, you can get a full listing of Danish libraries on the web, as well as direct links to public libraries of particular interest to foreigners. Further links are provided for the State Library of Denmark, the Union of Danish Librarians and other sources. Entries will vary from country to country, depending on how web-savvy the country is. Sites that communicate in English are indicated with a small Union Jack, while really outstanding sites get a gold star [http://dspace.dial.pipex.com/town/square/ac940/eurolib.html].

Art galleries too...

Lots more armchair travelling is on offer in this new directory of art galleries around the world. The Art Atlas database [http://artatlas.com/] provides addresses and telephone numbers for more than 4500 international art galleries. Some entries provide links to additional information, such as opening hours, a list of artists represented, or the gallery's website. You can search the atlas by gallery name, by home city, by an artist's name, or by keywords. Or if you prefer, you can browse the listing of galleries for a specific city. If you search for Paris, for example, you will get a long listing. Galleries that have supplied a web link have the word WEB next to their entry in the list.

Maps and the kitchen sink

All the World's Maps [http://www.embassyworld.com/maps/maps.html] provides access to national maps and maps of major cities from a range of map providers such as Atlapedia, Expedia and the Perry-Castañeda Library. Not every country is represented, but it soon should be as the site is continually being developed. Once you select a country, you can launch the map page to choose from a range of maps, many of which provide zoom facilities. Links to city maps are also provided, if available. The site also links to worldwide directories of embassy and consulate locations, information on visas, telephone directories and dialling codes, and to some factual and background information via a range of services. You can also get driving directions and routes and travel information. There is a lot here; it's all the world's maps and just about everything else.

Homework helper

Blank & Outline Maps [http://geography.about.com/cs/blankoutlinemaps/] would be a good site for children's homework, for school lessons or for quizzes where you ask people to identify countries from a map outline. The site provides printable outline maps of the world, continents, regions, countries, individual states of the United States, and the provinces of Canada. Maps are freely available for educational or personal use. This site is from About.com so use it while it is still available.

About to be closed

For those who missed the announcement, About.com is closing several hundred of its individual guides. These topical sites were personal guides to the web, generally compiled by enthusiasts. Many were extremely helpful, so it's lucky that a relocation directory has been put up on the web to link users to sites that may have moved. The About.com Closed Guide Relocation Directory and Assistance Links provides links to new addresses for closed guides and also advises former About.com editors on finding new hosts and setting up new sites [http://www.ericward.com/guidehelp/relocationdirectory.html].

This is a handy way to get a taste of CSA's online services...

How progressive are you?

Progressive Librarians Around the World [http://libr.org/international/] is hoping to build a worldwide network of activist librarians. The site includes a statement of the ten uniting principles that the group hopes to foster, including promoting equality of access to information services, and making available a range of progressive viewpoints. The site is organised by country or region, and includes contact details for existing group members. If you are interested in joining, send an e-mail to Rory Litwin at rlitwin@earthlink.net or visit the site.

United States attack information

The 11 September attacks on the United States have probably been the most exhaustively covered events in recent history. The sheer weight of information produced means it is worth sifting out the useful information for researchers down the track. One handy source is the recently released briefing book from the United States National Security Archive [http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB55/index1.html]. It covers the attacks, but also provides a number of related documents on terrorism, war, and other events, such as the attack on the USS Cole and the earlier World Trade Center bombing.

Archived for posterity

Also worth noting are the Internet Archive's [http://web.archive.org/collections/sep11.html] files of print and television coverage. The print section includes national and international news coverage, information from charitable organisations, and government and military sites. The television archive [http://www.televisionarchive.org/] includes actual streaming footage of television broadcasts from sources such as the BBC, CNN and others. It includes the Good Morning America program on which the first news of the attacks broke. The United States Poynter Institute [http://www.poynter.org/] has a very large section on the attacks, including PDF galleries of newspapers from that day and subsequent days.

Time machine

The Internet Archive has also just released a new tool called the Wayback Machine [http://web.archive.org]. If you are interested in ghosts, give it a try as it archives earlier versions of web pages. Have a look at the early, uncluttered Yahoo (I liked it better then). Some sites have multiple entries, al-
lowing you to view their development over time. The archive includes web pages that have vanished or died. If there was a site you loved and lost, you just might be able to resurrect it here.

Getting down to business

Leiden University in the Netherlands is always coming up with surprises. Now they have launched a site for business history [http://www.let.leidenuniv.nl/history/res/bushis/]. Though there is not a huge amount there as yet, the site is an attempt to encourage businesses to publish their corporate history on the company website. The existing links to information are organised by country. Since most corporate history is buried within sites, there are individual pointers to tracking them down. One tip is always to look in the investor relations section, the logical place for annual reports and other background. Further business research can be done courtesy of CorpWatch's tips [http://www.corpwatch.org/research/guide/]. This corporate watchdog site has a handy six-step research section on how to find out about multinational corporations. There are related sections on developing a research plan, carrying out industry research, looking at corporations and politics and other useful tips.

Erector set

If you have been thinking of setting up a portal for information, you could do worse than download the Scout Portal Toolkit from Internet Scout [http://scout.cs.wisc.edu/research/SPT/index.html]. The toolkit allows organisations to set up a portal fairly quickly and cheaply. The kit comes in three parts: the portal interface, the intelligent metatdata tool and the portal toolkit package. Internet Scout are looking for beta testers so visit the site to get the software and have a go.

Second language resources

Teachers or librarians looking for ESL material on the internet should find the Online Directory of ESL Resources [http://www.cal.org/ericcll/ncbe/esldirectory/] handy. The directory aims to include only the best resources for English as a second language, and it limits entries in the directory to sites as a whole, rather than try to list individual web pages from sites. The directory, a joint project from the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education and the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics, is annotated and searchable. ∎

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