

Life Magazine Home Page. Access: <http://www.pathfinder.com/Life/essay/photoessay.html>.

Among other publications' Web pages on the Pathfinder site is *Life* magazine. *Wired's* Louis Rosetto found it to be the best Web site of 1995 for its "really simple, visually appealing, really elegant" design. The site continues to have this minimalist style, allowing the photographs to be the focus of the site, as they should be.

This is truly a site for and about photographers and photography. The text associated with the pictures is there, but as anyone who has looked at the magazine in its physical form will know, *Life* is about photographs. The site primarily uses a slide-show technique for its

The graphic features the word "LIFE" in a small, bold, serif font inside a rectangular box. Below this box, the words "Photo Essays" are written in a large, elegant, serif font. The "P" in "Photo" is significantly larger than the other letters, and the "E" in "Essays" is also large and stylized.

photo essays, using one page for each photograph and its caption

or text. Possibly the best-looking example of this is the "A Mother's Life" photo essay, which uses a quote about motherhood or childhood with a photograph of some parental interaction and accompanying text. The fonts and background colors with the black-and-white photos are stunning.

Other features of the site are the "Picture of the Day," "This Day in Life," (an almanac of sorts with birthdays, a quote, and this-day-in sports, weather, and history) the current issue's photo essays as well as last month's, a store for purchasing coffee table books and dream house plans, message boards for discussion of topics presented in the magazine's stories, and a "Virtual Gallery." The Virtual Gallery is a list of sites all relating to photojournalism, including *Life's* tribute to Alfred Eisenstaedt, a link to a photo agency, and the Time Life Photo Sight (sic), which presents numerous photos from *Time* and *Life* issues in broad subject categories, such as popular culture.

Loading time for all of these photographs may be frustrating for low-speed connections, but for the most part the images are fairly small. The best navigation tool for the site is the Quick Index, which lists all available features

by title with some description and is more comprehensive than the links on the home page. On nearly all pages on the site is a banner with links to other Pathfinder publications, such as *People* and *Fortune*, which can get annoying with animated ads running while the user tries to read. The banner is left off some of the photo essays' pages, but is nearly omnipresent. Generally, the site operates well and is very easy to use.

Anyone interested in photography in general, or in *Life's* particular approach to photojournalism, will be pleased with this site. It is also an interesting tour through parts of our world and sides of the news not often presented by other media sources.—Kirsten Tozer, Central Washington University; tozerk@tahoma.cwu.edu

Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications (MOCAT).

Access: http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/dpos/adpos400.html.

Undoubtedly, the United States is the largest producer of information in the world. We also have one of the most liberal policies concerning access to federally produced information. With this quantity of information readily available to the public, those searching for government information can easily be overcome by information overflow.

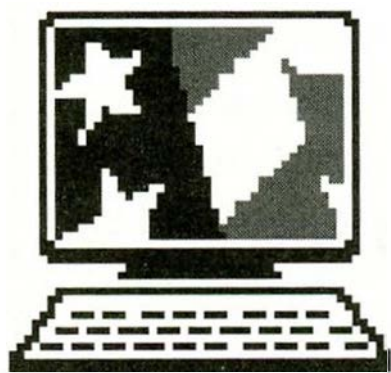
To counter this problem the GPO created the online version of the *Monthly Catalog*, which documents publications produced by the government. In June 1994, the GPO implemented this site to provide World Wide Web access to the myriad documents created by the government. Information at this site augments materials in the print version of the *Monthly Catalog*.

GPO reports that "the online catalog consists of bibliographic records published in the *Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications* (MOCAT) since January 1994. These records describe Government information products available through the Federal

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Depository Library Program. The MOCAT database is updated daily with preliminary cataloging records that will be edited and published in future issues of MOCAT. The GPO Access system provides online access to the Congressional Record, the Federal Register, the full text of all published versions of bills introduced in Congress, the Congressional Record Index, the History of Bills, the Lobby List, the Unified Agenda of Federal Regulations, the U.S. Code, Public Laws of the 104th Congress, and, through the Federal Bulletin Board, more than 6,000 other files from 25 Federal agencies."

This site develops its value by allowing searchers to gather citations to federally produced information from an immense database of information providers. By searching the database, a user may quickly develop a comprehensive set of citations on almost any topic. In some instances the document is available in electronic format directly from the site.



Where the document is not available online, the searcher can determine its exact location through the use of a query screen. Input of state and/or area code information to this screen returns a listing of

each depository library in the selected state that holds this title.

Boolean, proximity operators, and truncation are all available in the search function. Available fielded searches may increase the chances of obtaining meaningful hits in an expedient manner. The search results present a summary record for each publication. This includes title, format (i.e., microfiche, CD-ROM), date of publication, issuing agency, SuDocs Class Number, and Depository Item Number. If the publication is for sale by GPO, a GPO Stock Number will also be provided. A link is available to display the publication's cataloging record. Documents available online have a URL to access the appropriate site.

This is an important site for libraries that house government documents, and equally important to those that do not. Patrons benefit from a quick response as to what documents are available and their location. This site is a win for the government, the patron, and the librarian.—*Timothy E. McMabon, Metrowest Massachusetts Regional Library System; tmcmaon@simmons.edu* ■

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Letter to the editor

It was so good to see an article, such as Katherine Branch's "The axe for the frozen sea . . ." in the January 1998 *C&RL News*, that extolled the value of reading. I would like to emphasize reading next year on our campus, but I have been hesitant in light of all the emphasis on technology, but your article gives me hope.

The Arts and Sciences Division just sponsored a colloquium on Cold Mountain. Everyone on campus was encouraged to read the book and then discuss it. One of the English instructors led a lively discussion. I would like to work with the Arts and Sciences Division to sponsor more such book discussions.

Thanks for the reference to the Library of Congress site on Building a Nation of Readers. I will go there right after I write this message.

I believe in all the new technologies, but I really feel as Branch does, that reading still has a vital place in our world. Thanks again for your inspiring article.—*Scott Cohen, head librarian, Jackson State Community College, scohen@jscc.cc.tn.us*