

### Exploring Ancient World Cultures: An Introduction to Ancient World Cultures on the World-Wide Web.

Access: <http://eawc.evansville.edu/index.htm>.

Exploring Ancient World Cultures (EAWC) is a college-level "on-line course supplement for students and teachers of the ancient and medieval worlds" covering the Near East, India, Egypt, China, Greece, Rome, Islam, and Europe. The author/general editor of the site is Anthony Beavers, a professor of philosophy and religion at the University of Evansville.

### Exploring Ancient World Cultures

An Introduction to Ancient World Cultures on the World Wide Web

The site contains a separate chapter for each cultural area. Each chapter includes an introductory essay, links to the major literary and religious works, a chronology, and some include quizzes. The title of the site is somewhat misleading in that it implies exploration of the entire culture, while in fact the information presented heavily reflects the author's background in philosophy and religious studies.

The introductory essays are too short to explore other facets of the culture; for example, the introductory essay for "Ancient China" focuses on The Tao Te Ching and its philosophy of leading a modest, balanced life. However, highly selective links to resources outside the site are also included, which broaden the scope of the site considerably.

For each chapter, these outside links are organized into "Essays," "Images," "Internet Sites," and "Texts." The essays, which include other aspects of culture such as "The Coins of Ancient China," are scholarly and mostly from online journals or conference presentations. The images and texts are selected from museums, online archives, or mounted on the EAWC site.

The Internet sites are high quality and provide a path to subjects such as art, politics, education, and economy. In addition to the lists in the chapters, all of the links can also be accessed through a separate "Index of Internet Resources" section.

EAWC has many hotlinked words in the text (indicated by small caps) which, when selected, will automatically run a search in Argos, a Web search engine limited to ancient and medieval studies sites. Argos can also be searched directly from the "Index of Internet Resources" pages.

EAWC is a fine source for undergraduates or graduate students studying the ancient history of these areas. Although the introductory essays will only be relevant to those focussing on religion or philosophy, the links to other texts, essays, and Internet sites make

EAWC a good starting point of exploration for any aspect of these cultures.—

*DeAnne Luck, Austin Peay State University, LuckDL@apsu.edu*

### Opinion Pages

Access: <http://www.opinion-pages.org/>.

Mounted in 1996, Opinion Pages is dedicated to providing access to the most current editorials, opinions, commentaries, and columnists from English newspapers and magazines on the Web—something other search engines cannot accomplish due to indexing schedules that are frequently behind daily Web changes.

The site's producer, Montgomery Kersell, a Canadian reporter/photographer, news-writer and editor, details how the site is managed and indexed twice daily. While it remains the work of one sole proprietor, it has been online for four years and its creator reports a commitment to keeping it maintained.

The site is divided into two primary sections: "Opinions, Ideas and Commentary" allows users to search for editorials, opinions, and commentary published in online English newspapers around the world; "Columns, Columnists and Commentary" provides access to categorized columnists' pages from online English newspapers and magazines worldwide. This section is further divided into six broad subject areas with the option to search the

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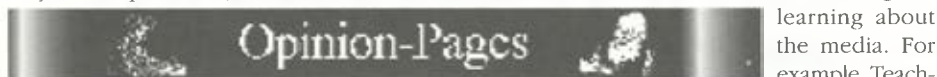
Sara Amato is electronic services and Web development librarian at Bowdoin College, e-mail: [samato@bowdoin.edu](mailto:samato@bowdoin.edu)

op/ed pages of the newspapers listed by geographic region.

Users can also link to resources by major geographic sectors—"USA," "Canada, and "International"—with a fourth set under the heading "Alternative." This is the most attractive feature and offering of this site—direct access to major newspapers in the world (that have Web sites) arranged alphabetically by country, and in the United States and Canada arranged by state and province.

Whether entering a keyword search or going to peruse a specific paper, users are linked to the homepage of the original resource. Pages indexed by the site change monthly, weekly, and daily and, depending on the newspaper's policies, users can access the archives. Some papers provide only the editorials, letters, and columnists of the current day, while others keep a rolling file of a week, month, or even longer.

The content is good, and the navigational tool is powerful, yet somewhat clumsy. The design is cumbersome, with bothersome changing advertisements as headers. There are very few help features, and those offered are



specific to the search engine and buried deep in the interface, found after entering a search under an "options" button.

This site should be quite useful to students writing their first papers or preparing speeches on current events—typical assignments for freshman college students everywhere. One can easily locate the pro/con arguments of any given issue, and find endless examples of opinion pieces in the form of editorials, letters, and columns. It also makes for a good reference source to the homepages of newspapers online worldwide.—*Lucinda R. Zoe, Baruch College, CUNY, Lrzbb@cumyvm.cuny.edu*

### **Media Literacy Online Project (MLOP)**

*Access:* <http://interact.uoregon.edu/MediaLit/HomePage>.

The Media Literacy Online Project (MLOP) is an ongoing research and development activity from the University of Oregon's College of Education. The project is coordinated by faculty member Gary Ferrington. Bill Walsh, an MLOP contributor, defines media literacy as "an attempt to make each of us more com-

fortable, more critical, and more conversant in various methods of communication." MLOP's goal is to "make available to educators, producers, students, and parents, information and resources related to the influence of media in the lives of children, youth, and adults."

The "Gateway to Media Literacy" menu divides the site into sections A–D and highlights their resources. Section A includes the Teachers' Desk, Media Literacy Organizations, Professional Collaborations, and Events. Section B is a database of Readings in Media Literacy. Section C covers Media Industry and topical Media Literacy Issues (e.g., media violence, advertising and children, media ethics, etc.) Section D features the Parents Corner. This menu simplifies access to the materials by providing a thorough site overview while focusing browsing on the sections. An AltaVista search engine option is available, but it is not readily apparent what is being searched and how.

MLOP offers original content through contributing writers, but the primary focus is its comprehensive collection of resource links. The resources are useful for both teaching and

learning about the media. For example, Teachers Desk caters to media educators with information on lesson plans, guides, instructional materials, standards, assessment and research, media production, educational Web sites, and professional development. Media Literacy Issues, on the other hand, has broader appeal, covering topics like advertising in schools, censorship and regulation, teen health and media, and gender in media. As a clearinghouse, the MLOP claims no responsibility for the content or currency of external resources. Suggestions for additions to the lists are encouraged.

Although media education is well established in European countries and Canada, it has been slower to gain acceptance in the United States. The MLOP was created several years ago in an effort to move media literacy into the mainstream of U.S. education. With its broad coverage and vast number of resource links, MLOP is a valuable source for students and faculty in education and communication/mass media, as well as anyone with an interest in media literacy.—*Signe Swanson, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, signes@unllib.unl.edu.* ■

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