

[back to standard version](#)

The Scout Report

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Research and Education

- [The Willa Cather Archive](#)
- [Using the Media to Promote Adolescent Well-Being](#)
- [Smithsonian: Science and Technology](#)
- [Wisconsin History Explorer](#)
- [American Institute of Physics: Education](#)
- [The Zora Neale Hurston Plays at the Library of Congress](#)
- [Poverty Action Lab](#)
- [Digital Document Quarterly](#)

General Interest

- [History Net](#)
- [NASA: Everest Expedition](#)
- [John Day Fossil Beds National Monument](#)
- [World Bank Topics: Food Crisis](#)
- [Global Wildlife Disease News Map](#)
- [The Industrial Designers Society of America](#)

- Index on Censorship
- Baldwin Library of Children's Literature, Digital Collection

Network Tools

- Glary Utilities 2.5.2
- MozBackup 1.4.7

In The News

- Robert Rauschenberg, master of different art forms, dies at 82

Research and Education

The Willa Cather Archive [pdf]

<http://cather.unl.edu/>

Born in Virginia in 1873, Willa Cather's family moved to Nebraska at age 10. She would later attend the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, and would of course share her vision of the Great Plains in novels like "O Pioneers!" and "My Antonia". In 1997, the University of Nebraska at Lincoln began a very ambitious project to digitize hundreds of Cather-authored texts and Cather scholarship for this excellent website. Currently, this collection includes digital transcriptions of five Cather books, all of her short fiction from before 1912, the complete run of "Cather Studies", multiple biographies, and several virtual tours of Cather-related locales. These materials can be located by using the search engine offered here or by clicking around sections that include "Writings", "Letters", "Life", "Gallery", and "Multimedia". Overall, it's a tremendous site, and one that merits a number of return visits. [KMG]

[Back to Contents](#) | [Back to Top](#)

Using the Media to Promote Adolescent Well-Being [pdf]

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2008/spring_children_haskins/spring_children_haskins.pdf

Many researchers and parents are concerned about the effects of the media on adolescents. It's in no way a new concern, but there is a renewed interest in how

media can potentially be harnessed to combat some of the more pernicious messages disseminated by mainstream media. This particular 8-page brief released in April 2008 takes on that very subject. The brief is part of "The Future of Children" initiative, which is jointly sponsored by Princeton University and The Brookings Institution. Authored by Elisabeth Hirschhorn Donahue, Ron Haskins, and Marisa Nightingale, the brief suggests that nonprofit groups and associations can effectively "draw teens into conversations by supplying them with expertise and tools they can share with their friends to become advocates to one another." The report goes on to suggest that working with new media and social networking sites may be more effective than trying to rally against such new forms of expression. [KMG]

[Back to Contents](#) | [Back to Top](#)

Smithsonian: Science and Technology [Macromedia Flash Player]

http://www.si.edu/Encyclopedia_SI/Science_and_Technology/default.htm

Browsing through the Encyclopedia Smithsonian can be a bit like spending time with a friend: You'll rediscover some familiar stories, and you'll probably learn something new at the same time. This particular part of the Encyclopedia Smithsonian covers science and technology and visitors can learn about Arctic wildlife, major "firsts" in aviation history, and bird biology. The materials are drawn from different parts of the Institution, including the Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention & Innovation and the National Air & Space Museum. Visitors can also scan the left-hand side of the page for alphabetically organized resources from aeronautics to zoology. Overall, the site is a great way to access a few of the tremendous resources offered by the Institution, and it may just inspire a deeper search through some of their additional online offerings. [KMG]

[Back to Contents](#) | [Back to Top](#)

Wisconsin History Explorer

<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/archstories/>

From Ashland in the far north all the way south to Beloit, the state of Wisconsin is full of compelling stories that bring in the cultural and social diversity of its people and its development. Offered up by the Wisconsin Historical Society, the Wisconsin History Explorer uses the properties documented through the National Register of Historic Places "to tell stories about Wisconsin people and communities." Through the use of historic photographs and other documents, the Explorer tells thematic stories about Wisconsin's suburbs, early road development, and historic theaters. One particularly delightful collection here is "Are We There Yet? Sweet Dreams: The Evolution of the Motel in Wisconsin". In this collection, visitors will learn about the early days of stage inns in the state and progress all the way up to the emergence of the motor courts in the 1920s. [KMG]

[Back to Contents](#) | [Back to Top](#)

American Institute of Physics: Education [pdf]

<http://www.aip.org/education/>

The American Institute of Physics (AIP) has a substantial outreach mission, and this site provides a cornucopia of educational materials and resources designed for physics undergraduate majors, instructors, and those thinking about a career in physics. Near the top of the page visitors will find the "Students" section, which includes information on graduate programs in the physical sciences, along with information about the national honor society for physics students. Below that section, the "Educators" area includes resources for physics teachers such as interactive modules and learning worksheets. Near the bottom of the page the "Academic Resources" area contains reports on employment trends for physicists and links to job websites in the realm of physics and related fields. [KMG]

[Back to Contents](#) | [Back to Top](#)

The Zora Neale Hurston Plays at the Library of Congress

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/hurston/>

Zora Neale Hurston was an American folklorist and author whose best known work remains the novel "Their Eyes Were Watching God". Hurston also wrote a number of plays and in 1997, a number of her previously unknown plays were discovered in the Library of Congress's Copyright Deposit Drama Collection. The American Memory Project took the time to digitize these interesting works, and visitors to this site can browse through all ten of them at their leisure. They include "Lawing and Jawing", "Woofing", and "The Mule-Bone: A Comedy of Negro Life in Three Acts". Visitors will enjoy reading through these works, and the site also includes a timeline of important events in Hurston's life. [KMG]

[Back to Contents](#) | [Back to Top](#)

Poverty Action Lab [pdf]

<http://www.povertyactionlab.org/>

Many laboratories focus their attention on topics like Alzheimer's research, but this laboratory at MIT focuses on poverty. The objective of their work at the Poverty Action Lab is "to improve the effectiveness of poverty programs by providing policy makers with clear scientific results that help shape successful policies to combat poverty." The Lab was started in June 2003 by a group of professors at MIT and their collaborators. Visitors to the site will note that the materials here are divided into sections that include "Research", "People", "News", and "Courses". The "Research" section is a great place to start as policy makers and others can look over their completed projects (such as "Discrimination in the Job Market") and their publications. Moving on, visitors can click on the "People" section to learn more about their staff and directors. Finally, those who are curious about the reach of the Poverty Lab's work will want to look at their media features in the "News" section. [KMG]

[Back to Contents](#) | [Back to Top](#)

Digital Document Quarterly

<http://home.pacbell.net/hgladney/ddq.htm>

Henry Gladney has an established background in the field of digital document management, and he also holds a number of patents. Gladney started publishing the Digital Document Quarterly (DDQ) in 2002 as an online publication that covers everything from the information revolution to providing information about digital preservation solutions. Visitors to the site can read the introduction to the DDQ, and then make their way through all of the previous issues. It's easy to see why different information science professionals and librarians would find the archive useful, as the topics covered here include basic topics in digital preservation, preserving office records, information retrieval, and even the epistemology of digital preservation. The site is rounded out by a nice glossary of terms, which covers everything from "abstract" to "value". [KMG]

[Back to Contents](#) | [Back to Top](#)

General Interest

History Net

<http://www.historynet.com/>

The Weider History Group publishes a wide range of military history magazines, including "America's Civil War" and "Civil War Times". They've also been generous enough to create this website, which offers a wide range of articles from their different publications. First-time visitors to the homepage may want to start out by taking a shot at the "Daily Quiz", which offers up a range of questions on everything from steamship battles to military operations in the South Pacific. Next, visitors may wish to click on over to the "Features" area, which includes articles culled from the magazines on Marine POW's, the Battle of New Orleans, as well as noted gunfighter Ben Thompson and his brother Billy. Moving on, visitors can also take part in the online forums where they can ask questions about battle tactics, the history of ground warfare, and the USS Ironsides. [KMG]

[Back to Contents](#) | [Back to Top](#)

NASA: Everest Expedition [Real Player]

http://www.nasa.gov/astronauts/everest_expedition.html

Astronaut Scott Parazynski has spent a great deal of time in space, but his most recent expedition took him to Mount Everest, and NASA helped him document the experience for posterity. Parazynski set forth for Nepal in March 2008, and during his journey he learned a great deal about the parallels of mountain climbing and space exploration. Along the right-hand side of the page, visitors will find a biography, along with information about Parazynski's previous space missions and a detailed interview. Further down the page, visitors will find a map of his route to the summit and images from his trip. Additionally, visitors can read the weblog from the trip and also listen to a podcast. [KMG]

[Back to Contents](#) | [Back to Top](#)

John Day Fossil Beds National Monument [Macromedia Flash Player]

<http://www.nps.gov/features/joda/>

Millions of years ago, central Oregon was a hotbed of volcanic activity. Curious geologists and others can learn about the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument on this most excellent Flash-enabled online tour. After "flying" in overhead to the site, visitors can learn about the 40 million year history of the site that would later become the John Day Fossil Beds. The next area of the site is titled "The Present Unlocks the Past" and it includes an exploration of the evolution of the horse in prehistoric Oregon, along with offering access into the daily life of a working paleontologist. In the interactive feature "Whose skull is whose?", visitors will get the chance to compare the skulls of ancient animals with those of their modern analogs. After that, visitors can get a better sense of the current state of affairs in the fossil beds by looking over a thirteen-image slideshow of this gorgeous section of Oregon. [KMG]

[Back to Contents](#) | [Back to Top](#)

World Bank Topics: Food Crisis [pdf]

<http://www.worldbank.org/html/extdr/foodprices/>

As concerns grow over the emerging food crisis across the globe, the World Bank has decided to create this page to inform the general public about their coordinated efforts to combat this growing problem. In brief, the World Bank's "New Deal" on global food policy includes creating safety nets such as school feeding, food for work, and conditional cash transfers. Additional elements of this policy include doubling agricultural lending to Africa over the coming year and also providing immediate aid to the country of Haiti to feed poor children and other vulnerable groups. First-time visitors should look first at the "Understanding the Crisis" section which provides brief synopses of the situation in different parts of the world, including Africa and Asia. On the right-hand side of the page, visitors can look through the "Behind the News" updates and even donate online to the World Food Program. Finally, the site also contains a calendar of events and links to papers from the World Bank on related topics. [KMG]

[Back to Contents](#) | [Back to Top](#)

Global Wildlife Disease News Map

<http://wildlifedisease.nbi.gov/wdinNewsDigestMap.jsp>

How does one populate an interactive map of wildlife disease? Well, the good people at the Wildlife Disease Information Node (WDIN) have done just that by combing through RSS alerts, science sites and weblogs in order to create this fascinating and tremendously useful resource for population biologists and others

who might be interested in such matters. On the map, visitors can toggle map filters that include "Wildfire", "Human/Wildlife", "Domestic/Wildlife", and "Disease Type". Visitors can also elect to zoom in and out across the map in order to look for items of interest. Moving on, the site also has a "Browse Map Articles" section that allows visitors to scan through the full text of recent items added to the map. Finally, visitors can also elect to view the map as a satellite image, or they can also view the map as a hybrid if they wish. [KMG]

[Back to Contents](#) | [Back to Top](#)

The Industrial Designers Society of America [Macromedia Flash Player]

<http://www.idsa.org/>

Some of our readers may wonder, "What exactly is industrial design?" Fortunately The Industrial Designers Society of America (IDSA) is well-positioned to provide such an answer. On their site, they define Industrial design (ID) as "the professional service of creating and developing concepts and specifications that optimize the function, value and appearance of products and systems for the mutual benefit of both user and manufacturer." On their site, current and future industrial designers can learn about the field, read about design news, and even sign up to become a member of the IDSA. New visitors may wish to start by perusing the "Features" on the right-hand side of the page. Recent features offered here have included a primer of getting a design job, creating "designs for humanity", and spotlight interviews of prominent designers. Also, "The Buzz" section in the "Design News" area is a great way to stay on top of the latest trends and developments in the field of industrial design. [KMG]

[Back to Contents](#) | [Back to Top](#)

Index on Censorship

<http://www.indexoncensorship.org/>

Based in London, the Index on Censorship is committed to logging free expression abuses in scores of countries, reporting on censorship issues from all over the world, and adding to the debates on those issues. On the top of their homepage, visitors will see several sections, including "About", "Magazine", "Events", and "Projects". Further down on the site, visitors can read the latest news from the world of censorship, including reports on restrictions placed on journalists and different legal battles intended to secure the rights of journalists across the globe. Visitors are also welcome to browse through their archives, which date back to October 2005. The site also includes a number of RSS feeds and tags. [KMG]

[Back to Contents](#) | [Back to Top](#)

Baldwin Library of Children's Literature, Digital Collection

<http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/UFDC/UFDC.aspx?c=juv>

The Baldwin Library Digital Collection at the University of Florida includes over 2500 fully digitized children's books, published in the United States and Great Britain between 1850 and 1900 (selected from more than more than 100,000 in the Baldwin Library of Historical Children's Literature, dating from the mid-1600s through 2007). Although baby-boomers may be disappointed in not finding their childhood favorites, it is nonetheless amazing to page through an illustrated edition of Little Red Riding Hood, published in 1895 by Raphael Tuck & Sons. Browsing through the list of recently added items also reveals the digital version of "[Bill an' me": sum ov our adventers in de "Midway Plaisance"](#)", a souvenir book documenting two boys' adventures at the World's Columbian Exposition, the World's Fair held in Chicago in 1893. Books in the collection reflect the mores of the times in which they were published; for example, although the protagonists seem on the youthful side to 21st century eyes, Bill an me's adventures include the drinking of alcoholic beverages. [DS]

[Back to Contents](#) | [Back to Top](#)

Network Tools

Glary Utilities 2.5.2

<http://www.glaryutilities.com/>

Glary Utilities offers this free application to help users improve their system's performance and also protect their privacy. After installing the application, users can remove and back up faculty registry entries, along with offering a secure file deletion feature. This version is compatible with computers running Windows 98 and newer. [KMG]

[Back to Contents](#) | [Back to Top](#)

MozBackup 1.4.7

<http://mozbackup.jasnapaka.com/>

Firefox and Thunderbird are both excellent programs, but taking the time to back them up can be a labored process. MozBackup 1.4.7 offers a bit of relief as it can be used to save and restore all the bookmarks, extensions, and other personal settings from such programs. Visitors can choose which parts of the profile they wish to save or restore, and then the program will begin its work. This version is compatible with computers running Windows 95 and newer. [KMG]

[Back to Contents](#) | [Back to Top](#)

In The News

Robert Rauschenberg, master of different art forms, dies at 82

Robert Rauschenberg: 1925-2008

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2008/05/14/MNOB10LKC9.DTL>

Robert Rauschenberg and Modern Dance, Partners for Life [Free registration may be required]

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/14/arts/dance/14coll.html?ref=arts>

Rauschenberg Shifted Path of American Art [Real Player]

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=90411572>

Metropolitan Museum of Art: Robert Rauschenberg

<http://www.metmuseum.org/special/Rauschenberg/images.asp>

Let the World In: Prints by Robert Rauschenberg

<http://www.nga.gov/exhibitions/2007/rauschenberg/index.shtm>

Robert Rauschenberg on De Kooning

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tpCWh3IFtDQ>

Robert Rauschenberg began his life in Port Arthur, Texas in a family where art was a decidedly uncommon experience. This past Monday Rauschenberg passed away; leaving a legacy of artistic works that includes everything from printmaking to his "combines", which bring together non-traditional materials (such as found objects) in an innovative fashion. Such combines included his 1959 "Monogram", which featured a stuffed goat, a tire, a police barrier, a shoe heel, a tennis ball, and paint. Rauschenberg spent much of his career responding to and moving away from the Abstract Expressionists, and he also helped pave the way for conceptual and Pop art. His influences included the paintings of Leonardo da Vinci, Kurt Schwitters, and the found object works by Marcel Duchamp. Rauschenberg was known for his gregariousness and one of his playful jokes is remembered as one of the most unusual events in art history. In short, Rauschenberg found himself at the home of his friend, artist Willem de Kooning, and he informed him that he wished to erase one of his drawings. De Kooning was skeptical, but he allowed it to happen, and the work was then known as "Erased de Kooning Drawing". In his later years, when asked what kept him going, Rauschenberg replied, "I'm curious. I'm still discovering things every day." [KMG]

The first link will take visitors to an obituary written by San Francisco art critic Kenneth Baker. The second link leads to an interesting article from this Wednesday's New York Times, which discusses Rauschenberg's interactions with the world of modern dance. Moving on, the third link leads to a short audio news feature on Rauschenberg's work and legacy offered by National Public Radio. The fourth link leads to a selection of Rauschenberg's work which was part of an exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art several years ago. The fifth link will take users to an online exhibit of Rauschenberg's prints created by the National Gallery of Art. Finally, the last link leads to an intriguing clip of Rauschenberg describing his famous encounter with a drawing by Willem de Kooning. [KMG]

[Back to Contents](#) | [Back to Top](#)

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