

Mapping Thoreau Country. *Access:* <http://www.mappingthoreaucountry.org/>.

Originally created in 2013 through grants from the University of Massachusetts-Lowell and the Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities, Mapping Thoreau Country is a visually stimulating project led by Political Science and Gender Studies Professor Susan E. Gallagher. According to its own description, the site “uses historical maps to organize and interpret documentary materials related to Thoreau’s travels throughout Massachusetts.” This makes it a useful tool for studying Thoreau as a writer, philosopher, abolitionist, and Transcendentalist. Using more than two dozen locations around Massachusetts as a framework, this site provides a historical context in which to understand and appreciate more deeply his life and works.

Although there are plans to expand the site to include maps of additional states to which Thoreau travelled, at the moment the content is limited to Massachusetts. The two primary sections of the site are “Thoreau’s Itinerary” and “Thoreau’s Maps.” “Thoreau’s Itinerary,” also accessible by clicking on the locations on a map of Massachusetts on the homepage, features places such as Concord (the place of Thoreau’s birth, death, and most of his life), Cambridge (where he attended Harvard), and Wellfleet on Cape Cod. Each location includes a narrative description of its significance to Thoreau’s life and writings, as well as pictures, maps, documents, and quotes throughout. “Thoreau’s Maps” contains items such as his survey of Walden Pond, a map of his 1839 excursion with his brother on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers, and his sketches and extensive commentary on the maps of Samuel de Champlain.

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Perhaps the most valuable aspect of the site is the vast network of links to resources from other sites, including museums, libraries, historical associations, schools, parks, and nonprofit organizations. Furthermore, these links are much more than a mere webliography because they are all thoughtfully embedded into the text and images, providing a descriptive context for each resource. In addition, quotes and references to Thoreau’s writings are helpfully linked to the corresponding works in Google Books, Hathi Trust, Internet Archive, or the Library of Congress.

Overall, Mapping Thoreau Country is easy to navigate and concisely focused on its subject, making it a valuable tool for students and teachers of Thoreau in literature, philosophy, history, political science, and more. The proposed expansion of the site to states beyond Massachusetts will be an excellent upgrade to an already solid resource.—*Brian T. Sullivan, Alfred University, sullivan@alfred.edu*

The National Museum of African American History and Culture. *Access:* <https://nmaahc.si.edu>.

To best appreciate the simple elegance of the website of the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC), one must first consider the museum itself. Opened on September 24, 2016, NMAAHC is the newest Smithsonian Institution museum. It stands on a five-acre site on the National Mall and currently holds more than 40,000 objects, many of them personal heirlooms donated to the museum. The museum’s powerful, fluid, and growing collection represents an essential American story, that of the black experience in America from the Middle Passage through the present day.

Through its straightforward and well-considered design, the NMAAHC website effectively navigates and narrates this complex collection. The site offers simple, clean, and thoughtful documentation that encourages

online visitors and on-site visitors to experience and interact with the collection. The text pages are easy to read and uncluttered, providing the reader with thorough information at every turn.

The orange menu box in the top left corner of every page allows visitors to confidently navigate the site. “Visit” offers FAQs, museum maps, parking information, and time-sensitive information concerning ticket and pass purchases. “Explore” provides access to thousands of digital photographs, artifacts, documents, and media, along with extensive descriptive data for each item. Gateways to museum materials include a rich collection of online exhibitions and a series of interpretive stories written by NMAAHC staff members. “Connect” provides the NMAAHC mobile app to complement on-site visits and register for events celebrating African American history and culture through an interactive form. “Learn” allows users to track book talks, discussion and film series, and make use of classroom materials and educational resources, as well as locate information on upcoming programs and activities. “About” provides extensive information about the NMAAHC—its history, leadership, and founding donors; easy to follow instructions for using NMAAHC images and media files; and calendar information for upcoming and recent events.

The NMAAHC site serves as a gateway to the museum’s powerfully rich and complex collection. For those investigating the center remotely, the website provides an elegant and comprehensive look at the expanding collection. For on-site visitors, the site has the added benefit of complementing and enhancing their real-time museum experience.—*Sarah Goodwin Thiel, University of Kansas Libraries, sgtthiel@ku.edu*

Scientific Committee of Antarctic Research. *Access:* <http://www.scar.org/>.

The website of the Scientific Committee of Antarctic Research (SCAR) is a valuable resource for students and researchers in the

sciences. SCAR is an international committee made up of representatives from nations participating in the International Council for Science. It coordinates the scientific efforts of the Antarctic region and provides scientific advice to the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings.

Under the “Science” tab, researchers will find the “Science Groups”—disciplinary groupings of research efforts—very useful. Geosciences, life sciences, physical sciences, and even humanities are represented. Site users are also offered science themes such as “Antarctica and Climate,” “Ice Sheets and Under the Ice,” “Ecosystems and Biodiversity” among others as access points to SCAR’s data.

Users seeking public data sets will find a broad range of scientific data from Antarctic researchers warehoused and made accessible through the SCAR site. SCAR’s collection of data is especially rich in GIS data sets, but there are also collections of biodiversity data, oceanographic data, and seismic data. One of the benefits of having a committee such as SCAR overseeing the collection and archiving of Antarctic research data is they are able to standardize systems to maximize access, openness, and efficiency among the international and multinational groups performing research in Antarctic regions.

Researchers in areas such as policy studies, public affairs, and political science will find SCAR’s “Policy” resources of great value. SCAR provides access to the Antarctic Treaty System, as well as papers and presentations delivered to the Antarctic treaty meetings. The rare, if not unique, shared governance of the continent of Antarctica is a fertile area for study, and SCAR provides good access to their documents.

The access the SCAR site provides to research areas, GIS data, and policy documents is rich and varied. The site should be highly useful to scientists and social scientists whose research areas include the Antarctic regions.—*Nicholas Schiller, Washington State University -Vancouver, schiller@usu.edu* 