Documenting the American South

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If you’re interested in researching the American South, then the University of North Carolina (UNC)-Chapel Hill has an extensive digital collection for you. Documenting the American South is a fascinating digital collection that is geared towards K–12 and college-level students and teachers. The collection provides its users a variety of sources ranging from texts, images, and other materials that originate from various libraries of the UNC. These materials provide a springboard into several aspects of the American South and the Tar Heel State.

The site’s main menu is located at the top of the homepage, offering links to several pages including: “Collections,” “Subjects,” and “Geographic.” The “Collections” page contains information regarding the primary sources for the literature, history, and culture of the American South. Each collection provides an index so that the user can easily locate different types of information pertaining to the topic. For example, the collection entitled “The Church in the Southern Black Community” lists autobiographies, biographies, and encyclopedias.

The “Subjects” page provides an index to a list of Library of Congress subject headings. Each item within Documenting the American South has been assigned a subject heading from this list. It is an expedient way to locate information within this collection.

The “Geographic” page is a wonderful resource for accessing materials related to specific states and North Carolina counties.

Each link listed at the top of this page takes you to interactive U.S. and North Carolina county maps. Clicking on a location within one of these maps will take you to a list of links. These links provide access to various resources (i.e., illustrations, photographs, and oral history interviews) related to either a particular U.S. state or a county within North Carolina.

The Web site’s overall design is very easy to navigate. Whether you’re a first-time user or a pro, this site has been designed in such a way that you can locate material quickly.

Documenting the American South digital collection is informative and user-friendly, providing access to a rich resource for history of the American South. Students and faculty from a variety of disciplines will find this site useful.—Tom Sommer, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, thomas.sommer@unlv.edu


The founder of the Environmental Illness Resource site, Matthew Hogg, describes it as an information resource and interactive community site for people suffering from a range of chronic illnesses, including chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalopathy, fibromyalgia, multiple chemical sensitivity, and allergies. Much of the content on the site is authored by Hogg and based on his research and readings. The articles are clear and well written but frequently lack references, making it difficult for a visitor to locate the original sources.

An advisory board added in 2006 includes two individuals with doctorates, one of whom is also a naturopathic doctor. However, it isn’t clear how much of a role this board has in reviewing content.

The Illness Overviews section is well authored. Again, additional references...