

When he did finally obtain a job as a lawyer, he was told that because of his race he would have to work out of sight, with no opportunity to interact with clients. At the same time, the film is heartening in that it captures the faces and voices of men and women who proved unstoppable. Brooke, after all, became *Senator Brooke*.

Long Road to Justice is a pioneering effort that does not purport to be definitive. It reflects the gaps in our knowledge about the intersection of race relations and the courts in Massachusetts, as well as about the history of black jurists. Much more is known and exhibited, for example, about developments prior to the Civil War and after World War II than about the period in between. Filling these gaps would be a worthwhile goal of a future exhibition. One can only hope that any such initiative will be as attentive to the education of the public as *Long Road to Justice*.

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THE DIGITAL ACADEMY:
AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY
OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY WEBSITES

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SINCE the days of Tacitus and Pliny, historians have used the same basic tools. The instruments with which we record information, be they the ink and papyrus of antiquity or the ink and paper of more recent times, have changed little. And today's archives and libraries are not so different from the famous libraries of ancient Alexandria. With the advent of the World Wide Web, however, the historical craft is undergoing a historic transition. With the push of a button, scholars can access documents and images they might previously have had to travel a thousand miles to see. Scholarly and popular websites about history have sprung up all along the information superhighway. Professional historians—prodded, often, by their students—are finally beginning to recognize the potential of the Web. At this point the majority of websites devoted to historical subjects are still geared toward the interested but casual visitor. Determining which of these sites can

also be of genuine utility to the serious researcher is our endeavor here.

The websites profiled below are of particular interest to scholars researching African-American history in New England. Our list, which is by no means comprehensive, begins in New England and then turns to sites that have a wider focus. While there is still, regrettably, a relative dearth of websites providing access to meaningful archival resources—the Library of Congress website being an important and extraordinary exception—the sites listed below are worth visiting both for the information they contain and for the guidance they may provide for further investigation.

NEW ENGLAND SITES

1. *Museum of Afro American History in Boston,*
www.afroammuseum.org

The nationally recognized MAAH has been providing scholars and the public alike with access to important materials since 1963. The museum's website extends that tradition. The site offers "virtual tours" of a number of key locations, many of which can be found on a walking tour of Boston's Black Heritage Trail. While the website is not a comprehensive archival resource for scholars, it does offer a glimpse of the museum's impressive collection of cultural artifacts relating to African-American life in the North prior to the Civil War.

2. *SeacoastNH.com Black History,*
<http://seacoastnh.com/blackhistory>

This well-organized, magazine-style website, operated out of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, offers a nice variety of resources for those interested in the history of African Americans in coastal New England. A series of articles on black life in the region and a virtual tour of Portsmouth's own Black Heritage Trail constitute the bulk of the site's offerings. Its greatest contribution, however, is a section on slavery in Portsmouth that includes profiles of slaveowning families and the men and women they bought and sold. The efforts of local abolitionists, such as their publication of a newspaper, the *Morning Star*, are also documented.

3. *Maine Memory Network*, www.mainememory.net

This beautifully designed and easy-to-use website, run by the Maine Historical Society, puts hundreds of images of the state's history, especially its participation in the Civil War, at users' fingertips. The site is a must visit for historians looking for illustrations, maps, and photographs relating to African Americans in Maine. The search engine is the best vehicle for finding the relevant images.

Two other New England sites worthy of mention—although they either lack substantive documentary resources or are not restricted to African-American history in particular—are those of the Rhode Island Black Heritage Society (www.providenceri.com/ri_blackheritage/) and the Amistad Project (www.amistad.org).

GENERAL SITES

4. *African-American Collections/Exhibitions, Library of Congress* (Web addresses below)

It is fortunate for historians that the most vaunted repository of resources relating to American history and culture has chosen to provide generous online access to its extraordinary collections. The Library of Congress has poured energy and money into digitizing most of its seemingly overwhelming catalog of documents, making them available to scholars and students around the world. The library's website achieves that rare combination of being at once immensely useful to the scholar and accessible, even inviting, to the more casual visitor.

A few sites within the LOC website serve as gateways to the library's astonishingly vast holdings on African-American history. As the authors of one site point out, these holdings reflect "the nearly 500 years of the black experience in the Western hemisphere." The first of these sites is a companion to a print publication, *African American Mosaic: A Library of Congress Resource Guide for the Study of Black History and Culture* (<http://lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits/african/intro.html>). The site is not comprehensive; it offers a mere sample of the library's African-American collections, which, as the site's authors note, include "books, periodicals, prints, photographs, music, film, and recorded sound."

The *African American Odyssey* site (<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/aaohtml/>) not only includes an online version of the library's popular and quite extraordinary exhibit of the same name but offers users ac-

cess to nearly four hundred pamphlets written between 1824 and 1909 on slavery, emancipation, black suffrage, and related subjects. Visitors to this site will also find links to the well-known slave narratives collected by the Federal Writers' Project in the 1930s.

The *Odyssey* site is part of the LOC's much larger *American Memory* site (<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem>), exploration of which is required work for historians of African America. This site boasts links to more than seven million digital items, including a collection of African-American sheet music, a number of texts that bear upon the role of the black church in Southern life, the papers of Frederick Douglass, hundreds of documents relating to the Civil War, recordings of traditionally black music, photographs from the jazz era, and myriad other collections teeming with resources for the historian. The LOC sites are simply not to be missed.

5. *The Schomburg Center for Black Culture*,
<http://www.nypl.org/research/sc/sc.html>

Another online treasure is the New York Public Library's "Digital Schomburg." This invaluable resource offers a guide to the research library in Manhattan and detailed information about how to use the NYPL's collections. More important, the website provides access to a massive collection of images of nineteenth-century African-American life, as well as the full text of often hard-to-find published works by African-American women writers of the same era. The site also features online exhibits on various subjects; a current exhibit centers on the Harlem Renaissance. The Digital Schomburg embodies the best the Internet currently has to offer for the serious historian.

6. *The John Henrik Clarke Africana Library*,
<http://www.library.cornell.edu/africana/>

Cornell University's Africana Library is home to a vast collection encompassing all aspects of African-American life and Africana Studies. While few of these documents are available online, the library's website does offer immensely useful bibliographies on topics such as Afrocentricity, black independent schools, and black cultural nationalism. A surprisingly beneficial resource is the online list of master's theses written on relevant subjects at Cornell. The site provides a thorough guide to the library's collections and is well worth exploring.

7. *The John Hope Franklin Collection of African and African-American Documentation*,
<http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/franklin/>

This collection, founded in 1995 with the support of Duke University's renowned professor emeritus, provides digital access to a wealth of documents relating to the entire African-American experience. The website is especially rich in resources for anyone studying nineteenth-century slavery or African-American life in the mid-to-late twentieth century. New acquisitions are regularly added to the current collection of thousands of documents, images, and oral histories, making this one of the most comprehensive online archival resources for scholars.

Finally, scholars investigating any aspect of African-American history will want to visit the websites for Yale's Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition (www.yale.edu/glc/) and Harvard's W. E. B. Du Bois Institute for Afro-American Research (<http://web-dubois.fas.harvard.edu>). While they do not provide online access to archives, both sites serve as important networking tools for scholars.

As a visit to any of the websites profiled above indicates, the Internet is a promising and already quite useful tool for historians. By providing easy access to information whose audience was once severely limited by geography, the Web can only enrich the histories we are able to tell.

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