Internet Reviews


The Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia (JCMRM) on the campus of Ferris State University (FSU) houses the nation’s largest collection of artifacts documenting Jim Crow and racist caricatures of African Americans. Although the museum opened in 2012, the collection dates back to the early 1970s when David Pilgrim—former FSU Sociology professor—began collecting these objects. For him, the purpose of the collection has always been to document a facet of American history, to shed light on the cruelty of racism, and to “use objects of intolerance to teach tolerance and promote social justice.”

JCMRM’s website serves as an internationally accessible introduction to the museum’s collection and mission, as well as an overview of Jim Crow racism in America. The website provides an intuitive and easy to navigate interface. From the homepage, dropdown menus offer users five options: “About Us,” “The Museum,” “News,” “Resources,” and “Donate.” The webpages nested under each of these menus provide plentiful information about the museum’s founder, the collections, and further learning opportunities.

Essays by Pilgrim under the “About Us” tab describe the founding of the collection as well as his struggle to preserve a hateful slice of history in order to use it for good. Under “The Museum” tab, users find digitized collections arranged as exhibits alongside encyclopedia-style essays that deconstruct racist caricatures. The scholarly essays include references to both primary and secondary sources. The online exhibits embed images, artifacts, videos, and documents from the collection. Exhibit topics cover Jim Crow from its origins to the present day, mirroring the coverage of the museum collection.


The Owl Research Institute (ORI), a non-profit organization “dedicated to owl conservation through research and education,” provides a wealth of information through its website. Anyone looking for a quick cute overload will be more than satisfied by the ORI’s robust Instagram presence, which provides beautiful photographs of fierce predators on the wing, as well as adorably fluffy owl chicks. Beautiful wildlife photography is a hallmark of this website. Nearly every page offers a stunning photograph of owls in their natural setting, or photo documentation of the work being done in the field by the staff and volunteer researchers working with these birds.

Of more practical use to an academic audience is the information presented in the rest of the site, which is divided into sections on ORI’s research programs, owl conservation efforts, and owl identification guides. The species identification guides are particularly...
useful, presenting detailed information and beautiful photograph of all 19 North American owl species. The guides are broken out by species name, although unfortunately for those not already familiar with the varieties of owls, it’s not possible to browse by geographical range. However, once a species has been selected, the field guides are very satisfying: accessible in tone, thoroughly detailed but not overly academic. In addition to standard field guide information like diet, range, size, and habitat, each species page also offers recordings of the owl calls, and informative, interesting asides about the species written in a conversational tone.

Other sections on owl adaptations and habitat offer useful facts and explanations for everything from their asymmetrical ears to their egg-laying practices. While informative, these sections are not particularly scholarly in tone, which may make some students unsure of the site’s suitability as a source for their academic work. Fortunately, there is a comprehensive bibliography dating back to the 1980s of scholarly publications produced by researchers affiliated with ORI. Unfortunately there are no links to preprints or open access versions of these articles.

ORI relies on donations to sustain its work, and there are prominent requests for donations sprinkled throughout the site, which may give some students pause. While not scholarly in tone, the ORI website offers students an authoritative and accessible guide to the owls of North America.—Eli Gandour-Rood, University of Puget Sound, egandourrood@pugetsound.edu


WageIndicator (WI) maps wages across countries and occupations. The data reflects the past 36 months of user-donated wage surveys, living wages for 68 countries, and minimum wage laws for 125 countries using 1,700 ISCOs (the International Labour Organization’s international standard classification of occupation). WI updates SalaryCheck’s 81 countries’ wages and working conditions quarterly from survey data on living wage calculations and twice a year from working conditions. One chart reports minutes of work to buy a sandwich locally from The Economist’s Big Mac Index. “Wages in Context” provides 13 options in Google Maps from minimum to living wages, with countries colored by tiers. Publications based on WI data, mostly self-published, are available, many by affiliated universities such as Harvard Law.

WI, while free for basic access, requests a donation from “companies, NGOs, and global organizations.” Suggested fees for downloading an entire country or region’s data, spreadsheets of wages in context, or countries not yet listed, vary depending on country size. Their Informality Index of the informal economy and laws on minimum wages, based on a worker’s position, has monthly updates of global data. Worldwide labor laws, 850 Collective Agreements from 52 countries, are full-text and samples are free. Academics may buy access to the full dataset for €1,000 per year. A free app facilitates offline survey collection on tablets, including full-text of the instrument, codebooks, methods, and FAQs.

The menu bar offers three categories: “Salaries,” “Labour Law,” and “WageIndicator Foundation.” “Salaries” provides information on gender pay gap, wages, surveys, and more. “Labour Law” hosts collective bargaining, regulations, and the platform economy. “WageIndicator Foundation” lists projects, publications by year, teams/partners, countries listed, news, and most importantly, the Research Lab, where researchers view prices.

WI is a not-for-profit supported by ads onsite and donations. WI is connected with the European Commission’s with Innovative Tools Against Gender Pay Gaps 2014–2016. The WageIndicator Foundation is hosted at the Amsterdam Institute for Labour Studies and Deutsche Post Foundation’s Institute of Labor Economics’ International Data Services Center.—Jennifer Stubbs, New York University-Shanghai, jas58@nyu.edu