

SITE REVIEWS

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SPECIAL FEATURE

Do Your Research

Sites you need to visit before you go to the polls.

By Dan Johnson

Hey, remember when George W. Bush and John McCain were close to stripping to the waist and attempting to give each other a Stone Cold Stunner? Yeah, that was at about the same time that Al Gore spent a solid three weeks ripping Bill Bradley on national television. Newsflash: that was just a few months ago. We caught you napping, didn't we? You forgot that it was an election year because the action since has been so incredibly boring. That's okay. We understand. You really should know something before you

go to the polls, though. Don't even get up from where you are—everything you need to know is online.

First off, check out what the candidates themselves have to say. Head over to

al gore.com (don't do what I did and go to gore2000.com—all you can get there is a chance to buy a plush doll of Demi the Democratic Donkey).

Pretty standard stuff from the Veep here; meet his family, meet his wife, see his policies, etc. Much like Al himself, the site is staid and unconvincing. Articulately bland policy wonk statements are the dominant mode of communication. There's not much in the way of interesting stuff here, aside from the daily snipe at George W. Bush about some minutiae or other.

Bush's site isn't any great shakes, either. If you cruise to georgewbush.com, the first thing you'll notice is the similarity to the Gore site. It's as if they use the same design firm, and the same people write the releases from both camps. His policies are listed in the most

inoffensive and uncommunicative way possible. A good bit of Bush's web site is devoted to meaningless jabs at Gore and defenses against Democratic attacks. Some humor is available in the youth zone, where you can read such treatises as "Running for President is a lot like playing baseball."

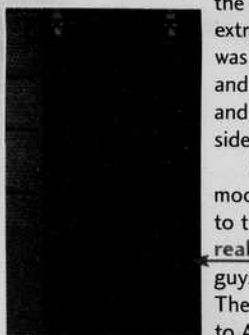
So where to go to really figure things out? A good place to start is politics.com. If you want inside information, it's all here. The positions of several major presidential candidates are distilled down to plain English. Find out

who's donating to the big boys, and have a searing debate in their forums afterwards. When you're done with them, go to salon.com and look at the political story archive. Salon is very good at investigative reporting (they broke the news of Henry Hyde's extramarital affair when he was going after Clinton), and report both the good and the bad from an outsiders' perspective.

If you're really in the mood for some dirt, click to the Skeleton Closet at realchange.org. These guys dislike everybody.

The site is a monument to American political corruption, detailing shady deals, money switches and other things embarrassing to every major presidential candidate and a few other prominent political figures. They're well-rounded, with links to information on historical scandals (anyone remember Teapot Dome?), 1996 candidates, and their ideas on reform.

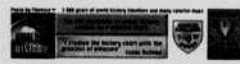
After that, you need a break and a laugh. Check out ficus2000.com. If an actor can become President, why not a potted plant? •



ACADEMIC AIDS

Hyperhistory hyperhistory.com

Some might argue that it's impossible to collect and present everything that ever happened in the course of human history in one place. The folks at hyperhistory would probably agree, but that hasn't kept them from attempting to give it a shot. Their synchroptic (they'll define it for you) chart follows the developments in all the major cultures of the world, making connections you might not have thought of before—all in bite-sized, digestible nuggets. *CDavenport*
Usability: B+ Content: A-



The webpage shows a sample of the unique World History Chart and links to the world's many great Republican sites.

HyperHistory Online is based on the groundbreaking concept and was developed as a companion to the World History Chart of Andrew Hildner. The original version of the chart is presently displayed in many Library Buildings around the world. The Chart is a public domain gift - not to be removed from here.



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Guide To Grammar and Writing ccc.commnet.edu/grammar

It's 1:17am and you're proofing that paper due in few hours. But you can't remember if there's an apostrophe—is it it's or its? Find out quick with this online grammar and writing reference. From comma usage to tense sequence, it's the easiest way to get answers to your writing dilemmas. *Efeick*
Usability: B Content: A

TECH TIPS

Webcrawler webcrawler.com

Webcrawler is an easy-to-use search engine with all the traditional search engine amenities including yellow pages, maps and auctions. And here, as with most search engines, you can personalize the page and customize it with your own personal preferences. One of the wonderful features of this site is the fact that it has no banner advertisements. The ads are still there,