

The ‘Compleat’ Revised Guide to Liberal and Progressive News and Politics on the Web

As seen on Daily Kos,
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In this discussion, I explore where to look on the web for political content and news content which have a liberal or progressive flavor. Since this is a summary article, I don't cover RSS feeds, newsgroups or environmental websites, although you can certainly find out a lot about the environment at some of the websites mentioned. These are the websites I go to looking for stories for my own liberal/progressive news and politics website, [Evans Liberal Politics](#) (shameless plug). (The news portion is a blog embedded in a larger website, of which this Guide to Liberal News and Politics is a part.)

Let's start with [AlterNet](#). This is one of the largest, most highly regarded progressive websites, with truthful news, columnists, videos and blogs. Sign up for email newsletters on the topics which are of interest; you can do that with almost all of the websites listed here. There are many “threads” of discussions going on at any given time with quite a few of the articles. You can email or print anything and pages print with print large enough to read, even with Internet Explorer (6 or 7).

One of the finest blogs in existence for us progressives and for anyone concerned with the truth is [Daily Kos](#), which is hosted by one Markos Moulitsas Zuniga. (Hey, it's official! Apparently Evans Liberal Politics is “too controversial”. Without any notification, we have been officially banned from posting on Daily Kos. You know, it's still a pretty good website and we're still going to use it, but you eventually will have to admit, it's pretty rah-rah.) It gets a hefty traffic of two to four million readers per day. (Of course we know this, we're here). Be sure you check out the “diaries.” ...there are some conservative dissenting opinions in the open “threads,” as well, and the comments are always entertaining and occasionally enlightening. Daily Kos is where a lot of the major networks go to uncover breaking news stories and the bloggers there are really active. On Daily Kos, I post articles as [seawolf1957](#). As with many of these websites, you need to register with your email, providing a username and a password, for full-featured access.

Another great one is [Common Dreams](#), the non-profit news and views website with a couple of hundred links to news and blog websites and columnists. It's absolutely one of the best liberal web sites out there.

If you just had to go to three websites to get a good liberal or progressive perspective about what's going on in the world, AlterNet, Daily Kos and Common Dreams would be my choice. I guess coming in at number four would be [Talking Points Memo](#), discussed below.

Interlude of “Middle of the Road” Websites

Here are a few really, really good websites which I want to insert here which are much more “centrist”, which now represents more closely where the nation as a whole finds itself these days. The point is, these are good news sources: [ABC News Politics](#); [CBS News Politics](#); [CNN Politics](#); [CQ Politics](#); [NPR Politics](#); [Politico](#) (OK, so no one SAID I wasn’t a Democrat!); [Politico’s The Arena](#); [Politics 1](#); [Political Information\(.com\)](#) (great search engine of many sites); [Politics.com](#); [Real Clear Politics](#); [Red State](#) (token right wing site — in my opinion, one of the very most effective ones); [Reuters Politics](#); [The Washington Post](#); [Washington Post – Politics](#); [TIME – politics](#); [Wired.com – Politics](#); [Yahoo News – Politics](#). (I’m sure there’ll be more....)

If you want a good dose of the real left, try [Truthout](#), which has hundreds of news stories and turns up a LOT of dirt on the Administration. Now that Obama is President, you will find material there both pro and con, but always enlightening. I understand America Online has restricted their users on this one (emailing), though I’m not sure.

Here are two new ones for our list: Be sure to check out [MichaelMoore.com](#) and also [Antiwar.com](#). There are some things you aren’t going to find anywhere else that you’ll find on these two.

Now, about “the truth.” There are a few websites which make it their business to check the media, politicians and candidates’ statements and tell YOU, the (news) “consumer” just what is true and what is false, and to what degree. Here are a couple of the best: [Factcheck](#) (sign up for the email newsletters from this one) and from down in St. Petersburg, Florida (yes, Florida), [Politifact](#). This last is a service of the St. Petersburg Times. Even though the election is over, we all need to stay in tune with the truth about ongoing current events and what is going on in Washington. You will always get the truth from these two websites, although sometimes it’s not complete, and it’s not the same as digging out the truth from the whole web. One reader did make the comment (which I think is justified) that they are a little too interested in being evenhanded, but it’s worth stopping by.

One of the best progressive magazines is [The Nation](#), and if you are of an intellectual bent you will like [Harpers](#), which magazine has been around since 1850. Both of these are also print magazines, and the websites want you to subscribe but you can still read them online for free. One of my very favorite places to stop by is [Talking Points Memo](#), where you have your own profile and blog. Be sure you read the news and check out such features as Muckraker, Election Central, the Café, and by all means read “The Horse’s Mouth.”

If you care about the “spinning” of the news and corporate control over content, be sure to check out [Media Matters for America](#).

Recently I found a great resource, a magazine which has been around for 100 years, 1909 – 2009. The online edition of [The Progressive](#) is a wonderful collection of news and a lot of editorial content and columnists, including Will Durst, Barbara Ehrenreich, Jim Hightower and Howard Zinn. There is also a radio station. Readers of mine will be seeing a lot of content from The Progressive on my own [Evans Politics](#) pages.

Speaking of radio stations, one reader made me aware of two good resources, which I will just give from his comment: Try out “[Ian Masters Background Briefing](#) and [Live From The Left Coast](#),” (which is also a service of Ian Masters). “These two together comprise what is basically a two hour public affairs program with some of the best interviews you can find on the radio.

Usually one-half hour with each guest. It airs each Sunday on [KPFK \(90.7 FM\)](#) (‘Progressive and Independent News, Talk and Music’) from Los Angeles, or it can be listened to online at KPFK, or the shows can be downloaded as mp3 files anytime from the websites above. It sometimes takes 2 or 3 weeks for the shows to be updated on the site after they air. To whet your appetite, the guests on the 3/29/09 shows were Joseph Stiglitz, Matt Taibbi, Juan Cole, and Craig Mullaney. The programs cover both domestic and foreign affairs.” Any other suggestions? Just [email me](#).

One of my favorite sites to “just drop by” happens to be owned by a friend of mine, Robert Rouse. If you enjoy unconventional and basically liberal stories, and great links and photos, often with human interest value, drop by [Freeze Dried Gray Matter](#) for great entertainment. And you probably will learn something while you’re being entertained.

While we’re on the subject of technology and the web as it relates to liberal politics, a couple of readers said, quite correctly, that this subject was too important to overlook. So be sure to check out the [Electronic Frontier Foundation](#). From the site: “EFF is the leading civil liberties group defending your rights in the digital world.” And I often stop by [Wired News](#), for (their words) “in-depth coverage of current and future trends in technology, and how they are shaping business, entertainment, communications, science, (and) politics”. This site is really good, and entertaining, and one should not underestimate it as a resource on, for example, all those fields dealing with government wiretapping and spying and also the whole internet in terms of privacy and corporate interests. It’s just worth stopping by, period.

A good website to check out regularly is [OpEdNews](#), with many excellent news and especially opinion and editorial articles, which are current and informative. There is real insight in a lot of these pieces. The oldest – and one of the very best – progressive Democratic blogs around, which claims to be the fastest growing site on the web, is [Democrats.com](#). I was very impressed by this site. Another huge, quite Left and with a LOT of news and user contributed articles is [Democratic Underground](#). They have had over 43,500,000 posts since January, 2001. If it’s happening, you can find it here. These three are progressive, as opposed to liberal, voices. Another website I have been enjoying a lot lately is [Taegan Goddard’s Political Wire](#), which has some very good current, inside stuff.

Also check out [The Nation Institute](#), which is a very impressive website where you can learn a lot. A little more arcane is The Rockridge Institute, which is about “framing” the debate in

American society from the progressive point of view. It is inactive now but very instructive. The Republicans were framing the debate before progressives knew what framing was!!

How did we win the 2008 Presidential Election and gain such majorities in congress? It was grassroots organization and networking, and hard work on the ground, especially locally, that made it happen. (It was that great Democrat, Thomas “Tip” O’Neill who said, “all politics is local.”) One of the major forces in the progressive grassroots networking involved in our successes has been and is [Netroots Nation](#), mainly known for their conventions for progressives, but they have a strong online presence too. Originally they were a project of Daily Kos. The Wikipedia article about them is [here](#). Their Facebook page is [here](#). If you are really involved and you really want to network, look no further.

Let me take a moment to relate something which was an important consideration in the election. Washington lawmakers are notoriously influenced by lobbyists, so I want to show how that pertained to the Presidential election, even though it is over. Lobbying is a regulated profession; you have to be registered to be an active lobbyist. We have all been suffering in the current financial meltdown, and perhaps it was partly because of the informed electorate’s insight as to McCain’s campaign staff makeup and its “ownership” by corporate America, that he lost. It couldn’t have helped him – American’s are fed up with lobbyists running Washington! Let’s look at the Republican candidate, John McCain, in terms of the number of lobbyists who worked on this candidate’s campaign staff. There were 83 (eighty-three) registered, Wall Street lobbyists working on McCain’s staff, (Mother Jones, September 17, 2008; Alternet, September 18, 2008). (There were 127 registered lobbyists overall on his campaign staff.) Read the article on Alternet [yourself](#). So who do you think would have been running White House policy if John McCain had been elected?? Barack Obama said he was absolutely committed to cleaning up government in Washington and eliminating the influence of lobbyists. He did it during his eight years in the Illinois State Senate and progressives were counting on him doing his very best to do it in Washington. So far, of course he’s doing better than McCain would have done, but I am disappointed. Let’s keep the heat up, people!

While the prevalence of lobbyists on McCain’s campaign is to be expected from a Republican candidate, neither candidate took that much money from political action committees, although McCain took more than has Obama. [Here](#) is the final information on McCain’s campaign financing at Opensecrets.org, a wonderful resource. [Here](#) is the final information on Obama.

Speaking of important current information – important even after the election – the latest polling information can be found at [FiveThirtyEight](#) and [Pollster.com](#).

Well, I suppose we need to cover Ralph Nader’s website. You can find it at [Public Citizen](#). Be sure and check the Press Room for current stories. While I’m glad not so many voted for him, he is an important voice. However good he is or is not in his positions, only Obama had a chance at preventing “Bush III” — which is what McCain would have been.

Here are some more serious, very good progressive blogs and websites. A great blog you will want to check out is [The Huffington Post](#), which I probably should have listed higher in this discussion. Arianna Huffington takes very good positions, and this is a big site. Also it’s always

a good idea to stop by [Fire Dog Lake](#). If you want to check out the people who absolutely infuriate conservatives who know, go to, [MoveOn.org](#). Seventy percent of the 3.2 million members of MoveOn.org who voted, asked the site to publically back Barack Obama in the primaries, and they actively campaigned for him as well as other progressive candidates in this last election. Currently they are involved in a campaign to put pressure on the so-called “moderate” or “Blue Dog” democrats in congress to support progressive legislation. This is also the site for people who want to get involved and put their name and email on petitions; just click the “Campaigns” button at the top. A fourth important resource is the [Campaign for America’s Future](#). This is a serious, impressive website that should not be overlooked.

A recent find for me is the [Institute for Policy Studies](#). From their home page: “The Institute for Policy Studies turns Ideas into Action for Peace, Justice and the Environment. We strengthen social movements with independent research, visionary thinking, and links to the grassroots, scholars and elected officials. [I.F. Stone](#) once called IPS ‘the think tank for the rest of us.’ Since 1963, we have empowered people to build healthy and democratic societies in communities, the US, and the world. [Click here to learn more](#), or read the latest below.”

[MSNBC](#) is great! not only do they have good liberal news and politics, but the videos, which you see a lot of on Evans Politics, (Rachel Maddow, Keith Olbermann, Ed Schultz) are truly educational and very heartening.

A great resource is [The American Prospect](#), whose slogan is “liberal intelligence.” There is a definite tie-in here with liberal Judaism. A good progressive source for “commentary and analysis on politics in America” was [The Carpetbagger Report](#), which unfortunately has closed up shop except for the archives. The new website which replaces it is [The Washington Monthly](#). There is a LOT of good analysis there and the topics are very current from the news. When you load any of Taegan Goddard’s stories on the “Political Wire” on the left of the screen, be sure to check out the “Breaking News” stories from the button at the top.

The really essential resource I have not mentioned is [Politico](#), which has a LOT of content. Boy do Conservatives hate Politico, and it’s even mentioned on the big TV networks. Sometimes its writers are interviewed there now, they are very influential these days. [The New Republic](#) is another resource, but it was described to me as “Beltway liberal” or “neocon centrist,” so beware, even though they have good news. They are influential enough that I decided to leave them on the list.

Perhaps you’d like to see speeches by Barack Obama (or be infuriated by those of McCain, Bush and Cheney and Limbaugh and company). Google’s video website [YouTube](#), has free registration, after which you can search many millions of videos, make comments, save the ones you like or download them in Real Player format, and share links to them. Subscribe to the channels for the videos you like. You do have the free media player RealPlayer right? If not you can get it [here](#). (Warning: with RealPlayer, any disc you burn, and any music or file you download, is in their own, proprietary file format, which is NOT compatible with a lot of older stereos and boomboxes. But you need it for the video downloads on sites like YouTube, unless of course you are using Firefox and get one of the free add-ons to download videos.... Also, you can get the free FLV Player which plays Real format FLV and also MPEG-4 video files, a safe

download from CNET, [here](#). 17 million downloads.) A search for “Barack Obama” on [Google Video](#) just after he was elected yielded about 174,000 results, but the links to the most relevant videos are on the results page provided, simply from a search on YouTube. (Google owns YouTube and there are more comprehensive search results on Google than you get on YouTube. However most of the results of a search at YouTube are the relevant videos with the links provided.)

If you feel so inclined and/or are among those who are getting up in years, try AARP, [The American Association of Retired People](#). Be sure to visit [AARP Magazine](#) for information and entertainment, not so much news and politics, but especially visit [AARP Bulletin](#), which has good news. You can join AARP for a modest fee if you are 50 or older, but the websites are completely free. AARP has been extremely successful at lobbying Congress about social programs. Back at the beginning of 2006 when the Bush administration was trying very hard to privatize Social Security, AARP ran a singularly effective campaign which helped squash this attempt. By the way, McCain voted to privatize Social Security three times.

Another great website to visit is [NOW](#), which stands for the National Organization for Women. There is a lot of real news and factual information to be found there. They supported Hillary Clinton very strongly in the election.

Another group the Bush administration hated is the American Friends Service Committee. That’s right, the social action arm of the Quakers. You can find them and join their efforts for peace and relief at [AFSC](#). Apparently being against the war in Iraq was enough to make you an enemy of the administration even if you are a notably Christian group! Ah, but not the “right sort” of Christian. I understood, if I am correct, that membership in the American Friends Service Committee was qualification for being put on the Terror Watch List. Oh, but didn’t you know, there are approximately ONE MILLION Americans on Bush’s Homeland Security Terror Watch List. Don’t you feel so much safer?

(Almost) all conservatives reserve a special venom for the ACLU, [The American Civil Liberties Union](#). When you’ve joined the ACLU, you’ve reached a certain level of status in the progressive movement. I will only note that this group defends the civil rights of everyone, including Conservatives. Related is [TalkLeft](#), which is about the politics of crime and injustice.

A very good opinion web site is [Open Left](#), which also collects summaries of very good news stories.

I guess this is as good a place as any for [Z Communications](#), the old ZMag. It’s a very serious magazine with a lot of features for those who are seriously “Left,” and I mean quite Left.

[The New York Times](#): there used to be a saying in the Watergate Era – “...and God Bless the New York Times.” Anything else need to be said? They aren’t “perfect” but they’re the best thing around in the mainstream media (MSM). [The Washington Post](#) also is a good news resource, period. Although it is basically not a liberal newspaper, there is some liberal material there, and the news is good. You need to create a username and password with both of these.

Although you will not find much news there with a progressive slant, there is good general news coverage at [Yahoo news](#). It's certainly not a progressive source, but they do an OK, fairly complete job with the news. In other words it is a resource to check out the "mainstream" news. Any (minimal) progressive coverage is at the bottom of the page. Yahoo, which fought off a \$44.6 billion plus takeover attempt by Microsoft, and has recently turned a deaf ear to a deal with them for half of that, had also recently been in talks with the media giant Rupert Murdoch (ugh). If Yahoo goes that route, you can expect any remaining evenhandedness in their news coverage to go out the window. Right now most of their stories seem to be coming out of the Associated Press.

[The Center for American Progress](#) is the website of a think tank that has become the most powerful voice inside the Obama transition. Time called it "Obama's Idea Factory." The President of "CAP," John Podesta, headed the Obama Presidential transition. The website has, besides the homepage, sections on national security, domestic and economy, the environment, media and culture, and others, in fact, the whole spectrum of current issues. It's a really good site that you should check out. There is a lot about a lot there, and this is a VERY influential think tank. There were a few issues over its undisclosed donor list, too.

If you just want a summary of really insightful news, with links to the full articles, try the [Progressive Blog Digest](#), PBD. Recently it has been the number one website listed in the search results for "progressive blogs" from Google; these are really good, in depth stories (at the links), with real research involved in digging them out of the media by one Nicholas Burbules, the owner. These are the inside stories, and if you had one site to really follow just what's going on, this one is pretty good. There are plenty of other unsung blogs out there. Check out [Liberal Values](#), for example; this is a really good blog! Another one I have been really using is [Liberal Oasis](#); you can find a LOT of good blogs via this web site.

There is good news coverage and there are some great blogs at [Mother Jones News](#). Fareed Zakaria of Newsweek called [OxBlog](#) "a great read," and you should also check out Buzzflash, which is a whole family of websites. Try [the general BuzzFlash website](#) and its [great collection of articles](#). A favorite of mine here is BuzzFlash.com's [GOP Hypocrite of the Week](#).

OK, I haven't discussed foreign sites, but we'll leave that for another time. I will just say that one site I have found one heck of a lot of important news at is [The Guardian \(UK\)](#).

Finally, let me conclude this survey of the progressive scene with Tom Paine's, "common sense," which can be found at [Tom Paine](#). It's a gritty, well thought out website which should not be passed up. Thomas Paine, more than any other thinker, motivated citizens of the British colonies in America to rebel in the American Revolutionary War. A pamphlet called Common Sense was perhaps most influential. One of his sayings was, "When the government fears the people, you have liberty. When the people fear the government, you have tyranny." By that definition, with the election of Barack Obama, NOW we have liberty!

Thanks to those of you who commented on my effort. Apparently I did leave out a few important sources, some of which I actually use but just forgot to list. Most notable among those is [Salon](#). Brother, how could I overlook them, they are important! I even subscribe to them, they're a very

important source. Be sure to sign up for their daily summary of the news. Two other really good ones I somehow missed are [Democracy Now](#), which I knew was really good and [The Real News Network](#), which I was not so familiar with but is a good find. One reader suggested the [Multinational Monitor](#), which is all about finance and regulating it and the like, and seems quite authoritative. Also suggested was John Cole's [Balloon Juice](#), by a Reformed right winger.

If you are looking for news on the environment and "The Original Guide to Living Wisely," check out [Mother Earth News](#). And the website which bills itself as the site "For People Who Care About the West" is [High Country News](#). Looks like I missed some good ones!

If anyone has suggestions for a really good liberal or progressive news and politics source that I missed, just drop me an [email](#), say hi and let me know. ~ Paul Evans