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Panel: Making Connections Via Indigenous Discourse (LIT 43)

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alt.indigenous.electronic-(re)sources

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Indigenous groups are not novices at using electronic media to promote cultural heritage. The Internet is merely the latest incarnation of what has become an element of cultural self-preservation. In his book *Electronic Media and Indigenous Peoples: A Voice of Our Own?* (1996), Donald R. Browne discusses the history of indigenous groups and the media. While his focus is on the U.S., the U.K., Europe and Australia, he does briefly mention some major events in the part of the world that interests this panel the most: Latin America. Browne asserts that radio promised to be a useful tool for native groups because as a method of oral communication, it did not necessitate a written component (useful for groups that do not have an alphabet). In the 1950s, missionaries in both Bolivia and Mexico established radio stations for the indigenous peoples. While these stations were allegedly *for* the indigenous people, they were directed by non-natives and their primary goal was the make the natives fluent in Spanish. In 1968 a Mapuche language (Mapuzugun) station was established in southern Chile and a Quiché station in the Guatemalan highlands came into being in 1974. Both of these efforts were "financed by outsiders: a Dutch Catholic group for the Chilean station and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Guatemala" (Browne 31). The Baha'is also have sponsored indigenous-language radio stations. From 1977-1980 they funded one in Otavalo, Ecuador, and a Baha'i station with Mapuche-language programming was operating outside Temuco, Chile in 1997.[1]

These indigenous-language stations prompted the Mexican government's Instituto Nacional Indigenista (INI) in 1979 to finance the construction and operation of indigenous radio stations. By 1989 there were ten INI-supported stations broadcasting in Chontal, Mixtec, Triqui, Tepehuano and other languages. These efforts might sound very progressive; however, Browne describes a different agenda. Even twenty years after the missionaries had started with similar intentions, he notes: "While the primary goal of the stations was to increase self-reliance and pride on the part of Aztec, Mayan, and other Native American groups, literacy training was aimed at making listeners literate in Spanish, and listeners were encouraged to consider themselves as one part of the national, European-flavored culture" (Browne 31). While this cynicism may be well-founded, the result was that the 1980s saw an increase in indigenous participation in radio. In 1989, a group of Aymara women in El Alto, Bolivia created and broadcasted their own radio dramas.[2] In 1990, a group of Mapuche men and women in southern Chile, calling themselves the Cooperación de Desarrollo, started a radio station named Comunicaciones Mapuche Xeg Xeg for the promotion of their culture as well as information about linguistic, economic, and sociopolitical

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[1] Personal communication.

[2] Unfortunately, Browne does not indicate whether these projects are still active.

rights. This group is still active and also has a web site (last updated 1998) describing the history and purpose of the station.[3]

While radio is much less expensive to produce than video, videorecordings were also soon being used as a means of cultural preservation and political activism. The Kayapó of Brazil used videos to promote indigenous rights. The Zapotecas also made videos in an attempt to combat stereotypes in the U.S. about migrant workers. Unfortunately, television stations were not required to offer airtime to these projects, and their intended audiences rarely (if ever) had the opportunity to see them. In 1986, a group of Aymara women in Bolivia fared slightly better and created 10-minute long programs on issues such as women and the legal system, poverty, and urbanization. These programs were aired weekly on local television stations.[4]

Although he does not mention the possibilities created by the Internet, Browne does offer some history of indigenous groups' uses of other electronic media as well as some of the problems these media. For example, electronic media do not *preserve* language, but (in Browne's words) they *extend* it. A preserved language is not dynamic and can no longer grow. New technology means new vocabulary, and most languages (indigenous and non) do not have the words to represent the new concepts. As the language develops, groups need to decide if they are going to create new words based on existing language or if they are going to adapt foreign words (often in English). We can also take from Browne his list of the seven "purposes of programming" for indigenous electronic media because, while he did not have the foresight to address it, these can easily be applied to their use of the Internet and its technologies:

1.   To "rescue" the language, chiefly by using it in daily broadcasts but also perhaps by direct language instruction.
2.   To increase a sense of self-esteem on the part of the indigenous population, both in their historical traditions and in their achievements in contemporary society.
3.   To combat the negative images of indigenous peoples held by the majority population.
4.   To work for a greater degree of cohesiveness among indigenous peoples. Often so as to develop greater political influence in local, regional, and national life.
5.   To provide a visible and audible symbol of indigenous society so that both indigenous and majority cultures would be aware that the former "counted for something" in the form of possession and operation of modern technology.
6.   To provide an outlet for the creative production of, for example, indigenous singers, instrumentalists, and poets.
7.   To provide another source of employment for the indigenous community, where, given frequently high unemployment, even the addition of 10 or 20 jobs can help. (Browne 59)

While Browne did not apply these purposes to Internet technologies, it would be easy to do so.

Before delving into indigenous peoples' use of the Internet, one must first define what "Internet technologies" are. In her book *The Psychology of the Internet* (1999), Patricia Wallace states that the "Internet" is actually several different environments. The first is the World Wide Web, in Wallace's words, "when it is used as a kind of library / magazine rack / yellow pages, and

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[3] Web sites mentioned in the text without a URL are mentioned again in the Webliography in the Appendix.

[4] While Browne lists these projects, he fails to say who funded them and what happened to these efforts.

also as a self-publisher" (4). However, unlike a library or a magazine rack or even the yellow pages, one cannot always identify the publisher behind the information one finds online.

A common search strategy when using the web is to consider *who* might care about the information you need and to see if that company or individual has a web page. Instead of jumping into a search engine or web directory right away, many searchers will first try to guess at the URL or web address. While it might sound simplistic, this is not a poor search methodology. One can use this with a decent rate of success as long as one thinks critically about the results.

Guessing at a logical URL has become a lucrative (and sometimes embarrassing) business. If one has visited the URL www.whitehouse.com instead of www.whitehouse.gov, one is painfully aware that the URL does not always represent what one would think: the former is a well-known pornographic site. So, how was pornographer Dan Parisi able to use an "official-sounding" name? Getting a domain name - defined as "a unique alpha-numeric name used to identify a particular computer (i.e., web server or mail server) on the Internet" – is an easy process one completes with an organization like www.register.com which has the authority to register domain names for the Internet Corporation of Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). According to register.com's online instructions, all one needs is a credit card and a domain name that is currently not being used. When Parisi was shopping, "whitehouse" was being used, but with the Top Level Domain (TLD) ".gov" (TLD is the part at the end of a URL, the .com, or .net or .org, etc.). Therefore while "whitehouse.<u>gov</u>" was already being used, "whitehouse.<u>com</u>" was a unique domain name.

While anyone can register a domain name, they are not anonymous. One also must provide register.com with contact information so, technically, any web server is traceable. This does not mean one must post one's credentials on the website for the world to see, but that somewhere on file a name is connected to each domain. Now that it is so easy for anyone to register a web site, a ".com" could be a corporation or an individual person.

So, what are the differences between a ".com" and a ".net" TLD? Officially, ".com"s are for commercial and personal sites, ".net"s for companies involved in Internet infrastructure, and ".org"s for not-for-profit organizations.[5] These are the guidelines, but there is no organization checking to make sure that only non-profits utilize the ".org" TLD. Also, the price is the same for any of the three TLDs – averaging about $35/year. There are also TLDs for different countries (".at" for Austria) and one does not have to be a resident of that country to register a country-specific TLD. So, while the web search engine *hotbot*[6] allows one to search for sites from a certain area of the world, it only searches the TLD, so there is no guarantee that the author of the information published on a ".lt" server is actually from or has ever been to Lithuania. So, when one sees a web address for http://GWbush.com, know that the domain name is no stamp of authenticity.

Wallace identifies electronic mail as the second Internet environment. She notes that people often make assumptions about the validity of the message based on the address and username of the sender. As examples, she uses the fictitious usernames "FoxyLady@flash.net" and "rgoldman@microsoft.com." She notes: "you might be inclined to listen more carefully to rgoldman's views on the future of the Internet than to FoxyLady's" (20). While these might be assumptions one would make, one cannot be certain that rgoldman is more of an Internet expert than FoxyLady. Just as with domain names, a username can be misleading.

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[5] Register.com and other ICANN-authorized sites do not offer ".gov" or ".edu" TLDs.
[6] http://www.hotbot.com

While most people think of e-mail as a way to keep in touch with distant friends and family in one-to-one communication, many people use the Internet to share ideas through an interactive dialogue with a number of different people who share similar interests. The two main ways of doing this are through mailing lists and newsgroups. These consist of groups of people who want to discuss a topic (through text) with others from different areas around the world. This technology allows people to broaden their peer group. Wallace calls these "asynchronous discussion forums" which are conferences with different topics (or "threads") and replies. These are asynchronous because people all over the world participate at different hours. Due to the numbers and the nature of these forums, several conversations are conducted at once, and replies might be posted hours or weeks after the original comment. These tools are especially useful for a diaspora in efforts to keep its members in contact with each other. Since these forums revolve around a specific topic, there are over 80,000 discussion categories from which to choose (http://www.usenet.com/new.htm).

A mailing list is a list of e-mail addresses of people (subscribers) interested in the same topic. When a subscriber sends a message to the list, everyone receives it. Sometimes these lists are moderated (someone first screens the message to confirm that it fits the list parameters) and some are not. One can reply to messages to the entire list or to an individual; or one can lurk, reading messages without ever contributing.

Newsgroups have the same basic principle as a mailing list, but the structure is a little different. In a mailing list, the messages are automatically sent to the subscribers' e-mail accounts. In a newsgroup, the messages are posted on a web site (organized by threads of conversation), and subscribers go to the web site to read the messages and to post replies. Like mailing lists, some are moderated and others are not. Unlike mailing lists, one has a few options of how to read newsgroup posts. One can subscribe to a newsgroup and read the messages using a newsreader (Netscape and Internet Explorer have newsreader functions). Again, one has the freedom to lurk or to participate. If one merely wants to lurk, this can be done without subscribing and by reading messages through a newsgroup reader like www.deja.com or www.remarQ.com.

Usenet groups tend to have names that start with "sci" (science), "soc" (social issues), "rec" (recreation) and "alt" (alternative, other, miscellaneous). Both deja.com and remarQ.com have search engines that will search either one particular forum (by message topic or by author) or across forums to identify which groups discuss topics of interest.   The search capacities are not very complex so if one is looking for information about a certain indigenous group's literature, trying to search "aymara and literature" will lead to frustration. Try a more rustic search (just "aymara") and see what kind of hits are retrieved. Both engines will search the previous two months' worth of postings and identify messages that contain that word; remarQ.com will rank the forums by relevance (how many times the word appeared in a certain forum's messages). Sometimes just searching the previous two months' messages is simply not as exhaustive a search as one might need. At deja.com one can conduct a "power search" and search archived messages. This only searches the messages housed on deja.com's server, which means that some messages are not available. For example, the charter message of soc.culture.chile (which started in 1993) is not available and the oldest one can read on deja.com is from March of 1995.[7]

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[7] If a newsgroup was created before 1989 (Usenet started in 1979), one can try searching the charter and control archive database at http://www.faqs.org/usenet/gsearch.html. (Dubin).

Obviously, a newsgroup that mentions the word "Mapuche" once is not necessarily a group concerned with indigenous issues. For most of the forums, remarQ.com has a brief (and not very useful) description. For example, the information window about misc.activism.progressive reads, "Information for Progressive activists. (Moderated)." A better way to discover the purposes and scope of a group is to locate a charter message. Charter messages can be valuable to find because they often explain why the original subscribers felt the need to create the list. Sometimes these have the guidelines for posting messages. Other lists will contain messages with answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), which can also be useful for identifying the purpose of a group. RemarQ.com has an option for searching solely for FAQ-type messages in a particular forum.

While everyone who posts to a list (both mailing lists and newsgroups) must use a valid e-mail address, it is not always easy to tell *who* the person behind the message is. Contributors can use e-mail addresses that include their full name, or a nickname (like "Indio Taíno") when posting. Sometimes one can get a list of the members, but this does not include all who have contributed since one can read and contribute through a web-based reader without actually subscribing. Also at remarQ.com, one can click on the author's name (like the author whose e-mail is "anybodybutmccain@my-deja.com") and then request information, but since remarQ.com does not require any registration information from the participants, many entries do not contain more than the vague yahoo or other free e-mail address.

The Internet also has the technology for people in different areas of the world to communicate via electronic text almost instantaneously. Wallace calls this "synchronous discussion forums." Internet Relay Chat (IRC) and other "chat rooms" are two ways in which people enjoy this technology. Sometimes due to slow server response time, messages are delayed for several seconds, thus making the dialog not truly synchronous, but users of this forum have adjusted their conversation styles to accommodate the sometimes clunky technology.

Not all of these technologies are useful for studying indigenous groups.[8] Adam Lucas (1996) foresaw that "[n]ew computing and telecomputing technologies offer exciting possibilities for indigenous people to preserve and develop their own cultures on their own terms" (103). I will discuss the new technologies that are relevant to conducting research on indigenous cultures in Latin America and explain how they are being used, and then I will apply Browne's purposes of programming to this arena.

Electronic mail (e-mail) is the oldest of the Internet technologies listed by Wallace. It is also difficult to trace its indigenous usage. We can presume that indigenous peoples use e-mail in the basic ways the same as non-indigenous people do – primarily to communicate with friends and family. However, other uses related to cultural preservation are apparent. One documented use of e-mail among Native Americans is the "keypal" (e-mail pen pal) project. This is an effort to get Native American K-6 students from Maine to California to correspond with keypals from other Native American communities to learn about each other's culture. And, although it is not clear from the brief conference session announcement, it appears that non-Native culture children can also sign up to learn about the lives of their Native American peers.

As we know from Wallace, e-mail is not always communication between two people only. Indigenous groups use mailing lists and newsgroups as a means of communication. An oft-

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[8] Wallace also mentions MUDs (Multi-User Domains - originally the D was for "dungeon"), which are text-based role-playing games. Metaworlds are multi-media MUDs. And the last Internet environment described by Wallace is interactive video and voice. These are not relevant for this paper.

mentioned mailing list is Native-L, a cooperative run by Native Americans in Banff, Alberta (Canada). It is a mailing list that provides information about events for Native Americans as well as discussions about different Native American studies programs at North American universities. Matthias Deitz-Lenssen studied the usage of this list in both 1994 and again in 1996. He noticed that while the contributors were predominantly North American in 1994, Meso- and South-American participants increased over the two years (44).

A particularly interesting newsgroup for indigenous studies is soc.culture.native.[9] Started in the beginning of 1993, this group's charter states that it is "for the discussion of issues relating to native populations throughout the world" (Wilson and Brunner). Its FAQ clearly states that one does not need to be a member of an indigenous group to contribute, and while it encourages worldwide participation, it acknowledges a North American focus due to the greater availability of technology compared to South America.

Less information is available about synchronous discussion forums used by Native Americans. The Taíno Inter-Tribal Council has an IRC forum and in Hawai'i, native peoples are using "chats" to have live discussions in Hawai'ian as part of the online language courses (see below).

The World Wide Web houses many sorts of information for the study of indigenous groups including both information about native groups published by non-indigenous peoples and material produced by the groups themselves. As is not surprising, many scholars have mounted web pages about different indigenous peoples. Some of these are based on anthropologists' fieldwork, such as the Yanomamö Research Group site in which UC Santa Barbara graduate student Edward Hagen presents one of the most detailed sites about the group. Others, like the Asociación Tucumana de Investigadores en Lengua Quechua, are sites focusing on certain areas of culture for other specialists and teachers. For example, there is information about native languages for linguists who wish to study their structure and for those who wish to learn how to communicate in that language.

In Hawai'i, the native peoples are using the Web to promote their linguistic heritage. One of the first bulletin board systems (BBS) in an indigenous language came out of Hawai'i in 1995.[10] This same group is now using the multi-media technologies available through the Web to offer online language courses so people all over the islands (and the globe) may study the language and read legends in the native tongue. One feature of this project is the live chat in Hawai'ian so students in different areas can virtually immerse themselves in the language.

In January of 1997, Jeroen de Bruin compiled a minimally annotated list of web sites with information about the Mayan peoples. He mentioned 37 sites ranging from tourism agencies to archaeology to Amazon.com's selection of books. While some of these links may now be dead, [11] it does indicate that scholars have been using the web for a few years to share information about indigenous groups.

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[9] This group supersedes alt.native.

[10] A Bulletin Board System (BBS) is conceptually similar to a Newsgroup, but technologically is a little more limited. To access a BBS, the user's modem dials up another computer directly. Now this can be done with Telnet. Basically, a BBS works like a Newsgroup with threads of conversations posted that one can read and, if desired, to which one can reply. Typically, one can only read messages on a BBS by going directly to the BBS, not by using a newsreader (like the ones available through Internet browsers).

[11] A "dead" link is one that no longer points toward an active page. Since it is so easy for webmasters to delete pages from their servers, part of web site maintenance is confirming that the pages to which your site points are still at the same address.

Some sites claim to be devoted to the needs of certain native groups, for example the *Comunidad India Quilmes* (Argentina) site, which is put together by "Grupo Chamaná," composed of anthropology graduate students from an Argentinean university. The students claim that they are acting on behalf of the Comunidad India Quilmes, promoting the Comunidad's interests in rescuing and revaluating their native traditions. Perhaps the online representation of the native culture is faithful to their needs and desires, as Lucas optimistically describes: "small groups of indigenous and non-indigenous people working together to achieve goals driven by the needs and aspirations of indigenous communities" (101-102). We need to look at these claims critically to discern whose needs are being serviced by this mediated usage of the technology.

Michael Two Horses is concerned about the effect of non-native participation in indigenous discussion forums in relation to the Native North Americans and discusses how the "wanna-bes" actually damage native culture with their web sites. He claims that "[A]ttempts by the relatively few Indians [sic] on the Internet to correct misinformation displayed there are met with accusations of racism by non-Indians on the Internet" (34). This phenomenon of "wanna-bes" is so wide-spread that the soc.culture.native has a "Native American Wannabe FAQ" to warn people how to avoid insulting native cultures.

International organizations also have posted information about different indigenous groups on the World Wide Web. An example of this kind of organization is the New York based Amanaka'a, which works with indigenous peoples in the Amazon helping them with issues concerning health, sustainable development and the environment. The web site is aimed at non-indigenous people, informing them about the conditions of the Tupi, Yanomami, and Guaraní peoples as well as providing information for how one can become involved.

Some sites actually appear to be authored and maintained by the indigenous groups they represent. For example, the student group Movimiento Juventud Kuna of Panama has a web site. It seemed logical that indigenous *youth* would be the ones to utilize this new technology most. Unfortunately, the continued vitality of the site is in question because several pages in the site warn that they are under construction and have been since 1997. If this site is indeed no longer being maintained, perhaps this is because taking advantage of the Web is difficult when one does not have consistent access to the necessary technology.

While it is less equipment-intensive (and therefore less expensive) than radio or television, maintaining a web site requires a certain amount of capital to access the technology and to learn how to use it. Not surprisingly, more web sites are authored in developed countries than in other areas of the world. This means that of the world's indigenous peoples, Native North Americans have the greatest web presence today (but each day is bringing representation of other areas of the world). Eric L. Miller's article lists 49 tribal web sites (no annotations) for 38 different North American Indian Nations. And there are numerous native newspapers available online. The October 23, 1999 issue of *Editor & Publisher* lists 13 of them.

Because of the greater prevalence of web technology outside Latin America, some indigenous groups have web sites published by or directed to the diaspora. The Taíno Inter-Tribal Council, Inc. is mainly for Taíno peoples of the Caribbean who currently live in the United States, although participants in the Caribbean are welcome and there is even a link to the Jatibonicu Taino Tribal Nation site (the section of the group in Boriken, or Puerto Rico). This site provides multiple ways for Taíno peoples to maintain contact with each other through links to online periodicals, listservs, and an IRC chat.

The Mapuche also have several web sites outside of Chile. This trend might be due to oppression under Pinochet that saw Mapuches leave their land as exiles. The strongest Mapuche site is Jorge Calbucura's *Ñuke Mapu* site. Calbucura is a Mapuche sociologist (educated in Budapest) currently serving on the faculty of Uppsala University in Sweden. His up-to-date site keeps people informed about current events affecting the Mapuches in Chile. It also provides a forum for Mapuche poets and artists to display their creative works. And he has a page linking to papers on Mapuche society and history solely by Mapuche authors, people who might not otherwise be published. Calbucura has created a site that is useful for Mapuches and non-Mapuches both in Chile and out. Many of the poems on the *Ñuke Mapu* site are in both Spanish and the indigenous language, Mapuzugun, reflecting an interest in keeping the native tongue alive.

In addition to collaboration within the diaspora, many different indigenous groups have banded together in collaborative efforts to promote awareness of indigenous cultures and some of the problems they face; some of these are fortunate enough to have access to the equipment and the knowledge required to maintain a web presence. As Lucas commented in 1996, "Networking within and between indigenous communities internationally would make it much easier for them to compare and contrast their respective social, cultural, and political situations" (104). One example of this trend is the Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónica (COICA). Located in Quito, this group represents more than 400 indigenous groups that are in the Amazon in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guyana, Guyana, Peru, Surinam, and Venezuela. Unfortunately, their web site reads like an online pamphlet, and while it describes the mission and organization structure of the group, it does not provide any useful links to help a reader get involved. The site seems to be designed to inform outsiders of the group's existence, but not as a resource tool for its members. This is probably because most of its members do not enjoy the means of access to a web site to obtain information about activities and events.

The League of Indigenous Sovereign Nations of the Western Hemisphere (LISN) was formed in 1991 at a conference of representatives of several Indian nations. As the name suggests, it is primarily a group of peoples in the Americas, but their web site states that this is changing and that the group is becoming more global. The main goal of LISN is to unite indigenous peoples into one federation so they can be politically influential at national and international levels. Unlike COICA, this web site seems to be aimed at the indigenous peoples themselves with information on current events and opportunities for people to take action. There are also links about "indigenous issues" that include health care and human rights.

In addition to using Internet technologies to disseminate information about indigenous groups, some groups are taking advantage of this easy and global means of communication to promote a political agenda. For example, Wallace comments on the "nationwide campus-based protest against California's anti-immigration measure" in which people organized protest marches using Internet technologies (105). Other international examples include pressure put on the Chinese government after the Tiananmen Square massacre of 1989 and the more recent demands for free speech on the Internet. In addition, supporters of the Zapatista uprising manipulated the Internet to advance their cause.

The Zapatista uprising in Chiapas, Mexico began on January 1, 1994 by the Ejército Zapatista de la Liberación Nacional (EZLN). The Internet soon became an important part of this movement. First used by academics to provide historical information and political background, e-mail listservs and BBSs started spreading the EZLN's cause to the rest of the world. People not

directly involved in the Chiapas situation initiated a world-wide letter-writing and fax campaign to the Mexican consulates and the United States government urging leaders to find a peaceful resolution to the crisis. This outside support was key to the EZLN cause, as noted by Markus S. Schulz: "the Zapatistas' successes depend less on the internal strength of their military organization than on the support they receive from individuals and associations that are explicitly not part of the EZLN" (591). So, how did this happen?

Communications coming from a man from within the EZLN identifying himself as "Subcomandante Marcos" began to be transmitted to the outside world through the Internet. Oliver Froehling notes that a U.S. Army report stated that Zapatistas had laptop computers and a cell-phone. Jerry W. Knudson states that "Marcos reportedly used the lighter in his pick-up as a power source for his laptop computer to write these messages, ostensibly emanating from the Clandestine Indigenous Revolutionary Committee" (509). Due to the lack of electricity and telephones in most of the Chiapas region, it is difficult to believe that an indigenous leader had access to this technology. In fact Subcomandante Marcos was later revealed to be Rafael Sebastián Guillén Vicente, a middle-class, Jesuit-educated, non-indigenous Mexican (Knudson 513). Although it sounds like an IBM commercial, perhaps he did have this equipment, but Harry M. Cleaver presents a more plausible scenario.[12]

Cleaver asserts that the EZLN did not directly use the Internet but that Marcos wrote letters describing the situation and gave them to reporters (perhaps via a friend) who later typed and distributed them on the Internet. Froehling observes that there was immediately a problem with the reliability of these messages because the e-mails read as if they were eyewitness accounts and the readers were left to determine their authenticity. Also, the indigenous peoples were being represented by a non-indigenous man, Marcos, who gave his interpretation of their words to a journalist who then typed, perhaps edited, them and then gave them to the public to read. How many filters did these words go through? Reliable or not, Knudson underscores their importance: "the Internet communiqués were the most important element in influencing public opinion" (508).

Marcos' messages were spread across the globe via listservs and later the World Wide Web. Some of the listservs (chiapas-l and fzln-l) were run off servers in Mexico; many web sites were maintained by supporters all over the globe with differing agendas. As Froehling points out, there was no central Zapatista information source, but multiple global sites, and these "cyber-zapatistas" did not have to answer directly to the Chiapas Zapatistas.

Whether or not these Internet communications were faithful to the original goals of the EZLN, it cannot be ignored that the international pressure exerted on the Mexican government by cyber-sympathizers helped the Zapatistas' cause. Perhaps this strategy has set a precedent for future indigenous movements.

Even if Subcomandante Marcos had been an indigenous person, we cannot just assume that a message produced (in any forum) by a member of an indigenous group truly represents the goals of that nation. Michael Two Horses quotes Vine Deloria Jr.'s cynical words about educated native peoples' self-representation: "More, young Indians in universities are now being trained to see themselves and their cultures in terms prescribed by such experts rather than in the traditional terms of the tribal elders" (35). Jorge Pedraza Arpasi's site Aymara Uta might be an example of Deloria and Two Horses' fears as the Aymara mathematician / Linux consultant links to sites of

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[12] Cleaver is a professor at the University of Texas and the man behind the *Zapatistas in Cyberspace* web site, http://www.eco.utexas.edu/homepages/faculty/Cleaver/zapsincyber.html, reviewed in Neugebauer.

government statistics agencies and Western academics' interpretations to describe his native culture.

Although we are concerned about the authenticity of the voices and the possible political motives of the participants, and with the ethnicity of those involved, these new technologies can have an overall benefit to indigenous cultures. If we review Browne's purposes of programming, we see that while the media have changed, the goals are still being met. The Hawai'ian language is being resuscitated through online classes. Nativeweb.org has online announcements looking for volunteers to translate the web site into indigenous languages.[13] Indigenous groups, like the Taíno, are successfully promoting positive aspects of their culture. Many groups, for example the LISN, are collaborating online (and off) in efforts to wield more political influence. Through their use of Internet technologies, native peoples are proving that their cultures can and will adopt modern technology for their own uses. Jorge Calbucura's web site acts as a publisher for Mapuche scholars and poets as well as a gallery for Mapuche artists. Only Browne's last purpose, that of providing employment, is not obviously illustrated by the examples listed in this paper. This could be because web sites are not expensive to maintain (once the technology is acquired), nor do they require full-time attention; most web sites are volunteer projects supported by those who care about the cause.

What will the future hold for indigenous peoples online? As indigenous communities become more globally interconnected through telephone and electrical infrastructures, more and more will use the Internet to their advantage. Also, as the urban-dwelling indigenous peoples become more involved with the technology-driven economy, more will become comfortable with this new means of communication. Perhaps some will work in e-commerce with entrepreneurs like Roberto Milk and his Internet corporation, Novica,[14] which sells handmade products from all over the world online at relatively low prices – working directly with the artisans and eliminating the middle-distributors and expensive catalog printers.

Some people, both indigenous and non, are afraid of what this new technology could mean to the native communities. Mark Warschauer asks, "Can indigenous peoples appropriate new network technologies for their own purposes, or, in attempting to do so, will they see their own cultures and languages swallowed up in a homogeneous whole?" (140). Michael Two Horses thinks they can appropriate new technologies, but he also warns:

Indian peoples must not use this technology blindly. The Internet is perhaps the greatest tool for assimilation that has existed to date, and Indians, more than any other ethnic group, must be constantly vigilant regarding involvement in computerization and the Internet. Indians must develop the kind of critical self-appraisal that is lacking throughout North American society in general. To fail to do so is to risk the loss of identity as Indian people and to finish for non-Indians what they have not been able to accomplish in five-hundred-plus years of attempted physical and cultural genocide. (42)

Just as Native Americans need to think critically when using the Internet technologies, so must researchers approach the Internet with caution. The way we do research is changing: Where one used to have papercuts from flipping through dusty print indices, searching for elusive articles, now one wears braces in vain attempts to prevent carpel-tunnel syndrome from scrolling

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[13] Briefly mentioned in the Webliography and reviewed in detail in Neugebauer.

[14] http://www.novica.com

through electronic databases (but the articles remain elusive). Libraries are often choosing to collect the digital format of print indices due to space constraints and desires to appear "cutting-edge." This means that even the Luddites find themselves awash in the monitor's glow as they struggle to keep current in their fields.

Some indices are still being produced in paper format. But even the print editions of the *Handbook of Latin American Studies* and the *Hispanic American Periodicals Index* sadly lag several years behind in their publication, and the scholar who needs the information now will have to give in and log on.[15] Many other print indices are available in electronic formats as well. Some database services, like Dialog, provide online access to several of these databases and, while stronger in social sciences than humanities, some scholars might benefit from a mediated Dialog search in their field.[16]

The above-mentioned databases are available through the Internet, but most are subscription-based (with the exception of the *Handbook of Latin American Studies*).[17] The open (or free) Internet is another resource for research. While many of its users are undergraduate students who would rather use *yahoo!*[18] than leave the comfort of their dorm rooms and go to the library, professional scholars can find useful information on the Internet if they are careful in their searches and critical of the results. Since the Internet is unorganized (no one has catalogued its entirety), scholars would also benefit from some instruction in search strategies and can find helpful advice and instruction from research librarians.

We have seen, briefly, how electronic mail, newsgroups, mailing lists and the open World Wide Web can be used to find both primary and secondary sources for the study of indigenous discourse. When used with caution and a healthy amount of cynicism, the Internet can be a valuable research tool, especially for scholars following the activities of nations today.   While the Internet may not replace print sources as primary research tools for scholars, it can complement these sources and provide more up-to-date information and new primary documents.

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[15] The *Handbook of Latin American Studies* exists online for free at http://lcweb2.loc.gov/hlas/. This online version contains all previously published print volumes as well as the forthcoming editions. *Hispanic American Periodicals Index* is available online for subscription (http://hapi.gseis.ucla.edu) and its web version also all previously printed volumes as well as the indexing which will be published in forthcoming volumes.

[16] Due to the high costs and complicated searching language, even those academic libraries that do pay for a Dialog password will not allow the patrons to do their own searching. Librarians who have been trained to search Dialog will perform the search on the researcher's behalf.

[17] Most researchers are used to being able to access these through the license their host institution has with the companies.

[18] http://www.yahoo.com

Appendix: Webliography

Disclaimer: I hesitate to add this Appendix because the World Wide Web is a dynamic medium and these pages could disappear between the time I type this and the time it is read. However, it seems that this section is a necessary appendix to this paper. Readers need to have a listing of some web sites in order to get a better understanding of what types of information is available on the Internet. This list is far from exhaustive; it is merely a sampling of what is available for researchers on the World Wide Web.

Web sites published by and about International Organizations

http://www.amanakaa.org/

Amanaka'a Amazon Network Home – Environmental Education and Indigenous Rights, Rainforest Protection.

"Amanaka'a works directly with Amazon leaders in support of their projects for survival, human rights, the environment, health, sustainable development, education, and more."

New York based organization.

Focuses on Tupi, Yanomami, Guaraní.

Page is mostly about volunteer activities and how you can support them. They also sponsor Amazon Week in NYC which brings indigenous leaders together to discuss current problems and exposes non-indigenous people to their plight.

Website not updated very often (most recent Amazon Week described is from 1996, but the "Urgent" page was updated in May 1999).

http://www3.satnet.net/coica/

Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónica (COICA)

Group located in Quito. A group effort of more than 400 indigenous groups which are in the Amazon in the countries of Bolivia, Brasil, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guayana, Guyana, Perú, Surinam and Venezuela. COICA's goals include to promote indigenous rights and cultures.

The web site reads like a pamphlet describing the types of activities of the organization (without specific recent examples), the organizational structure, and its publications. The site does not provide useful links, information about current events, or assistance to its visitors.

http://www.geocities.com/RainForest/4043/ (Spanish)

http://www.latinsynergy.org/dobboyala.htm (English)

Fundación Dobbo-Yala, Panamá

Dobbo-Yala Foundation, Panama

"The Dobbo-Yala Foundation is a private, indigenous organization with the mission to develop the indigenous peoples and conserve the environment."

English site is online pamphlet. Spanish site has a little more information, but not enough to really get a handle on the group.

Last updated 11 days prior to my consultation.

http://www.alphacdc.com/ien/subject.html

Indigenous Environmental Network

"An alliance of Indigenous Peoples empowering Indigenous communities towards sustainable livelihoods, environmental protection of our lands, water, air and maintaining the sacred Fire of our traditions."

Claims to be a group OF indigenous peoples. Has links to reports about current events affecting indigenous groups worldwide, but the site participants seem to be North American. And, the information is only presented in English. Also has links to info about events – useful resource for people to become involved and to support the causes. Up-to-date.

http://www.ecouncil.ac.cr/indig/

Indigenous Peoples Earth Council - San José, Costa Rica

Sponsored by the Earth Council "an international non-governmental organization (NGO) that was created in September 1992 to promote and advance the implementation of the Earth Summit agreements."
The Indigenous Peoples Earth Council page has information about indigenous spirituality. The page says that indigenous people and elders got together to have a conference entitled *Indigenous Peoples, Mother Earth and Spirituality* in 1996 to discuss strengthening indigenous groups' decision-making mechanisms. The page says that indigenous people are the attendees of the 4 conferences of this theme (in different areas of the world). Also contains reports from "Rio+5". The page also links to international conventions and declarations affecting indigenous groups.

http://www.ecouncil.ac.cr/ngoexch/chirapaq.htm

Chirapaq Centro de Culturas Indias

Housed on the Earth Council server. A center in Lima which describes itself as being made up of Andean and Amazonian indigenous peoples. Web page is an online pamphlet.

http://www.indigenouspeople.org/natlit/natlit.htm

Indigenous Peoples' Literature

An ambitious page, this tries to include indigenous groups from around the globe in several different languages. Unfortunately, the Java script has some problems making navigation cumbersome. While it tries to be global, the focus is more North American.
Includes some literature samples.
Last updated in January 2000.

http://www.nativeweb.org

Native Web

"NativeWeb is an international, nonprofit, educational organization dedicated to using telecommunications including computer technology and the Internet to disseminate information from and about native or Indigenous nations, peoples and organizations around the world; to foster communication between native and non-native peoples; to conduct research involving native peoples' usage of technology and the Internet; and to provide resources, mentoring, and services to facilitate native use of this technology." (mission statement from /info/)
States that it is predominantly active in the Americas, but that it is gradually adding groups from around the globe. Also from /info/: "NativeWeb is not limited to "officially recognized" Peoples. Those who are not "native" by blood or by government standards may be "native" by attitude and way of life. The truth of being "native" is a matter of values and not of blood. It could not be otherwise in an increasingly mixed-blood world. Our concern is for communities rooted in indigenous life-ways." The site describes the people who control NativeWeb and lists ancestry for most. Most are not indigenous; most are professionals (lawyers, professors). This site started as an outgrowth of a listserv. Updated fairly recently (one of the pages was last updated in 2/2000).
NativeWeb is currently looking for volunteers to translate their site into Spanish and indigenous languages. It also has a "Community" page with message boards devoted to different topics. The Resources page is a well organized part of the site with links in subcategories covering art, reference, science, genealogy and others.
Reviewed in detail in Neuguebauer.

http://abyayala.nativeweb.org/
Abya Yala Net, hosted by the NativeWeb server, has information about indigenous peoples. This page has factoids about native peoples (divided by region) and some links to other pages. All in all, not as interesting a resource as Native Web.
Reviewed in detail in Neuguebauer.

http://saiic.nativeweb.org/
"The South and Meso American Indian Rights Center (SAIIC) exists to ensure that the struggles of Latin America's Indigenous peoples for self- determination and respect are heard in the US and internationally, and to support Indigenous peoples' organizing." (from front page)
This site is also hosted by the NativeWeb server. Unfortunately, it would seem that the site was last updated in August 1999. Even the heading "Urgent Actions" shows nothing more recent than 1998.
Reviewed in detail by Neuguebauer.

http://www.lisn.net/
League of Indigenous Sovereign Nations of the Western Hemisphere
The site has been recently updated (the front page was updated in Dec. 1999).
The LISN was formed in 1991 at a conference of representatives of several native nations. Their goals are to unite indigenous peoples in one federation so they can be politically influential on an international level. The web site supports these goals by acting as an information tool to those indigenous groups. The site provides information on current events and opportunities for people to take action. There is also a group of "Indigenous issues" links which are further subdivided into categories such as human rights and native health. Some of these pages are more frequently updated than others. Sadly, the "Upcoming Events" page has not been recently updated and under the heading 2000, the months January, February and March are not linked to any events. Through the Site Map, one can find links to pages about specific nations and regions.

http://www.unpo.org/
UNPO Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation
"UNPO is an international organisation created by nations and peoples around the world who are not represented as such in the world's principal international organisations, such as the United Nations." (maindocs/0201what.htm) According to their website, the UNPO does not act as a representative for these peoples, but as a resource by training them in the fields of diplomacy, law, and the environment. Over 50 nations and peoples are currently members.

http://www.puebloindio.org/
Plataforma de información del pueblo indio, sponsored by CEACISA, a group of Bolivians and Swiss promoting Bolivian culture and supporting the Consejo Indio de Sudamerica. The organization promotes human rights, specifically indigenous rights. Includes press releases about the U.N., the WHO, and the WTO.'s statements on indigenous peoples.
Includes information about Moskita, Aymara and Maya peoples as well as links to some Mapuche sites. On the page for the "Nación Moskita" there is a link to a document in that native language.
Has section called "publicaciones indígenas", which seems to be a mix of indigenist and indigenous materials.

Web sites authored by and about individual indigenous groups
http://indy4.fdl.cc.mn.us/~isk/maya/maya.html
Maya Civilization -- Past & Present
Page prepared by Paula Giese. Text and graphics copyright 1995, 1996

Last updated: Friday, July 05, 1996 - 8:57:38 AM
Has links to Culture, Language, numbers, maps of ancient sites & environmental info, school curriculum and other "Maya Links".
Under Culture there is a page:
"A Mayan Life: A Birth in the Village—By Gaspar Pedro Gonzalez, a Mayan writer who
is an official of the Ministry of Culture in Guatemala. This excerpt is part of chapter 1 of the first novel ever by a Mayan writer, telling the story of life in a remote Mayan village in the Guatemalan highlands as experienced by Mayans who live there. Translated by Fernando Penalosa and Janet Sawyer, copyright 1995, Yax:Te' Press"
Unfortunately, page of Maya Links has many dead links.

http://mars.cropsoil.uga.edu/trop-ag/the-maya.htm
The Maya of Guatemala
Last updated Dec. 11, 1999
Inside page of Guatemalan tourism site.
Contains links to pages about culture, language, history, archaeology. Linked to pages produced by academics or enthusiasts.

http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Lobby/5267/index.html
Movimiento Juventud Kuna
Last updated in 1997, pages in the site still warn that they are under construction. It's unfortunate that it is not currently being maintained because as an indigenous youth group, this site could have so much promise. According to their site (/historia.html) "En marzo de 1972 se constituye formalmente el Movimiento de la Juventud Kuna, el cual es la continuación del movimiento estudiantil que nace en el 1er Congreso de Estudiantiles Kunas de 1957." This organization has a history and I don't know if they are currently active outside of cyberspace.

http://www.umanitoba.ca/anthropology/tutor/case_studies/yanomamo/
A 1995 page by Brian Schwimmer of the University of Manitoba with some basic information about Yanomamo kinship structure.
Brian Schwimmer is a professor at University of Manitoba. He is not an expert on the Yanomamo, he just uses them as an example in a tutorial discussing kinship and social organization.
Has link to 1997 Yanomamo interactive CD-ROM.

http://www.sscf.ucsb.edu/~cejal/
Yanomamö Research Group
Edward Hagen's (Graduate student, Dept. of Anthropology, University of California, Santa Barbara) site reporting on his research in a Yanomamö village in Venezuela.
One of the more detailed sites about the Yanomamö.

http://www.quilmesnet.com.ar/indioquilmes/index.html
Comunidad India Quilmes (Argentina)
Website put together by "Grupo Chamaná", composed of anthropology graduate students from Argentina.
Claim content is by the indigenous people in Quilmes.
Inside pages about history, culture and press releases about current events affecting the indigenous peoples.

http://www3.rcp.net.pe/ashaninka/index.htm
MARANKIARI BAJO Territorio de serpientes
Some information about the Asháninka in Peru.

Last updated 13 Jan 2000.
Press releases (scanned images) of when they launched web site.
Unfortunately, not much information about the group or web site.

http://www.aymara.org/
Aymara Uta (The Aymara Site)
Hosted on GeoCities
"Copylefted" by Jorge Pedraza Arpasi, an Aymara from Peru.
Has links to pages about the Aymara language. Also links to the National statistics institutes of Chile, Bolivia and Peru.
The author is a mathematician and a Linux consultant.

http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Senate/7718
Comunicaciones Mapuche Xeg Xeg
This site is sponsored by the Corporación de Desarrollo, which consists of Mapuche men and women working towards the promotion of Mapuche culture, education, and linguistic, economic and political rights. This web site discusses the history of the radio station which this group operates.

http://Linux.soc.uu.se/mapuche
Ñuke Mapu
Page authored by Jorge Calbucura, Mapuche sociologist at the Uppsala University, Sweden.
Site contains press releases (very up-to-date) on Mapuche activities or issues which relate to them.   Also contains list of papers on MAPUCHE society and history by Mapuche researchers. Links to "nuestra cultura" includes poetry and photos of artwork.   Page seems to be a resource for Mapuche and non-Mapuche, both in Chile and in other lands.

http://www.xs4all.nl/~rehue
Fundación Rehue
The Rehue Foundation is located in Amsterdam and the NGO gives support to projects to improve life conditions of the Mapuche in Chile. From the site, it is difficult to know if there are Mapuche organizers living in the Netherlands working with the foundation. The web site is in English, Spanish and Dutch. The "Noticias y acciones" page has good recent information about Mapuche protests. The "Artículos mapuche" page has links to articles about the Mapuche by scholars (some of whom are Mapuche). "Arte y cultura" page has information about mythology, painters, and music.

http://www.hartford-hwp.com/taino/
The Taíno Inter-Tribal Council, Inc.
Consists of Taíno people from the Caribbean who live in the United States. Links to The Jatibonicu Taino Tribal Nation, a page from the Boriken (Puerto Rican) section of the group.
Also tells reader how to subscribe to a Taíno listserv: "Taíno-L is the Taíno Indigenous People's Forum is for a discussion among all Taíno, Island Carib and other Taíno-speaking peoples and to further the goals of the Taíno Inter-Tribal Council." There is also an advertisement for a Taíno IRC chat group.
Includes links to other pages about Taíno culture and museums.
Also includes archived digital copies of *The Taino Indian-Land Review*.
http://www2.best.com/~gibbons/
Cultures of the Andes: Quechua songs, poems, stories, photos...
A personal page with Quechua jokes and other fun links. Nothing too profound about the culture.

http://usuarios.arnet.com.ar/yanasu/index.html

ASOCIACION TUCUMANA DE INVESTIGADORES EN LENGUA QUECHUA
Information for linguists. Not very many links to other pages of possible interest.

http://www.umt.edu/history/nahuatl/default.htm
Nahuatl Home Page
University of Montana hosts this page sponsored by the Nahuatl-l discussion list.
Link to subscribe to Nahuatl-L
Site more focussed on language, but also has links to cultural pages.
links to vocabulary lists, Nahuatl names, info about the Aztec calendar, etc.

Some Usenet Forums of possible interest
Mapuche: soc.culture.chile
              chile.soc.politica
              soc.culture.argentina
              misc.activism.progressive

Aymara: soc.culture.bolivia

Yanomami: soc.culture.venezuela

Nahuatl: sci.archaeology.mesoamerican

Taíno: soc.culture.puerto-rico

Other: alt.native
              own.natives (One World Net) according to 2/15 message, it has closed   down.
              soc.culture.native

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