The Internet in Latin America: 
Development and Reference Sources

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SUMMARY. This article chronicles the development of the Internet in Latin America and the evolution of reference and research information of use to scholars in the interdisciplinary field of Latin American Studies. It describes selected reference resources including public domain/open access and subscription databases, electronic journal aggregators and websites that provide full-text of historical materials, abstracts and citations to journal articles, books, dissertations and other academic resources, government information, statistics, and news. [Article copies available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service: 1-800-HAWORTH, E-mail address: <docdelivery@haworthpress.com> Website: <http://www.HaworthPress.com> © 2005 by The Haworth Press, Inc. All rights reserved.]

KEYWORDS. Latin America, internet, development, history, reference sources, research

PART 1: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTERNET IN LATIN AMERICA

Information does not exist in isolation from the individual, organization, or other entity that creates it. Researchers need to know about the
dynamics of information production and dissemination in their disciplines and in the countries or regions that they study. In the interdisciplinary field of Latin American Studies, librarians must be aware of how academic publishing functions in the region, the characteristics of the book trade, and how to obtain materials or provide access to information produced outside of the commercial realm by governments, education and the non-governmental organization (NGO) sector. Librarians must understand how the mass media operates in different countries and how to obtain newspapers so that an archive will exist for future historians. Latin Americanist librarians have been engaged in these activities for many years and their efforts have created excellent research collections that have fostered the growth of new knowledge.

My career as an academic librarian began at the same time that the Internet became accessible to more than just the techies and geeks in higher education. From my perspective as a specialist in Latin American area studies, it seemed that researchers should take advantage of this new tool for information dissemination that promised to break through some of the barriers of time, distance, and economics that made access to information from Latin America difficult. As the Internet became an important tool for scholarly communication and research and entered the information universe in Latin America in the 1990s, academic librarians recognized the need to use the net to increase access to traditional sources of information (online newspapers, academic journals, newsletters, etc.) and to take advantage of the production and dissemination of new sources of information.

Long before traditional published sources appeared on the Internet, scholars, activists, journalists, and others were creating and disseminating unique information from and about the region to the rest of the world, often information produced by groups and individuals excluded from the commercial or traditional academic information world, such as activist groups, guerrilla organizations, and other minority or marginalized sectors of the population (Cleaver 1998, Molloy 1998). The primary value of the Internet has always been as a medium of communication and a vehicle for the formation of community. The Internet is a “network of networks” of people keeping each other aware of events and sharing information to solve problems, to publicize situations requiring action, and to facilitate the creation of new knowledge. The Internet can create communities of affinity without geographic limitations.

In a previous paper, I explore in some detail the development of the Internet in Latin America within the framework of several interrelated themes: the use of Internet communication for development and de-
mocracy; the influence of entertainment and commerce; and the economics of the gap in access to information technologies in Latin America (Molloy 2000). While universities, international organizations, governments, and private businesses played an important role in institutionalizing Internet communications in Latin America, it should be noted that NGOs took on much of the earliest technical, educational, and outreach work in the late 1980s and early 1990s to bring Latin America online. Social change activists, often members of local groups dealing with human rights, environment, peace, labor, or other issues recognized the potential of new technologies to enable them to connect with people in other parts of the world who were working on similar issues or who had an interest in receiving information about their activities (Lane 1990, Keck and Sikkink 1998).

In the pre-Internet era, beginning as early as 1985-86, the Association for Progressive Communications (APC) provided access to electronic mail for many groups involved in progressive social movements in Latin American countries—the earliest NGO networks in the region were in Nicaragua and Brazil (Frederick 1993, Association for Progressive Communications 2004, Pasch 1997). It can be argued that the conjunction of Internet communication and the growth of civil society in Latin America created a synthesis such that: “Throughout Latin America and the Third World . . . such groups (grassroots NGOs) have risen to prominence in the last ten to fifteen years—thanks in no small measure . . . to their ability to creatively use new information and communication technologies—exerting their influence all the way from the struggle to redefine (and democratize) daily life to the realm of international relations” (Norsworthy 1997, p. 268).

Optimism about the social benefits of Internet connectivity in Latin America prevailed throughout the 1990s; however, the more recent boom fueled by online entertainment and commercial applications and the growth of private Internet service providers that followed took away much of the vanguard status that progressive organizations had acquired (Gomez 1998). The commercial boom enabled many more people in Latin America to obtain access to the Internet, but as Gomez points out (2000), the Latin American Internet became a “hall of mirrors” reflecting, and in some ways exacerbating, huge inequalities already present in these societies.

The 1999 Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP 1999) focused on the contradictions of globalization: a world in which the benefits of growth and prosperity had become more and more unevenly distributed. Thirty years ago, the in-
come ratio of the richest to the poorest countries was 30-to-1; by 1999 it had grown to 74-to-1. The report details the “double-edged sword” potential of the Internet to break down barriers and facilitate social change and/or to reinforce the inequalities of access to the Internet in rich and poor countries. “Those with income, education and–literally–connections have cheap and instantaneous access to information. The rest are left with uncertain, slow and costly access. When people in these two worlds live and compete side by side, the advantage of being connected will overpower the marginal and impoverished, cutting off their voices and concerns from the global conversation” (UNDP 1999, 6).

There is no lack of literature on the general problem of the “digital divide” in Latin America (Panos Institute 1998, Hamelink 1998, Haymond 1998, Carty 2000, Everett 1998). Everett examined the position of aid agencies in funding information technology as a tool for promoting economic development and political reform, but found that: “The Internet is far from being the free and open exchange that the advertisers and other enthusiasts claim. In terms of both content and accessibility it reflects the same inequalities of race, class, gender and the global order which exist in the ‘real world.’” (Everett 1998, 392).

By 2003, most Latin American governments had articulated policies aimed at promoting Internet access and connectivity and thus working toward the alleviation of inequalities (Summits of the Americas 2004). A recent study (Hawkins and Hawkins 2003) looked at the connections between government policies and Internet access in Latin America. Their data show that the level of Internet use is strongly associated with the overall wealth of the countries and the corresponding development of the telecommunications infrastructure (659). The only government policy shown to have a significant impact on the level of internet access was the implementation of changes in telecommunications tariff structures (660).

The Internet, like so many technologies before it, is not being introduced onto a tabula rasa; rather, it is inserted into an existing set of highly unequal social and economic relations. In the case of Latin America, it is not even a static situation of inequality—the period of the 1990s, when the Internet was introduced in the region, was one of growing inequalities in distribution of wealth and resources. However, there is the potential, thanks to private investment, government policies and the continuing efforts of progressive communities, to create the space for activism, education, research, and other socially beneficial activities. Critical and well-informed users and producers of information
may, in the long run, be much more important than hardware, infrastructure and commercial investment.

In 2004, Tim Berners-Lee, credited as the inventor of the World Wide Web, received a $1.2 million Millennium Technology Prize in Helsinki, Finland. In his acceptance speech, Berners-Lee said that if he had patented his ideas and demanded royalty fees, he would never have succeeded in creating and implementing the communication protocols and markup language that have become essential to what became the open and inter-operable World Wide Web, accessible through any computer platform anywhere in the world. His statement emphasized the Internet’s “spirit of openness and sharing” as an essential catalyst to creativity and invention (Shannon 2004).

The recent trend toward the “harvesting” of metadata from archives of open access scholarly information sources and making these archives accessible to web searchers through deep indexing is one way that the Internet may be moving toward fulfilling the dreams of its founders and the “access is power” optimists of the 1990s: that useful and reliable information would become freely available to all—not just to those in wealthy countries or to the privileged few in poorer world regions like Latin America. Librarians and other information scientists are finding evidence to show that open access sources do have a greater impact on the research community than articles published in journals that are only accessible by paying high subscription fees (Antelman 2004).

Eugene Garfield, the citation database pioneer and founder of the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) has speculated that open access may improve readership and citation impact (quoted in Antelman, 372-373). ISI’s Journal Citation Reports (JCR) are used extensively in academia to determine the relative research impact of a select list of journals across disciplines. ISI currently monitors the presence of open access journals in their citation databases to determine if open access increases research impact. The most recently published study, released in October 2004 and based on the 2003 Journal Citation Reports, concludes that while “more of the currently available open access journals rank in the lower half of their subject category” there are some open access titles in the top ranks (McVeigh 2004).

It is important to note that the JCR methodology focuses on a measurement of the research impact of journals, not individual articles (Antelman 373). ISI’s October study points out the complexity in evolving open access distribution models, including the fact that many publishers permit self-archiving of individual articles by authors, that
these archives are increasingly available through web searching, and thus the availability of articles outside the “package” of the published journal may also affect research impact. The ISI reports note the important role of regional journals in open access publishing, specifically the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO), which encompasses a growing list of Latin American titles (Thomson ISI 2004).

**PART 2: ANNOTATED GUIDE TO REFERENCE SOURCES FOR LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES**

The resources listed here provide access to scholarly literature, news and news archives, periodicals, statistics, and government information focused specifically on Latin America. I have included a few general sources that may be especially relevant to Latin American Studies. Some sources mentioned are very specific and are provided as examples of the kind of unique and useful information that is available via the Internet; however this list is not intended to be comprehensive. Directory sites such as the Latin America Network Information Center (LANIC) provide the best access to the constantly changing array of sites in the region. These online resources will provide a variety of information including complete bibliographic citations and abstracts and/or full text. In some cases, the database will provide external links to the full-text of articles or documents. Access to full text depends on whether the end user is willing to pay for documents or whether the source material is provided through a paid subscription maintained by the library or other institution providing the database access. For all resources listed, I indicate whether access is OPEN or via SUBSCRIPTION.

**Americas Program**

<http://www.americaspolicy.org/>

OPEN

The Americas Program website provides policy briefs and analysis from the Interhemispheric Resource Center (IRC) <http://www.irc-online.org> on topics such as economic integration and sustainable development, U.S. policy, and Latin American political, social and economic affairs, etc. The site includes data and reports on current U.S.-Mexico border issues <http://www.americaspolicy.org/index/usmex/index.php> and an archive of published policy papers and newsletters back to 1995
The IRC is a nonprofit research and advocacy organization located in New Mexico.


This site from CLACSO provides free access to more than 4,000 full-text books, periodical articles, reports, and conference papers by social sciences researchers in Latin America and the Caribbean.

CIAONET: Columbia International Affairs Online <http://www.ciaonet.org>

Columbia International Affairs Online (CIAO) is a comprehensive source for theory and research in international affairs. CIAO provides full text of working papers, reports, and articles from many international relations research centers and think tanks and full text of books published by Columbia University Press. Latin American countries and issues are well-represented in CIAO content. For access and subscription information, see: <http://www.ciaonet.org/frame/subscribefrm.html>.

CLASE/PERIODICA <http://www.oclc.org/support/documentation/firstsearch/databases/dbdetails/details/ClasePeriodica.htm>

OCLC Firstsearch provides access to these two periodical databases produced by the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). CLASE indexes documents published in Latin American journals specializing in the social sciences and humanities; PERIODICA covers the sciences and technology. Together the databases provide more than 300,000 bibliographic citations to articles, essays, book reviews, conference proceedings, and technical reports published in more than 2,600 journals from 24 different Latin American countries. This database does not provide links to full text articles. Access to database producers is available from the Dirección General de Bibliotecas at UNAM: <http://dgb.unam.mx>.
Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas
<http://www.dallasfed.org/index.html>
OPEN

The Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas is an excellent source for economic information on the U.S.-Mexico border region and Latin America. It provides full text access to economic data, reports and analysis. The Center for Latin American Economics, CLAE <http://www.dallasfed.org/latin/index.html> is a research institute attached to the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. CLAE focuses its research efforts on issues of particular concern in Latin America and provides full text access to working papers, research reports, statistics, and other documents via this website.

Handbook of Latin American Studies–HLAS
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/hlas/>
OPEN

The Handbook of Latin American Studies is produced by the Hispanic Division of the Library of Congress and is provided free of charge to web users worldwide. HLAS provides abstracts and complete bibliographic information for published materials and online resources from and about Latin America on a wide range of topics in the humanities and social sciences, selected and annotated by specialists in the field. HLAS has been published since 1936 and the print volumes constitute a comprehensive and growing bibliography of the scholarly literature in Latin American Studies. The online database contains more than 80,000 citations and grows at the rate of about 10,000 citations annually. HLAS includes citations to books, journal articles, theses and dissertations, online resources, and materials in other formats such as CD-ROMs. For more information on the history and content of this resource, see: <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/hlas/salalm.html>

Hemeroteca Digital de Chihuahua
SUBSCRIPTION

The Hemeroteca Digital de Chihuahua, provided by Información Procesada (INPRO), contains full text articles from Mexican newspapers and magazines from and about the state of Chihuahua and the U.S.-Mexico border region. Most of the information in the database is
in Spanish, although it does contain articles from some regional U.S. publications that cover the border region. In addition to local papers from Ciudad Júarez and Chihuahua, the database contains articles that pertain to Chihuahua and the northern border region from many other Mexican publications. Time coverage: 1976 to the present. This database is very specific, but it is an excellent example of a regional information provider developing unique archival content of use to serious researchers. For more information about access to this database, email: informes@inpro.com.mx.

**Hispanic American Periodicals Index (HAPI)**
<http://hapi.gseis.ucla.edu>

**SUBSCRIPTION**

HAPI provides access to the contents of more than 500 social sciences and humanities journals from and about Latin America with coverage from 1970-present. HAPI is a source for authoritative, worldwide information about Central and South America, Mexico, the Caribbean basin, the U.S.-Mexico border region, and Hispanics in the United States. Subject coverage ranges from current political, economic, social, and business issues to Latin American arts and letters. HAPI Online contains complete bibliographic citations to articles, book reviews, documents, original literary works, and other materials. HAPI provides coverage of many regional journals that are not included in other online databases. Produced by the UCLA Latin American Center, HAPI includes more than 210,000 citations, and grows at the rate of about 8,000 records a year. Beginning in 2003, HAPI provides links to articles that are available full text through several commercial sources and through journal web pages. For more information see: <http://hapi.gseis.ucla.edu/hapi/html/free/about.shtml>.

**Independent Media Center–Indymedia**
<http://www.indymedia.org>

**OPEN**

The Independent Media Center is an excellent example of social activists taking advantage of the Internet to disseminate alternative news from many different world areas. Indymedia describes itself as “a collective of independent media organizations and hundreds of journalists offering grassroots, non-corporate coverage.” Latin American news is posted to Indymedia from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia,
Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, and Uruguay. It is an excellent source for current news coverage from an alternative perspective.

InfoLatina: ISI Emerging Markets
<http://www.securities.com/corp/infolatina.html>

SUBSCRIPTION

InfoLatina provides current and archival access to the full text of a large array of Mexican publications, including newspapers, magazines, government documents, legislation, and jurisprudence. For some publications, the archive goes back to the early 1980s. The commercial service, Internet Securities, acquired the InfoLatina database in 2000 and merged the content with other global and Latin American news and business sources provided through the website. Trial subscriptions are available. For more information on subscriptions and access, see: <http://www.securities.com/corp/infolatina.html?ms=0&section=contact>.

INFO-LATINOAMERICA: Latin American Information System
<http://www.nisc.com>

SUBSCRIPTION

Produced by the National Information Services Corporation (NISC), INFO-LATINOAMERICA covers regional business, economics, politics, and social issues. This database began as Info-South from the University of Miami’s North-South Center and coverage goes back to 1988; content is updated weekly. INFO-LATINOAMERICA includes abstracts of Latin American newspaper and some journal articles; most content from 1996-forward is full text or includes links to full text on the web. Coverage tends toward English-language news and business sources from more than 1,500 international newspapers, journals, news magazines, newsletters, media broadcasts, conference proceedings, and other print publications. English translations of foreign media broadcasts are provided by the World News Connection (see below). See: <http://www.nisc.com/factsheets/qila.htm> for more information.

INFORME–Revistas en Español
<http://www.galegroup.com/servlet/ItemDetailServlet?region=9&imprint=000&titleCode=INFO1&type=4&id=172023>

SUBSCRIPTION

INFORME is provided by the Thomson/Gale Group. The database provides full text access to more than 140 Spanish and bilingual aca-
demic and popular periodicals. Archival coverage is not consistent, but full text for some titles is included back to the mid-1990s. Subject coverage includes news, politics, arts and letters, social sciences, as well as popular entertainment, sports, and fashion magazines. INFORME is one of the first products from a mainstream, commercial information provider to include significant Spanish-language and Latin American content to non-specialized academic and public libraries. The INFORME title list is available: <http://www.galegroup.com/tlist/sb5022.html> and a fact sheet: <http://www.gale.com/pdf/facts/inform.pdf>.

**J-STOR**

<http://www.jstor.org/>

**SUBSCRIPTION**

J-STOR is a membership organization providing a full text archive of the complete runs of several hundred major academic journals in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities. Some journal archives cover more than 100 years of research. Latin American Studies titles in the current J-STOR collections include: Hispanic American Historical Review, Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs, Journal of Latin American Studies, Latin American Perspectives, and Latin American Research Review. Inclusion of archival Latin American content in J-STOR should continue to grow and will make it possible for many smaller college and university libraries to provide access to specialized journals that are not part of their print holdings.

**Latin American Network Information Center (LANIC)**

<http://lanic.utexas.edu>

**OPEN**

LANIC is headquartered at the University of Texas at Austin and is the premier Internet directory for Latin American information. LANIC provides links to thousands of information resources from and about Latin America. Many LANIC projects continue to provide full text access to archival materials of use to researchers. The following are examples of LANIC resources and projects.

**Electronic Text Collections**

<http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/ etext/>

Full texts of Presidential messages from Mexico and Argentina dating back to the mid 19th Century; translations into English of more than
37 years of Castro’s public speeches, interviews, and press conferences; archives of several Latin American journals and conference proceedings, etc.

*Latin American Open Archives Portal (LAOAP)*

<http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/laoap/>

LAOAP (under development) uses the Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH) to develop a database to provide access to social sciences “grey literature” (working documents, pre-prints, research reports, statistical documents) produced by Latin American research institutes, NGOs, and some government agencies. It is anticipated that the repositories indexed by the LAOAP will be integrated into other open access archives to facilitate access via open web search engines.

*Association of Research Libraries Latin American Research Resources Project (ARL-LARRP)*

<http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/arl/>

In addition to the LAOAP and the Presidential Messages databases, LANIC and ARL have collaborated to create a database of the Tables of Contents (LAPTOC) of more than 800 humanities and social sciences journals published in Latin America. The journals covered in LAPTOC are specifically chosen because they are not likely to be included in other databases (such as HAPI). Indexing is provided by Latin American specialists at participating ARL libraries; members facilitate interlibrary loan of articles to other participating libraries.

A selection of other LANIC pages:

LANIC Newsroom: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/info/newsroom/>

Media and Communication: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/subject/media/>

Journalism: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/journalism/>

Magazines: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/epub/>

Newspapers: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/news/>

Academic journals: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/journals/>

Photography: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/photography/>
Government: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/subject/government/>
Human Rights: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/hrights/>
U.S.-Mexico Border: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/mexico/usmex/>
Maps: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/map/>
Statistics: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/statistics/>
Libraries & Reference: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/subject/libraries/>

**Latin America Data Base (LADB)**
<http://ladb.unm.edu/>

**SUBSCRIPTION**

The LADB has been published by the Latin American and Iberian Institute at the University of New Mexico since 1986 and at that time it was one of the first online databases for Latin American research, disseminating weekly bulletins of news and economic and political analysis via email and providing access to an online archive via a telnet connection. LADB currently produces three weekly electronic news bulletins about Mexico (SourceMex), Central America and the Caribbean including Cuba (NotiCen), and South America (NotiSur). These are available on the web and/or by e-mail with a subscription. LADB’s searchable archive of over 24,000 articles since 1986 is updated weekly. This is a unique, content-rich archive and current awareness source for economic and political information on Latin America. See <http://ladb.unm.edu/info/prices/> for prices and trial account information. Email: <info@ladb.unm.edu>.

**LatinFocus**
<http://www.latin-focus.com/>

**OPEN**

LatinFocus, “the leading source for Latin American economies,” contains data from government sources, economic forecasts, market analysis covering economic performance, political risk assessments and financial market developments. LatinFocus includes full text documents providing economic indicators (GDP, unemployment, CPI, stock market, exports, imports, etc.) from 1995 onward for Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Venezuela, and Latin America as a whole. The database also includes recent news articles and commentaries, fact
sheets, charts, economic briefings, and related links for individual countries. LatinFocus sells publications and some specialized services via subscriptions, but the free resources on the website are an excellent research tool.

*Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe*
*<http://www.lexis-nexis.com/universe>*

**SUBSCRIPTION**

This general database for news and legal research is available through many U.S. academic libraries. It includes full text access to thousands of news sources, including several dozen Spanish-language titles. The best segments for Latin American news are “North/South American News” and “Spanish Language News.” Searches can be restricted to these sets of publications. Lexis-Nexis provides access to several specialized publications such as the *Latin American Weekly Report, Latin American Newsletters, Latin American Regional Reports, Latin American Economy and Business, Latinnews Daily*, as well as information on the region from thousands of daily newspapers and other periodical sources.

*National Security Archive*
*<http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/>*

**OPEN**

The National Security Archive is an independent non-governmental research institute and library located at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. The National Security Archive collects and publishes declassified documents acquired through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Complete collections are available for purchase in published and microfiche formats and online via subscription, but the website provides selections of full text primary research collections online in a section entitled: Electronic Briefing Books, <http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/index.html>. Latin American topics available online include: Argentina’s Dirty War, CIA in Latin America, Contras, Cocaine and Covert Operations, the Tlatelolco Massacre, Human Rights and the Dirty War in Mexico, Kennedy and Castro, Chile Intervention, Oliver North File, War in Colombia, U.S. Policy in Guatemala, and many other topics.
**OAIster**

<http://www.oaister.org>

OPEN

OAIster is an open access archive project of the University of Michigan Digital Library and provides a searchable database of more than 4.7 million (as of December 2004) articles, documents, graphics, photographs, sound recordings, videos, and other digital objects made freely available on the Internet by more than 390 institutions and organizations including many university special collections and archives. OAIster encompasses as broad a collection of resources as possible in many formats and with no restrictions on subject parameters. It is also possible to restrict searches to specific collections included in the database. OAIster is accessible to the entire Internet community. While OAIster does not focus specifically on Latin America, sample keyword searches reveal significant Latin American content. Examples: Latin America* restricted to image format = 108 items; Mexico images = 8,969; Mexico and all document types = 15,332; Nicaragua and all document types = 305 items.

**Political Database of the Americas**

<http://www.georgetown.edu/pdba/>

OPEN

The Political Database of the Americas is produced at Georgetown University and provides political documents and data for all countries in the hemisphere, including texts of constitutions and laws, electoral systems and historical election data, political party platforms and histories, judicial information, and more.

**Red de Revistas Científicas de America Latina y El Caribe (RedALyC)**

<http://www.redalyc.com/>

OPEN

The Red de Revistas Científicas de America Latina y El Caribe, España y Portugal provides full text access to more than 130 journals in social sciences and humanities published in many Latin American countries, Spain and Portugal. RedALyC is conceived as an open access portal for academic information produced in the region. Using the slogan, “La ciencia que no se ve, no existe/Science that is not seen does not exist,” RedALyC has taken a giant step forward in providing access to
academic research produced in Latin America. It is anticipated that the visibility of the full text of these journals will increase the citation rates and global research impact of Latin American scholarship.

*Sistema de Información sobre Comercio Exterior/Foreign Trade Information system (SICE)*
<http://www.sice.oas.org/> OPEN

SICE is the Foreign Trade Information System of the Organization of American States. The web page contains full text of official documents and other information relating to trade agreements and treaties, intellectual property rights organizations, investment treaties, a glossary, and related links to other web sites, arranged by topic and by country concerning trade in the Western hemisphere. Most of the documents available via SICE are provided in English and Spanish and portions of the site are available in English, Spanish, French, and Portuguese.

*SciELO*
<http://www.scielo.org/> OPEN

The Scientific Electronic Library Online, SciELO, is a vanguard open access digital library of full text articles from science and social science journals from Latin America and Spain. The original SciELO project was developed by a consortium of Brazilian research institutes, and has developed as a model for cooperative electronic publishing of scientific journals on the Internet. SciELO was designed to meet the scientific communication needs of developing countries, particularly Latin America and the Caribbean. Current projects exist in Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Spain, Mexico, Colombia, Peru, Costa Rica and Venezuela. SciELO content is especially strong in the fields of public health, agriculture, biomedicine, and allied health sciences. SciELO titles feature prominently in the ISI research impact studies of open access journals and are accessible via Google Scholar <http://scholar.google.com>.

*SCIRUS*
<http://www.scirus.com> OPEN

SCIRUS is a comprehensive science-specific Internet search engine that provides access to scientific, scholarly, technical and medical data
on the web. Like Google Scholar, SCIRUS provides links to open access scientific information as well as links to articles that may be available via purchase or subscription. I have included it in this list because keyword searches yielded many relevant articles and sites with Latin American content, including links to open access archives such as SciELO.

**World News Connection**
<http://wnc.fedworld.gov>
<http://wnc.dialog.com/>

**SUBSCRIPTION**

World News Connection (WNC) provides access to a wide array of news articles, conference proceedings, television and radio broadcasts, periodical articles, and other publications. Translations of foreign language broadcast and print sources are provided by the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) and produced by analysts at the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), a sub-agency of the CIA. WNC provides English translations of news broadcasts worldwide, with extensive coverage from more than 25 Latin American and Caribbean countries. News stories and translations are generally available online within 24-72 hours of broadcast. Online archival coverage goes back to 1995. Although the database content is created and maintained by NTIS, online subscription access to the WNC is provided through DIALOG, <http://wnc.dialog.com/>. For more information on subscribing, contact: <customer@dialog.com>.

**PART 3: CONCLUSIONS**

I began writing about the development of the Internet in Latin America in 1994 and have posted various chronologies and resource lists online (Molloy 1999). Until very recently, the Internet as a reference source for Latin American Studies was a way to access gigabytes of information on the latest events (daily newspapers, current issues of popular magazines, travel and tourism information, political and human rights alerts, basic government information) but provided only limited access to deep news archives or scholarly resources. As can be seen from the selective list of reference resources above, this broad but shallow information pool is changing and growing with the most interesting
and substantive advances coming from scientific journal publishers, research centers, and NGOs in the region.

The current challenge for librarians and scholars is to find meaningful ways to participate in the evolution of the Internet from a communication tool into a functioning virtual library. While the Internet does not provide the kind of controlled subject access and the bibliographic or inventory control that exists in a research library, new digital projects using the Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH) are creating online access to large repositories of quality research information. Regional electronic publishing initiatives such as the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO) and the Red de Revistas Científicas de América Latina y El Caribe (RedALyC) now provide free, open access to the full contents of hundreds of academic journals published in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Spain. Advanced Internet search engines such as Google make it possible to find quality information on the open web. New relationships between Google and global academic publishers, including those from Latin America (launched as Google Scholar in late November 2004), are creating the beginnings of a real virtual library for academic research in Latin American Studies.

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