LANIC: A Digital Bridge between Latin America and the World

http://lanic.utexas.edu/

Google any topic related to Latin America and you will see results from LANIC—the Latin American Network Information Center—at the top of your list. LANIC was developed by LILAS to provide Latin American users with access to academic databases and information services throughout the Internet, and to provide Latin Americanists around the world with access to information on and about Latin America. LANIC acts as a portal or directory to both local and off-site information, and content links are organized both by country and by subject. LANIC also hosts a number of other informational resources including joint projects, databases, and electronic publications. With links to content in Spanish, English, Portuguese, and indigenous languages, the site is used by people from all over the academic, governmental, and business community.

LANIC Stats

- 42 Number of country pages
- 74 Average number of e-mail inquiries, comments, and suggestions
- LANIC receives each month
- 12,000 Number of unique URLs in the LANIC directories
- 87,000 Number of Web sites containing links to LANIC
- 4.5 million Average number of monthly hits on LANIC

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http://lanic.utexas.edu/larp/laptocn.html

The Latin American Periodicals Tables of Contents (LAPTOC) is a searchable Web database that provides access to the tables of contents of more than 800 journals from 29 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, including bibliographic references to over 250,000 articles in the major languages of the region. The journals, examples being Arqueología y sociedad or Cuadernos de economía, are primarily in the humanities and social sciences and are published in Latin America. Currently, 53 libraries participate in the Latin American Research Resources Project (LARRP), which sponsors the project. The libraries have divided the task of collecting and cataloging the journals included in the database. For each issue, a library enters in journal’s tables of contents into the database and provides document delivery when users request specific articles from those journals. LANIC is the technical partner on the project and manages database development.

LAPTOC Makes Latin American Journals Accessible

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LAOAP is a portal service providing access to social sciences grey literature produced in Latin America by research institutes, non-governmental organizations, and peripheral agencies. It encompasses working documents, pre-prints, research papers, statistical documents, and other difficult-to-access materials that are not controlled by commercial publishers. It utilizes the Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH) as a low-barrier solution to disseminate and share digital resources originating in Latin America to bring more visibility and access to research in the region.

The Latin American Government Documents Archive (LAGDA) was developed to preserve and facilitate access to a wide range of ministerial and presidential documents from 18 Latin American and Caribbean countries. The archived versions typically incorporate all the functionality of the live site, so users will have a window into the past long after the original versions have been updated or have disappeared from the live Web. Capture of sites began on multiple dates in 2005 and 2006, and will continue with regular scheduled captures approximately every quarter.

The archive includes not only the full-text versions of official documents, but also original video and audio recordings of key regional leaders. Archive contents include thousands of annual and “state of the nation” reports, plans and programs, and speeches by presidents and government ministers. Content can be accessed via full-text search, or by browsing by country or by specialized sample collection, such as “Presidential Messages” or “Ministerial Documents.”

LAGDA is a true example of partnership in action. The archive was developed by LANIC (Latin American Network Information Center), using the Internet Archive’s Archive-It service, soon joined by the University of Texas Libraries and the Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection. Latin American bibliographer Dan Gibbs and Fred Heath, Vice Provost of the University of Texas Libraries, both lent their knowledge and support to further develop the project. As LANIC Project Director Carolyn Palaima describes it, “LAGDA is structured for comprehensive capture of Web sites based on the collecting needs of libraries. The service provides for the systematic capture of documents and other primary source material that are increasingly available on the Web only. We capture not only the documents, but also the supporting context in which they were written.”

Ann Hartness Receives Brazil’s Order of the Southern Cross

As head librarian for the Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, Ann Hartness has done much to further the world’s knowledge and understanding of Latin America. In April 2005, the Brazilian government honored her for this work with the National Order of the Southern Cross (Ordem Nacional do Cruzeiro do Sul). This prestigious award is presented by the Brazilian government to outstanding foreigners. Rui Fernandes Barbosa, Brazilian Ambassador to the United States, bestowed the decoration on Hartness in a public ceremony at the Rare Books Reading Room of the Benson.

Hartness’s most recent work on Brazil includes an annotated bibliography of Brazilian works from 1965 to 1998. She is known internationally as a Brazilian expert and also has written pieces about Mexico, Guatemala, and Latin American business. Her book Subject Guide to Statistics in the Presidential Reports of the Brazilian Provinces, 1830-1889 made a major contribution to the preservation of important Brazilian government papers by making them much more accessible to researchers.

Analyzing the Andes–Professor Knapp Uses Fulbright-Hays to Study Sustainable Development

In April 2005, Professor Gregory Knapp of UT’s Department of Geography and the Environment was awarded a nine-month research grant from the Fulbright-Hays Faculty Research Abroad Fellowship Program to study “Water Management, Livelihoods, and Landscapes in the Andes.”

This was the second time Knapp received the highly competitive Fulbright-Hays grant from the U.S. Department of Education, and he was one of only 27 faculty members nationwide selected for the 2005–2006 academic year. Awarded are selected based on the originality, significance, and theoretical importance of their research, as well as their qualifications for carrying it out and their impact on transforming area studies programs.

Following up his previous research on the patterns and processes of land use in the Andes, this project took Knapp to the Ecuadorian Andes for nine months to study the importance of water management for the success and sustainability of high mountain societies. “I’ve spent a long time studying the history and culture of local irrigation systems,” says Knapp. “With this project, I’m striving to update this research and relate it to broader themes in sustainable mountain development, both in the Andes and elsewhere. Usually, mountains are seen as marginal environments with no future in the global economy except for sites for tourism. I suspect the Andes have a more vibrant future.”

Knapp worked with local partners to conduct field study and interviews and to analyze data. In the summer, María Belén Noroña Salcedo, a ULLAS graduate student, joined the team. Knapp also worked with Manuel Peralvo, a doctoral candidate in geography at UT, who was conducting research in Oyacachi, an important site for Quito’s water supply. “I have also benefited from my colleagues at the Ministry of Agriculture, the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador (Quito), the University of Otavalo, the National Institute for Cultural Patrimony, and the National Polytechnic University,” Knapp said.

One of Knapp’s biggest challenges was the unstable political environment as the Ecuadorian elections approached. “The country was convulsed by various protests, with candidates jockeying for position in the elections,” he said. “Taxis included strikes and shutdowns of the transportation system.” As an American doing research, Knapp was in an especially sensitive position due to the negotiations for a free trade agreement, which some critics in terms of its potential effect on local indigenous agriculture.

After his analysis is completed, Knapp will publish the results of his work in Ecuador in Spanish. Knapp says, “My previous work is still available in Ecuadorian bookstores.”
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The LANIC Gopher server was launched in 1992—providing the first public information service for Latin America on the Internet. The Web site, launched in 1994, grew daily. As part of an ongoing research and development agenda, LANIC is involved in several projects that seek to develop innovative approaches using new information and communication technologies to access, collect, organize, preserve, and disseminate information from and about Latin America to the broadest possible audience.


http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/laop/

LAOP is a portal providing access to social sciences grey literature produced in Latin America by research institutes, non-governmental organizations, and peripheral agencies. It encompasses working documents, pre-prints, research papers, statistical documents, and other difficult-to-access materials that are not controlled by commercial publishers. It utilizes the Open Access Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH) as a low-barrier solution to disseminate and share digital resources originating in Latin America to bring more visibility and access to research in the region.

Current institutional partners include FLACSO Chile, CRAM Guatemala, Universidad Torcuato Di Tella, Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales, Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, Centro Iberoamericano de Formación, Guatemala, and the Inter-American Development Bank. When fully up and running, these partners will collectively provide approximately 13,500 full-text items, with a range of 5,000 to 10,000 per individual institution. The premise of the partnerships is to build institutional capacity in the region for ongoing development of the collection. New partners, as well as suggestions for additional resources, are welcome.

LAOP is a joint project of the Latin American Research Resources Project (LARRP) and LANIC.

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LAGDA Web Archive Lets Users Browse the Past

http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/archives/lagda

One of the advantages of a Web site is that it can be changed frequently—but that flexibility presents a challenge to archivists and scholars. Note: LILAS and the Latin American Collection are creating an archive containing copies of approximately 300 Web sites from Latin American government ministries and presidencies.

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