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Outlaws and citizens: indigenous people and the 'New Media Nation'

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Abstract

Emerging from the international movement of Indigenous peoples, what the author terms 'the New Media Nation' is linked to the explosion of Indigenous news media, information technology, film, music, and other artistic and cultural developments. The creators of Indigenous media projects experience an array of government, transgovernment, corporate and other policies and pressures: these range from supportive to disinterested, to hostile and sometimes life-threatening. In the most supportive environments, they are able to participate as citizens working within government media policies. In the most hostile environments, they are forced to become 'outlaws', finding ways to send printed materials, radio signals and Internet transmissions across borders that often artificially (re)construct Indigenous peoples as bounded by nation-states. Indigenous people are using old and new technologies to amplify their voices and expand their power, disseminating information to a rapidly expanding global audience. The article draws on more than 20 years of research in several countries and picks up key themes elaborated in the book, The New Media Nation, *now in press.*

Keywords

indigenous peoples
indigenous media and cultural production
aboriginal media
transnational movements
global audiences
'New Media Nation'
Sámi

In 2007, the new United Nations Human Rights Council adopted a declaration aimed at protecting the rights of Indigenous peoples around the world. Although the declaration is not legally binding, many people have noted that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which also was not a binding document, eventually became customary law. The countries that voted 'no' were Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United States (Cultural Survival Quarterly 2007: 5). For many, the Canadian vote was the big shock. Canada's new (and only marginally elected) minority Conservative government rejected the initial request for a consensus (affirmative) decision, requested a vote and then voted against the declaration, reversing the original position of the previous government and obliterating Canada's central role in drafting the original document. Australia's government shifted in a more progressive direction, but not in time for the signing. In 2008, both Australia and Canada issued official apologies for the horrors and injustices of those countries' assimilation policies and residential schools.

There is no universal definition of 'Indigenous peoples', and indeed, no global agreement among peoples who use this term to refer to themselves and others. The United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations refers to 'pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies' that consider themselves

coherent cultural groups, estimating some 350 million individuals, with more than 5,000 surviving languages and cultures, residing in more than 70 countries. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention No. 169 makes self-identification the central identifying principle (International Labour Organisation 2005: Article 1). The Sámi Parliament in Finland[1] defines an Indigenous people as one whose members consider themselves Indigenous, whose 'ancestors have inhabited the area before it was conquered or settled or before the present borders were drawn up . . . [and has] distinct social, economic, cultural and political institutions' (Sami Parliament 2002: 3).

To create an ideal climate for Indigenous media would require international consensus on the Declaration, equality for Indigenous peoples everywhere, and strong and continuing support for development and maintenance of local, regional, national and global Indigenous media projects. It is clear that such things will not happen overnight, or in the foreseeable future. It is, therefore, no surprise that Indigenous people are not waiting for that elusive, global utopia. With erratic, scant, or sometimes nonexistent resources, they find ways to utilize old and new technologies to amplify their voices and expand their power, disseminating information to a rapidly expanding global audience.

I have observed these developments for more than twenty years, in Alaska, the northwestern and southwestern United States; Yukon, Nunavut, Québec, Ontario and British Columbia in Canada; northern Norway and Finland, Greenland and Australia, and have followed kindred projects in New Zealand, Africa, Latin America, Sweden, Russia and elsewhere. Emerging from the international movement of Indigenous peoples, 'the New Media Nation' (Alia 2003; Alia 2009) is linked to the explosion of Indigenous news media, information technology, film, music and other artistic and cultural developments.[2] No real nation in the political science sense, it exists outside the control of any particular nation state, enabling its creators and users to network and engage in transcultural and transnational lobbying, and access information that might otherwise be inaccessible within state borders. While the 'Nation's' various member outlets and organizations may be subject to state regulations and control, in a broader sense, it is an 'outlaw' organization.

The evolution of 'outlaw' media

According to *Webster's Online Dictionary* (2008), the English noun, outlaw, dates back to before the12th century, evolving from the Old Norse *ūtlagi*, from *ūt* (out) + *lag- or log* (law), to the Old English *ūtlaga*, Middle English *outlawe*. The current meanings are: 'a person excluded from the benefit or protection of the law', 'a lawless person or a fugitive from the law;' 'a person or organization under a ban or restriction', 'one that is unconventional or rebellious;' 'an animal (as a horse) that is wild and unmanageable'. The *Compact Oxford English Dictionary Online* (2008) places the two main definitions in reverse order. Here, the first definition is a 'fugitive from the law' and the second, a 'person deprived of the benefit and protection of the law'. I would contend that all of these definitions, including the one about 'unmanageable' animals, can be applied to the spirit and

1 The Sámi parliaments in Norway and Finland produce separate, but often interconnected policies and documents; because of their home countries (and what for Sámi are artificially imposed borders) they are separately funded, and must negotiate separately with their home state governments. They are located, respectively, in Karaskjok, Norway and Inari, Finland.

2 A more comprehensive treatment can be found in Alia (2009).

substance of the New Media Nation. Most of the Indigenous media practitioners and audiences I have interviewed, over the years, view the 'Nation's' most visible outlaws as Robin Hood figures, operating in the people's interests. If not literally 'stealing from the rich', they most certainly are 'giving to the poor' – to those disadvantaged by governments, corporations, and more generally, by economic and environmental circumstances.

Indigenous peoples' movements tend to work both inside and outside the 'system'. Some media outlaws do legal and illegal, or a-legal work, simultaneously. An example is Paul DeMain, a leading, US-based journalist of Oneida/Ojibway ancestry. DeMain is an editor, radio presenter and media activist who sees himself and his colleagues as 'guerillas in the media'. Like many other Indigenous media leaders, DeMain is at once a 'guerilla' and a 'legitimate' journalist – not either/or, but both (DeMain 2001: 131). At once stateless and a citizen responding to his particular experiences of an assimilationist state, (the United States), I think he typifies the kind of Robin Hood-style media hero seen throughout the Indigenous world. Another example is the Inuit broadcaster and political leader, Rosemarie Kuptana, who, while lobbying for Indigenous broadcasting in the Canadian Arctic, famously compared 'the onslaught of southern television and the absence of native television to the neutron bomb . . . Neutron bomb television . . . destroys the soul of a people but leaves the shell of a people walking around' (Kuptana cited in Brisebois 1983: 107).

James Clifford, a scholar known for his work on ethnographic authority and cultural, disciplinary and geographic border-crossing, thinks that positive social change requires such mixtures of legal and extra-legal, challenging and crossing of boundaries. 'Cultural action, the making and remaking of identities, takes place in the contact zones, along the policed and transgressive intercultural frontiers of nations, peoples, locales' (Clifford 1997: 7). In Clifford's view, transnational connections are able to break the binary relationship between 'minority' communities and 'majority' societies – 'a relation that structures projects of both assimilation and resistance' (Clifford 1997: 255). Along with many of its constituent organisations and cultural groups, the New Media Nation uses a form of what the interdisciplinary, post-colonial scholar of ethics, human rights and globalization, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1990; 1995) calls 'strategic essentialism'. In this instance, particularities and differences are set aside in the interest of constructing a carefully orchestrated, essentialised pan-indigeneity. Starting with his home community, the Shuswap (Secwepemc) Neskonlith First Nation in British Columbia, Canada, George Manuel adopted the principles and tactics identified by Clifford and Spivak. He envisioned an international organization of Indigenous peoples, which he called the 'Fourth World', a term developed during his conversations with Mbuto Milando, first secretary of the Tanzanian High Commission in Canada. Manuel was equally committed to working locally, regionally, nationally and globally. His discussions with Mbuto Milando and Julius Nyerere in Tanzania were followed by meetings with Maori, Native American, Peruvian, Australian, Sámi and other leaders. Manuel was 'instrumental in drafting the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples' and in 1975, founded the World Council of Indigenous

People (McFarlane 1993: 8). He said that peoples of the 'Fourth World' could not be confined within national or state borders and, like Rosemarie Kuptana, that state-controlled communication helps to create and sustain oppression of Indigenous peoples, who must stand together and send their voices beyond national borders, to 'be heard by the world' (Manuel quoted in McFarlane 1993: 160–161). He pictured the Fourth World not as 'a destination' but a 'global highway', seeking 'the right to travel freely, not only on our road but in our own vehicles' (Manuel and Posluns 1974: 217).

Having long ago learned to maximize scarce resources in human-intensive ways, Indigenous people have created global forests from the tiniest of seeds. In remote communities, news media often begin as 'alternative' services. Northern Ontario's Wawatay Communications Society started as a trail radio rental service to trappers, with small, high-frequency transmitters forming an emergency communications system. Sámi radio services in arctic Norway and Finland sometimes arrive by snowmobile. The evolution of Indigenous media in Canada can be traced to the moment when the Métis leader, Louis Riel, seized Fort Garry, took over the printing establishment and began publishing the newspaper, *New Nation*. The link between transportation and communication was underscored in early Alberta history, when the *Medicine Hat News* was printed and distributed from an aging Canadian Pacific Railway boxcar. That tradition continued into the 1990s, in Ontario, when for several years during the 1990s Miles Morrisseau and Shelley Bressette published *Nativebeat* newspaper from a trailer next to their home at in the Kettle Point First Nation in Forest, Ontario.[3]

There is a long-standing and widespread tradition in first peoples' communities (especially in remote areas)[4] in which meetings, feasts, potlatches and public events of all kinds effectively become communication media – much as early troubadours and town criers[5] brought the news to street corners, coffee houses and pubs. The 'outlaw' status of such forms of communication lies in the frequent beginnings of media outlets in 'illegal' or 'pirate' structures. In the northern region of the Canadian province of Ontario, for example, the first radio broadcasts were carried through the countryside by equipment installed in a travelling van, and various versions of mobile service have emerged throughout the history of Indigenous broadcasting worldwide. In Suva, Fiji, Femtalk 89.2, women's community radio initiative of femLINKpacific (Media Initiatives for Women) uses a mobile 'suitcase' radio to broadcast to women in semi-urban and rural Fiji (Mutuku 2005).

In the late 1980s in Salt River, Cape Town, South Africa, a small group of people founded CASET (Cassette Education Trust) to produce radio-formatted cassettes for distribution in townships and in the area around Cape Town, to inform, educate and empower disadvantaged people on issues such as literacy, hygiene, health and politics. In 1992, CASET transformed itself into the member-owned voluntary association, Bush Radio, becoming the first broadcast outlet run by and for black South Africans, CASET pressured the government for a licence to broadcast inside South Africa and internationally and to develop a nationwide training program (Mott Foundation 2005).

3 For further reading, see Alia 1999; 2004; (2009); Lehtola 2002; Lehtola 2005.

4 Communities, territories or regions that are distant from major cities, important towns, and other places providing essential services.

5 Troubadours were poet-musicians who are generally traced to Medieval times; they often brought and 'sang' the news, as they traveled. Town Criers have been traced back to ancient Greece, and in more recent times, were well known in England and North America. They are sometimes called the first journalists. Some Indigenous peoples maintain similar practices, continuing long histories of oral culture.

Frustrated by a string of government rejections, Bush Radio adopted guerrilla tactics and began broadcasting illegally. In 1993, some twenty volunteers took over the station's 16-channel studio mixing desk, illegal transmitter and supply of CDs and tapes, and began broadcasting. Following the inaugural 4-hour broadcast, authorities invaded the premises, seized the equipment and 'charged Bush Radio's two key members on counts of illegal broadcasting, illegal possession of broadcast apparatus, and obstructing the course of justice' (Mott Foundation 2005). The state eventually dropped the charges, after 8 months of public pressure, not only from individuals but also from national and international organizations as well (Mott Foundation 2005). Bush Radio was the first South African community radio initiative to join the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC), and has continued to lobby and help develop community radio across South Africa. The aim of the training program is designed to create a perpetually-expanding, skills chain-reaction, bringing representatives of each community station for training and returning them to their home stations to train others (Mott Foundation 2005). Today, CASET has partnerships and exchange programs in several countries, an Institute for the Advancement of Journalism and Media Training Centre, and a national resource for radio production and management skills.

From Guatemala comes another example of 'outlaw' media. Indigenous peoples experienced more than 500 years of persecution and decades of civil war, including the murder of more than 200,000 in the most recent conflict (Cultural Survival 2006). In 1997, peace accords ended more than 30 years of civil war, and also guaranteed Indigenous people the right to community media. Guatemalan people and Indigenous people in particular, fought hard to change the country's telecommunications law. Yet, Guatemala's primarily Mayan Indigenous majority, with 25 languages among them, still has only minimal representation in media and government. As a result, Indigenous and other people seeking media freedom have developed more than a thousand unlicensed stations. Their vulnerability to being 'caught' and shut down makes legalization of community radio the broadcasters' top concern (Cultural Survival 2006).

Where governments fail to provide access or adequate funding, NGOs and private funding sometimes help to close the gap. Cultural Survival is a non-profit organization dedicated to Indigenous people's rights and self-determination, founded in 1972 by anthropologists David and Pia Maybury-Lewis. In 2005, Cultural Survival started the Guatemala Radio Project to support local stations broadcasting to Maya peoples across the country (Cultural Survival 2007). In a rapid move from under- to above-ground, the 2007 community radio summit in Chimaltenango elected an Indigenous-majority board of directors whose president is a correspondent for *La Prensa Libre*, the country's most influential newspaper. Recent radio programming includes a Spanish-language social issues *radionovela*, a radio drama broadcast in Spanish and three Indigenous languages, a health program and a program for coffee farmers subsidized by Dean's Beans Organic Fair Trade Coffee. The earlier practice of burning programs onto CDs and physically carrying them to each station is gradually being replaced by a constellation of 'hub stations' using the latest Meraki

wireless antennas to cut distribution costs and expand internet access (Cultural Survival 2007). Unfortunately, the government persists in creating obstacles to Indigenous media projects, forcing some to choose between closing a station and ending the broadcasts, or remaining outlaws. After months of apparent progress, in July 2008, Guatemala's Public Ministry returned to its practice of raiding community radio stations and seizing their equipment. Four stations in the department of San Marcos were raided. Cultural Survival notes that such actions contravene recent Peace Accords and the Guatemalan Constitution, which 'guarantee indigenous Mayans the freedom to use community media'. The present telecommunication law leaves unlicensed stations vulnerable: any '"man of influence" can have the police raid a station, arrest the operators, and confiscate equipment'. The 'catch 22' is that under present law, the stations cannot be licensed. The slow progress in legislating 'to regularize the 140 community stations' and confiscation of equipment leave thousands of Indigenous Guatemalans without 'their only source of vital news and information' (Cultural Survival September 2008).

Towards a borderless media world

The International Labor Organization (ILO) and the United Nations (UN) recognize Indigenous peoples' rights to define their cultures, territories and governments, 'within the framework of the States in which they live' (Article 1) without any 'form of force or coercion' (Article 3) according to their 'freely expressed wishes', while enjoying 'the general rights of citizenship, without discrimination' (Article 4) (International Labour Organisation 2005). Even if such guarantees were universally enforceable, and in force, this still does not guarantee the nation-to-nation, or nation-within-a-nation relationships that many Indigenous peoples would prefer. The ILO-UN programs and principles stop short of allowing, where relevant, the dissolution of state-defined borders altogether. In an ideal world, Indigenous peoples would enjoy full rights of citizenship and mutually beneficial relationships with state governments, as determined in peaceful and cooperative negotiations with those governments, and with the option of choosing the nature and level of citizenship, as governments within governments. For example, the Mohawk First Nations that identify as residing within Mohawk Territory, the province of Québec and the country of Canada. The 'outlaw' or 'guerilla' status of Indigenous media is linked to the refusal to accept boundaries and borders as defined and maintained by nation states. For example, the growing sense of Sámi identity and location in Sápmi ('Land of the Sámi' – the Sámi homeland). Tove Anti, staff officer with the Sámi Parliament in Norway, explains, 'We never say, "we are going to Finland" . . . We say, "we are going to the Finnish side of the border". We also don't call this the Norwegian Sami Parliament, we call it the Parliament of the Samis in Norway. It's important because words have a lot of power' (Anti cited in Hoge 2001: 2). Although now well-integrated into 'legitimate' society – funded, sponsored and otherwise supported by the national broadcasters of Sweden, Finland and Norway – Sámi media retain an outlaw/guerrilla undercurrent. The outlaw/guerrilla element has its historic roots in the Áltá Conflict, a turning-point in Sámi political

and cultural life. Starting in the 1930s, the building of large dams, throughout Sámi in Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Kola region (Northern Russia) caused great environmental, cultural and political disruption for Sámi communities who began to organize and resist. A protest movement from 1968 to 1982 focused on trying to stop the Norwegian government's plan to build a massive dam and power plant on the Áltá-Guovdageaidnu River in northern Norway. Although the dam and plant were built, to the detriment of the environment, the Áltá Conflict and the resulting movement have had a lasting impact on Sámi political life. From it came collaboration between artists, political and social leaders, and what is known as the 'cultural awakening'. The Sámi flag was originally an outlaw flag, flown during the Áltá Conflict. In 1986, it became the official flag of Sámi peoples, its circle of yellow, red and blue, signifying unity. This conflict, while originating in Norway, was never seen by Sámi as bounded by any of the nation states. Sámi activism was based on the premise that programs, projects and issues affecting one community concerned all Sámi. The new flag represented all of Sápmi (Lehtola 2002: 56). The Áltá Conflict led directly to major reforms. Constitutional reform in 1988 included recognition of Sámi as an aboriginal people with their own representative body, the Sámediggi (Sámi Parliament) (Lehtola 2002: 72–73). Yet, the story of Sámi-state relations has not been one of linear progress. The Sámi sociopolitical historian, Veli-Pekka Lehtola, points out that although the 'Swedish Crown recognized the siida (the Sámi village system) boundaries and ownership rights until the 1700s' (Lehtola 2002: 23), Sámi today have relatively less power in Sweden than in other parts of Sápmi (Lehtola 2002: 23). Concerning Finland, Lehtola notes that 'the ideas of social Darwinism' reached it only in the 1920s and 1930s, later than other Nordic countries, probably because Finland declared independence from Russia in 1917 and needed to seek its own identity as a state (Lehtola 2002: 46–48). In Norway, the assimilationist policy known as 'Norwegianization' originated in the late 1800s and continued for several decades. It was gradually modified, from the 1930s to 1959, when a committee appointed by Norway's Ministry of Church and Education recommended a new policy. Nearly forty years later, at the 1997 launch of the Sámediggi (Sámi Parliament), King Harald V apologized for the assimilationist policy and discriminatory treatment of Sámi, affirming that 'Norway was founded on the territory of two peoples' (Norway 2007).

Such developments have paved the way for some of the changes that are helping to create the New Media Nation. Indigenous people are finding ways to transcend the limitations imposed by the governments of the particular countries in which they reside. Indigenous media networks are deeply affected by the policies, politics and priorities of state governments. The communications policies of different countries have variously restricted and enabled the development of Indigenous media. For example, Canada's multiculturalism and commitment to serving remote communities has fostered an array of media projects, experiments, and services. Although its recent, ultra-conservative government tried to reverse the pattern by refusing to sign the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Canada has still a legacy of policies for language and

minority rights and particularly in communications. This stands in contrast to the assimilationist policies of the United States, which have produced little public support of ethnic minority and Indigenous cultural and media projects, and little interest in serving the needs of remote and otherwise disadvantaged communities.

The Soviet Union also invested little in Indigenous peoples or regional communications, but all the more in transport networks in its remote and northern regions, much of which has now been undermined by the decline of government support. The combined effects of Soviet and later Russian policies in the North have been devastating for Indigenous peoples. In a 2006 radio report on Russian Sámi for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Jorn Madslien said the 'traditional way of life has been under assault for decades', with Sámi 'gradually forced off arctic Russia's fertile tundra grazing-land and into artificially created towns'. In addition, contact between Russian and Nordic Sámi was curtailed by closure of the border during the Cold War years (Madslien 2006). Currently, Inuit in Chukotka, Sámi on the Kola Peninsula and other northern Indigenous people are experiencing a crisis, largely due to changes in government and shift away from subsidized transport. Under Soviet rule, air travel over vast distances at bus-fare prices enabled Indigenous Siberians to make frequent visits among remote communities. However, in post-Soviet Russia, the government no longer subsidizes air travel at such a level. As one observer put it, 'cheap aviation used to hold communities together, and now it's a mess' (Vitebsky 2001). Despite the rampant health, economic and environmental problems experienced by so many, Sàmi and other Indigenous people living in the Russian Federation are experiencing a cultural revival which has parallels in the 'Maori Renaissance', the 'Native American renaissance', the Sámi 'cultural awakening' in Scandinavia and the Inuit 'renaissance' in Greenland and Nunavut, Canada (Alia and Bull 2005). At Lovozero township, for example, a 'concrete jungle' near a military airbase, the Sámi 'flag is flying proudly over a cultural centre' built in 2003, where the once prohibited Sámi language is spoken on the airwaves via the nation's own radio studios (Madslien 2006). In 1998, Russian Sámi organized a public protest against efforts by a Swedish company to dig an open-pit gold mine 'in the heart of the grazing lands' (Madslien 2006). Some Sámi now wear traditional garments once banned by the Soviets, which they have recreated, using archival photographs as guides. They are demanding a share in mineral and other resource rights and profits (Madslien 2006).

Australia's Indigenous media, now an established media sector, have activist roots as well. Perhaps the earliest publication by an Aboriginal organisation was *The Aboriginal,* also known as *Flinders Island Chronicle*, published in 1836. In 1938, *Abo Call: the voice of Aborigines* emerged in Australia – possibly the first 'advancement movement' (Aboriginal activist) newsletter (Meadows and Molnar 2002:9). That same year, Torres Strait Islanders began experimental radio broadcasts, perhaps the first Indigenous radio service (Meadows and Molnar 2002: 11). Australia's first exclusively Indigenous station began broadcasting in 1985 at Alice Springs. Today, the National Indigenous Media Association of Australia

(NIMAA), has a membership of 136 community broadcasting groups (National Indigenous Media Association of Australia 1998) and a code of ethics that demands respect for 'confidences . . . especially secret sacred information' and observation of 'all tribal, geographical and sacred rights and areas' (NIMAA 2005). In 2005, about 160 licensed community radio and TV stations in remote areas broadcast more than 1,000 h of Indigenous content weekly as part of the Remote Indigenous Broadcasting Service (RIBS). Alongside RIBS, small-scale licensed and unlicensed stations continue to serve a wider community. About fifty community radio stations broadcast locally produced Indigenous programming in regional and urban areas; 21 radio stations are licensed as Indigenous-owned and run; plus 'three Indigenous low-cost narrowcast radio services and an Indigenous commercial station in Broome, Western Australia' (Robie 2005: 6).

Inuit have lived on the coastal areas of Greenland (Kalaallit Nunaat) for about 5,000 years. In 1979, Greenland's Home Rule Act took effect, making it a special cultural community within the Kingdom of Denmark and the Landsting (Greenland parliament) and Landsstyre (Greenland government) sat for the first time (Berthelsen 1995: 15). In this period, in Greenland as in Canada, a communications revolution took place, which featured a *Kalaallit* (Greenlandic Inuit) cultural revival. Radio transmission in Greenland dates back to 1925 when the first telegram was transmitted wirelessly. Danish people sent and controlled the early radio broadcasts but *Kalaallit* (Greenlanders) were soon involved, and by the 1950s, programs were produced in Greenlandic and Danish. Kalaallit Nunaata Radioa (KNR), Greenland's public national broadcaster, has headquarters in Nuuk (the capital) and regional offices in Qaqortoq and Ilulissat. It broadcasts a daily radio newscast from a station in Copenhagen for Greenlanders living in Denmark. KNR's television service is linked to Danmarks Radio (DR, Danish public radio), which distributes its newscasts throughout Greenland via satellite. Greenland also has a handful of privately owned radio and television stations. In 1980 broadcasting was one of the first institutions to come under the control of Greenland Home Rule jurisdiction. KNR emerged in the midst of a cultural revival and much of the music broadcast on its radio outlet still reflects this. Greenland's singer-songwriters were among the first to write and record in their own language, and have influenced Indigenous musicians worldwide. Of the approximately 5,400 hours of KNR broadcasting annually, some 2,200 hours are devoted to music, supported by Greenland's strong and rapidly expanding music recording industry.

In the United States, policies around Indigenous peoples have vacillated, ranging from the assimilationist 'melting pot' policy to various forms of genocide. The American Indian Movement that emerged in the 1960s was both a political and cultural turning point (discussed further below). In the decades since, policies have shifted to allow for major changes to museum and other institutional policies, with repatriation of human remains and cultural artefacts a major theme. In general, literature – non-fiction, fiction, and poetry – has thrived, along with music and the visual arts. In general, however, the type of traditional arts often labelled 'handicrafts' have predominated and the works of other Indigenous

artists living in the United States to this day tend to be treated more as anthropological material or 'craft' than as so-called 'serious' art, and less-widely known and exhibited than those of their Canadian counterparts. The first Indigenous broadcasts in North America were heard on Alaskan radio in the 1930s, but the United States did too little to support Indigenous media, while Canada has a strong history of supporting minority media in general, and Indigenous and Northern media in particular, and the strength and persistence of Indigenous lobbying and pressure has been a major factor in promoting, facilitating and speeding change (Roth 2005). As a result, Canada has a dozen regional networks, a national radio network, a half dozen television production outlets, the nationwide Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (Alia 2003) and several hundred Indigenous radio stations as compared to about thirty in the United States. As in Australia, Sápmi[6] and many other parts of the Indigenous world, in North America, radio is the most popular technology for Indigenous media makers. Starting and maintaining 'outlaw', 'pirate' or 'alternative' facilities remains relatively easy, and radio is relatively cheap to access. In urban communities, where Indigenous people continue to have limited resources, radio is popular. In turn, people who have laptops seldom take them out on the land, keeping radio an important media there as well. Even in relatively wealthy 'first world' countries such as the United States, it is a mistake to assume universality of access to a range of broadcast and 'new' media. As Levo-Henriksson (2007) points out in her study of Hopi media and identity in Arizona, many Native American communities have poor, and sometimes no access to relevant radio, television or the Internet. In Hopi territory, for example, television arrived in the 1960s, but it remains widely inaccessible. Some villages have no electricity, and while many people use solar power, problems with reception mean that TV sets tends to work better for VCR than for receiving television broadcasts. Not all homes with satellite access can receive television channels. Some people use their television sets only to watch films on VCR. Radio is far more accessible and affordable. As of 2007, most Hopis in this mainly rural and un- or under-serviced region still had no e-mail or Internet access (Levo-Henriksson 2007: 107), not just because of poverty and scarcity of computers, but because the United States does not have a culture of shared community access comparable with that found in the Canadian North and other Canadian regions. Neither the federal nor state governments nor the tribal governments seem to prioritize communication infrastructures or community access. The American Indian Movement sparked a new outlaw/guerrilla politics and a cultural and media explosion. Part of that explosion took place in Alaska, where the widely influential newspaper, *Tundra Times*, began as a lobbying tool of the Alaska Native Brotherhood (ANB), in the conflict between Indigenous and commercial fisheries. The Tlingit leader, William Paul, adapted traditional Raven narratives,[7] comparing Raven's control and silencing of people to the need for Indigenous people to control the press and re-appropriate 'the White man's journalism' (Daley and James 2004: 64). The *Tundra Times* bolstered Alaska Native resistance efforts by giving voice to a pan-Indigenous movement aimed at uniting Aleut, Yup'ik, Inupiat,

6 The Sámi homeland located across the state-determined boundaries of northern Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Russian Kola Peninsula.

7 In Alaska, western British Columbia, and the northwest coast of the U.S., Raven is the 'Trickster'. "In Tlingit tradition the trickster role merges with that of culture hero or demiurge [creator]" (Danenhauer and Danenhauer 2004: 25).

Athabascan, Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian peoples. With the newspaper front and centre, the movement's best known and farthest-reaching achievement was the signing of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). The prime mover in that process was the Seattle-educated artist and Inupiat leader, Sikvoan Weyahok (Howard Rock). *Tundra Times* ceased publication in 1997.

In 2000, the Navajo Nation began a three-year process of installing a wireless network with the help of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (Cullen 2005: 33). That private funding was needed is an indication of one of the main differences between Canadian First Nations communications and those in the United States, which receive almost no government support. Another development in the United States is the American Indian Radio on satellite network distribution system (AIROS) operating 24 hours a day using the Internet and public radio. With funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, it manages a web site, e-mail access and a video distribution service that includes an archive of Native American videos and public television programs available to tribal communities throughout the country. When I first went to what is now Nunavut in the Canadian eastern Arctic in the early 1980s, even the smallest Inuit communities received equipment and access and expertise, and soon community members were developing web sites and exploring various options for using the new technologies. Inuktitut fonts were available by the mid-1980s and computers were provided to schools, adult education centres and community centres. Teleconferencing was emerging as a major tool for conducting inter- and intra-community meetings, legal, medical and social services and government business in a region with challenging weather, distances, terrain and prohibitive transportation and communication costs. Radio, television and Internet resources were already in place and in the decades since, have continued to expand and develop.

In Japan, Ainu continue to struggle both under and above ground, reflecting an embattled history. In 1593, the warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi gave the Matsumae clan rights to the island of Ezo, now Hokkaido, the core of the ancestral Ainu homeland (Ainu Mosir). The Hokkaido Colonial Office was set up in 1869 and in 1899, the Meiji government enacted the Hokkaido Former Aborigines Protection Law. Much as 'reserves' in Canada and 'reservations' in the United States were created to herd Indigenous people together and free up the land for colonial use, Japan gave Ainu designated tracts of land, placed their common property under the governor of Hokkaido's control, and set up state-controlled education (Zakoda 2006). A 1990 exhibition in Daito City (Osaka, Prefecture) by Ainu activists, which later toured across Japan and to New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles, was a mix of hope, anger and frustration. Its message: 'in spite of everything, We Ainus are alive today . . . we Indigenous peoples [have] no "borders"' (Yamamoto 1993: 5). Ainu activism has elements of 'outcast', 'a-legal' and 'citizenship' strategies. The late artist and activist Shigeru Kayano, wrote more than a hundred books, including an Ainu dictionary, fought a dam project, participated in drafting the Law for the Promotion of Ainu Culture (adopted in 1997) and launched FM Pipaushi, an Ainu micro-radio station which does not need a licence in his

home community of Nibutani (Hadl and Hamada 2009). It became a meeting place for Indigenous people from around the globe (Temman 2006; Zakoda 2006). In the summer of 2008, the Indigenous People's Summit in Ainu Mosir (Hokkaido) preceding the Group of Eight Ministerial Conference (G8) and seeming set to shine the spotlight on the continuing discrimination and forced assimilation policies affecting Ainu peoples,[8] the government of Japan finally acknowledged and officially recognized Ainu as Indigenous peoples. 'After centuries of discrimination and forced assimilation, Japan's Ainu people have finally been recognized by Japan's government'. (Cultural Survival July–August 2008). However, the Japanese government is still far from fulfilling its responsibilities under the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Indigenous People's Summit in Ainu Mosir 2008) and much work remains to be done for Ainu activists. Shigeru Kayano's son, Shiro Kayano, chaired the organizing committee for the 2008 Indigenous People's Summit and is maintaining the FM Pipaushi station, continually expanding the network. From a recent study group meeting in Japan, a researcher reports: 'He just visited Indigenous radio stations in Bolivia, Mexico and Columbia and returned inspired' (Hadl 2008) – an example of the New Media Nation in action.

8 I am indebted to the editor (Gabriele Hadl) for much of the information in the rest of this paragraph.

Acts of conscience, agents of change

As we have seen in the case of African Bush Radio and Indigenous media in Guatemala, Canada and elsewhere, 'alternative' and non-legal media occupy a significant, though sometimes transitory, place throughout the Indigenous world. Lorna Roth notes their long 'history of appropriating airwaves' and the 'illegal capture and use of an airwave frequency' (Roth 1993: para. 8). She describes a now iconic incident in 1964, when a group of Inuit at the top of Baffin Island 'innocently put together an inexpensive radio station and began to broadcast culturally-relevant programming without going through the conventional regulatory channels' (Roth 1993: para. 10). The station survived for several years and might have continued unnoticed except for a freak, technological accident. Two pilots flying over Montreal's Dorval airport 'heard the Inuktitut programming and could not identify the language. Thinking it was Russian . . . they had the air traffic control tower employees research the source' (Roth 1993: para. 10). To their surprise, the voices were coming from a tiny, illicit community radio station in Pond Inlet. While they would not normally travel so far, the sound waves were apparently carried because of 'atmospheric abnormalities'. The radio station was contacted, brought into line with current broadcasting regulations, and made officially 'legitimate' (Roth 1993: para. 10).

Roth argues that Indigenous people are not only inadvertent 'outlaws', but have developed entirely new strategies including 'self-organized media projects . . . clustering of their broadcasters into policy lobby groups, and . . . cross-cultural programming initiatives have transformed them into new social actors who do media politics differently . . . bypassing completely or tiptoeing lightly past technological and social constraints . . .' (Roth 2005: 229). The Finnish scholar, Ritva Levo-Henriksson, concurs. Among other things learned during her work with Hopi broadcasters in

northeastern Arizona, she observes that different visual codes can affect production values and approaches, such as a proscription against looking directly at another individual that goes against non-Indigenous views of how to properly conduct a television interview. 'The representative of the world "out there" mostly talks, whereas the representative of the Hopi culture mostly "listens"' (Levo-Henriksson 2007: 107). Culturally relevant broadcasting was not available on the Hopi Reservation until 2000, when KUYI-FM, the Hopi radio station on First Mesa was launched. Created by The Hopi Radio Project, its aim is 'to bring a Hopi-owned, Hopi-run FM public radio station to the reservation, in part to help preserve the Hopi language and culture' (Levo-Henriksson 2007: 103). The name KUYI-FM's derives from the Hopi word, *kuyi*, meaning 'water'. As Roth observes in Canada, and we have noted in other parts of the world, Hopi have found a different way of doing radio. Those who tuned into the inaugural broadcast heard: 'You're listening to KUYI' followed by the Hopi crier, Jimmy Lucero, 'shouting the news in Hopi' (Levo-Henriksson 2007: 103). Drawing on Hopi tradition and calling to mind the long history of criers and troubadours in other cultures, Hopis have made their radio their own, from the start. However, whether the Hopi choose to opt out of national or global media networks or to utilize them for their own cultural, political, economic or educational objectives, their ability to participate in the life and evolution of The New Media Nation will be limited, without improved access to the enabling technology.

In 2008, the recently developed, but technologically well-supported Māori Television hosted the first meeting of the World Indigenous Television Broadcasters Network (WITB) (Horan 2008). Following many years of informal, unacknowledged and sometimes deliberately unpublicized global networking, Indigenous broadcasters finally went public. Because of the persistence of policies that continue to drive some Indigenous media underground, we can expect that some of the networking will continue in the old guerrilla/outlaw ways. However, just as Amnesty International has used publicity to prevent or stop human rights abuses, organizations such as WITB may help to improve conditions for Indigenous people in less enlightened countries and regions. According to one of its spokespeople, WITB is committed to promoting 'Indigenous broadcasting at the highest levels internationally and foster closer relationships between broadcasters' (Horan 2008). While maintaining a professional, and even conventional, public face, WITB can provide support for those with fewer resources and less friendly governments. Already, it is bridging geographical and cultural distances. In its first year, it included broadcasters from Australia, Canada, Fiji, Ireland, Norway, Scotland, South Africa, Taiwan and Wales. Future conferences will be hosted by Taiwan Indigenous Television in 2010, S4C in Wales in 2012 and the Aboriginal People's Television Network (APTN) in Canada in 2014 (Horan 2008).

As this sketch of the global Indigenous media world has shown, the boundaries between cultures and states, outlaws and legitimized practitioners, are permeable and malleable. For the New Media Nation, 'progress' is not a linear movement from piracy to legitimacy, statelessness to state, outlaw tactics to citizenship, but a fluid and perpetually challenging form

of resistance and collective power. Increasingly, Indigenous peoples are signing nation-to-nation, or government-to-government treaties and other agreements with the states in which they reside. In some cases, they hold special status – as, for example in the quasi-borderless premise underlying Indigenous relations across the US-Canadian border. Elsewhere, they must live across borders quietly, even surreptitiously, sometimes at great risk to personal safety. They have gained support from such organizations as Cultural Survival, and learned from Amnesty International and others that publicity and public outcry can sometimes embarrass, shame, or intimidate governments into sparing the lives of activists. They use strategic essentialism while celebrating cultural particularities and forging new combinations and collections of smaller, separate voices. The further development of the New Media Nation may well be the key to Indigenous survival.

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