OSU Libraries Undergraduate Research Prize

Library Research Journal

Name: Meghan Hensley

Course Title/Qtr & Yr.: History 368.02 Native American Peoples of the Andes Winter 2010

Title of Research Project: “They Returned as Millions:” Bolivian Indigenous Movements and Nation Building in the New Millennium

Instructions

The research journal, designed to help you stay organized, allows you keep track of the steps you take as you go through the research process. Consult with a librarian at least twice during the research process: the first visit for help in developing your research plan, and later to review your research journal, before you submit your project to your instructor. Ask the librarian to sign your journal form where indicated below.

Include the following in your journal (attach pages to this document):

1. Discuss your information needs for this project with a librarian and state them in your journal. For example, you may write down the points you wish to pursue in your project or the type of information (statistics, case studies etc) you think would be useful.

2. List the various research tools you used to locate relevant materials (journal databases, catalogs, Web sites etc), and some key resources that you identified using those tools. Write a sentence for each of the resources indicating what they added to your project.

3. Reflect on your experience, noting the successes, difficulties, and surprises you encountered. (2 – 3 paragraphs)

Librarian Assistance

Research Planning:
Librarian: [Signature] Date: 2/15/10

Research Review:
Librarian: [Signature] Date: 4/15/10

Rev. 4/15/2010
Research Needs and Tools:

When I decided to do my term paper on modern indigenous movements in Bolivia, I knew that I would need a vast amount of resources so that I could expand my knowledge about the long history of rebellion in this specific Andean region. I also suspected that it would be a difficult area to research because of the mere fact that it is comprised mainly of peoples of indigenous descent and has been controlled, since the Spanish conquest, by the non-indigenous minority. I knew from my experiences in Latin American studies that this mix of power in the hands of a few made for a complicated picture, with many different sides and issues. The election of Evo Morales, the movement away from neo-liberal agendas in recent years, and the indigenous movements that I had learned a little about in other courses motivated me to investigate further.

At my first meeting with Dr. Dueñas, we discussed the goals of my term project and she gave me some suggestions concerning names of scholars who specialize in Bolivia. In History 368.02, throughout the quarter, we touched upon main ideas that helped shape my paper such as pachakuti and other indigenous perceptions that help shape their world views. I also read about indigenous rebellions and organizations that were inspirations for more recent uprisings in the works of Kenneth Andrien, Brooke Larson, and Domitila Barrios de Chungara. From previous courses I knew that I would need more sources in the following areas:

- Major uprisings in Bolivia throughout history
- Articles from academic journals as well as books identifying the problems led the indigenous to revolt, among other things.
- Personal accounts/testimonies from indigenous people.

I found most of my books by searching through the OSU Libraries catalog and Worldcat. In those books, I used the bibliographies to find other work that would possibly be useful. I used a variety of research databases in order to find the journal articles. The databases I found most helpful were JSTOR, LANIC, and ArticleFirst. I was satisfied with many of the academic
sources that I had found on my own as far as articles and books were concerned. At this point, I had enough information to gain good background knowledge about the historical moments that helped shaped the more recent indigenous discontent. I know needed help finding more current resources describing what has been happening in the country in the past five years or so. I met with Susan Scott to seek advice. At this meeting I came with some specific resources that I needed help finding:

- Visual displays of indigenous protest and daily life.
- The most recent constitution and sources for electoral results
- Information from NGOs and outside entities acting in Bolivia today

From this meeting I was directed towards a number of resources that led me to different interpretations of the Bolivian constitution. Susan showed me an amazing article compiled by Alan Taylor which showed me amazing displays of indigenous Bolivians gathering in demonstrations leading up to the constitutional referendum of 2009. These photographs, aside from being extremely moving, were a great addition to my sources because they let me glimpse the mass demonstration that I had only read about thus far. Susan also helped me make a connection with Dr. Riedinger on the Columbus campus.

Dr. Riedinger directed me to the Latin American Regional Reports which I found very informative in that they broke down key issues that have been central in the current administration. I was able to find briefs that were very informative concerning keys issues that the current administration has been implementing such as the reformation of the cabinet earlier this year and the advancement of women’s roles in political life. Dr. Riedinger also showed me the Political Databases for the Americas, maintained by Georgetown University, where I was able to find a copy of the most recent constitution as well as links to NGOs and human rights organizations like Amnesty International and MADRE that were informative because they helped me pick apart the gradual progress that is not apparent when you get lost in scholarly criticisms and technical reports.

**Reflections:**

As a history major I am no stranger to the research process. I find browsing through archival materials enjoyable as I try to put the pieces together of whichever puzzle I am
attempting to solve. This project was tremendously beneficial to me in that it helped me organize the process through various consultations with not only my professor but the knowledgeable librarians who guided me and pointed me in different directions when I was feeling bogged down with the vast array of sources that can be easy to get lost in.

At first, the major difficulties I encountered were centered on finding the right sources. It is easy to get lost in the search when you are looking for information from a variety of perspectives. The many resources available through the multitude of searches that a student has available to them through the OSU library can seem daunting at times but, when I found that I had to pick and choose between many really great sources, I realized that what I thought was a tedious process was actually a great lesson in disguise. A sense of accomplishment came when I finished my paper and wanted to do more research. There were many interesting aspects that I may use in future projects so that I may delve further into the very complicated nation which is Bolivia. I learned a lot about Bolivia in my research, I think the most important lesson is that it may be impossible to piece everything together, especially with the short time that I had but even when a scholar spends years of research in a particular field. The inability to solve the puzzle is actually the most valuable thing of all because it opens up your mind to new information and fresh outlooks as time goes on.

It was a little surprising that there was so much scholarship in a variety of fields in English. I found that many of the people who had publications in English were at least bilingual and had published in Spanish as well. This only accents the fact that Bolivia is an interesting and perplexing place to many people, throughout the world. My next goal is to become fluent in Spanish so that I may have access to sources in Spanish such as newspaper articles and current testimonies from those who are living on the ground, experiencing the travesties and triumphs that I read about second-hand. I will surely continue to follow Bolivia throughout the rest of my scholarly career.

I would like to thank my professor and mentor, Dr. Alcira Dueñas for her avid support throughout the research process and the extensive amount of knowledge that I attained about indigenous peoples, from pre-Columbian times to the present, in History 368.02 Native Peoples of the Andes, a course that had not been offered before on the Newark campus. I would also like to thank Susan Scott and Dr. Edward Riedinger for their support, enthusiasm, and guidance at
key moments in my research. I am including some comments given to me by Susan below, describing what stood out to her about our collaborations:

In early 2010, Meghan Hensley contacted me for a research appointment, coming to my office for a first meeting. She was doing research for her paper on indigenous movements in modern Bolivia for History 368.02, Native American Peoples of the Andes. At that time she indicated her plan to apply for the library’s Undergraduate Research Prize.

As I prepared for our first meeting, I expected to be starting somewhere at least near the beginning in terms of the research process. Was I ever surprised! During that first meeting as Meghan and I talked, I found her to be knowledgeable and prepared. She already had a tentative thesis statement, a significant bibliography and a well-developed outline for her research paper. She was looking for a couple of specific resources; I suggested a few other additional resources. We worked to locate some of those and we also wanted to locate online, full-text access, if possible, a newspaper covering the town of El Alto, Bolivia. If not local newspapers, then perhaps other newspaper accounts would be useful for the paper.

Because, in my position, I am not a subject specialist, I subsequently introduced Meghan to Edward Riedinger, Latin American subject specialist at OSU Main Library. Meeting with Professor Riedinger (Ted), Meghan had an opportunity to see and consider the vast resources of the Thompson Library while working with an expert in Latin American resources.

At the point in time when I began working with her, Meghan was already quite sophisticated in her understanding of the ways in which citations are organized. We, Ted and I, were able to participate and guide her in subsequent searches in databases in general and in other resources via the web. Meghan had the opportunity, through this project, to widen her research horizons. Working with Meghan has been a pleasure!

Susan D. Scott  
Warner Library Director  
The Ohio State University at Newark  
April 4, 2010