

Plugging In

Taking Control of the Internet on Activist Websites

By ANITRA FREEMAN

I was on a panel at a recent computer conference up in Canada. The topic was "Who controls the Internet?" I broke that down into six aspects. You have control of something when:

1) You can use it. (Get access to it.) 2) You can get what you ask for from it. 3) You can have your say on it. 4) What you say is listened to. 5) You have an effect on it, or create an effect with it.

The final aspect of control, of course, is: Who can pull the plug? Until we all own our own Internet Server machine, that aspect of control will remain in the hands of whoever does.

But in this issue's reviews I'm going to cover sites that broaden who has control in several senses.

Increasing access and use:

The Homeless Women's Network <http://www.speakeasy.org/hwn>

HWN was begun by a group of homeless and formerly homeless women in Seattle to increase the use of computers and the Internet among homeless and low-income women and youths, and to increase the resources available out on the Internet for them.

HWN connects donated computer equipment with recently homeless women who now have stable housing. They are working with Speakeasy and the Seattle Community Network on a project to place

computers with Internet access in four Seattle homeless shelters. And they provide training in computer and Internet skills, as well as information on other sources of free training.

I am highly biased in favor of information and usability on websites. Graphics are amusing, but if they take any more than 30 seconds of my time to load, I lose patience. With its logo of a woman of all ages, provided by Linda Israel, HWN's site is visually striking, yet clean and simple. It loads fast, and you can get straight to the meat. The meat is:

- Resources for Women — A searchable database of King County resource information, provided on PAN, the Public Access network, and maintained by HWN volunteers.
- A link to the King & Snohomish County YWCA website
- Powerful Voices: King County Women Talk About Their Needs — The

complete text of a report filed by the Seattle Women's Resource Project in 1995.

- Domestic Violence Information - Love Shouldn't Hurt — Link to a web page maintained on PAN by the Department of Housing and Human Services Domestic Violence Unit.

- A link to *Real Change* and the Speakers Bureau

- A link to S.T.E.P. — Searching for Training & Employment Programs — a searchable database of training and employment programs provided on PAN and maintained by the Worker Center, a division of the King County Labor Council, AFL-CIO

- A link to the Crisis Directory on Seattle Community Network, maintained by Peace Heathens.

- A link to the home page of the National Coalition for the Homeless, reviewed in the March 15, 1996 issue of *Real*

DONATE
YOUR OLD CAR
Boat, RV, Truck or Van
to non-profit
EL CENTRO de la RAZA.
RECEIVE A TAX BREAK AND
FREE TOWING! We want it even
if it doesn't run! Your support
will help children, youth,
seniors and families.

EL CENTRO de la RAZA
329-2024/329-9442
<http://www.cyberspace.com/~elcentro>

Candles
Essential Oils
New Age Supplies
Incense
Palmistry by appointment

COME SEE US AT
THE SELLERS CART
NEXT TO SUBWAY

IN THE NEWMARK BLDG
1402 2ND AVE

Jewelry
Crystals

OUT OF THE MAINSTREAM
NEW & USED RECORDS, TAPES, CDs
MODERN ECLECTIC & WORLD MUSIC

WALLOF SOUND

2237 SECOND AVE (AT BELL) 441-9880
OPEN 7 DAYS • LISTEN BEFORE YOU BUY