A Digital Bundle: Protecting and Promoting Indigenous Knowledge Online. *By Jennifer Wemigwans.* Regina, SK: University of Regina Press, 2018. 256 pp. ISBN: 9780889775510.

In the roughly three decades since the internet first wriggled into popular consciousness, its abundant "state of permanent novelty" (Papacharissi, Streeter, & Gillespie, 2013) has allowed for the propagation of countless self-congratulatory yarns, each more eager than the next to attain the status of maxim. Few corners of the earth, for example, have managed to entirely fend off the slow creep of that all-pervasive ethos that "information wants to be free," whose truth claims and biases can appear so entirely baked into the fabric of daily life that confronting their virality seems hardly worth the effort. Thankfully, Jennifer Wemigwans (Anishnaabekwe from Wikwemikong First Nation and Assistant Professor in the Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education at the University of Toronto OISE), does not share this sense of fatalism, and in *A Digital Bundle: Protecting and Promoting Indigenous Knowledge Online* sets out to "[challenge] the predominantly Western Internet field to consider Indigenous theoretical understandings" (p. 57). And so begins this fascinating account of the creative process behind FourDirectionsTeachings.com, a highly influential online resource for the preservation, sharing, and teaching of Indigenous knowledge.

Authoritative, advocative, and tremendously original, *A Digital Bundle* is Wemigwans' first manuscript and is broken up into eight chapters of roughly equal length. In the opening chapters, Wemigwans provides us with an overview of the unique elements to FourDirectionsTeachings.com—most notably, the availability of interactive teachings by respected Elders and traditional teachers from five Indigenous communities—as well as a timeline of the production process. On the latter point, it must be said that Wemigwans' early attempts to create the website were met with considerable resistance from established funding agencies, owing to their reticence to "take a chance on infringing on the cultural rights of communal Indigenous Knowledge" (p. 18); after five years of pitching, FourDirectionsTeachings.com was finally approved for funding and launched in 2006.

Throughout, Wemigwans uses the website as something of a case study in the ways in which a diverse array of Indigenous communities, leaders, and educators might "take control of the Internet as an Indigenous transformative communications network that speaks to and respects Indigenous Knowledge within Indigenous protocols and paradigms" (p. 207). Core to the overall argument is Wemigwans' position that "it is possible to apply cultural protocols to the Internet" (p. 63), and that, in the right hands, online Indigenous Knowledge projects such as FourDirectionsTeachings.com can serve as a powerful "source of empowerment for Indigenous peoples/causes" (p. 11). Through an analytic framework closely informed by Smith (1999), Simpson (2011), and Alfred and Corntassel (2005), Wemigwans thus introduces the notion of a *digital bundle*, which she derives in part from the prior concept of a *bundle*—that is, "a collec-

tion of things regarded as sacred and held by a person with care and ceremony" (p. 34). As the book progresses, Wemigwans uses in-depth interviews with "Indigenous activists, artists, educators, and front-line workers" (p. 1) involved in the website's co-creation to illustrate how FourDirectionsTeachings.com has come to stand as both a "culturally sensitive pedagogical aid" (p. 22) and an altogether "new cultural form, a new cultural artefact" (p. 36)—in other words, a digital bundle.

Though the book itself is fairly light on visuals, Wemigwans does a good job of sketching out the contours to FourDirectionsTeachings.com by providing detailed background information on various elements to its development (e.g., the rationale behind the user interface design—of which, it turns out, there is plenty). But even as these details might occasionally segue into discussions of platform-specific affordances, the bulk of *A Digital Bundle* centres on far broader questions related to the politics and possibilities of the internet, particularly in regard to the (re)production, transmission, storage, and reception of online Indigenous knowledge. In this respect, there are certain parallels to the likes of Bang, Marin, Faber, and Suzukovich III (2013), Christen (2005), Duarte (2017), Loft (2014), Lyons, Schaepe, Hennessy, Blake, Pennier, Welch, McIntosh, Phillips, Charlie, Hall, Hall, Kadir, Point, Pennier, Phillips, Muntean, Williams, Jr, Williams, Sr, Chapman, and Pennier (2016), and McMahon (2014).

Still, even as there may be certain commonalities to be had with other recent works concerning the digital self-development of Indigenous peoples, *A Digital Bundle* is also something of an anomaly, primarily due to the lengths that Wemigwans has gone to in underscoring the productive potential of placing *traditional* protocols in direct conversation with *technical* protocols. In so doing, Wemigwans is able to establish the complementarity and coevality of systems of knowing which are more often than not presented as somehow opposed, misaligned, or just plain incompatible. In this sense, you might say that the book sits in closest conversation with L'Hirondelle (2014) (who, it bears noting, was actually one of Wemigwans' primary research participants), given their respective commitments to the multimodal engagement of Indigenous symbolic literacies. If L'Hirondelle (2014) once called for greater attentiveness to Indigenous peoples' "precontact ingenuity as inventors and technologists — experts in new media and avatars of innovation" (p. 147), Wemigwans has responded by outlining a vision in which "old forms of sharing knowledge" are syncretically readapted "to ensure that the next generation benefits from the wisdom of our ancestors" (p. 217).

Though *A Digital Bundle* is largely animated by a current of optimism toward the internet, Wemigwans has not shied away from engaging with the flip side. She notes, for example, how the informationalization of sacred teachings can quickly give way to their commodification (particularly in the yearning hands of New Age cultural tourists); how the online sphere carries the risk of manipulation or co-option of voice, such that "prevailing discourses on Indigenous knowledge will be in danger of being defined by [non-Indigenous] audiences" (p. 20); and muses on the difficulty of ensuring that FourDirectionsTeachings.com remains both accessible and adequately safeguarded long into the future. Nevertheless, if there is one aspect to *A Digital Bundle* that I would single out as worthy of critique, it is that these very dilemmas can at times feel underdeveloped. By way of example: though Wemigwans opens with a brief men-

tion that "net neutrality is not a given" (p. 2), the remainder of the book treats the internet as a mostly-emancipatory space of alterity, and contains little discussion of the ways in which the structural characteristics to the network—particularly those which would have emerged only after the original launch of FourDirectionsTeachings.com—may ultimately act as a constraint.

But in all honesty, these are minor oversights, and none of them has any particular impact on the overall message. Against a backdrop of intellectual inheritances more inclined toward the temporal deferral of Indigenous peoples through atavistic caricature, Wemigwans has provided a rich counter-narrative which deftly illustrates the ways in which Indigenous cultural resurgence can be meaningfully advanced through "one carefully framed online tool" (p. 148) at a time. For academics at the confluence of Education, Digital Humanities, Media Anthropology, and Indigenous Studies, *A Digital Bundle* will hold wide appeal, just as it will for design theorists, NGOs with a focus on Indigenous well-being, and policymakers (for whom this ought to be required reading).

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