

Editorial

This issue of Serials sees the publication of more of the fascinating papers delivered at the UKSG Annual Conference in Edinburgh earlier this year.

Newspapers on CD-ROM are a growing phenomenon and Geoff Smith of the British Library Newspaper Library provides insights into the pros and cons of this medium for newspaper archiving and usage. The lack of inclusion of complete contents — leaving out such items as adverts, births, deaths etc. — appears a serious omission given the demand of future generations for such 'social' information. Another of the problems associated with CD-ROMs, the lack of standard interfacing, is addressed by Steven Hall of Chadwyck-Healey in a paper he has written after hearing Geoff's talk at the Conference. It would appear that CD-ROM providers are listening to the comments they receive from users and doing something to address their concerns.

Another Conference paper talked about the electronic journal *The Newsletter on Serials Pricing Issues* and Marcia Tuttle certainly has more experience than most on the opportunities and frustrations which publishing in this medium presents. One of the most interesting aspects of her paper lies in how the electronic publication is further disseminated by its 'electronic' recipients. Continuing that theme is a paper which was not presented at the Conference but which discusses the potential for electronic journals in the UK. It sounds like the infrastructure is there, all that's needed now is the determination to make the potential into reality.

Morag Nisbet fascinated the Conference with her account of the growth of the Scottish Science Library and how it sees itself in relation to other national providers of information in this subject area. A story of true synergy with a combination of elements adding up to more than the sum of the parts.

Moving away from the Conference and into the realms of the publishing process it seems appropriate, amongst all the talk of electronic publishing and how it can potentially speed up and bring down the costs of information dissemination, to remind ourselves of at least one aspect of the value added by the traditional publishing process. The editor's role is a vital one in preparing the raw material of journals — the original articles — for publication and Don Manley's piece gives an insight into the process.

Another aspect of publishing which is seldom discussed is the role of the copyright receipt office. Here we learn the origins of A T Smail's office in Euston Street and can appreciate the enormous task which is so efficiently carried out in ensuring that the designated libraries receive the materials they need to establish the national archive.

Returning to the Conference, Margaret Barwick of the British Library Document Supply Centre lead a workshop on electro-copying. If there wasn't already enough trouble with the legal and copyright issues surrounding ordinary photocopying, this discussion explains the implications of electro-copying and reports some current views on the way forward in this new minefield of opportunities and threats.

Finally with regard to the Annual Conference, a selection of the students who attended share their experiences of attending and illustrate the advantages of sharing in a gathering of all the participants in the information chain. My thanks to all the participating students who supplied reports of their Conference — more than we have been able to publish.

I hope that you enjoy this collection of articles on serials. The first issue of 1993 will bring you material from the Second European Serials Conference, a fascinating event whose papers I'm sure you will appreciate.

Jonathan Barker