



View from North America

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The editors will love this column because it will be brief and allow more space for adverts. I plead guilty to editorializing rather than sharing news items. I trust the reasons will be clear.

Greetings once again from the United States where the world of serials is finally stable. What? Did I write that sentence? Yes, we have now experienced a full year of dealing with the same issues (access and management of e-journals, consortia buying, licensing confusion, staff re-organization in defining the role of serialists, and (of course) company mergers. If this isn't stability, what is? In a world where the dot.com economy/success is based on losses not profit; we can feel stability in the midst of the myriad changes occurring in our serials world.

Ironic, is it not? Stability defined by continual changes in our world of libraries, publishers, and vendors.

Indeed the issues have not changed in the past year. What has changed dramatically is that we are all experiencing the same in our professional lives whether we live and work and play in the US or the UK (or the rest of Europe for that matter). We all read the same list-servs, subscribe to the same e-services (Newsletter on Serials Pricing for example), and work in a daily environment with global publishing services (serials both print and electronic). It is becoming increasingly clear that the myth of parochial serials concerns (whether in the US, UK, or rest of

world) should be laid to rest. Maybe I am just waking up to this fact of life that UKSG members have known for some time. If so, mea culpa and I am suitably embarrassed. Regardless, we are facing the same challenges and change in our serials world. This is good. This is stabilizing. This means that we can and will seek global solutions to bring true stability (not my notion of ironic stability) to the access, management, publishing, distribution, and selling of serials.

We are about to enjoy another NASIG meeting in San Diego, California (June 22-25). This meeting is the most fertile in the US for sharing, creating, and enjoying the complete world of serials. The next column will specifically focus on this gathering though I think it is safe to assume some of you will read about it first on the NASIG listserv. That is the beauty of our serials world today.

Best wishes for an enjoyable and stable summer.