Serials & E-Resources News

Report on the 21st North Carolina Serials Conference, "Déjà vu All Over Again: Familiar Problems, New Solutions" Chapel Hill, NC, March 16, 2012

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Dean Irene Owens, from the School of Library and Information Sciences at North Carolina Central University (NCCU), welcomed serialists, publishers, and vendors to the 21st North Carolina Serials Conference. The theme this year was exploring new and more complex solutions to ongoing challenges in the serials world.

Kristin Antelman, Associate Director for the Digital Library at North Carolina State University (NCSU), offered the morning keynote: "Serials in the Wild: How Do We Think about What We're Seeing?" The keynote ranged the full landscape of current issues in the transition to e-serials, including what libraries care about and what users care about, data quality issues, poor change management in title and publisher changes, open repository data, and willingness to publish in open access format. In the end, it comes full circle to providing access for our users. Useful resources mentioned include GOKb , Kuali open source software, and Dryad repository for bioscience data.

Morning concurrent sessions included "Serials Staffing Challenges from the Paraprofessional Perspective", "Bundles, Big Deals and the Copyright Wars: What Academic Librarians Can Learn from the Record Industry Crash", and "Built to Suit: A Database Designed to

Efficiently Collect Usage Statistics Came with a Bonus". In the third session, Jane Bethel, from University of North Carolina (UNC) Chapel Hill and EPA libraries, described EPA's use of SILS interns to assist in building an Access database (rather than Excel software) to track usage statistics. The query features in Access have allowed for ease in generation of many required reports.

The morning concluded with a panel discussion on the topic "Responding to Change: Creative Approaches to Current Serials Challenges." Denise Branch, from Virginia Commonwealth University, discussed her library's solution for problems of e-serials access, including building an electronic problem report form and the library archive for problems, responses, and users. Sarah Brett, from James Madison University (JMU), described streamlining processes for a tech support form for reported issues, building staff as expert first responders, and running a log to track stats. Cheri Duncan, also from JMU, shared about their library giving staff iPads and allowing telecommuting two days/month to increase efficiency. Duncan also shared how JMU libraries are adapting to new structures for bibliographic services and e-resources and serials. She recommends ACRL's report "Changing Roles of Academic and Research Libraries". Patricia Hudson, Senior Marketing Manager for Oxford University Press, discussed the increasingly blurry line between journals and e-books, the idea of an "issue" becoming a historical concept, Oxford's experimenting with open access models (~ 90 titles), evaluating what is "circulation" and "usage", e-journals looking more like

databases, and Oxford Handbooks transitioning to updating articles – now a serial? The free "Oxford Index" allows users to search across all Oxford electronic academic content; soon offering the ability to limit results to subscribed content.

Time was allocated for meeting with vendors before a sumptuous buffet lunch.

Afternoon breakout sessions included a repeat of the serials staffing program, plus "Weeding Déjà Vu: New Solutions for How to Dispose of Withdrawn Materials Responsibly" and "The (All Too Familiar!) Journal Cancellation Review: Proven Techniques for Eliciting Quality Feedback". In the third session, Christie Degener and Susan Swogger with the UNC-Chapel Hill Health Sciences Library walked us through their library's 3-year plan for summer journal cancellation review. NCSU library provided a good working model for this process; UNC Health Sciences focused on engaging their diverse user communities in the design of the review process and encouraging their useful feedback. A feedback database collected responses about affiliation and journal rating (must keep, keep if possible, don't

keep, comments). Publicity was vigorous through liaisons, letters to deans, and a button on the library website.

The afternoon wrapped up with a keynote by Kevin Guthrie, President of Ithaka, called, "Will Books Be Different?" Guthrie compared the many differences between journals and books in their transition from print to electronic, and the challenges ahead for libraries, publishers, societies, authors, and readers. Models will need to be different for different types of books – reference, trade, scholarly, textbooks – and the transition to electronic will be different for these various formats. Many questions remain unresolved: licensing for individual access vs. institutional access, consortial purchasing, big deals, what is usage, preservation, reading devices, and discovery. Stay tuned!

Attendance was excellent at this content-rich conference; scheduling will be at a similar time next year. Please consider participating!