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Editor

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Provocatively, she asks, “Can you hold an electron in your hand?”

Mary Greene, the serials cataloger at the University of Oregon, provides a reality check. Processes have changed, some for the good and some less so. Staff who took great pride in their work resolving problems with printed serials now sometimes find that other staff members (acquisitions or systems staff, for example) take the lead in troubleshooting. Mary provides the important reminder that staff morale needs our attention as well.

And finally, Adam Chesler, the assistant director of sales and library relations for the American Chemical Society, describes the changing landscape from a scholarly society publisher’s point of view. With so many value-added options (interactive tables and links to yet more data and tables), what exactly is an article, not to mention a journal, these days? Adam’s perspective is so important for librarians to hear about: who knew publishers migrated systems, too?

All of these articles address the disruptive technologies that have changed the way everyone in our industry does business. We change, hit an obstacle, pick up the pieces, regroup, and do it again. While no one has quite figured out the ideal method, we’ve all done pretty well in finding the best way to shape the digital landscape to fulfill our service missions. What was true for the ancient Greeks is true for us as well: the only thing permanent is change. Just don’t try to manage it!

Rumors
platform as the foundation for delivering eBooks. Integration of all content has been the objective of the University for some time and combining access to eBooks along with the locally-loaded journals allows the user to search all digital content through one interface. Many users do not know or care whether the information they want is found in a journal article, in an abstract and indexing database, in a section of a reference work or a chapter in a book. What they do know is that they want to find that information whenever they need it — 24 by 7, 365 days a year. To that end, University of Toronto Libraries has chosen MyiLibrary to deliver eBook content. The eBooks will be integrated with over 70 abstract and index databases and over 7,300 journals to provide as comprehensive a search as possible for the users at the University. Carole Moore, Chief Librarian at the University of Toronto Libraries, believes that it is essential the University Libraries to be able to offer their users access to all content through one portal. The MyiLibrary platform consists of a huge and diverse database of current content that provides a unique way to access collections of books: reports, journals, bulleted and other documents published by both Intergovernmental Organizations and major STM publishers. In total, some 40,000 current eBooks are available and this is expected to increase to over 80,000 titles over the coming months. This extensive collection of content has been integrated by Coutts into their selection-management system, OASIS, allowing University of Toronto the option to manage the acquisition of print and electronic collections through one interface, further enhancing the ability of the Librarians to create the most comprehensive offering of all types of information to their users. <warren.holder@utoronto.ca>

From Edupage, March 27, 2006 — A law professor at the University of Memphis, has banned laptops from her classes for first-year law students. Professor Entman says that they must take notes with pen and paper. “The computers interfere with making eye contact,” said Entman. “You’ve got this piquet fence between you and the students.” She said she wants her students to spend less time taking down everything she says and spend time “thinking and analyzing” instead. As you might expect, students responded by circulating a petition to have the decision overturned and by submitting a complaint to the American Bar Association, which has since dismissed the complaint. James Smith, dean of the law school, said that Entman’s decision will stand but that the school will review technology policies. For more info see — USA Today, 21 March 2006 www.usatoday.com/tech/news/2006-03-21-professor-laptop-ban_x.htm

Emerald Group Publishing has announced the publication of a special issue of Reference Services Review (RSR), dedicated continued on page 22