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International Dateline — ALPSP and UKSG Conferences

by **Martin White** (Intranet Focus Ltd)
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ALPSP Conference

In the U.K. Spring is heralded by the **Annual Conference of the UK Serials Group**, which is itself now preceded by a one-day seminar organised by the **Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers**. The idea is to attract delegates from outside of the U.K. to come to the ALPSP meeting on a Friday, and then journey on to the UKSG conference which starts on the following Monday. This year both events were of the highest quality. The ALPSP seminar was entitled *"Is there life after E-prints?"* Survival strategies for publishers, and attracted a large audience. The opening paper was given by **Professor Peter Singer**, of the **Joint Centre for Bioethics, University of Toronto**, and was provocatively entitled *"Three cheers for the death of the journal."* It was a virtuoso performance, and ended with a consideration of the impact of not having access to electronic journals (or indeed journals of any sort) on health care in Africa and other Third-World countries. I will not try to summarise the paper, as the PowerPoint slides can be accessed from the ALPSP Website at www.alp.org/300301.htm, along with most of the other presentations. Missing from the site is the presentation by **Dick Kaser**, Executive Director, **NFAIS**, who pointed out the importance of secondary services in providing a structure to the literature. Other topics included the role of evidence-based review journals in medicine, and the activities of **BioMed Central**.

UK Serials Group Annual Conference

This year the **UK Serials Group Annual Conference** was held at **Heriot-Watt University** in Edinburgh, and attracted over 500 delegates and 40 exhibitors. The event has now reached the stage that there are only three or four universities in the U.K. that are able to accommodate a conference of this size. The format of the conference is an interesting and effective blend of plenary papers, product review sessions and workshops, together with very well organised events each evening. In the opening session of the conference **Connie Foster**, President of **NASIG**, outlined the cur-

rent activities of **NASIG**. Delegates were quite surprised to learn of the differences between **UKSG** and **NASIG**, with the U.S. group operating without a central office, and excluding vendor participation.

There were two keynote papers. The first paper was delivered by **Bernard Naylor**, for many years the Librarian of the **University of Southampton**, and currently President of the **Library Association**. He reflected on the importance of university departments being able to cite published research as an indicator in the **Research Assessment Exercise**, through which the **Higher Education Funding Council** (on behalf of the U.K. Government) grades departments and in so doing allocates funding for research. The second paper was given by the author of this column, in which I suggested that the publishing industry needed to move from being e-journal providers to being in e-business, and in so doing should recognise that business models adapted from the print era would not be sustainable in the long term. Most of the papers will be published in *Serials* during the course of 2001, and it is likely that outside of the U.K., *Serials* will be available on subscription without the need also to be a member of the **UK Serials Group**.

It was good to be able to welcome two speakers from the U.S. **Tom Sanville** gave a fascinating insight into the operations of **OhioLINK**, presenting a wealth of usage data, and **Ed Pentz** reported on the current status and future plans for the **CrossRef** initiative.

In between the plenary sessions, delegates had the choice of 18 workshops, all run by acknowledged experts. Some are run as an open discussion forum, and others are more in the style of a briefing session. To accommodate the interests of the 500 delegates and yet keep the workshop numbers at no more than around 30 some of the workshops were run two or three times. The presenters kept their sanity by finding that each workshop took a different direction, depending on the interests of the attendees. Among the themes of the workshops were licensing issues (of course), managing e-journals, and linking. A further theme that will certainly figure more highly next year was the issue of usage data, and the respective interests of publishers, librarians, authors and readers. A working group has been set up by the **Pub-**

lishers Association (www.publishers.org) with participation from **ALPSP** amongst other groups to look at the issues in some detail and hopefully develop some guidelines. The **STM** group of publishers (www.stm-assoc.org) were also planning to discuss usage statistics at their Spring meeting in Amsterdam at the end of April.

The **AGM** of the **UK Serials Group** was held during the conference, and this year there was a very important item on the agenda. Since its inception the **Group** has operated in a quite informal (though legal) way, but given the scale of **UKSG** the decision has now been taken to convert to a limited company. This will have no impact on the activities of the **UKSG**, but will ensure that the members of the Executive Committee are no longer personally liable for the debts of the **Group**! Another important change has been the retirement of **John Merriman** as Editor of *Serials*. **Helen Henderson** (**Kings Norton Library**) and **Hazel Woodward** (Librarian, **Cranfield University**) have assumed a joint Editorship, and have some very interesting plans for the expansion of the journal in conjunction with the newly revised **UKSG Website** (www.uksg.org). An internationally-renowned Editorial Board has been established, and the representatives of the U.S. serials community include **David Fritsch** (**RoweCom**), **Cindy Hepfer** (**University of Buffalo**), **Rebecca Lenzini** (**The Charleston Company**) and **Judy Luther** (**Informed Strategies**).

Acquisition Budgets

One of the sub-texts of the **UKSG Conference** is always budget management in academic libraries. As I have mentioned before in this column there is a particular problem with sales tax on electronic journals. There is no sales tax on printed material, but electronic journals (and CD-ROMs etc) have to bear a 17.5% sales tax. In the corporate sector this tax can be passed on to customers through the sale of products and services, but the academic community is not able to pass this tax on. The result is that even if an e-journal is the same price as the print title an academic library has to find 17.5% more money to subscribe to the journal.

The **Publishers Association** publishes one of the most detailed reports in the

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From the Reference Desk

by **Tom Gilson** (Head, Reference Services, College of Charleston)
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Social history has evolved into a significant branch of historical inquiry. It concentrates on the lives and experiences of ordinary people and its importance, as an active field of study, has to grow since its emergence in the 1920's. For evidence of this, one needs look no further than to a new encyclopedia recently published by Scribner's. The *Encyclopedia of European Social History from 1350 - 2000* (2001, 0684806452, \$650) is a serious and scholarly work that offers a comprehensiveness that will serve the needs of both student and professional historian.

Containing over 200 essays, the *Encyclopedia* is organized in 23 thematic sections filling 6 volumes (including the index). Laying the groundwork is Volume 1, with essays on the methods and theoretical approaches in the practice of social history, as well as articles on specific chronological periods, those on regions and countries within Europe and essays on Europe's relationship with the rest of the world. Volume 2 looks at the broad processes impacting change like technology, war and secularization. It also contains essays on population changes, as well as articles on phenomena like urbanization, life in rural communities and articles on state-society issues like absolutism, the liberal state, bureaucracy and military service. Volume 3 covers issues related to social structure, varying forms of protest, crime and social control, as well as essays on social problems like public health, poor relief and welfare. The fourth volume deals with family, gender and sexuality issues along with the roles played by work and labor. Also contained in this vol-

ume are essays on medical practice, childbirth, psychology and the physical senses. The fifth volume is devoted to popular culture and ranges from articles on music and dance to those on drinking and drug use, and also includes those on religion, education and literacy. The final volume contains biographies of notable figures drawn from a variety of Gale Group titles like the *Encyclopedia of World Biography* and *Notable Women Scientists*, a list of contributors with credentials and most importantly, the index. Given the topical structure of this reference a good index is imperative and this one fits the bill. It leads the reader to specific volume and page numbers, as well as being cross-referenced. Each essay has its own useful bibliography and the text is complemented by photos, illustrations and maps, all adding to the impression of high quality.

With the *Encyclopedia of European Social History*, editor **Peter N. Sterns** and his contributors have created a work of enduring scholarly value. The essays are thorough examinations of the topics covered, not short burst of factual information. In short, this is an encyclopedia that demands that a reader spend time with it to gain maximum value. Students of European history will seek out this handsome set repeatedly. Most academic libraries will find it a necessary purchase.

Literary translation is an essential means of introducing cultures to one another. Without translations into English, the classic drama of the Greeks, the poetry of the Tang Dynasty and the fiction of modern writers like **Solzhenitsyn** would be inaccessible to

most of us. However, there are both obvious and hidden implications inherent in the mediation imposed by translation. So much so, that a formal field of study focused on the practice of literary translation has emerged demanding serious consideration.

Fitzroy-Dearborn has published a 2-volume reference set that attests to the vibrant nature of translation studies while at the same time helping to map and define them. Edited by **Oliver Classe**, the *Encyclopedia of Literary Translation into English* (2000, 1884964362, \$285) contains over 600 articles by 290 contributors. The entries fall into three major categories: surveys of major languages that have been translated into English, articles related to the theory and practice of literary translation and those covering individual writers and works. Languages ranging from Arabic to French-Canadian are covered in this set, as are influences like feminist translation theory and cultural misrepresentation. Of course, specific authors and individual works are given a good deal of attention and range from the *Gilgamesh* epic and the *I Ching*, to 20th century writers like **Umberto Eco** and **Isabel Allende**. The organization of the book is solid with the entries listed alphabetically and includes title, translator and general indexes. In addition, there is an alphabetical list of all articles, a list of writers and works by language and a chronological list of writers and works.

Under the watchful eye of **Mr. Classe**, the *Encyclopedia of Literary Translation into English* does justice to this important, interdisciplinary field of study. The commitment to scholarship is obvious from the selected translations listed in each author entry to the bibliographies at the end of each article to the thorough notes on individual advisors and contributors. This is a natural choice for academic libraries supporting advanced literature and linguistics courses. Such libraries should also consider the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (1998, 0415093805, \$165) edited by **Mona Baker** and **Kirsten Malmkjaer**.

Speaking of **Routledge**, they have recently published a useful addition to their list of contemporary culture encyclopedias. The *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Latin American and Caribbean Cultures* (2001, 041513188X, \$399) contains over 4000 entries in a handy three volume set. Many of the articles are more like dictionary entries,

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public domain on university library acquisition budgets. The 29 page report can be downloaded as a pdf file from the PA Website (www.publishers.org) and the 2001 update, which has only recently been released, contains comparative data on spending in Europe, Australia and New Zealand. In general the picture painted by the report is not a happy one, with 36% of university libraries spending less on book acquisitions in 1998/99 than they did in the previous year, and 20% spent less on journals. The per capita spending on books also continued to decline. There is a great deal of use-

ful analysis in the report, and it is well worth the effort to download.

I started this column with a reference to **ALPSP**, and to give another perspective on the importance of professional society publishing, the Annual Report of the **Institution of Electrical Engineers** for 2000/2001 has just been published. The total operating income of the **IEE** was \$55 million (at the current exchange rate of 1.42), of which over 55% was accounted for by income from publishing and information services. Any decrease in this amount as academic libraries try to manage their budgets in a time of some difficulty would have a serious impact on the **IEE**, and on most other professional societies.