

Borchert, Carol Ann. and Gary Ives, eds. *Mile-High Views: Surveying the Serials Vista: NASIG 2006: Proceedings of the North American Serials Interest Group, Inc. 21st Annual Conference May 4-7, 2006 Denver, Colorado*. New York: Haworth Information Press, 2007. 400p. \$90.00 (ISBN: 978-0-7890-3658-2)

According to the back cover accolade, this book is “a wealth of information to anyone who deals with decision-making for serials resources in an institution...” Overall I would agree with this assertion. The content includes extremely pertinent topics, valuable insights, and provocative perspectives. The weakness is that the book delivers only on the promises stated in the title; thus it includes all of the “proceedings” of the North American Serials Interest Group (NASIG) 21st annual conference, and little else. The authors merely provide a formal recap of the conference events. For readers like me, who were unable to attend the conference, this is not quite enough. We expect more from a published book.

The four-day conference included 35 sessions, grouped into five types: preconference, vision, strategy, tactics, and poster. The topics selected explored a wide variety of issues, such as cataloging serials, implementing new technologies (Electronic Resource Management and Institutional Repository), analyzing journal pricing, identifying users’ needs, reevaluating collections, and reorganizing workflows.

The sessions touched on the most salient concerns for today’s serials librarians. In particular, I found Amanda Yesilbas’ presentation “Old is New Again: Using Established Workflows to Handle Electronic Resources” relevant and I am looking to implement an e-journal check-in process similar to hers. Yet, is the relevancy of the topics and other positive attributes a result of the editors’ efforts? Or should the credit be given to the NASIG organization, conference organizers, and program planning committee? Do the conference proceedings *need* to be published in a book? What value-add is offered? Since every proceeding is already published in the journal *The Serials Librarian*, the decision to publish it in book-form is questionable.

I was disappointed the editors were not compelled to go beyond the basics. Sessions were inconsistently recreated by a recorder. Some provided detailed transcripts while others summarized the events like a sports commentator giving post-game highlights. Only a handful of proceedings included any figures, charts, tables or graphs. I am skeptical that a majority of presenters read their speeches and did not provide any additional audio or visual material. Illustrations would have reinforced the information provided to the serials librarian who did not have the ability to attend the conference. This omission is frustrating. Furthermore, the editors lost an opportunity to present readers with a framework to absorb the conference proceedings by providing a more in-depth introduction to the book and an opening paragraph to each section.

However, despite these drawbacks, this book could be a valuable resource. It is the closest thing to attending the 2006 NASIG annual conference without a time machine. And, it has shown me the value in registering for future conferences.

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