



Socorro García González*

Thirty Years' Worth of Knowledge

I have had the good fortune of working at the Center for Research on North America (CISAN) for almost 25 years. I have worked all that time in the Research Support Department, from where I have witnessed important events on the world stage that have marked the way forward for researchers' studies of North America. As members of the center's academic personnel, we have had to follow up and monitor the issues that arise from those events, such as, for example the signing and entry into effect of the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994, or the 2001 attack on New York's Twin Towers. These events have undoubtedly marked a transformation of relations among Mexico, the United States, and Canada, and, as a result, have prompted profound changes in the way that, as a center and as a department in particular, we have had to respond to the challenges they pose.

In this regard, the evolution of technology is another of the surprising changes that personally and as a department

we've had to adjust to. Several of us learned how to use a computer here, and the physical review of newspapers and culling of information to select news items, which were then filed in innumerable folders that could be photocopied so researchers could access the information for their projects, became things of the past. Thanks to technology, we began to consult libraries from our desks! We began to consult U.S. and Canadian newspapers the same day they were published and no longer had to wait five or seven days for the subscription to arrive! Those were some of the enormous changes that would make fulfilling our functions as the Research Support Department much quicker and more efficient.

This brief summary serves to glance at the past—which doesn't seem so far behind us—and allow me to realize that it was here, in this space, where I have grown as a person and as a professional. This is where my dreams began to materialize; thanks to the CISAN and the UNAM, I have met good friends and received invaluable advice. Happy thirtieth anniversary! ■■■

* Head of the UNAM, CISAN Research Support Department; gargo@unam.mx.