Teacher-Librarian
T O D A Y

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From the Editor's Desk...............

As the new publications editor of *Teacher-Librarian Today*, I would like to acknowledge the work of our former publications editor, Dianne Dunse, who has stood us proud in her years of commitment to the ongoing publication of this journal and to teacher-librarianship in particular. Thank you, Dianne, for all your years of dedication. We trust that you will continue to read the journal and keep in touch with colleagues while finding more time to spend with your family.

Our theme for this publication highlights issues related to intellectual freedom and social responsibility in the school library setting. The authors address issues that we may have avoided or sidestepped altogether depending on our personal comfort level. However, like the grain of sand that irritates the oyster shell, much good can come of meeting the challenge of dealing with these issues. The teacher-librarians writing in this issue inspire us to ask the hard questions and take the necessary risks to create and maintain a climate of trust and learning for students, which is as valuable as any pearl.

Two articles are related to critical inquiry and engaging teachers in the selection of school library resources. Both of these topics engage us as we embrace new curriculum and offer many ideas that will enhance future successful interactions with teachers.

Join me in welcoming the 2007/08 Alberta School Library Council (ASLC) provincial executive. Fern Reirson, president, has provided a message to inspire and lead us through another school year. Thank you to past president Irene Masciuch for her enthusiasm and energy over the past two years. Thank you to those of you who took the time to honour colleagues with Awards of Merit and principals who support and advocate for teacher-librarians. You will find stories and photos of events in the journal that highlight their contributions.

As always, communication with colleagues is important to the work we do each day in the classroom. To this end, check out the new look of the ASLC website at http://aslc.teachers.ab.ca/. Your input is solicited. Hopefully, the website will become a go-to place for teacher-librarians provincewide. For example, you will find links to information mentioned in Dianne Oberg and Toni Samek's article as well as up-to-date details on Kaleidoscope 9.

As you leaf through this journal and recognize a few faces and names, I hope you are energized to incorporate some of what you find into your school library's daily activity. Then you will most likely file the journal next to former issues for future reference, and that is a good thing; however, the words in this publication need to be shared beyond ourselves, the converted. Therefore, as the new publications editor, I challenge you to share this journal as a point of discussion about the role and value of teacher-librarians in schools. Why not share it with your principal, a school board member, a teacher on your staff or your neighbour? Better still, once you've taken that step, write about the experience for the next issue. I look forward to hearing from you.

—Diane GallowaySolowan
Acquisitions Editor

From the Past Editor

Thanks for the memories! The past editor of *Teacher-Librarian Today* has passed the torch to a most capable teacher-librarian, Diane GallowaySolowan, who is the editor of this issue. Many of you know her from her great sessions on the Online Reference Centre. We have kept the tradition of having another Diane in the position, which saves on the name memory problem.

I will miss the great meetings with my colleagues, but time marches on. Progress and technology has moved forward and left me in their wake. Diane will be the right person for keeping *Teacher-Librarian Today* on the forward track.

I would like to thank everyone for their wonderful support over the past 10 years as I have helped publish 14 issues of *Teacher-Librarian Today*. Much has changed over these 10 years, but the colleagues in the profession have not. They are just as professional, just as supportive, just as enthusiastic and just as great as they have always been. Our numbers have dwindled drastically, but that T-L enthusiasm and advocacy have stayed upfront. It is a special group to belong to and is even more special if one takes part in the administration of the council. The networking and professional support are so important in keeping the teacher-librarian spirit alive and well.

Thanks to all those who so diligently sent in contributions every issue. Finding colleagues to write and research for our small group is difficult as our tasks are many and the time restraints have spread our professional time very thin. But those who contributed were ever faithful and could be counted on to help publish interesting and informative issues each time. Please continue to do the same for the next Diane.

—Dianne Dunse

President's Message

Defining Focus

This year brought focus to the Alberta School Library Council (ASLC). Members selected the following three goals to enhance the professional competencies of teacher-librarians, and increase knowledge, understanding and awareness of the role of school library programs in support of teaching and learning:

- Professional development: provide and promote professional development opportunities for members
- Curriculum connections: provide leadership in teaching and learning using varied and diverse quality resources to support the Alberta program of studies
- Focus on inquiry: provide leadership in and promote the inquiry process across the curriculum

ASLC members are encouraged to help determine how we can support you through the regional councils.

Professional Development

This past spring, our annual conference, "A Class Act: Celebrating Alberta's Libraries," was held in Jasper with the Alberta Library Association. Our sessions received excellent reviews. We are looking forward to our joint conference with the Educational Technology Council, in Calgary, in spring 2008.

ASLC has become an affiliate member of the Library Association of Alberta.

This permits us to access PD through the Partnership and the Education Institute at www.thepartnership.ca/partnership/bins/index.asp, which delivers quality educational opportunities electronically, by telephone or in person. This site can be accessed individually or at a reduced cost at regional meetings. Let your ASLC executive know which sessions have been pertinent and helpful to you.

A link on our website will connect you to Kaleidoscope 9, "Story: Bridging Worlds," which will take place in Calgary November 6–8, 2008. ASLC solely sponsors this conference every fourth year. The Kaleidoscope committee, chaired by Cathy Yusep, has been working for the past three years to make this children's literature conference a world-class literary event. We invite regional councils provincewide to become more involved in providing support at this conference by such things as acting as hosts.

Regional councils provided PD activities ranging from presentations by vendors of the Online Reference Centre to Wired for Words, an online book club for children. Each regional uses its own needs to drive PD activities.

The ATA is collecting names of presenters from each specialist council to present at conferences and conventions. ASLC gave presentations at the 2007 Beginning Teachers' Conferences, in Edmonton and Calgary, to highlight our areas of focus. If you are willing to share your expertise in one of our three goals with teachers at conferences and conventions, please e-mail me at freirson@telusplanet.net. Check TNET (http://aslc.teachers.ab.ca) frequently to keep abreast of the council's upcoming PD activities.

Curriculum Connections

TNET will become a significant means of connecting our membership through our council's website. There will be a public and membership side to our website. The membership side will be used to collect and share resources that will be useful to teachers and school library personnel. Regional councils and individuals are encouraged to send links to resources or personally developed resources to share with colleagues. Forward your resource links to webmaster Maria Mirka at mamirka@cbe.ab.ca.

A wiki and/or discussion board in TNET will allow members to interact online to discuss issues in school libraries, share resources and provide support to one another.

Focus on Inquiry

Some of the newest research involving inquiry in school libraries was presented by Dr Ross Todd, director of CISSL at Rutgers University, New Jersey, in two sessions at the Alberta Library Conference. His presentations can be viewed at http://aslc.teachers.ab.ca/Conferences/.

A number of our executive presented inquiry-based workshops at the Beginning Teachers' Conference and in conjunction with Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia. We are working toward providing professional development through ATA conferences, conventions and the Consortia for all teachers in the province.

Advocacy

In October 2006, ASLC members met with representatives who have a vested interest in school libraries to form the Alberta Coalition for School Libraries (ACSL). At the inaugural meeting and follow-up online discussions, the ACSL defined their mission: to advocate for the implementation of standards in school libraries as outlined in *Achieving Information Literacy: Standards for School Libraries in Canada*, (which is in the process of being updated). ASLC will become an active member of this coalition as a significant avenue for advocacy for school libraries.

The Canadian Association of School Libraries (CASL) will be developing electronic presentations geared toward target audiences, which might be used by provincial school library councils/organizations to advocate for school libraries. These will be developed over the next year and will be posted to CASL's website. As a working member of this committee, I would like to receive examples of presentations that you have created and presented to trustees, superintendents, principals and/or school councils so that the development of these presentations may truly be a collaborative effort.

National School Library Day

National School Library Day (NSLD) was held on Monday, October 22, 2007, in conjunction with Canadian Library Month. Community members were asked to share their views about this year's theme, "Libraries: The World at Your Fingertips." Their views were posted on our ASLC website and linked to the NSLD and the International School Library Day websites. Please direct students, parents and community members to our website to view these and/or to post any NSLD activities at your school. Go to www.cla.ca/casl/nsld.html for materials to promote NSLD at your school.

Membership

Our membership comprises regular members (certificated teachers) and subscription members (technicians, postsecondary libraries/librarians, publishers, authors and other community members who have a vested interest in school libraries). Over the past decade, the erosion of our school library programs in this province has significantly affected our membership.

This year, our council will need to examine the feasibility of regional councils. The dissolution of the Fort McMurray and Central Alberta regional councils has affected the representation of people who work in school libraries in these regions. Other specialist councils have gone to different formats to represent their members. We will be examining how to better serve our members in all areas of the province. Although physical distance separates us, interests and issues continue to unite us. As a result, we will examine ways to connect with one another over distances through possible videoconferencing, teleconferencing, wikis, blogs and TNET. Please feel free to share your views with your regional president and/or me about what you'd like to see as a means of support.

I look forward to serving as ASLC president because of the energy and support I have received provincially and nationally. I thank our 2006/07 provincial and regional executives for their tireless work in promoting school libraries and supporting those of us who work in and on behalf of school libraries. Special thanks to Dianne Dunse, who served as *Teacher-Librarian Today* editor for ASLC for the past 10 years. I welcome our new executive members and look forward to working together to meet our mission and goals.

ASLC Executive Members

Seated l to r: Irene Masciuch, Fern Reirson
Standing l to r: Maria Mirka, Grace MacDougal, Donna Grove, Lyle Krause, Sherry Nasekin, Diane GallowaySolowan, Jacquie Vincent, Greg Jeffery, Terry Kernaghan.
Missing: Lynda Smith, Cathy Yusep

Photo by Maria Mirka

—Fern Reirson

Past President's Message

My term as president has come to an end, and now I sit on this council as past president. The past two years have been most rewarding. Another two-year term allows for the continuity of moving the council ahead provincially and federally. Powerful connections are made while on the provincial council. Although we remain a small group, we are an important one and the heart of every school that we are a part of.

We continue to struggle in Alberta, and our struggles are mirrored in other provinces. In some areas, schools struggle to keep teacher-librarians, and classrooms are being set up in libraries due to space shortages. In other areas, schools are acquiring teacher-librarians for the first time due to increased demands of inquiry and the vision of what the 21st-century learner looks like. The council's role is to provide professional development in either case to teacher-librarians and colleagues. At the Beginning Teachers' Conference in September, we provide crucial professional development that focuses on the teacher-librarian's role and how we work collaboratively with stakeholders in the school.

Our council continues to work on the three goals that we identified in the previous year. Advocacy is taking on the form of the work we do in schools with a strong supporting voice through the coalition. The curriculum connections piece continues with the creation of a document that shows where we touch on the present prescribed curriculum. *Focus on Inquiry* (2004) has a focus now that we worked with Dr Ross Todd, at the Alberta Library Conference in Jasper this year. Please support your local groups in assisting them in this work.

We are thrilled that ATA members will receive a free membership in one specialist council beginning in September 2007. Please encourage staff at your school to make the Alberta School Library Council (ASLC) their top choice.

Our executive was sad to see the departure of Dianne Dunse as our editor. Dianne has devoted many years of service to our council in many positions. We know that she will continue to be an active member and supporter of school libraries as she continues her work through her presentations at various schools in the province. We welcome Diane GallowaySolowan as the new editor and look forward to her work with our council. Many thanks to Dianne Leong-Fortier for her work as conference cochair. We appreciate the hard work that went into planning and organizing this conference. The speakers were fabulous. I welcome Fern Reirson as president. Her strong voice, enthusiasm and vision will guide us as we work to advance teacher-librarianship in our province.

Change is the one guarantee that we have in our lives. It can be both positive and negative. Positive changes are being made in our council. The provision of professional development within a small community of teacher-librarians is one of the many things that our council will grapple with for the next year. We will be working closely with our webmaster to keep members informed of what is happening across our province and to open further channels for communication through TNET.

Thank you for your ongoing support of ASLC. I look forward to another exciting year as we move ahead with the constant changes that confront us.

Reference

Alberta Learning. 2004. *Focus on Inquiry: A Teacher's Guide to Implementing Inquiry-Based Learning.* Edmonton, Alta: Alberta Learning.

—*Irene Masciuch*

Feature Articles

Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility: Communicating Our Core Values

by Dianne Oberg and Toni Samek

Dianne Oberg is professor and chair of the Department of Elementary Education at the University of Alberta and coauthor of the award-winning Focus on Inquiry: A Teacher's Guide to Implementing Inquiry-Based Learning *(with Jennifer Branch, Alberta Learning, 2004).*

Toni Samek is associate professor in the School of Library and Information Studies at the University of Alberta, and author of Librarianship and Human Rights: A Twenty-First Century Guide *(2007).*

We hope this special issue on "Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility" will be read in conjunction with two other special issues in Canadian school library publications on this topic. The first appeared as Volume 24, Issue 4, of *School Libraries in Canada (SLIC).* That *SLIC* issue was a potent contribution to the conversation in our school library community about these core values of librarianship—it resulted in a book published by the Canadian Teachers' Federation for two coauthors and in a summer course at the University of Alberta taught by us. The course, EDES 501: Issues in Teacher-Librarianship: Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility, brought together 29 graduate students from across Canada and from countries abroad, including Japan, China and Ethiopia. The course drew attention campuswide (Ford 2006).

The second special issue on this topic was published in Volume 26, Issue 2, of *SLIC* as a companion to this special issue of *Teacher-Librarian Today.* Both of the current special issues on "Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility" are based on the final papers written by students in the course. The specific topics addressed by the papers are diverse: censorship, students' privacy rights and *in loco parentis,* collection development with a social justice orientation, cuts to teacher-librarians as a threat to intellectual freedom, activist librarianship, and issues of peace and global education. One objective of the course was to effectively communicate policy positions on intellectual freedom and social responsibility through both oral and written means. We anticipate that the course will be offered again in summer 2008 on the University of Alberta campus.

Certainly, we and many of the students completed the course with a strong appreciation of the need to address the core values of librarianship in a significant way in education for teacher-librarianship. Certainly, also, we reaffirmed for ourselves the critical importance of the values of intellectual freedom and social responsibility as key conditions for the development of democratic education and citizenship in the Canadian and global context.

Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.

—William Butler Yeats,
Irish poet and playwright (1865–1939)

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Ford, D. 2006. "Librarians Are Freedom Fighters, Says Author." *Express News*, July 31.

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Samek, T. 2007. *Librarianship and Human Rights: A Twenty-First Century Guide.* Oxford, UK: Chandos.

We knew there was a need for this course, but we were uncertain as to how it would be received. We wondered if we would get enough registrants to even run the course—we filled two sections! By the end of the first day, we could feel some magic in the room. By the close of the final day on campus, we saw the beginnings of a new community committed to supporting the rights of children.

Cuts to Teacher-Librarians: Effects on Intellectual Freedom and Democracy

by Claudia Klausen

Claudia Klausen is a full-time teacher-librarian at Emerson Elementary School in Winnipeg, Manitoba. She is currently pursuing her master of education degree in teacher-librarianship from the University of Alberta.

Canada's current crisis in cuts to teacher-librarians and school libraries is endangering the relationship that both can make to the development of intellectual freedom and social responsibility in our society. Teacher-librarians promote cultural diversity, advocate for rights and work to support the development of children's ethical foundations as global citizens. Teacher-librarians and school libraries provide unique supports to teachers and students in the promotion of literacy (in all its forms) and critical inquiry.

"Freedom and democracy are not easy roads, nor are they permanent states. They are constantly renewed in our minds, hearts and conscious efforts" (Barron 2003, 49). Freedom is necessary for democracy. Democracy cannot survive without being free to live, love, speak, believe, read and enjoy. However, "even in Canada, a free country by world standards" (Samek 2005, 44), there may be stumbling blocks that hinder our enjoyment of these freedoms. How do we embrace these freedoms, how do we celebrate cultural and human diversity and how do we help our children to develop into informed and caring citizens who participate freely in our democracy?

Libraries, both school and public, make important contributions to freedom and democracy. In the words of the American Library Association (ALA), they are "cornerstones of the communities they serve … [They] are a legacy to each generation, offering the heritage of the past and the promise of the future [and] contribute to a future that values and protects our freedoms in a world that celebrates both our similarities and differences, respects individuals and their beliefs, and holds all persons truly equal and free" (ALA 2006b).

In early 21st century, libraries are facing innumerable challenges to their core values. Although teacher-librarians may believe very strongly in these foundational principles, circumstances and contexts shaping school communities affect the role of school libraries and teacher-librarians. Today, both face trends that greatly affect student learning and our commitment to these values and principles. These trends include declining library budgets, new sweeping and centralized curricula, culturally diverse student populations, monopolies in educational publishing, issues of Internet and child protection, and cuts to teacher-librarian positions throughout schools. Knowing this, how does our current crisis in Canadian school libraries affect democracy and intellectual freedom in our schools today?

Statements on Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility

Many professional groups have developed statements on intellectual freedom and social responsibility. Having a solid awareness of these policy statements can help teacher-librarians negotiate the issues we face. The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* states: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers" (UN 1948).

International Federation of Libraries Associations and Institutions (IFLA 2004) states it is a "fundamental right of human beings to access and express information without restriction." "Intellectual freedom is the basis of democracy. Intellectual freedom is the core of the library concept" (IFLA 2006a).

The American Library Association's (ALA) Intellectual Freedom Committee, developed in 1940, declared

Intellectual freedom is the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause or movement may be explored. (ALA 2006a)

In 1974, the Canadian Library Association (CLA) developed a "sister" intellectual freedom statement. This statement has been amended twice and now reads:

All persons in Canada have the fundamental right, as embodied in the nation's Bill of Rights and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, to have access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity and intellectual activity, and to express their thoughts publicly. This right to intellectual freedom, under the law, is essential to the health and development of Canadian society.

Libraries have a basic responsibility for the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom.

It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity, including those that some elements of society may consider to be unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable. To this end, libraries shall acquire and make available the widest variety of materials.

It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee the right of free expression by making available all the library's public facilities and services to all individuals and groups who need them.

Libraries should resist all efforts to limit the exercise of these responsibilities while recognizing the right of criticism by individuals and groups.

Both employees and employers in libraries have a duty, in addition to their institutional responsibilities, to uphold these principles. (CLA 1974)

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982) guarantees all Canadians intellectual freedom stating we have "freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication."

In my home city of Winnipeg, the Public Library's statement dovetails the CLA statement but also specifically speaks to "the freedom of the individual and the right and obligation of parents and guardians to develop, interpret and maintain their own code of values within their family" (Winnipeg Public Library 2003).

Last, our school division's statement on intellectual freedom "recognizes that in a democracy, free inquiry in an essential ingredient of education" (Rivereast Transcona School Division 2007). Collectively all documents present the same ideals, promote the same principles and honour a democratic society where intellectual freedom and social responsibility are embraced. What constitutes a democratic society in today's world? Are these ideals truly being embraced, or to what extent are there limitations? Where do these statements truly find place within our schools? To realize the full extent of embracement, we need to examine their presence (if any) in our schools.

Value of School Libraries and Teacher-Librarians

Children have rights to an education. The United Nations statement on the Rights of the Child speaks to the child's right to an education and points to the "existence and utilization of the school library" (IASL 2003) as critical to development of the whole self. Large bodies of research "reaffirm the value of school libraries staffed by professional teacher-librarians" (Neill 2004). School libraries play a vital role in promoting intellectual freedom and their collections support both teachers and students in their pursuit of learning. It is critical that students learn how to locate, analyze and use information in this digital age. Many studies in the United States have pointed out the correlation between library staffing and student achievement; namely, that a well-staffed, well-stocked and well-funded school library makes a significant difference in student achievement (Lance and Loertscher 2003). The Ontario Library Association's study (2006) offers Canadian data to support this finding. School libraries function as an integral part of the school's programming and student learning. They also have a powerful opportunity to become cultural conduits because they provide the connecting link between student readers and an informed book selection process. When literature is proactively selected, children are able to make emotional connections with characters that assist them in valuing an increasing diverse culture. These connections to literature create higher levels of critical thinking in children, creating increased responsibility for their own learning and allowing them greater intellectual freedom.

School Library Support— Impact on Learning

School libraries in Canada have been supported by provincial governments since the late 1960s. In the 1970s numerous studies (Haycock 2003, 17) demonstrated that students attained higher academic performance when professional library services were available. In 1974 Greve found that one of the greatest predictors of success in a school was the number of volumes the library held (p 18). The strongest variable related to achievement, other than socioeconomic status of the community, was expenditure for library books per student. In 1984, the presence of library media programs was found to be directly related to achievement in specialized skills areas and educational curriculum. Further studies in the 1990s (p 19) found that the better funded a school library was, the higher was the academic achievement of its students. Improved funding provided students with access to more staff and to a larger and more varied collection of materials better suited to meet their needs.

The role of teacher-librarians is integral to the instructional process. Since 2000, however, because of the prevalence of technology, the role of the teacher-librarian has shifted (Haycock 2003, 20) with more emphasis being placed on helping students and teachers find, access and synthesize information. Studies have continued to show the positive impact that teacher-librarians have on student achievement in mathematics,

science, English language arts and social studies. The biggest impact, though, appears in students' development of information literacy and of research strategy skills; that is, the skills needed to "develop ideas, form questions, gather information, locate and assess information for quality, authority, accuracy and authenticity" (RTSD 2007) and the skills necessary for success in our information-rich world. Adequate funding along with professionally trained staff are the two components that definitively affect both information literacy and student achievement in the subject areas. Access to information and a variety of materials by students have been found to be integral to the success of school library programs in supporting student achievement. Information literacy and problem-solving skills are enhanced with the presence of a teacher-librarian in the school library (Haycock 2003).

School Library Support— Impact on Reading

Studies in the 1970s and 1980s found that students had increased use of newspapers and increased access to school libraries when a teacher-librarian was present. A greater love of reading for pleasure and recreation was seen in schools where libraries were found. By the 1990s significant differences in reading levels between children who borrowed books versus those who did not was evident, and emphasis was placed on the role of teacher-librarian in promoting reading. Teacher-librarians have an "ability for placing right books into right hands at right times" (Haycock 2003, 27). They connect books to children. Children find comfort in getting assistance to find specific books that they request.

Research shows that reading proficiency is linked to student achievement and also to reductions in school drop out rates. Students need access to current materials, relevant materials and interesting materials for independent and lifelong skills for reading. When children are motivated to read, their interest in literature and their achievement in academics increases. Children need large collections of books to choose from. Choosing books from a large collection creates a greater positive impact on children's love of reading for pleasure and on their reading for inquiry. Funding to create print-rich learning environments in our schools and school libraries is critical, and classroom collections cannot substitute for library collections. Creating a safe haven for enjoyment of literature in many formats—graphic novels, informational books, magazines, DVDs, plays or dramas—is another contribution of school libraries to creating lifelong learners.

School Library Support—Impact on Cultural Identity

School libraries provide opportunities for children to learn about themselves and one another. Manitoba's new social studies curriculum addresses identity and cultural diversity in ways to promote lifelong value for students. It seems clear that "in a democratic society, the importance of a citizenry equipped with a good understanding of the country and a refined appreciation of its character can hardly be overestimated. Canadian publishers can provide ample evidence of teacher-librarians selecting and promoting Canadian books for Canadian children" (Haycock 2003, 31).

School libraries are places where children can explore culture and identity through literature. Literature can introduce children to the values, social norms, cultural norms, dreams and aspirations of our society. Providing access to Canadian materials allows children to see what it is to be Canadian—what we look like, how we act, what we value both today and in the past. We need these materials to help our children understand the importance of identity within a country. Teacher-librarians are trained to identify and select excellent materials. However, this task is becoming more difficult because many of the professional journals used to review children's books have disappeared, making it even harder for Canadian publishers to market their titles. Only two publications completely devoted to reviewing Canadian children's books remain—*Resource Links: Connecting Classrooms, Libraries and Canadian Learning Resources* and *CM: Canadian Review of Materials.*

Current Crisis—Cuts to Teacher-Librarian Positions

What worries us about cuts to teacher-librarian positions? Teacher-librarians are leaders within our schools working with teachers implementing new curriculum and working with students to provide the best resources, supports and guidance for lifelong education and learning. Samek (2005) believes "the greatest threat to intellectual freedom [in schools] is cuts to teacher-librarian positions." Intellectual freedom is connected to democracy and social responsibility. Samek (2005) states "the theory and practice of intellectual freedom are essential underpinnings of critical inquiry and informed citizenship, both important goals of our education system." Teacher-librarians advocate for intellectual freedom through implementing curriculum and through selecting resources. When teacher-librarian positions are cut or reduced, many advocates for intellectual freedom and social responsibility are lost.

In 2004, Manitoba was the only province that maintained school library funding for staffing, operating and collection development (Haycock 2003, 20). Many other provinces in Canada have seen the consequences of cuts as reading proficiency scores continue to falter, leaving New Brunswick's reading proficiency scores in last place among Canadian students (Haycock 2003). Full-time teacher-librarians currently are found in only 2 per cent of Ontario's elementary schools. These cuts to teacher-librarian positions throughout Canada have created concerns in three specific areas—curriculum-based inquiry, access to resources and informed citizenry.

Inquiry

"Inquiry is the dynamic process of being open to wonder and puzzlements and coming to know and understand the world. Inquiry-based learning is a process where students are involved in their learning, formulating questions, investigating widely and then building new understandings" (Alberta Learning 2004, 1). Inquiry actively involves students in the learning process through their engagement with questioning. As long as we continue to wonder, to ask questions and to inquire, we are learning. In this information-rich world, children "need to learn not only how to answer questions, but also how to generate them along with strategies to help them find answers. Children need to own their questions … to build on what they already know and come to a deeper understanding of the concepts" (Donham et al 2001, vii, 1). Ownership of inquiry by the student produces the "most successful curriculum inquiries" (Alberta Learning 2004, 15). Freedom is expressed through students' generation of their own questions and information gathering. Students are able to connect to the outside world where lifelong learning occurs.

Inquiry-based learning "encompasses the habits of mind that promote learning and the processes that can be woven through all classroom activities to enable students to broaden and deepen their understanding of the world" (Alberta Learning 2004, 15). Intellectual freedom gained through learning is student driven through their thought processes and personal experiences. Students need to understand "inquiry as the process of using information to satisfy their own interests and to develop their own knowledge" (p 8).

Cuts to teacher-librarian positions hinder the inquiry process within our schools. Teacher-librarians are well versed in inquiry-based approaches to learning. The inquiry process allows students freedom to choose what they want to learn, how they want to learn it and in what way they will share it. Interactions with ideas, objects and people allows for acknowledgement of intellectual freedom and formation of knowledge and beliefs.

Cuts to collection development can also hinder the inquiry process. "Collections are very tangible and visible" (Everhart 1998, 91) and "must meet the needs of all students, not perpetuate one dominant culture" (Shirley 2004). Collections must observe and attend to curriculum, ability and achievement levels, learning modes, learning styles, ethnic and cultural background, language differences and interest levels (Everhart 1998, 92). Teacher-librarians must build inclusive, diverse, multilingual, multiformat collections that promote cultural democracy and that encourage students to think critically (Shirley 2004). With a declining number of qualified personnel purchasing books for school librar- ies, collections are not as diverse as they should be. Schools suffering from cuts to teacher-librarian positions often will see decreased use of professional selection tools to aid in collection development. It is critical that trained individuals support the library collection through the use of selection tools because individual and isolated selection practice can result in biased collections.

With the increasing diversity of students in our schools, it is very important to build collections that celebrate and reflect cultural diversity and human rights. As leaders in our schools, teacher-librarians must accept the challenges involved in developing collections that represent different people and their different ways of being and that demonstrate how important intellectual freedom is in our democratic society. The building of a collection that discourages bias and racism yet "reflects cultural diversity and the pluralistic nature of contemporary society" needs to be undertaken by a qualified teacher-librarian (Hopkins 2006).

"Without a wealth of relevant, current resources, learning will not be as meaningful or accurate" (Donham et al 2001, 59). Inquiry-based learning requires current, age appropriate, interesting, attractive and relevant materials in a variety of formats (p 60). The decline in teacher-librarians has resulted, in many instances, in depleted collections that are lacking in Canadian materials, lacking in current resources, and lacking in materials that are of interest and relevance to today's students.

Access

Access means more than choosing. Teacher-librarians must be mindful that "selection is liberty of thought" and "censorship is control of thought" (Lamb and Johnson 2005). Teacher-librarians must be mindful that one of the cornerstones of democracy is the right to free expression. How teacher-librarians view and what value they place on intellectual freedom influences collection development. Both intellectual and physical accesses are critical to intellectual freedom. The American Library Association (2007) defines intellectual access as "the right to read, receive and express ideas and the right to acquire skills to seek out, explore and examine ideas." No longer is one textbook adequate to support children's learning. This notion has "now been replaced in many learning environments with a resource-based teaching approach" (Hopkins 2006). As teacher-librarians and teachers recognize the specific learning styles of their students, access to a wide variety of resources becomes even more important. In schools, teacher-librarians through their work with classroom teachers integrate a variety of resources into everyday work.

Physical access as defined by the ALA (2007) "includes being able to locate and retrieve information unimpeded by fees, age limits, separate collection or other restrictions." Two important factors in positive attitudes toward school libraries are attractiveness of the area and the amount of space. These areas in schools need to be inviting, centrally located, safe havens. Comfort involves attention to proper lighting, to sound barrier walls and ceilings and to comfortable furniture and shelving.

Again, cuts to teacher-librarian positions will impede both intellectual access and physical access. The teach- ing of information literacy skills necessary for the acquisition of materials will be greatly affected if the responsibility is left only to the classroom teacher or only to the student. With less teacher-librarian time due to cutbacks, resources necessary for inquiry will not be easily available and may not even be purchased. Teacher-librarians offer a wide curricular knowledge base with expertise in resource acquisition. As positions are cut, teachers will be on their own to acquire necessary resources for their curricular units of study. As cuts occur, physical access to the school library diminishes as time allocation for student interaction is decreased. Pre and post school hour programs likely will be deleted and creation of that special refuge and safe haven where intellectual freedom is embraced will be forgotten when the doors to school libraries are often closed.

Informed Citizenry

Our youth should be offered experiences that allow them to share in their culture and identity and become productive, informed citizens. The decreasing number of teacher-librarians is reducing awareness of Canadian materials. Publishers have noticed reduced sales of Canadian books to schools and "the need to develop Canadian identity and social cohesion is more challenging with resources that reflect the American experience and viewpoint" (Haycock 2003, 31). "This is particularly true in areas of children and teen literature, when reading habits and tastes are being formulated" (Neill 2004). Haycock stresses the dominance of American culture in the television, film, video and magazine industry. Canadian publishers have fought hard to eradicate this trend but threats to Canadian materials and therefore Canadian identity are increasing.

Teacher-librarians must try to respond to the learning needs of all students, and the school library collection must reflect that. Supporting the development of an informed citizenry requires offering materials in different languages, at various reading levels, of varying interest and from multiple perspectives. By doing this, the teacher-librarian makes the library a safe haven

"for the pursuit and interchange of ideas" (Stripling and Hughes-Hassell 2003, 36). In this secure place, children can make personal connections to books and enjoy reading experiences that create connections to the world outside of school. They need to share their personal perspectives, connecting text to self, text to text, and text to the world. Rosenblatt (1991) describes two specific experiences—an "efferent stance, where our main interest is in acquiring information, or an aesthetic stance, where we attend mainly to what we are experiencing, thinking and feeling during the reading." Both aesthetic and efferent reading experiences are critical for intellectual freedom.

Cuts to school library programs along with decreased resources greatly affect the building of our own experiences within our culture. Any hope of embracing intellectual freedom hinges on our own responsibility to the social issues we face. As educators, we need to embrace intellectual freedom and model it through our actions and our voices. We need to provide information for fellow educators and administrators in our staff rooms, our schools and our communities of the importance of intellectual freedom in this democratic society As retiring high school teacher Brian MacKinnon asks, "If you're silenced, how can you go into a classroom and celebrate democracy?" (Martin 2006, B3). We must strive to maintain our positions, our collections and our voices so we can continue to inform our school communities of the importance of the values of intellectual freedom and social responsibility to our culture, identity and ways of being.

What the Future Holds

"It certainly seems like our profession is in a state of crisis" (Johnson 2004, 44). Many places throughout the country have reduced school library programs and cut professional staff; have provided only minimal budgets for resources for our libraries; have supplanted library programs with technology initiatives and have driven teacher-librarians from their field with frustrations from challenges to suppression of a child's rights (p 22).

As a profession, teacher-librarians must find ways to continually reinforce and strengthen our roles and our programs. Studies have determined our worth in schools, in a child's education, in staff development and in expression of the rights to intellectual freedom within our libraries. It is our responsibility to advocate for teacher-librarian positions because teacher-librarians help to change the lives of children and support them in being intellectually free and productive citizens in the world today and in the future.

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Partners for Peace:
School and Public Libraries

by Alan Clark

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Since Canada has become involved in the war in Afghanistan, I have noticed higher-profile displays from the Department of National Defence (DND) at school postsecondary and career fairs. Students and staff have relatives serving in Afghanistan. The school library is receiving an increasing number of pamphlets, books and DVDs from DND. Should librarians respond when war occurs? After years of chaos, the Iraqi National Library closed its doors permanently in November 2006. Librarians had not only provided a "haven for students and scholars in Baghdad" (Bollag 2006, para 3) but also made "all sorts of sacrifices to serve the cultural needs … of the country" (Kuch 2007, para 8). Although few librarians face these pressures, we share a responsibility to promote peace and uphold intellectual freedom.

Pictures of violence and warfare flash across students' computer, television and video game screens. As technology has become more prevalent, students have become exposed to increasingly graphic forms of violence. In January, Peter Jaffe, a professor at the University of Western Ontario, reported that "viewing entertainment violence can lead to increases in aggressive attitudes, values and behaviour, particularly in children" (Leslie 2007, para 6). Young people as well as adults can become desensitized to violence. Teacher-librarians can provide students with an alternative viewpoint in their school library collections and programs. In the preface to Yukio Tsuchiya's (1988, 1) picture book, *Faithful Elephants: A True Story of Animals, People and War*, Chieko Akiyama explains, "The biggest gift adults can give to children is to make public the complete history of the different viewpoints about war, and to help them consider how we can realize the human ideal." These perspectives must be shared with adults as well.

The United Nations declared the first 10 years of the 21st century as the "International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World." The related document, "Manifesto 2000," contains six pledges, of which two are "practice active non-violence, rejecting violence in all its forms" and "defend freedom of expression and cultural diversity" (ALA 2004a, para 2). These pledges could form a starting point for discussion and research in the school library.

Peace Education in Library Documents

The library's role in developing peace worldwide is embedded in several influential papers, including the "IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto." "This Manifesto proclaims UNESCO's belief in the public library as a living force for education, culture and information, and as an essential agent for the fostering of peace and spiritual welfare through the minds of men and women" (IFLA 1994, para 3). The Canadian Library Association (CLA 2006, para 2) believes that "libraries and the principles of intellectual freedom and free universal access to information are key components of an open and democratic society." In the North American context, the American Library Association (ALA 2004a) has also embedded the concepts of intellectual freedom and social responsibility into its core values.

In endorsing intellectual freedom and the freedom to read, librarians and libraries serve a necessary function in a democratic society. When intellectual

freedom is limited, other human rights are often limited as well.

> Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. (Henri and Lee 2006, para 10)

Librarians work to ensure that the freedom to read is upheld. The "IFLA Internet Manifesto" equates this freedom with global stability: "Unhindered access to information is essential to freedom, equality, global understanding and peace" (IFLA 2002a, para 1). In a successful democratic society, citizens should have unhindered access to differing points of view. In societies struggling with war, revolution and social change, this freedom is often curtailed to various degrees, both overtly and covertly.

Libraries in Areas of Conflict

Canadian and American armed forces members are engaged in overseas conflicts; civil unrest continues in Haiti. Librarians and libraries themselves have been targeted by warfare. "Recent and not-so-recent history is full of examples of libraries becoming war booty or being destroyed by war … [including] the great library of Alexandria … [and] the library in Bagdad" (Segall and Webber 2004, para 3). In Iraq alone, school libraries have lost more than 1.3 million books and 800,000 audiovisual resources as a result of war (O'Shea 2003). With the global prevalence of war, libraries have a moral responsibility to promote peace. Public librarians have recognized the importance of this role for many years. ALA's (2004b, para 9) resolution against the use of torture demonstrates this commitment:

> Courageous men and women, in difficult and dangerous circumstances throughout human history, have demonstrated that freedom lives in the human heart and cries out for justice even in the face of threats, enslavement, imprisonment, torture, exile, and death. We draw inspiration from their example. They challenge us to remain steadfast in our most basic professional responsibility to promote and defend the right of free expression.

Libraries and Peace Education

More recently, at the 2005 International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) conference

in Norway, the Canadian Ambassador to Norway, Jillian Stirk, described librarians as "peace envoys" (Clubb 2005, para 7).

As educators, teacher-librarians have an obligation to educate students about the topic of peace because

> over the past year, a day has not gone by without some reference to war … What will the next generation of leadership in our schools, communities and nations be able to provide that might assure humanity's survival? We have a unique opportunity to provide access to ideas and information that can help our schools address the concept of peace as an alternative to perpetuating the historical realities of war. (Barron 2003, para 7)

Article 29 of UNICEF's *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989, para 7) outlines the responsibilities of educators in this area.

> The education of the child shall be directed to … the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of all sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin.

This stance of UNICEF helps us to answer the question of what constitutes library work. As educators, teacher-librarians should provide programs and resources to develop students' appreciation of a peaceful society.

Balanced Collections

According to the IFLA's "School Library Manifesto," access to resources and programs cannot be restricted by "any form of ideological, political or religious censorship, or to commercial pressures" (2002b, para 5). The manifesto also details the role of the school library in "creating and using information for [students'] knowledge [and] understanding" (para 10). A varied and balanced library collection allows the teacher-librarian to "provide access to local, regional, national and global resources and opportunities that expose learners to diverse ideas, experiences, and opinions" and "support all students in learning and practicing skills for evaluating and using information"—two goals outlined in the "School Library Manifesto" (para 10). At the same time, the teacher-librarian should "proclaim the concept that intellectual freedom and access to information are essential to effective and responsible citizenship and participation in a democracy" (para 10). The "School Library Manifesto" is also closely linked to the intellectual freedom and social responsibility statements that appear in the "UNESCO Public Library Manifesto."

Teacher-librarians may access various selection tools to balance their school library collections. ALA's website (www.ala.org) provides extensive peace-related resource lists. Several of its book lists, such as "Children and 9/11—Books That Help" (ALA 2002), offer multiple perspectives on one event. The annual Coretta Scott King Award has been honouring children's books concerned with peace and social justice since 1970. Journals, including *School Library Media Activities Monthly* (www. schoollibrarymedia.com), and websites, such as Weapons of Mass Instruction: Anti-War Books for Young People (www.sol-plus.net/peace.htm), provide book lists and related teaching ideas. Many of these sources are annotated and include suggested reading levels. Teacher-librarians may wish to highlight these titles in book talks. Of course, libraries should provide a balanced perspective on all issues, including armed conflict and peace. This approach follows the spirit of CLA's *Statement on Intellectual Freedom* (1985, para 20):

> It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity, including those which some elements of society may consider to be unconventional, unpopular, or unacceptable. To this end, libraries shall acquire and make available the widest variety of materials.

It is important to note that this is not an uncontroversial stance; for example, look at the response to Ellis's children's book *Three Wishes* (2004).

Building Programs Together

The "School Library Manifesto" states that teacher-librarians should "participate in the local, regional and national library and information network" (IFLA 2002b, para 7), and "liaise with the public library and others" (para 12). School and public libraries may support current initiatives or begin one of their own. Many opportunities to contribute exist in countries where library services are limited or nonexistent.

The actions of a small group of committed people can have a profound effect. In 2006, two University of Western Ontario students formed Librarians Without Borders (LWB), an organization dedicated to funding library services in emerging nations. Their philosophy reflects the values of social responsibility and intellectual freedom. LWB believes that access to information is vital in supporting learning and literacy, reducing poverty, empowering citizens, and building healthy, strong communities. LWB pledges to work toward a "global society where all people have equal access to information resources" (LWB 2006, para 1). The founders of this program believe that providing people with access to books can help to build strong communities in any part of the developing world, "regardless of geography, language, or religion" (para 3). Their first project involves stocking a medical library in Huambo, Angola. The organization intends to make a lasting difference in that country by educating Angolan library staff in collection development and information literacy.

British Columbia Library Association members have formed Libraries Across Borders, a similar organization that funded three projects in the developing world last year, in Honduras, Ghana and Guatemala. In recognition of these two initiatives, CLA identified international librarianship as a key focus area for 2005/06 (Clubb 2005).

South of the border, the Peace Corps program has established more than 50 libraries in overseas communities. Libraries can often have a significant influence on their communities. "The impact of establishing a library in an underserved community is priceless" (Fjeld 2006, para 1). Members of the Social Responsibility Round Table (SRRT) of ALA have engaged in similar projects. This committee provided support for the Pastors for Peace caravan by shipping library and school supplies to Cuba. Recently the SRRT has also provided support to Palestinian public libraries. The roundtable has also passed resolutions on numerous international issues, including the occupation of Iraq and the war in Afghanistan.

School Library Programs

The "School Library Manifesto" urges teacher-librarians to "organize activities that encourage cultural and social awareness and sensitivity" (IFLA 2002b, para 10). While planning these activities, the school library may partner with other organizations, such as public libraries or community groups. The structure of these programs differs by community. Some school libraries in countries at war, such as Israel, have introduced programs for youth who have witnessed or engaged in conflict. Bibliotherapy, the "use of literature for therapeutic and supportive purposes," attempts to assist these young people with their experiences of war and "is important in school libraries" (Baruchson-Arbib 2002, para 15). Ellis (2004) interviewed children on both sides of the Middle East conflict. She believes that educators shouldn't avoid discussing issues related to war (Bula 2006). Ellis's book, which "balances the half-truths that people read in mass media about the war" (2006, para 9) is an important resource for middle and secondary school libraries.

Teacher-librarians and students in the United States have become involved with an ALA initiative supporting

public and school libraries in Iraq. Through this program, school supplies and children's books in Arabic, Kurdish and other languages are sent to assist young people living within the ongoing conflict. "Regardless of our individual opinions on the current conflict in Iraq, we have a professional and ethical duty to protect collections and to work towards a more secure future for the world's libraries" (O'Shea 2003, para 20). Canada's involvement in the Afghanistan conflict includes the development of literacy programs for young women in conjunction with UNICEF. After nearly three decades of conflict, the contents of Afghan libraries have been destroyed. A Canadian organization, Libraries for Afghanistan, is collecting funds for library redevelopment. According to children's author Rukhsana Khan,

> the fundamental difference between the first world and the third world is that in the first world knowledge is free. All you need is access to a library card. In order to provide real hope in countries like Afghanistan, we must establish libraries. They will create avenues through which people can pull themselves out of both ignorance and poverty. (Libraries for Afghanistan, para 4)

Opportunities for education and involvement also exist with peace organizations outside of the library world. For example, school libraries could become involved with the international Adopt-a-Minefield project. With the assistance of teacher-librarians and teachers, students could organize an awareness and fundraising campaign for this organization. This project would educate students about the daily threat that landmines impose on children in the developing world as well as provide a financial contribution to this charity.

Members of the school library community have developed a creative response to world events For example, the annual International School Library Day (ISLD) offers an opportunity to address the concept of peace with students. In 2001, following the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, teacher-librarians across the US recognized ISLD by planting peace gardens with students, to which they added plants every year on the same day. In 2005, Japan's librarians encouraged children to respond to the massive tsunami and express their concern for victims by tracing their hand onto a sheet of paper, writing a message and bringing it to a local library.

Teacher-librarians may find that partners for peace education exist in their own schools. Invite student groups to organize events or displays in the library. After images of children living amid conflict were placed in my school library, many thoughtful conversations occurred.

Individual students may feel powerless over world events. However, if students participate in local projects, they will personally connect to a world issue and discover that individual actions can bring positive changes. The Spectrum Community School Library Council raised several hundred dollars toward the construction of public libraries in Nepal after organizing used book sales. Virginia Brucker, a teacher-librarian on Vancouver Island, suggests that schools set up a bare tree at Christmas for students to decorate with winter clothing for the less fortunate.

Many print and electronic resources exist for teacher-librarians planning peace-related learning activities. The Burnaby Teachers' Association, with funding from the British Columbia Teachers' Federation, provides an extensive collection of resources on its website, Teaching for Peace (www.teachingforpeace.org), including poetry, stories and profiles of peacemakers. Similar resources, including lesson plans, are also available from the British Columbia Teachers for Peace and Global Education website (www.pagebc.ca). On this site, lessons are grouped by grade level. With an understanding of the school curriculum, teacher-librarians may approach a classroom teacher with a relevant lesson plan and inquire about teaching the lesson together. Many other forms of social action are possible, including giving out awards and books; responding to disaster, fundraising; holding essay contests; conducting interviews; providing leadership development; creating posters; and inviting speakers, student groups and symposiums (Samek 2005). Swee-Hin and Floresca-Cawagas (2000, 380) offer similar suggestions:

- Work with parents, community groups, social agencies, and political bodies to design and carry out culture of peace programs
- Challenge injustices, human rights violations, ecological destruction and manifestations of violence
- Engage in research on education and schooling that seeks ways to promote violence prevention and peace-building programs

Teacher-librarians skilled in teaching critical thinking and media literacy can help students navigate their thoughts about war and violence. Students benefit from discussion as early as age four (Kielburger and Kielburger 2006b, para 4):

> If it is not openly discussed, children run the risk of falling prey to apathy or fear. Believing war is relegated to other parts of the world, children may feel untouched by it and not feel the need to act… they may close their hearts, becoming desensitized and apathetic. On the other hand, if they are confused about the images they see on television, children may be overwhelmed by fears and anxieties.

Other opportunities for discussion about peace also exist. The ultimate goal is for students to feel compassionate toward others who have been affected by war. Students and staff with relatives serving overseas experience the effect of war more directly than others. How can these feelings be shared within the school community? Perhaps a staff member is willing to share correspondence from a relative with past or current experience in a war zone. In November 2006 a colleague shared a letter on this topic over the school public address system. This action visibly affected students and staff. Former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan expressed the value of peace education in these words:

> Over the years we have come to realize that it is not enough to send peacekeeping forces to separate warring parties. It is not enough to engage in peace-building efforts after societies have been ravaged by conflict. It is not enough to conduct preventive diplomacy. All this is essential work, but we want enduring results. We need, in short, a culture of peace. (Stubbins and Singh 2005, 3)

Public Library Programs

Public librarians also have a significant role to play in the development of our culture. As a "living force for education, culture and information" (IFLA 1994, para 3) the public library has the resources to assist in the development of a society that values and works toward a lasting peace in all areas of the globe. The importance of the library's role in the "fostering of peace" (para 3) is highlighted at the beginning of the "IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto." Have public libraries made a serious commitment to this responsibility? In Canada, the birth of two organizations, Librarians Without Borders and Libraries Across Borders, suggests that many

library school students and librarians in the public library system have taken this aspect of intellectual freedom and social responsibility to heart.

The school library shares this important role. The "IFLA/UNESCO School Library Manifesto" includes several related goals, including the "organizing of activities that encourage cultural and social awareness and sensitivity" and "proclaiming the concept that intellectual freedom and access to information are essential to effective and responsible citizenship and community" (2002b, para 10). Craig Kielburger, the founder of Free the Children, suggests

> It's natural to shield children from situations in which they feel helpless. But this can reinforce the idea that children can't make a difference. In an effort to protect, we unwittingly encourage children to close their eyes and hearts to the suffering of others…Learned individuals [including the Dalai Lama] said that they believed the greatest potential threat facing our world was not terrorism, but that we were raising a generation of passive bystanders… [and] the problems in our world will only worsen. (Kielburger and Kielburger 2006a, para 3)

The majority of young Canadians believe that they can have an impact on the world around them. Study results released in 2006 by War Child Canada were reassuring, finding that "three quarters of youth believe they can help make the world a better place; 49 percent say young people can make a big difference" (Kielburger and Kielburger 2006b, para 2).

In 2006, Ellis's (2004) book, *Three Wishes: Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak,* received media coverage when the Canadian Jewish Congress requested its removal from Ontario school library shelves. In the book's preface, Ellis states, "War, like almost everything else humans do, is a choice. Allowing a child to go hungry or to drink poisoned water is a choice. Sitting on the sidelines and doing nothing to stop something that's wrong is a choice" (p 10). The fact that we are geographically removed from military combat does not distance us from our responsibilities. In February 2007, 10-year-old student Evie Freedman became the youngest recipient of the Writers' Union of Canada's Freedom to Read Award. "Although she has never met her hero, Evie said she's thought a lot about something Ellis said during the controversy: 'If children are tough enough to be bombed and starved, they're tough enough to read about it'" (Kalinowski 2007, para 19). As stated by IFLA, UNICEF and the ALA, we are obligated to become involved. There are many opportunities for involvement—we can serve on professional committees, collaborate with colleagues and design creative library programs. Through personal and cooperative initiative, we can serve as agents of change.

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GLBTQ Picture Books: An Elusive Search

by Vivianne Fogarty

Vivianne Fogarty has been teaching in both English and French immersion schools for the past 17 years. She is currently working as a teacher-librarian and classroom teacher at École Dieppe in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and is completing her diploma in education in teacher-librarianship at the University of Alberta.

How would you feel if you walked into a library and the only characters you saw in books were aliens? Wouldn't you wonder where the people were? What if all the characters were males or females? Would this not be an odd representation of society? Would you not wonder why you were not worthy enough to be represented in everyday books of fiction and nonfiction? When certain segments of society, such as lesbians and gays, are not represented in literature and library collections, are professional educators and librarians doing their job? How does providing and promoting GLBTQ (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer) literature in schools promote intellectual freedom and social responsibility?

My prime focus in writing this article was to investigate the accessibility and availability of GLBTQ picture books, written in English and French and suitable for K–6 students. My guiding questions were these:

- What GLBTQ resources are available to students and educators in Winnipeg, Manitoba?
- How easily accessible are these materials?
- How do education and library policies (divisional, provincial, national and international) affect the availability and accessibility of GLBTQ resources?
- What do teacher-librarians, working with teachers and students, need to be thinking about and doing to address these questions?

I kept this international human rights statement in my mind and heart as I thought about and investigated this complex issue:

> Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers. (United Nations 1948)

Accessibility and Availability of K–6 GLBTQ Books

Because my personal and professional experience with GLBTQ resources has been limited, I began by consulting several reference lists: (1) Schrader and Wells's (2004) reference lists (primary and elementary), (2) Clyde and Lobban's (1996) bibliography and (3) the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) website (www.glsen.org) of K–6 book link resources. The GLSEN site was most comprehensive with 34 books; Clyde and Lobban's bibliography included 28 picture books. The only book I recognized from any of the lists was *William's Doll*, by Charlotte Zolotow, which I had read to my Grade 4 class years ago.

Next I looked for picture books online in various local libraries, bookstores and resource centres in Winnipeg using *homosexuality* as the heading. I visited the Rainbow Resource Centre in person. Searching for GLBTQ children's books was awkward. For example, the public library catalogue did not have a method of separating the items found under *homosexuality* into juvenile, young adult or adult categories. McNally's bookstore, on the other hand, provided the subheadings *Homosexuality* (4) and *Relationships* (74) under the subject heading *Children's*, which made for easier searching and yielded six GLBTQ titles. The most common titles found in my searches included *Daddy's Roommate*, by Michael Willhoite; *Heather Has Two Mommies*, by Lesléa Newman; *And Tango Makes Three*, by Peter Parnell and Justin Richardson; and *King and*

King, by Linda de Haan. Table 1 summarizes my findings of how many picture books were actually available compared with how many books were available under the general heading of homosexuality.

Table 1
Accessibility and Availability of GLBTQ Picture Books

Location	Availability of GLBTQ picture books (number of English and French titles)	Availability of all books under the heading of homosexuality (number of titles listed)
Winnipeg Public Library	3	224[1]
Manitoba Department of Education Library	3	27
DREF—French Education Resources (Manitoba)	0	18
McNally's bookstore	6	78[2]
Chapters bookstore	6	1,227
Rainbow Resource Centre	30	5,000 (approx)

Notes

1. Sixteen books were in French, but none of them were picture books.

2. Four books were found under *homosexuality,* and 74 were found under *relationships.*

The selection of picture books was minimal in all locations except the Rainbow Resource Centre, which stocked many of the titles listed in my reference lists. My results were consistent with that of Spence (2000) and of Schrader and Wells (2004), who found that many school and public library collections under-represent GLBTQ materials and that searches for these materials can be difficult and cumbersome.

Applying Education and Library Policy Statements

How do education and library policies (divisional, provincial, national and international) affect the availability and accessibility of GLBTQ resources? How can these policy statements be used to address this question? Starting from a local perspective and broadening out to international policy statements, I will highlight pertinent points that support providing GLBTQ resources in schools.

Local

Pembina Trails School Division's (PTSD) (2003, 1) mission statement states that "Pembina Trails is dedicated to educational excellence through challenging and enriching experiences for all, in a safe and caring community." Providing GLBTQ literature in libraries will be challenging and enriching for students and teachers. If these materials are easily accessible and positively promoted, this will promote a safe and caring community. Providing these resources in the school library affirms that diversity in family composition and relationships is a reality. This literature is important for students who are questioning their sexuality; have same-sex parents, friends or family members; or who just want to expand their horizons by reading an interesting book. For teachers who are teaching about human rights, diversity, family composition, sexuality and family life, these excellent resources will complement the curriculum. Providing this literature is also consistent with PTSD's vision statement: "2. ensure a welcoming environment where everyone is emotionally and physically safe. 5. recognize and celebrate the unique and diverse gifts of all. 8. embrace purposeful change and renewal" (p 2). Many of the value statements also support providing alternative literature for students and educators: "We value 1. the learning and dignity, respect and well-being of all. 3. the diversity and the uniqueness of all. 7. social and environmental responsibility" (p 3).

Provincial

The Manitoba Teachers' Society (MTS) code of professional practice that deals specifically with student interaction includes: "1. A teacher's first professional responsibility is to her or his students. … 4. A teacher speaks and acts with respect and dignity, and deals judiciously with others, always mindful of their rights" (MTS 2003, 1–2).

The MTS code, like the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) *Code of Professional Conduct*, includes provision for respecting private information about students and sharing it only when necessary with authorized personnel. However, the ATA code distinctly specifies the grounds on which teachers cannot discriminate (ATA 2004, 1):

The teacher teaches in a manner that respects the dignity and rights of all persons without prejudice as

to race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical characteristics, disability, marital status, family status, age, ancestry, place of origin, place of residence, socioeconomic background or linguistic background.

The ATA specifically addresses many areas where discrimination and self-censorship could occur in a library or classroom setting. The ATA website (www.teachers.ab.ca) has links and information relating to homosexuality and homophobia, such as *Safe and Caring Schools for Lesbian and Gay Youth* (2002), which includes a wealth of useful information. The MTS website did not contain any information relating to homosexuality or homophobia.

National

How do official human rights and library policies help support this initiative to include GLBTQ literature in libraries? In the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982, 1–2), this is one of our fundamental freedoms: "2.b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication." If we are to form our own thoughts and beliefs, opinions and expressions, we must be exposed to a diverse array of reading and viewing materials. Unfortunately, the Canadian Charter does not specify the access to information as clearly as Article 19 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948).

The first and third statements in the Canadian Library Association (CLA) *Code of Ethics* (l976, 1) states that we need to

1. Support and implement the principles and practices embodied in the current Canadian Library Association Statement on Intellectual Freedom; … 3. Facilitate access to any or all sources of information which may be of assistance to library users.

The CLA "Statement of Intellectual Freedom" (1985, 1) clearly states that we have the right to access all types of information:

All persons in Canada have the fundamental right, as embodied in the nation's Bill of Rights and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to have access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity and intellectual activity, and to express their thoughts publicly. This right to intellectual freedom, under the law, is essential to the health and development of Canadian society.

The CLA position statement on intellectual freedom also specifically states that we should offer a wide variety of reading materials even if it is controversial.

It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity, including those which some elements of society may consider to be unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable. To this end, libraries shall acquire and make available the widest variety of materials (CLA 1985, 1, para 3).

The IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations) "Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom" (2002, 1, para 2 and 3) also promotes providing a diverse array of information sources to all library patrons:

- Libraries and information services contribute to the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom and help to safeguard democratic values and universal civil rights. Consequently, they are committed to offering their clients access to relevant resources and services without restriction and to opposing any form of censorship.
- Libraries and information services shall acquire, preserve and make available the widest variety of materials, reflecting the plurality and diversity of society. The selection and availability of library materials and services shall be governed by professional considerations and not by political, moral and religious views.

The "IFLA/UNESCO School Library Manifesto" (2006, 1, para 5) states that

Access to services and collections should be based on the United Nations *Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Freedoms*, and should not be subject to any form of ideological, political or religious censorship, or to commercial pressures.

In the manifesto, the goals of the school library also state many objectives that are core to school library services. This particular one relates directly to my topic, "Proclaiming the concept that intellectual freedom and access of information are essential to effective and responsible citizenship and participation in a democracy" (IFLA 2006, 2).

The UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, as stated in Thomson's (2004, 1) article "Children's Rights in the Library," also supports the inclusion of LGBTQ literature in today's libraries.

Article 17—Access to appropriate information

In recognition of the important function performed by the mass media, States are required to ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her well-being and health.

Resources and Organizations to Support Students and Educators

The Safe Schools Manitoba organization includes various groups provincewide that collaborate to promote safe schools. Their resource list includes a wide variety of topics, including homophobia. Three relevant guides for educators include the words *lesbian*, *gay*, *bisexual* and *transgender* in their titles.

Helpingout.ca (Rainbow Resource Centre 2004a) deals specifically with addressing homophobia in Manitoba schools. This is an excellent source of information for students and educators. Suicide rates and homeless rates are clearly stated on the educator and student pages. The following statement is from the educator page of the website:

For [GLBT] students, there are fewer opportunities for open, honest discussions about their feelings with friends and family. There are fewer books, television shows, and movies with positive portrayals of the kinds of relationships they are looking for. (2004a, 1, para 3)

The student page points out students' needs for information and resources:

Gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender [GLBT] students have questions about sexuality that nobody seems to be talking about, they aren't covered in class, and they can't be answered by a trip to the library. (2004a, 1, para 1)

Is this lack of GLBTQ resources not a clear example of self-censorship in libraries? Despite the vast variety of media available today, children and youth have little exposure to the GLBTQ world. The lack of such resources in libraries contributes to the isolation and loneliness of GLBTQ youth.

The Importance of Intellectual Freedom and Access

As Schrader and Wells (2004) point out, homosexual name-calling and bullying are common in schools. Coloroso (2002. 34) also addresses this issue.

Because our sexuality is an integral part of who we are, sexual bullying cuts at the core of our being and can have devastating consequences. Peer-to-peer sexual bullying is one of the most widespread forms of violence in our schools today.
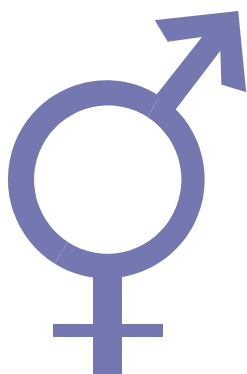
The Bully, the Bullied and the Bystander (Coloroso 2002) reports on various studies that also are presented in the 2004 video *Reaching Out,* by Lynne Barnes. Homosexual or questioning students are often victims of verbal and physical abuse by their peers and teachers. If we honour established library policies and human rights statements and really believe in a safe and caring community, then acquisition and promotion of this literature should help decrease the homophobia and heterosexism that is still present today. This is actively valuing and promoting "social and environmental responsibility" (PTSD 2003, 3).

Students are not finding GLBTQ literature in libraries. The straight community is uninformed about becoming more empathetic and caring. The last statement in the UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child* referring to well-being and health directly affects the homosexual community. David Levithan, author of *Boy Meets Boy* (2003), and other GLBTQ authors regularly receive e-mails from GLBTQ readers. These readers, who range from teens to seniors, talk about their pain and anguish, and the comfort and relief they've experienced from these books. Nancy Garden, author of *Annie on My Mind* (1982), has remarked that she found only one book about homosexuals in her youth and that motivated her to write a gay-positive book.

Resources for Change

Many local, national and international official policy statements support the inclusion of GLBTQ resources in libraries. More GLBTQ books are now available for children than ever before (Cart 2004; Clyde and Lobban 2001; Spence 2000). However, access to these books for young readers continues to be a problem. When you think of the anguish and pain that homosexual youth experience, imagine if they would have seen realistic and positive gay and lesbian portrayals in picture books throughout their childhood. Imagine if all children were seeing this literature throughout their childhood, accompanied with supportive and open-minded discussions with their families and teachers. Would there not be an entirely different attitude and perception when these children become adolescents? Attitudes and prejudices are formed very early in life. Whether youth are heterosexual or homosexual, their ability to accept themselves and others is a foundation for safe and caring schools and communities.

Personal Connections

Intellectual freedom is the freedom to read from various sources and make one's own conclusions about any given issue. Social responsibility is doing something positive for the world. The lack of GLBTQ resources in school libraries goes against both intellectual freedom and social responsibility.

I spent some time looking at GLBTQ resources as part of my investigation. The two books that resonated with me the most were *Who's in a Family*, by Robert Skutch (1997) and *The Harvey Milk Story,* by Kari Krakow (2002). Through beautiful illustrations, Skutch's book portrays a wonderful assortment of human and animal families including same-sex parents. There is no heavy didactic message, just a presentation of the world's reality in today's families. Krakow's book on the true story of Harvey Milk, the first openly gay elected official in the United States, was inspirational and deeply touching. This book made me reflect on the courage that gay and lesbian politicians still need today. These books have motivated me to examine my collection more critically.

Public and education libraries carry minimal GLBTQ resources for young children, and elementary school libraries even fewer. Searching for these books can be difficult. Unless teachers and librarians search for them specifically in bookstores or on GLBTQ websites or have access to places like the Rainbow Resource Centre, they may not even know that these books exist. Schrader and Wells (2004, 10) comment specifically on the ethical responsibilities both educators and librarians have regarding the absence of this literature in libraries.

> Individual practitioners and organizations in both education and librarianship must reflect critically and re-examine absences in service and harmful practices that alienate LGBTQ youth from their fundamental rights to access information and to have supports that reflect the diversity of their lived experiences. In librarianship this ethical and professional responsibility must occur on several fronts, which include acquiring current and age-appropriate materials, relevant indexing access, and positive respectful reference and interloan services to aid in retrieving information and materials.

Concluding Comments

Where do we go from here? My personal awareness and knowledge of GLBTQ literature has expanded enormously. Reading and viewing these books and researching the literature have helped open my mind and my heart even more.

What is my social responsibility now? I must share this information with other teachers, teacher-librarians, administrators and other professionals, such as public librarians. Eccleston's (2005) powerful and informative PowerPoint presentation, Gay/Lesbian Materials for Young Children, is an excellent information resource with thought-provoking questions. I need to use the services of the Rainbow Resource Centre, and connect and collaborate with other like-minded staff in my division. Some school districts have provided antihomophobia training to all staff, a model that others need to follow. I must continue my journey of intellectual freedom and social responsibility. I must use the official policy statements, from divisional mission statements to international UN statements, to further this cause. These statements must come alive, be posted and be used to validate our work and correct one of the wrongs in society. I conclude with a simple yet powerful quote from Gandhi that will guide my social responsibility in this endeavour.

You must be the change you want to see in the world.
—Mahatma Gandhi

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Intellectual Freedom and *in loco parentis*: Balancing Professional Responsibilities in School Libraries

by Roberta Waldner

Roberta Waldner has been a teacher for 13 years, both for the Calgary Board of Education and internationally. She graduated from the University of Alberta with an MEd in teacher-librarianship and is a middle-level classroom teacher for Saudi Aramco Schools in Udhailiyah, Saudi Arabia.

When teacher-librarians develop their resource collections, they adhere closely to their school's selection policies. However, how many teacher-librarians adhere to the principles of intellectual freedom and social responsibility? Intellectual freedom, as defined by the American Library Association's (ALA) Office of Intellectual Freedom, is

> the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause or movement may be explored. Intellectual freedom encompasses the freedom to hold, receive and disseminate ideas. (ALA 2006)

Social responsibility, as defined by the ALA's (2006) Core Values of Librarianship statement, is "the contribution that librarianship can make in ameliorating or solving the critical problems of society."

Would a typical school library have a variety of resources on gays and lesbians, women's rights, poverty or sexuality available to students? Yes, if the school's administration and community support the teacher-librarian in his or her efforts to maintain the principles of intellectual freedom and social inclusion. Upholding these principles is part of any librarian's mandate. Unfortunately, though, some teacher-librarians practise self-censorship by not purchasing resources on sensitive topics because they want to avoid controversy and challenges from colleagues, students or parents. "Self-censorship is librarianship's 'dirty little secret'" (Berman 2001, xv). When self-censorship occurs, the ideals of intellectual freedom are compromised.

However, school libraries are unique in the range of materials they provide (Credaro 2001). Unlike the more limited research and scholarly functions of a college library, school libraries must support curriculum and promote literacy. In addition to serving students and colleagues, teacher-librarians take the place of wise and judicious parents when students are in their charge. The Alberta Teachers' Association's (ATA) *Code of Professional Conduct* refers to this as *in loco parentis*, and it "means that the teacher (and therefore the teacher-librarian) stands, in relation to the student, in the position of a caring parent" (ATA 2004). This sensitive role can cause serious dilemmas for teacher-librarians in the discharge of their professional duties.

Teacher-librarians uphold the principle of intellectual freedom by developing a collection of resources that widely represents the demographic characteristics and experiences of their students, who have unrestricted access to the material. However, parents sometimes object to certain resources because they deem the materials to be inappropriate for their children. In such a situation, parents might consider that the teacher-librarian is breaching his or her professional obligation to act *in loco parentis*.

Teacher-librarians are teachers and librarians, and those two responsibilities can conflict in the school library setting. How, then, can teacher-librarians balance their responsibilities of maintaining and promoting

intellectual freedom (and the availability, access and privacy that go along with it) and their role of acting *in loco parentis*?

Children's and Parents' Rights Regarding Access to Information

To address the problem of conflicting rights, it may help to examine children's rights in using libraries as well as parents' rights in protecting children. Thomson (2004) cites Article 13 from the UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child* as a guiding principle for children's access to library materials: "The right of the child … to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any media of the child's choice." Thomson continues to discuss children's library rights, as well as librarians' responsibilities in guaranteeing them, citing the CLA's "Statement on Intellectual Freedom":

> It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity, including those that some elements of society may consider to be unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable... It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee the right of free expression by making available all the library's public facilities and services to all individuals and groups who need them.

These two statements clearly affirm children's rights to seek and gain access to information of all kinds and formats, even those that may be deemed unacceptable or controversial to others. The implication is that children, ideally, should be able to access whatever information they want, regardless of topic or format.

To a certain extent, parents censor and control what young children read, view or listen to. In a world where children are exposed to print, visual and digital media with images and themes that encourage them to grow up quickly, parents may wish to preserve their children's carefree innocence. These parents do not wish to keep their children perpetually ignorant of topics that could seriously affect their physical and mental health, such as what to do if one gets lost, stranger danger, inappropriate touching, adolescence, sexual orientation, AIDS or STDs. Parents want to control when and how children are exposed to sensitive issues. Perhaps parents want to broach these subjects when they feel their children are ready, or answer children's questions as they arise. Whatever the reasons, parents can deny or control children's access to certain media resources despite what the statements on intellectual freedom recommend.

Some argue that children do not need protecting. For example, Dr Eliza Dresang, professor in the School of Information Studies at Florida State University, states, "It is not the job of librarians to protect children. We provide access to information" (Minkel 2000, 109). Many parents would argue that this wrongly advocates for protection of a principle (however noble) of protection of a child, and that, by law, it is part of the teacher-librarian's job to protect children, as they act *in loco parentis.* Who is right?

Ultimately, whichever right one designates as supreme—the parent's right to protect or the child's right to know—one must admit that these position statements on intellectual freedom and access for children, the UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and the CLA's "Statement on Intellectual Freedom" are only recommendations and policy statements. They are not legislation. They have not been universally adopted and, if a country or region has adopted these positions, some librarians may not uphold them in practice. Considering the rights of the child and parents in school libraries is one part of finding the balance in professional responsibilities; examining the different roles and responsibilities of the teacher-librarian is the other.

Teacher-Librarians' Dual Role

Teacher-librarians help students grow into critical consumers of information. This is vital not only for students' work with the various aspects of the mandated curriculum but also for their becoming informed citizens. Making certain that information is readily available to students is important to the realization of this task. "The theory and practice of intellectual freedom are essential underpinnings of critical inquiry and informed citizenship, both important goals of our education system" (Samek 2004, para 2).

The ALA document, *Information Power*, aligns with Samek's stance on intellectual freedom for students in school libraries in its assertion that "the (school) library media program is founded on a commitment to the right of intellectual freedom" (Barron 2003). The ALA suggests that teacher-librarians promote intellectual freedom in three ways:

1. Promote the principles of intellectual freedom by providing services and resources that create and sustain an atmosphere of free inquiry and by actively advocating for intellectual freedom with the school and in the larger learning community.
2. Model openness to ideas and encourage the free and robust debate that is characteristic of a democratic society.

3.   Guard against barriers to intellectual freedom, such as age or grade-level restrictions, limitations to access to electronic information, requirements for special permission to use materials and resources, and restricted collections. (Barron 2003, 50)

These guidelines for establishing a positive atmosphere that fosters intellectual freedom, free inquiry and access to information are clear, though they both support and conflict with parents' rights to censor what their children read and, by extension, teacher-librarians' *in loco parentis* responsibilities to do the same. Depending on the variety of family and community values in place (and these can vary widely within any community or even within families), the issue of intellectual freedom and access may be seen differently by different parties.

Consider a scenario where teacher-librarians select GLBTQ (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer) materials for their school library collections. In doing so, the teacher-librarians fulfill their responsibility to uphold the ideals of intellectual freedom and social inclusion as well as their *in loco parentis* role in the sense that the students, for whom they are "stand-in" parents during the school day, see that the teacher-librarians (and by extension the schools) respect and honour the needs and interests of marginalized and ridiculed groups. This situation shows how intellectual freedom and social responsibility, while acting *in loco parentis*, can be mutually supportive and enhancing. With the support of teachers and parents, students learn more about social diversity and the importance of helping social minority

groups, and see themselves as valid members of the school community. The two responsibilities may come into conflict when a GLBTQ resource is borrowed by a student whose parents object that the resource is age inappropriate or that the family's personal or religious beliefs disapprove of the GLBTQ "lifestyle." In this scenario, the ideals of intellectual freedom and social responsibility have been honoured with respect to access to resources, but the student's parents may feel that the teacher-librarian has not acted *in loco parentis*.

Consider another scenario where students accidentally open an inappropriate website while doing research. Instead of immediately censuring the students and denying them computer access, the teacher-librarian uses the event as a teachable moment to discuss topics of responsible use and critical media literacy. This will help students understand why the site came up, how to critically decide on its usefulness or appropriateness, and how to respond if it should occur again in future. Students learn to critically and morally assess the information found on the Internet and are better armed with information to discern website content and to handle future instances appropriately, while the teacher-librarian upholds the principle of intellectual freedom. Some would say the teacher-librarian has also acted *in loco parentis* in helping to enhance students' media literacy. In this case, the ideals of *in loco parentis* and intellectual freedom are seen as supportive and complementary. However, parental complaints about the lack of Internet safety at the school may suggest that the teacher-librarian has not acted *in loco parentis*.

Parents' opinions differ on what children should and should not have access to and how teacher-librarians should respond, given parents' personal or religious beliefs or the children's ages. Bibby (1998) states, "Every … principle has exceptions, when it conflicts with a more fundamental one." But which principle is more fundamental, children's right to read, listen to and view anything they desire and the librarian's responsibilities for intellectual freedom, or the teacher's responsibility to protect (as might a caring parent) children from sensitive material?

In what can be the messy world of school communities, the protection of students can interfere with teacher-librarians' provision of intellectual freedom for other school library patrons, making it increasingly difficult to apply a blanket statement stating that all children can have unlimited access to all library materials. As Barron (2003, 50) states, "There is a difference in having a policy that guides an action and the actual implementation of that policy when human circumstances are taken into consideration." This statement is likely to resonate strongly with educators who are grappling with this issue. As all teachers know, the curriculum is a guide, and it is the teachers' task to provide meaningful learning experiences. Similarly, teacher-librarians must reconcile the protection of intellectual freedom with the protection of young children from inappropriate materials. As Thomson (2004, 39) asks, "How do you ensure you are upholding this ideal (of intellectual freedom) and supporting children's rights while still respecting federal and provincial law, parental rights and expectations, community beliefs." The issue remains: how can teacher-librarians uphold children's rights and the principle of intellectual freedom while honouring parents' rights?

Strategies That Honour Teacher-Librarians' Dual Roles

The health of children, schools and our very democracy is at stake if intellectual freedom and its principles are not honoured, yet the wishes of parents must not be ignored either. Practical solutions must be explored to reconcile the dilemma.

Policy Strategies

Ensuring that your school or division has a concrete and detailed collection development and resource selection policy that honours intellectual freedom is vital. Parental concerns will diminish and teacher-librarians' positions will strengthen if the item(s) in question have been selected according to established

policy. Disagreements about school library content can be extremely personal and highly emotional and, when such conflicts arise, an established policy can assist in depersonalizing the discussion. In addition, a policy whereby parents can challenge selection honours parents concerns and gives them the freedom and the forum to voice them. Having an information ethics statement or a position statement on intellectual freedom as a core value of your school or district (either as a stand-alone document or as part of a collection development policy) is also a good idea. This would not only heighten the awareness of the school stakeholders on the topic of intellectual freedom but also educate them on its importance regarding school library collection development.

Access and Privacy Strategies

Strategies addressing access to resources and student privacy will alleviate some tension. One strategy is to have sensitive materials as read-in-library only. This would allow students access to the materials they are seeking while maintaining student privacy, because there will be no record of the material being checked out. An implication of this strategy may be that parents would object to the materials being made available, which only underlines the need for an established challenged materials policy.

Regarding Internet access and use, the limitations of filtering software have been well documented. Perhaps a compromise could be reached between the school and concerned parents by having filtered and nonfiltered computers available for student use. Unlimited access to Internet resources is part of intellectual freedom and provides the opportunity for teachers and teacher-librarians to exercise critical thinking skills when assessing the appropriateness and usefulness of Internet resources. Perhaps concerned parents could give permission for students to use a nonfiltered computer after a school-conducted unit or course of study on Internet media literacy and acceptable use had been completed.

Cooperative Community Strategies

It is important for all school staff to know the community it serves. Doing so allows staff to approach daily interactions and discussions on policy and decision making from a more informed position, and enables educators to anticipate challenges to materials. In addition, parents must understand the beliefs and ideals espoused by those educating their children. Increased understanding leads to more open communication, and conflict resolution is built on consensus rather than

confrontation. Informational seminars help acquaint parents (and teachers) with the notions of intellectual freedom and social responsibility. In most communities, at least as many challenges to materials come from teacher colleagues as from parents. Administrators as well as teacher-librarians and teachers could present a seminar on conflict resolution to open dialogue between parents and educators prior to a challenge or conflict necessitating it.

In addition, educating parents and teachers and giving them a forum to voice concerns leads to another strategy: inviting parents and teachers to participate in a library advisory committee. This group, comprising the teacher-librarian, a school administrator, students, teachers and parents, has several purposes. First, it allows for continued education of parents and teachers on the principles of intellectual freedom and access to resources. Second, it allows all parties to develop increased understanding of differing viewpoints in a safe environment focused on consensus instead of conflict. Third, encouraging parent and teacher consultation on resource selection and access strategies for what parents feel are age-inappropriate materials (or materials inappropriate for other reasons) could reduce the number and severity of challenges and complaints. An advisory group could also devise ways to limit access for some students, while allowing access for other students. Getting the parties together to explore the issues and find mutually agreeable solutions before conflict arises is surely preferable to doing damage control after an issue explodes.

Conclusion

Whatever one's stance on the interplay between the principles of intellectual freedom and a teacher's *in loco parentis* responsibilities, we must admit that these are important principles that must be explored in real and productive ways. Issues related to intellectual freedom and access to information are ones that teacher-librarians need to consider carefully, both for themselves and for the learning communities that they serve. Opinions vary widely about what access should be allowed in elementary schools, but an open discussion about the issue is a testament to the fact that intellectual freedom is alive and kicking in Canadian democracy. The fact that parents and teachers sometimes differ is not completely bad. In fact, it is healthy for children to see that people can disagree and have regard for others, that they can listen to each other and work together to find a compromise, and that they can find solutions while still maintaining respect for everyone concerned. Let's hope this continues.

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Public Libraries and Schools:
Social Conservationists or Social Activists?

by Holly Huber

Holly Huber has taught at the elementary, junior high and high school levels, specializing in social studies and language arts for the last 13 years. Currently, she is a full-time Grade 6 teacher and postsecondary social studies instructor for the Teacher Education North program in Grande Prairie, Alberta.

When I began thinking about the subject matter in relation to my role as a teacher and teacher facilitator in a public school, my first inclination was to investigate the use of challenging, potentially upsetting or controversial materials with children in the course of the new social studies curriculum in Alberta. As I considered my topic, however, it became apparent to me that I was in fact putting the cart before the horse. I could not discuss the use and inclusion of such materials without first engaging in an investigation into the ambiguity with which public schools first inform their students that they must obey but that they also must become active, critical citizens within and outside the school sphere. This contradiction of purpose reflects the dilemma facing public libraries as they seek to define their place in today's challenging climate of opportunity and censorship. We can learn much by comparing the roles of public libraries and schools in the encouraging and modelling of active and responsible citizenship.

In public libraries, democratic values are defined as intellectual freedom and social activism; in schools, these values involve multiple perspectives and active citizenship. Schools have a unique opportunity to instill in youth the skills and attitudes of critical inquiry and an acceptance of multiple perspectives. As a classroom teacher and facilitator of social studies and language arts, I advocate for the concept that schools have a moral,

professional and social obligation to ensure that their charges are educated in an environment that models and requires critical inquiry as a matter of course.

A Historical Debate

The debate in public schools between a socially activist stance and a socially conservationist stance (Gibson 2004, 14) is similar to the tension in public libraries between those who want libraries to serve as neutral repositories of information and those who see them as places for social activism. The conflict in public libraries came to a head with the Berninghausen debate in the early 1970s. Berninghausen's (1972, 3676) diatribe against the "so called 'social responsibility' concept of libraries" was a response to what he saw as the increasing distance that libraries and librarians were travelling from their traditional role as neutral collectors and purveyors of information. Berninghausen saw social activism as a direct threat to intellectual freedom in libraries. His article in *Library Journal* prompted an outpouring of ideas and counterpoints from other librarians. Perhaps the most eloquent counterpoint to Berninghausen came in an essay by librarian Milton Byam:

> The whole thrust of our profession is its total concern for mankind. Social responsibility, as I understand it, is such a concern. It is expressed in orthodox library circles in a Library Bill of Rights. It can be and should be expressed in other ways. Such expression does not suddenly make us biased or inept (Wedgeworth et al 1973, 32)

The tension between social conservation and social activism has played out numerous times in the arena of public education as well. In his *Democracy and Education* (1916, 16), Dewey wrote that "all which the school can or need do for pupils, so far as their minds are concerned, is to develop the ability to think." In later

years, however, Dewey recognized the need for public schools to not only encourage critical thinking and inquiry skills but also to act as glue for society, passing on the ideas that were essential to the preservation of the democratic and intellectual ideals that we as a western society hold dear.

In 1969, in *Teaching as a Subversive Activity*, Postman and Weingartner also challenged the idea of public education as being socially conservationist. As Herb (2004, 21) observes about their work:

> [*Teaching as a Subversive Activity*] … spoke in a different voice. It was a book with an attitude. It was openly critical of an education based on precedent. And it began with a scatological metaphor … crap detecting.

Like Dewey before them, for Postman and Weingartner the main purpose of public education was to create good thinkers who were able to effect change and challenge the status quo.

> What [Postman and Weingartner] were talking about was an education whose basic mode of discourse was asking questions, whose subject matter was every cherished idea, every time honored practice in and out of school. Nothing was sacred. The success of teachers would be measured in terms of certain kinds of behaviors exhibited by their students. (Herb 2004, 21)

However, like Dewey earlier in the century, Postman continued to reflect on his ideas and 10 years later published *Teaching as a Conserving Activity* (1979). In this later writing, Postman responded to what he saw as the deterioration of values, safety and democracy at the end of the 1970s. Of particular concern to Postman as the 1970s drew to a close was the emergence of what he saw as the "First Curriculum"; the prevalence of the media as a source of "education" for children (Postman 1979, 103). He saw public education as having to perform the function of not only creating good thinkers but of preserving important cultural ideals.

> The school curriculum is subject-matter-centered, word-centered, reason-centered, future-centered, hierarchical, secular, socializing, segmented and coherent. Assuming that these characteristics are maintained, and even strengthened, we may hope that the education of our youth will achieve a healthful balance, and therefore a survival insuring direction. Marshall McLuhan wrote … "Just as we now try to control atom bomb fallout, so we will one day try to control media fallout. Education will become recognized as a civil defense." (Postman 1979, 103)

The Current Debate

Since the debates of the early 1970s there have been concerted efforts on the part of librarians and educators to address these challenges and to reconcile the dilemma that exists in institutions whose original purposes were the preservation of society but which cannot but be affected by and effect social change.

> Librarianship (and teaching) is a humanistic profession essentially because it is concerned with the notion that people should improve … Humanistic notions … are hardly scientific in quality. They speak to the quality we seek in man, not to absolute truth. (Wedgeworth et al 1973, 38)

What has resulted from these ongoing debates are movements in libraries and schools that define their roles in terms of the development of active citizens and the preservation of values that encourage the continuation of a democratic society. In their article, "Educating Students to Think: The Role of the School Library Media Program," Mancall, Aaron and Walker (1986, 18) provide a rationale for this course of action:

> It hardly needs to be stressed that in a society whose political foundation is built on an informed citizenry able to evaluate the merits and determine the consequences of various courses of action, an ability to think effectively is essential.

This commitment to help students become good thinkers has been supported by a belief that both Canadian schools and Canadian libraries have a responsibility to be socially activist. For example, the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) has recently amended its *Code of Professional Conduct* to reflect a more socially activist stance regarding people's differences by including gender identity and sexual orientation:

> The teacher teaches in a manner that respects the dignity and reflects the rights of all persons without prejudice as to race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical characteristics, disability, marital status, family status, age, ancestry, place of origin, place of residence, socioeconomic background or linguistic background. (ATA 2006)

Similarly, the Canadian Library Association (CLA 1985) developed guidelines that sought to define their responsibilities regarding intellectual freedom:

> It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity, including those which some elements of society may consider to be unconventional, unpopular, or unacceptable. To this end, libraries shall acquire and make available the widest variety of materials.

In these and other ways, the ATA and the CLA have institutionalized social activism into their organizations and membership. Sexual orientation and gender identity

continue to be very controversial issues as do intellectual freedom and access to resources. That these organizations have chosen to take a stand in these areas suggests that there has been some movement toward receptiveness of these topics.

This institutional shift toward social activism in Canada has been accompanied by its inclusion in important educational statements and documents based on the ideals of inquiry-based and critical-inquiry learning; a key component of social activism. The Alberta Learning document *Focus on Inquiry: A Teacher's Guide to Implementing Inquiry-Based Learning* (2004) was created to support teachers in the use of inquiry-based education. Just as Dewey, Postman and Weingartner had envisioned:

> Inquiry-based learning provides opportunities for students to develop skills they will need all their lives, learn to cope with problems that may not have clear solutions, deal with changes and challenges to understandings, and shape their search for solutions, now and in the future. (Alberta Learning 2004, 2)

It is interesting that the *Focus on Inquiry* resource appears to take cues from Dewey, Postman and Weingartner's preliminary and revised ideas regarding inquiry-based learning. The writers of the *Focus* document, Jennifer Branch and Dianne Oberg, also acknowledge that these skills must be developed with

> A systematic approach … to prepare students for problem solving and lifelong learning … and to understand that this general inquiry process can be transferred to other inquiry situations. (Alberta Learning 2004, 3)

Social Studies as a Place to Live in Active Citizenship and Critical Thinking

The parameters and expectations of social studies as a subject have been the topic of many debates similar to those that have occurred in the public library and public school spheres. However, recent documents and statements surrounding social studies in North America have been very supportive of the ideals of social activism, critical inquiry and multiple perspectives. The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) position statement, *A Vision of Powerful Teaching and Learning in the Social Studies: Building Social Understanding and Civic Efficacy*, draws on these ideals as it expresses its core values:

> Civic efficacy—the readiness and willingness to assume citizenship responsibilities—is rooted social studies knowledge and skills, along related values (such as concern for the common good) and attitudes (such as an orientation toward participation in civic

affairs). The nation depends on a well-informed and civic minded citizenry … in an increasingly interdependent and changing world. (NCSS 1994, 1)

The new Alberta program of studies for social studies also supports these values. As the writers of the curriculum document state in their rationale:

> It has at its heart the concepts of citizenship and identity in the Canadian context … [and the engagement of students] in the democratic process … to effect change in their communities, society and world. (Alberta Learning 2003, 1)

From students' first experiences with social studies in kindergarten to their Grade 12 year, they are exposed to varying perspectives, to question-based inquiry and critical thinking skills that are essential for active citizenship. But if teachers are to be true to the heart of the curriculum, they must move far beyond traditional ideas of personally responsible citizenship and toward the goal of participatory and justice-oriented contributions to our society (Westheimer and Kahne 2004, 237).

Continuing Challenges to the Progress Made

While significant progress has been made in terms of "talking the talk" of social activism in public libraries and public schools, there are still numerous barriers to "walking the walk." Lack of institutional support has left public libraries and librarians vulnerable. Richard Ellis, a Canadian librarian, has commented on the CLA *Code of Ethics*: "'Generic goodness' and 'best efforts' directives … lack tangible guidelines and require interpretations" (Samek 2001, 16). Although the CLA's "Statement on Intellectual Freedom" (1985) and *Code of Ethics* (1976) delineates the ethos of librarianship, without professional protection, there is little guarantee that members will follow the ideals of these documents.

The socio-political climate in which we currently live is also challenging to institutions that wish to uphold the ideals of social activism and critical inquiry. The *Patriot Act* in the United States and its resulting fallout in countries like Canada have proven to be a formidable opponent in the battle to create open, responsive, responsible public institutions. As Sipley observes in his prize-winning essay "Operation—Patriots Act: The Role of School Libraries in Promoting a Free and Informed Society":

> A school of thought that has recently gained popularity is that, to be a patriot, we as citizens [of the United States] must accept our government representatives' decisions without question, as all decisions are made for our own good. (Sipley 2003, 22)

This school of thought has had an impact in public libraries in the same way that McCarthyism did in the late 1940s and early 1950s. It has stifled conversation and created a climate where fundamental rights like access to information and privacy are in danger.

In Canadian schools, the recent swing to the right has had an impact on student access to information and discussions about controversial topics, not only restricted to those regarding politics or international conflict. In a strange way we can thank Postman and Weingartner for this climate, as well as the political and cultural right. Parents have come to feel justified in questioning the materials that are taught to their children on the basis of their own beliefs. While one cannot argue with the right of a parent to have a say in their child's education, an increasing conservative influence in the United States as well as Canada can have a stifling effect on students in public schools.

In the United States parents are using legislation like the *Protection of Pupil Rights Act* (amended 1994) to excuse their children from discussion and or instruction in areas such as gender identity, divorce, moral education, drug education and values clarification (Simpson 1996, 25). This certainly has caused self-censorship among teachers as they determine how far they are willing to push the envelope regarding a potentially controversial topic. As Westheimer and Kahne (2004, 237) state in their examination of current attempts at citizenship education "What Kind of Citizen?"

> The narrow and often ideologically conservative conception of citizenship embedded in many current efforts at teaching for democracy reflects not arbitrary choices but, rather, political choices with political consequences.

But perhaps the greatest barrier to creating socially active citizens who are critical inquirers and open to multiple perspectives is the nature of children and how their "childish" nature relates to and understands citizenship itself. It is in this area that no parallel exists between public libraries and public schools. Schools, by the nature of their "clientele" must act in a way that demonstrates an understanding of children's unique construction of knowledge and moral understandings at different stages of their development. In his article, "Children as Citizens: Towards a Contemporary Notion of Child Participation," Jans (2004, 28) observes:

> As long as we unilaterally define childhood from a modern, educational perspective, the potential citizenship of children will remain in the shadow … of the need for protection and of the inauguration ritual they face. … Because of the need for protection and of the playfulness of children it is not self

evident that we give children the same rights and responsibilities as adults … [however] the late modern condition allows children to increasingly present themselves as social actors, within as well as outside the family.

An example of this dilemma and its effects on the development of children as active citizens is the use of Internet filters in school and home computers. As Schrader (2002) comments:

> Filtering is not a tool for critical thinking … filtering products do not help young people to assume the intellectual and moral responsibilities for adulthood … how will young people learn to recognize irrational hatred, racial intolerance and coded language if they do not examine them, study them, and dissect them? … We live in a world of moral ambiguity and intellectual limitation. Young people need help in learning how to survive and triumph as they grow up in that world. Values over filters!

Schrader's observations are as relevant to the classroom as they are to the Internet. While he adds that "a world without filters is not a world without problems" (2002), we do our children a disservice if we do not allow them age-appropriate access to materials, discussions and examples of issues that matter in their world.

Implications for the Classroom

The long and the short of this discussion in terms of its implications for teachers, teacher-librarians and students is that two vital public institutions, libraries and schools have made it their mandate through codes of conduct and curriculum development to support social activism. As a teacher of social studies and a facilitator for social studies educators it is apparent to me that there are three areas that must be actively addressed to ensure that we are indeed creating capable, active and responsible citizens.

1. *Careful and deliberate education of students and teachers in the "intellectual tools" of critical thinking (Case and Wright 1997, 157).*

Case, through his work in the Think Critically Consortium (TC2) has determined that specific resources need to be used during critical thinking:

> background knowledge, criteria for judgment, possession of a critical thinking vocabulary, fluency with relevant thinking strategies, … and the possession of essential habits of mind—the values and habits of a careful and conscientious thinker. (Case and Wright 1997, 157)

As the writers of *Focus on Inquiry* recognized; "a systematic approach ensures that students have the opportunity … to learn an overall process … transferable to everyday life situations" (Alberta Learning 2004, 3). By making these tools an integral part of instruction, teachers are not only creating a classroom climate, but "building a community of thinkers" (Case and Wright 1997, 157), which cannot help but assist in the creation of social activists.

2. *The grounding of critical thinking with a knowledge and acceptance of multiple perspectives.*

In her article "Out and Ignored: Why Are So Many School Libraries Reluctant to Embrace Gay Teens?" Whelan (2006) recounts the story of a teen who has known since kindergarten that she is gay. One of the outcomes of the Alberta social studies kindergarten program of studies (Alberta Learning 2003) is the development of one's personal identity. If she was a student in a kindergarten class in Alberta, she should have had some exposure to the idea of gender identity.

This access to information about differing perspectives is parallel to the right of access to information in public libraries. If relevant information is not provided regarding the perspectives surrounding an issue, students would not be carrying out true critical analysis. And if the ultimate goal of social studies (and public education and public libraries) is to encourage and support social activism, how can one be considered an informed social activist if one does not possess the pertinent viewpoints of a specific topic? When teachers model consideration of different perspectives through their regular inclusion in inquiry and discussion, the practice will become normalized for their students.

3. *The presence of rich opportunities for debate and social activism, particularly when the topics are challenging or controversial.*

Often in social studies, teachers self-censor possibilities for debate and inquiry because we are concerned about the controversial nature of students' questions or concerns. However, even young children deserve to have these questions and concerns addressed in a manner which is appropriate to their level of understanding. Children in kindergarten should be able to discuss all of the different forms of "family" when developing a sense of their own identity. Children in Grade 2 in Alberta might want to ask about some of the difficulties that our Aboriginal peoples are experiencing that they may have heard about from their parents or the media, or they may want to question a racist comment that they have

heard on the playground. The Alberta program of studies for social studies acknowledges that:

> Opportunities to deal with [controversial] issues are an integral part of social studies education in Alberta … Studying controversial issues is important in preparing students to participate responsibly in a democratic and pluralistic society … [and] provides opportunities to develop the ability to think clearly, to reason logically, to open-mindedly and respectfully examine different points of view and make sound judgements. (Alberta Learning 2003, 6)

In her study "When Central High Students Speak: Doing Critical Inquiry for Democracy," Otoya-Knapp describes the social change and activism that can result from the debate of controversial issues. Her year-long project relates how six classes of urban Grade 9 students "engaged in critical inquiry about their experiences and how they are affected by race, class, gender, and power issues" (Otoya-Knapp 2004, 149). Drawing on the work of Dewey, among others, Otoya-Knapp comments: "if students are to learn or grow, teaching and learning should be related to students' lives within the concerns that surround their community and society" (2004, 149).

This idea is also reflected in the NCSS document regarding powerful teaching and learning in the social studies:

> Students develop new understanding through a process of active construction … they actively process ideas, relating them to what they already know (or think they know) about a topic … they strive to make sense of what they are learning by developing a network of connections that link the new … to preexisting knowledge and beliefs anchored in their prior experience. Sometimes the learning involves a conceptual change in which students discover that some of their beliefs are inaccurate and need to be modified. (NCSS 1994, 1)

Summary

Although it may not seem immediately obvious, there is a strong connection between the history, values, purposes and goals of public libraries and public schools. The tension that exists in both institutions between their roles as social conservators and social activists has resulted in a rich dialogue that can only strengthen the goal of creating socially activist citizens. Although there may be a perceived risk to the institution and even those they serve, it is the professional obligation of teachers, teacher-librarians and public librarians to foster the climate and skills that will lead to social activism and a respect for the diversity of perspectives that exist in their world.

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Critical Inquiry: Is Inquiry Critical?

by Dianne Oberg

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Intellectual freedom and social responsibility are core values of teacher-librarianship. These core values shape the work of teacher-librarians in a myriad of ways: selecting resources, making resources accessible both physically and intellectually, developing policy, planning with teachers, instructing students in the classroom and the library, and interacting with school and community members. The authors of the other articles featured in this issue of *Teacher-Librarian Today* have each explored one or more of the ways in which these core values shape the work of teacher-librarians. This article focuses on how these core values shape the instructional role of the teacher-librarian in relation to inquiry-based teaching and learning.

In working with Toni Samek in planning and teaching a course focusing on intellectual freedom and social responsibility, I needed to reread articles on critical librarianship. This process of rereading helped me to reconceptualize the work that I and my colleague Jennifer Branch have been doing on inquiry in terms of "critical inquiry." In this article, I examine inquiry (or guided inquiry) through the lenses of key concepts from media literacy (Duncan 2006) and critical literacy (McLaughlin and DeVoogd 2004b).

The foundation for this exploration of what critical inquiry might entail begins with the core values of intellectual freedom and social responsibility and with how teacher-librarians and school libraries contribute to the development of those core values in children and adolescents and also in their teachers, especially through teacher-librarians' contributions to critical inquiry.

Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility in School Libraries

The core values of intellectual freedom and social responsibility have been well-defined by our colleagues in the American Library Association (ALA). Intellectual freedom is

> the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause or movement may be explored. Intellectual freedom encompasses the freedom to hold, receive and disseminate ideas. (ALA 2006)

Social responsibility is "the contribution that librarianship can make in ameliorating or solving the critical problems of society" (ALA 2006).

However, teacher-librarians—certificated and experienced teachers with specialist training in librarianship—are accountable to two professional codes—that of librarians and that of teachers (see Table 1 for a comparison of the codes of the Canadian Library Association and the Alberta Teachers' Association).

Table 1
The Professional Codes of Teacher-Librarians: A Comparison

Canadian Library Association *Code of Ethics* Annual General Meeting, June 1976	The Alberta Teachers' Association *Code of Professional Conduct* Approved by the 2004 Annual Representative Assembly pursuant to the *Teaching Profession Act.*
	The *Code of Professional Conduct* stipulates minimum standards of professional conduct of teachers but is not an exhaustive list of such standards. Unless exempted by legislation, any member of the Alberta Teachers' Association who is alleged to have violated the standards of the profession, including the provisions of the code, may be subject to a charge of unprofessional conduct under the bylaws of the Association.
Support and implement the principles and practices embodied in the current Canadian Library Association "Statement on Intellectual Freedom" (1).	
Make every effort to promote and maintain the highest possible range and standards of library service to all segments of Canadian society (2).	The teacher protests the assignment of duties for which the teacher is not qualified or conditions that make it difficult to render professional service (8). The teacher acts in a manner that maintains the honour and dignity of the profession (18). The teacher does not engage in activities that adversely affect the quality of the teacher's professional service (19).
Facilitate access to any or all sources of information which may be of assistance to library users (3).	
Protect the privacy and dignity of library users and staff (4).	The teacher teaches in a manner that respects the dignity and rights of all persons without prejudice as to race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical characteristics, disability, marital status, family status, age, ancestry, place of origin, place of residence, socioeconomic background or linguistic background (1). The teacher treats pupils with dignity and respect and is considerate of their circumstances (4). The teacher may not divulge information about a pupil received in confidence or in the course of professional duties except as required by law or where, in the judgment of the teacher, to do so is in the best interest of the pupil (5).

	The teacher is responsible for diagnosing educational needs, prescribing and implementing instructional programs and evaluating progress of pupils. The teacher may not delegate these responsibilities to any person who is not a teacher (2). The teacher may delegate specific and limited aspects of instructional activity to noncertificated personnel, provided that the teacher supervises and directs such activity (3).
	The teacher may not accept pay for tutoring a pupil in any subjects in which the teacher is responsible for giving classroom instruction to that pupil (6). The teacher may not take advantage of a professional position to profit from the sale of goods and services to or for pupils in the teacher's charge (7).
	The teacher fulfills contractual obligations to the employer until released by mutual consent or according to law (9). The teacher provides as much notice as possible of a decision to terminate employment (10). The teacher adheres to agreements negotiated on the teacher's behalf by the Association (11).
	The teacher does not undermine the confidence of pupils in other teachers (12). The teacher criticizes the professional competence or professional reputation of another teacher only in confidence to proper officials and after the other teacher has been informed of the criticism, subject only to section 24 of the *Teaching Profession Act* (13). The teacher, when making a report on the professional performance of another teacher, does so in good faith and, prior to submitting the report, provides the teacher with a copy of the report, subject only to section 24 of the *Teaching Profession Act* (14). The teacher does not take, because of animosity or for personal advantage, any steps to secure the dismissal of another teacher (15). The teacher recognizes the duty to protest through proper channels administrative policies and practices that the teacher cannot in conscience accept; and further recognizes that if administration by consent fails, the administrator must adopt a position of authority (16). The teacher as an administrator provides opportunities for staff members to express their opinions and to bring forth suggestions regarding the administration of the school (17). The teacher submits to the Association disputes arising from professional relationships with other teachers which cannot be resolved by personal discussion (20). The teacher makes representations on behalf of the Association or members thereof only when authorized to do so (21). The teacher accepts that service to the Association is a professional responsibility (22).

These two professional codes are complementary, and each adds unique elements to the professional responsibilities of teacher-librarians. These examples are drawn from the 1976 Canadian Library Association (CLA) *Code of Ethics* and the 2004 Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) *Code of Professional Conduct.*

1. The CLA code speaks strongly about the core value of intellectual freedom while the ATA code is silent on this issue. This means that teacher-librarians have the responsibility of bringing this core value of librarianship to the attention of their teacher colleagues.
2. The CLA code speaks to the core value of respect for the dignity and privacy of staff and users; the ATA code speaks very strongly to this core value and specifies in considerable detail what is involved in respect for dignity and privacy.
3. One important difference between the two codes is their power to control professional practice. Both librarians and teachers are held to their codes by virtue of their education and their socialization into the profession, but teachers unlike librarians are subject to discipline by their professional association if they are found in violation of their code and the consequences can be as serious as losing their right to practice.

Teacher-Librarians' Contributions to Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility

Teacher-librarians contribute to the development of the core values of intellectual freedom and social responsibilities in many ways:

1. By developing collections and providing access to materials that support the curriculum and that provide alternative perspectives and viewpoints
2. By ensuring that children and adolescents and their teachers have access to resources that reflect the diversity of our Canadian peoples
3. By ensuring that policies and processes are in place to protect children's right to information and everyone's rights to question decisions about including or excluding specific items or kinds of materials in the classroom and the school library
4. By working with teachers and administrators to implement critical inquiry in the school's instructional programs and strategies

The first three roles of a teacher-librarian are very fundamental aspects of the work of librarians in any setting; the fourth, critical inquiry, might need more examination. Although instructional work is not unique to teacher-librarians, it is generally the work of teacher-librarians rather than librarians.

Guided Inquiry + Media Literacy + Critical Literacy = Critical Inquiry

Critical inquiry is both a learning goal and an approach to learning. The curricula of the three prairie provinces are inquiry-based. *Critical inquiry* is not a term currently used in the literature of teacher-librarianship, but it captures very well the core of the teacher-librarian's instructional work that supports intellectual freedom and social responsibility. It is important for teacher-librarians to call for and stand up for intellectual freedom and social responsibility. To do so, we need to develop those core values through teaching and learning. Critical inquiry, which brings together the key concepts of guided inquiry, media literacy and critical literacy, can provide a vehicle for developing those core values in schools.

Guided Inquiry

Guided inquiry comes from Library and Information Science (LIS) research and theory building, and it is based on user-centred views of library work, such as Brenda Dervin's work on "sense-making" and Carol Kuhlthau's work on "meaning-making." The approaches to guided inquiry presented Alberta's *Focus on Research* (1990) and in *Focus on Inquiry* (2003) drew strongly on Carol Kuhlthau's work. At the Center for International Scholarship in School Libraries (CISSL) at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, Carol Kuhlthau continues her work along with Ross Todd and Carol Gordon, and a new book on her approach to guided inquiry is forthcoming.

Media Literacy

Media literacy comes from education research and theory building. In Canada this approach grew from the work of Barry Duncan and John Pungente in the 1980s. The 1989 *Media Literacy: Resource Guide* from Ontario is one well-known example of a media literacy model. There has been a lot of work in the United Kingdom on this approach, as well, where it is more frequently referred to as "media education."

Critical Literacy

Critical literacy also comes from education research and theory building. This is a newer approach that draws on the critical thinking area and on some aspects of media literacy and Rosenblatt's reader response theory from English language arts. The work of Maureen McLaughlin and Glenn DeVoogd over the past decade on critical literacy has been published in book format as well as in both language arts education and school library journals.

Identifying the Key Concepts of Critical Inquiry

Critical inquiry draws its key concepts from guided inquiry, media literacy and critical literacy.

Focus on Inquiry, one model of guided inquiry, defines inquiry as a process where students are involved in their learning, formulate questions, investigate widely and then build new understandings, meanings and knowledge. That knowledge is new to the students and may be used to answer a question, to develop a solution, or to support a position or point of view. The knowledge is usually presented to others and may result in some sort of action. (Alberta Leaning 2004, 1)

The *Focus on Inquiry* model is an instructional model designed to assist educators in doing inquiry-based activities with K–12 students. *Focus on Inquiry* represents inquiry-based learning as a phased process of planning, retrieving, processing, creating, sharing and evaluating, held together and infused with Reflecting on the Process. The key concepts of guided inquiry are these:

1. Inquiry is a process where students formulate questions, investigate widely and build new understandings, meanings and knowledge.
2. The inquiry process is not linear and lockstep but flexible, recursive and highly individual.
3. The most critical phase of the inquiry process is usually focus formulation (coming to an authentic question, a personal perspective and/or a compelling thesis statement).
4. Inquiry involves thinking, feeling and doing.
5. Students are involved in planning and evaluating their inquiry work.
6. Metacognitive activities, both cognitive and affective, help students to develop and understand their personal inquiry processes.
7. Teacher-librarians and teachers mediate throughout the inquiry process on an as-needed basis.

Media literacy is not an instructional model but an approach that can be infused into inquiry-based learning that occurs in the classrooms or libraries. The approach began with concerns about the influence of mass media on students and about helping students to critically evaluate, appreciate and create media products. Media literacy encourages a probing approach to the world of media, asking questions such as, Who is this message intended for? Who wants to reach this audience, and why? From whose perspective is this story told? Whose voices are heard and whose are absent? What strategies does this message use to get my attention and make me feel included? Tallim (2007, para 3) says:

In our world of multitasking, commercialism, globalization and interactivity, media education isn't about having the right answers—it's about asking the right questions. The result is lifelong empowerment of the learner and citizen.

The key concepts of media literacy are these:

1. All media are constructions. [Media are not simple reflections of reality; although they appear to be "natural," they are carefully crafted constructions.]
2. The media construct reality. [Media shape our ideas of what the world is and how it works.]
3. Audiences negotiate meaning in media. [Our understanding of a media text is shaped by what experiences we bring to the text—personal needs, family and cultural background, political and social attitudes, and so on.]
4. Media have commercial implications. [Media production is a business and must make a profit; increased concentration of media ownership means that a few people decide what and how content is reported or published.]
5. Media contain ideological and value messages. [Media present particular values and ways of life and they more often affirm the existing social system, the status quo, than alternative values and ways of life.)
6. Media have social and political implications. [Media are linked with national concerns and global issues; the dominance of American media has implications for the maintenance of a Canadian identity.]
7. Form and content are closely related in the media. [Different media will report or present the same content but create different messages and impressions.]
8. Each media has a unique aesthetic form. [Understanding how media are created helps us to appreciate them.] (Ontario Ministry of Education 1989, 8–10)

Critical literacy, like media literacy, is not an instructional model but an approach that can be infused into inquiry-based learning that occurs in the classrooms or libraries. Critical literacy, narrowly defined, is very similar to the aspects of information literacy that relate to one's ability to identify aspects of information validity, such as accuracy, objectivity, authority, currency and coverage. However, more recently, critical literacy is being defined more broadly in terms that connect with the core value of social responsibility: "Ultimately, the goal of critical literacy is to create a more equitable, just

world. The first step is for students to recognize an author's implicit bias, whether in books, newspapers, films or speeches" (DeVoogd 2004, 52).

This broader view of critical literacy draws on and builds on Rosenblatt's (1991) Reader Response Theory. This theory holds that readers transact with text on a continuum of aesthetic and efferent stances, from a more emotional stance and from a more factual stance, and that readers are always making choices about their thinking, sometimes focusing on both stances and sometimes focusing more on one than the other. McLaughlin and DeVoogd (2004a) suggest that a critical stance can be viewed as part of the aesthetic-efferent continuum, that readers using the critical stance can take the role of text critics, as well as code breakers, meaning makers and text users. Critical literacy or being a text critic goes beyond "reading and understanding the words" to "reading the world;" that is, reading the purpose of the text so that the reader is not manipulated by the text. The key concepts of critical literacy are these:

1. Critical literacy focuses on issues of power and promotes reflection, transformation and action. [Readers can submit to the author's right to select the topic and determine the treatment of the ideas or they can "read against the text" and ask whose voice might be missing, silenced, discounted.]

2. Critical literacy focuses on the problem and its complexity. [When faced with a situation or problem, we look beyond the simple or obvious answer.]

3. Techniques that promote critical literacy are dynamic and adapt to the contexts within which they are used. [Useful techniques include juxtapositioning of texts in various formats (for example, print, photos, videos, lyrics), problem posing, using alternative texts.]

4. Examining multiple perspectives is an important aspect of critical literacy. [Often this can be done through comparison of the same event or situation through different texts or media formats.] (McLaughlin and DeVoogd 2004a, 54–58)

Applying the Key Concepts of Critical Inquiry

What does critical inquiry offer for our practice as teacher-librarians? What might we consider in light of current practices in classroom and libraries?

Teaching That Develops a Critical Stance

Many of our curricula support the work of helping students to develop a critical stance through critical reading, critical thinking and/or critical viewing. There are many entry points for incorporating a critical stance in learning projects, especially in the language arts, social studies and science curricula. Unfortunately, curriculum materials rarely provide much support for teaching students how to read, think or view critically. It is important that teachers and teacher-librarians use a scaffolding instructional strategy that helps students become comfortable reading or viewing from a critical stance; that is, explain, demonstrate, guide, practise, reflect (McLaughlin and DeVoogd 2004b). The new Alberta Social Studies Curriculum offers many opportunities for teaching a critical stance. According to the Online Guide to Implementation for the Alberta social studies curriculum (http://onlineguide.learnalberta.ca/), the critical thinking components for each grade level are organized around several overarching critical inquiries (OCIs). The purpose of each OCI is to cluster the teaching of many specific outcomes under a central idea. The term *critical* indicates that the inquiries focus on large questions or issues that require critical judgment. The OCIs described for each grade level are intended to suggest possibilities and to provide considerations for instructional planning. Within each OCI are specific critical thinking lessons, called critical challenges (CCs), which might be undertaken in pursuing the larger overarching critical inquiry. The suggested CCs are illustrative of the questions or tasks that would engage students in thinking critically about various components of the overarching inquiry.

Teaching About Inquiry

A key concept of guided inquiry is that inquiry is a complex process. In guided inquiry, it is important not to overload students either cognitively or affectively, which means that students must begin an inquiry

project with adequate background knowledge and that we do not try to teach students how to develop their critical stance in one inquiry project. Inquiry-based learning requires intellectual freedom—forming one's own questions and investigating widely are based on the right to read what one needs—and it requires social responsibility—both in using and acknowledging the ideas of others, and in taking action on the basis of the findings of one's inquiry. The Alberta curricula, as outlined in the programs of studies, is strongly inquiry based and offers many opportunities for students to experience and learn about inquiry to develop deeper understandings of themselves and their world.

Questioning the Curriculum

Teacher-librarians can help develop critical approaches to curriculum by careful choice of textbooks and novels, and by helping teachers ask questions about whose perspectives, ideology and views of the world are presented in these texts. Teacher-librarians can help teachers and students identify those perspectives, can offer teachers and students texts that present alternative perspectives, and can encourage teachers and students to research and write about alternative perspectives (DeVoogd 2006). We need to work with teachers to encourage students to question authority, to be skeptical about the curriculum, about what is in the textbooks and about what is in the media. Examining texts from alternative perspectives is applicable in a wide range of curricula.

Speaking Up for Our Core Values

Teacher-librarians must continue to use the opportunities that are open to us to speak to the values of intellectual freedom and social responsibility. We should celebrate Freedom to Read Week enthusiastically. We should seek out alternative viewpoints in collection building. We should enter into the controversies that arise in our schools and communities, and strive to address

the needs and interests of the marginalized in our schools and libraries. We need to model a critical stance in our relationships with colleagues and community members by challenging unfounded assertions about individuals or groups. Problematizing or examining the complexity of the situation of the individual or group often reveals factors that have not been taken into consideration.

The concept of critical inquiry invites us to extend and enrich our practice as teacher-librarians. By incorporating the key concepts of media literacy and critical literacy into guided inquiry, we can engage teachers and students in inquiry-based learning activities that honour the values of intellectual freedom and social responsibility.

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Encouraging High School Teachers to Collaborate on Collection Development

by Cynthia Peterson

Cynthia Peterson is a teacher-librarian at M E LaZerte High School, in Edmonton.

In Alberta, high school libraries and the position of the teacher-librarian are at risk. With diploma exams driving instruction, students relying on the Internet for research, increasing class size, and shrinking budgets forcing administrators to look for ways to cut costs, teacher-librarians must work hard to make the school library indispensable.

When one considers physical space, equipment, staffing and resources, more dollars are invested in the library than in most other areas of the school. In this era of site-based management, if we want the school decision makers to see this expenditure as justified, we must demonstrate our usefulness. Our goal should be to ensure that colleagues share ownership of and commitment to the school library program.

Our most powerful tool is the budget allocation for library resources. If we can encourage colleagues to collaborate with us on selecting resources, the collection will be relevant to what they are teaching and they will feel connected to the teacher-librarian and to the library. "Ownership of the collection comes when the teacher and school librarian select and evaluate resources together" (Dillon 2003, 275). In addition, "Collaborative collection development and evaluation ensures that resources, in a variety of formats, are available to meet curricular objectives" (Asselin, Branch and Oberg 2003, 24).

Teacher-librarians' goals are not simply to have excellent collections and to have other teachers think what they do is important, but to be integral to the success of every student in school. Kearney (2000, 96) outlines what that might look like.

> For us as library media specialists to function as full curriculum partners with classroom teachers, we must use our leadership skills to become knowledgeable about their curriculum, understand curriculum design, and participate in its creation; create a library information skills curriculum; develop the collection in collaboration with teachers and staff to meet the instructional needs of the school; collaborate with classroom teachers on the planning, implementation, and assessment of the instructional program; link student needs, information literacy standards as well as information skills, and resources across all curricular areas through meaningfully integrated curricular units; effectively teach information skills and a research process through these units; understand as well as participate in the assessment of student learning; and be passionate about our work as well as dedicated to the improvement of the teaching and learning process.

Although this description represents the ultimate goal, many of us are not there yet. We need a way to involve the curriculum experts in school—the teachers—to help us get there. We must collaborate with teachers to create curricular-based projects that excite students and help them to learn. One way forward is through the collection. "A strong library media collection that has been developed by the library media specialist in collaboration with classroom teachers is necessary for resource-based learning" (Kearney 2000, 83). How do we get teachers to collaborate with us on improving the collection?

Doll (2005) explains that collaboration does not happen for various reasons. Sometimes teachers do not know what the teacher-librarian or the library has to offer, and it is up to teacher-librarians to reach out to colleagues (p 10). Two veteran Edmonton high school teacher-librarians routinely involve teachers in collection

development. Robert Poole, teacher-librarian at Harry Ainlay High School, and Margo Johnston, now retired but formerly at Jasper Place High School, have some excellent suggestions. Like Callison (2003, 49), they believe that, "Collections are constructed through experimentation and discussion in collaborative efforts with teachers who have proven skills in implementing innovation." Johnston and Poole developed relationships with teachers and involved teachers new to the school. They asked teachers to give opinions on new resources, to suggest materials and to help evaluate the collection.

In a conversation with the author on November 30, 2006, Margo Johnston said,

> Staff requested most of the books, magazines and databases I purchased. When teachers were in the library planning lessons with me, I asked if there were any resources they would like me to order. I e-mailed teachers a list of information on the topics or links to webpages with reviews, or gave them print resources or selections from the Wilson High School Library Catalog or publishers' catalogues. When the new books arrived, I e-mailed teachers and departments, and signed the book(s) out to the requesting teacher.
>
> I asked teachers which books in the library were outdated or no longer relevant to the curriculum. I always requested previews for online databases, sent the information to the appropriate teachers and did inservices on the program highlights. I encouraged teachers to use the databases our school had purchased. Often I showed the teachers how to use the interesting feature of the program while their students worked in the library. I also collaborated with teachers to find websites for students.
>
> I often ate lunch in different department workrooms to talk informally with teachers, which frequently led to at least one teacher requesting library time or a book.
>
> Sometimes I was able to get books for staff to preview and would have drop-in times in the library with refreshments.

Van Orden, Bishop and Paweluk-Kort (2001) recommend several ways to involve others in selection. These include "routing bibliographies and reviewing journals to teachers and administrators; attending faculty, departmental, or grade-level meetings to learn about curriculum changes and to discuss future purchases, . . . [and] involving teachers, administrators, and students in the selection decision-making process" (p 125). Donham (2005) also advises, "Route publications with materials reviews to teachers and encourage them to initial items that they would like to see in the collection" (p 166).

In some schools, teacher-librarians speak at staff meetings. "Every year at the first faculty meeting, teachers are encouraged to look for materials that should be added to the collection. Teachers are reminded that ideas may come from inservice programs, course work, professional meetings, and professional reading" (Van Orden, Bishop and Paweluk-Kort 2001, 128).

Robert Poole feels that networking with teachers is an essential collaborative tool. He says, "I build relationships with teachers and gain their trust." He holds an orientation for new staff at the beginning of each year to discuss what he and his library have to offer.

He asks experienced teachers with whom he has successfully collaborated in the past to talk to new teachers about the power of collaboration between teacher and teacher-librarian. "Integrating information-literacy skills and differentiating instruction benefits the students. The power of two—having two teachers planning and teaching, and reducing pupil-teacher ratio—is so important. It's a win-win situation for us and the students."

Poole works formally and informally with teachers on collection development. He asks teachers for feedback or suggestions on resources when they are in the library with students and meets with departments to evaluate sections of the collection that relate to their curricular areas. Curriculum changes mean that Poole meets with departments to update the collection.

His collaborative work has a huge impact on collection development. In a conversation with Poole on December 4, 2006, he said, "I wouldn't dream of making a big purchase without consulting the teachers. They are the curriculum experts."

Others also see the value of networking. Hartzell (2003) discusses various ways for teacher-librarians to develop relationships. He suggests, "Regardless of the size of your school, know the names and responsibilities of every teacher in the building" and "Take time to socialize" (p 167). He suggests several important initiatives. "Develop an orientation program for student teachers and for new hires. . . . Survey the teachers and ask (1) for an evaluation of current library services and (2) how the library can be of more service to them in their classes" (p 168). He advises teacher-librarians to demonstrate their knowledge and expertise to the decision-makers in the school. "Work to convince the principal, department heads and individual teachers that you should be a part of any curriculum committees" (p 168). Like Poole and Johnston, Hartzell sees collection evaluation as an effective way to get teachers into the library. "Involve teachers in the process of weeding the collection in their areas of interest" (p 169).

Many teacher-librarians routinely ask teachers for help in selecting resources, but they can be equally helpful in culling collections. "As in other aspects of the collection management, the media specialist should involve teachers and others in the decisions about what items to remove" (Van Orden, Bishop and Paweluk-Kort 2001, 271). If you have weeded items, ask teachers "to examine materials in their areas and flag those items to be retained" (Donham 2005, 157). Weeding "may also enlist the help of teachers in evaluating materials within a particular subject area(s)" (Nebraska Education Media Association 2000, p 175).

Of course, collaborating with teachers on collection development in any form means more work for teacher-librarians. Will the results be worth the effort? Doll (2005) discusses various stages in collaboration, from the teacher-librarian working alone to full collaboration. She argues that teacher-librarians are taking a risk if they assist only teachers who come into the library. "Overall, this low level of involvement with the greater school curriculum results in a school library media centre that is dangerously isolated and may be vulnerable to cost-cutting measures because of the small perceived value it adds to the school community" (p 7).

Doll discusses cooperation, coordination and collaboration. "In the ultimate level of involvement, the school library media specialist is actively collaborating with teachers throughout the school, involved in planning lessons, units, and the curriculum itself. The school library media specialist is viewed as a full, valued partner by teachers and administrators, and everyone is involved in integrating information literacy skills throughout the curriculum" (p 9).

This full collaboration includes collection evaluation. "At the conclusion of the unit, the teacher and school library media specialist would work together to evaluate the entire experience, examining the professional collaboration, resources, pedagogy, student experiences, and all other pertinent elements in order to determine what worked well and what should be changed next time" (p 6).

However, in the reality of education today, collaboration is not possible to this extent. Doll states, "Full collaboration all the time with all teachers on all units is not possible. It would take too much time and too many resources—such as one school library media specialist for every teacher in the school" (p 9).

A more realistic approach is for the teacher-librarian to "develop collaborative relationships with all or almost all of the teachers in the school" (p 10). Thus, all students would be involved in a project developed collaboratively and led by a teacher and the teacher-librarian at least once or twice per term.

Teacher-librarians should be aware of some pitfalls of involving teachers in collection development. "On the negative side, teachers do not normally receive the training that school library media specialists do in selecting and evaluating suitable resources for library collections" (Everhart 2003, 63). Everhart points out the possibility that teachers may choose poor quality resources and the teacher-librarian may then have to justify why the purchase will not be made.

Another problem with teacher involvement might be that few teachers participate, and the balance of the collection suffers as a result. "Worse, teachers could misinterpret the school media specialist's attempts at involving them in selection as neglecting his or her own duties" (p 63).

It is more likely, though, that the results are worth the small risks. "Collaborative planning between the library media specialist and other teachers ensures a collection selected and developed to support the school district curriculum" (Nebraska Education Media Association 2000, 173).

McGhee and Jansen (2003) agree: "In following the spirit of intellectual freedom, the collection will provide students with a wide range of viewpoints on current and historical topics. This important task is best conducted in collaboration with teachers and consists of having a

deep knowledge of both the curriculum and student interests" (p 42).

Collaborative collection evaluation is essential and need not be time-consuming.

The best time to evaluate the ability of the collection to satisfy the requirements of a resource-based unit of work is immediately after the unit. Additionally, it is essential that both the teacher and the school librarian evaluate this aspect of the unit together (three to five minutes is all that is required). Only when teachers are aware of the number of resources per pupil that are available on any given curriculum topic can they and the school librarian fairly begin an evaluation of the value of the collection and its impact on the educational programs of the school (Dillon 2003, 273).

We owe it to our students to ensure that school library programs are the core of our schools. Collaboration on collection development and evaluation is one effective method to do this. "If the library media collection has been developed collaboratively with teachers and in response to curricular needs, teachers and students will seek you out and ask for assistance in accessing and managing information" (Kearney 2000, 9). Like Margo Johnston and Rob Poole, you will create dynamic programs that are integral to the success of every teacher and student in your school.

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Professionally Speaking

2007 Alberta Library Conference Provincial Awards

by Fern Reirson

Award of Merit Recipients

Diane GallowaySolowan

Diane GallowaySolowan was awarded the Alberta School Library Council's (ASLC) Award of Merit for her commitment and support to the professional development of teacher-librarians and school library programs through her role as project coordinator of the Online Reference Centre (ORC) at the Alberta Library.

Over the past four years, Diane has travelled our province extensively, providing professional development for thousands of teachers and teacher-librarians on how to use the multiple databases of the Online Reference Centre available through LearnAlberta. As a project coordinator of the ORC, Diane conducts workshops and coordinates conference and professional development training in using electronic databases, which allows students more equitable access to information and provides them with rich resources to develop their information literacy. She has worked tirelessly to provide countless training sessions at school PD days, conventions and conferences in all regions of the province, and has coordinated the hosting of numerous workshops by the vendors of the various databases in the ORC in conjunction with the ASLC regionals. She offers ongoing suggestions on how to use the ORC

resources through a listserv. Diane has involved teacher-librarians in examining, evaluating and recommending new resources for the ORC, thereby recognizing the expertise and role of teacher-librarians in selecting resources for the ORC. Her passion for school libraries is demonstrated through her commitment to teacher professional development and support for the role of teacher-librarians of this province.

Previously, Diane has worked as a teacher-librarian and public librarian for 24 years in central Alberta. She has been an active member of the ASLC and has held numerous positions on provincial and regional executives. She served as a professional development instructor for the Alberta Teachers' Association from 1989 to 1993. Diane has committed to the ongoing professional development and research in school librarianship through completing her master's in school libraries and by publishing numerous articles in *Teacher-Librarian Today*, *SCAN* and *SLIC*. This spring, she continues her commitment to professional development by taking over as editor of *Teacher-Librarian Today*, the professional journal of the ASLC.

She exemplifies what can happen when educators, libraries and government coordinate their skills and services to improve the information literacy of Alberta.

Sheryl Connery

Sheryl Connery received the ASLC Award of Merit. It was presented to her in absentia by Sherry Nasekin.

Kaleidoscope 9 Conference

by Cathy Yusep

November 6–8, 2008
Calgary, Alberta

This conference is held every four years at the Calgary TELUS Convention Centre. Delegates from across North America look forward to it as a highlight of their professional development activities. The Kaleidoscope conference celebrates literature created for children and young adults and the interpretation of this literature through media, performance and illustration. This celebration aims to heighten the awareness and appreciation of the creative processes by providing a chance for teacher-librarians to interact with authors, illustrators, publishers, producers and performers. The inspiration received by participants enhances their experience of this literature and, in turn, the experiences of colleagues and the children with whom they have contact. The conference theme is "Story: Bridging Worlds."

> Story is universal—transforming thoughts, shifting perspectives
> Building bridges … revealing new worlds
> Story defines humanity
>
> Whose voices are heard?
> Whose voices are silent?
>
> Inspiring us to dream, to act, to imagine, to grow …
> The alluring world of story.

We have invited Werner Zimmerman to design our poster, and he has kindly accepted. We are looking forward to seeing his beautiful work adorn all of our publications. The Kaleidoscope website has a new look and is almost ready to unveil. Please visit www.kaleidoscopeconference.ca by September 2008 for all of your Kaleidoscope information needs.

We are proud to be the first Kaleidoscope conference to offer the ease of online registration and payment, which will be available by January 2008.

Over 25 authors, illustrators and others from Canada, the US, the UK and Australia will be presenting at the conference. Delegates will be able to rub shoulders with these internationally acclaimed children's literature figures during the opening evening, the conference banquet and autographing sessions.

We are excited to announce the following confirmed presenters for Kaleidoscope 9:

Lois Lowry—www.loislowry.com

Beverley Naidoo—www.beverleynaidoo.com

George Littlechild—www.georgelittlechild.com/main.htm

Wallace Edwards—www.quillandquire.com/authors/ profile.cfm?article_id=2585

Betsy Lewin—www.betsylewin.com

Ted Lewin—www.tedlewin.com

Eileen Spinelli—www.eileenspinelli.com

Julie Lawson—www.canscaip.org/bios/lawsonj.html

Robert Heidbreder—www.kidscanpress.com/ kidscanpress/KidsCanPress_3/KCP/creators/ creators_detail.htm?id=93

Michael Morpurgo—http://www.michaelmorpurgo.org

Werner Zimmerman—www.wernerzimmermann.ca

Sneed Collard III—www.author-illustr-source.com/ sneedbcollard.htm

Ian Wallace—www.ian-wallace.com

Jack Zipes—scholar, folklorist, authority on fairytales

Ron Jobe—professor of children's literature, University of British Columbia

We encourage all of you to mark November 6–8, 2008, on your calendar and start saving your money to come to Kaleidoscope 9 "Story: Bridging Worlds" in Calgary, Alberta.

AGM 2007 Minutes

The following are the minutes of the ASLC annual general meeting, held April 27, 2007, at the annual conference in Jasper, Alberta.

Executive in attendance: Irene Masciuch, Fern Reirson, Donna Grove, Dianne Dunse, Maria Mirka, Dianne Leong-Fortier, Grace MacDougall, Jacquie Vincent, Sherry Nasekin, Lyle Krause, Terry Kernaghan, Greg Jeffery

Council members: Shirley McGowan, Barbara MacDougall, Sandra Lindsay, Linda Shantz-Keresztes, Lois Barranoik, Dianne Oberg

1. Call to order: Irene Masciuch. The council is proceeding with the work of the three goals: inquiry, curriculum connections and professional development. The future is full of enlightenment, challenges and moving ahead.

2. Approval of agenda: Irene Masciuch. Dianne Oberg moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Grace MacDougall.

3. Greetings and opening remarks: Irene Masciuch.
   - Term of president ends this year and moves to the position of past president. Moving to a two-year presidency has allowed continued liaisons with various groups and individuals.
   - Transition for Fern Reirson, incoming president, will be smoother because of the two-year transition period.
   - Transformational name change was a great benefit. ASLC tops the list of specialist councils.
   - New coalition for school libraries becoming a reality, vision of hope.
   - Constructive work around the council's three goals. Review these items annually—model for PD work.

4. Introduction of 2006/07 executive: Irene Masciuch.

5. Minutes of AGM, May 5, 2006: Irene Masciuch. Jacquie Vincent moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by Linda Shantz-Keresztes. Corrections—10.4 principles.

6. Reports:
   6.1 Treasurer: Donna Grove
   - Next year's budget is more accurately aligned to actual spending.
   - Numbers are down.
   - As part of the council's three-year action plan, president to apply to attend CLA. Total costs will change from year to year due to conference location. The council will cover all expenses for this collaborative responsibility of the council.
   - Financial policy will be updated annually by the budget committee.
   - Audit procedures for year-end:
     o Regional presidents, please send audited financial records to Didi Heer at the ATA or send complete books to ATA offices. Donna will e-mail details.
     o Edmonton books are missing. Jennifer Branch personally delivered these books in July 2006. (Post note: These were located in ATA archive files for ASLC and returned to Edmonton regional.)
     o Regionals are not buying QuickBooks software program.
     o Donna will e-mail Didi Heer.
   - Send financial records by registered mail to ATA in Edmonton. Send receipts to Donna for postage reimbursement.
   - ATA provides audit free of charge. Turnaround time in the return of these financial records was questioned. ATA attempts to ensure records are returned in time for fall executive meeting.
   - Moved by Sherry Nasekin. Seconded by Jacquie Vincent to accept the proposed 2007/08 budget. Approved.
   6.2 President: Irene Masciuch
   - Established three goals: advocacy, curriculum connections and inquiry. A workday was held at a September executive

meeting to establish mission statements and possible activities for each goal. Each regional left with information to establish participation regionally. Regionals responded in January with information that more time was required and that advocacy needed to be changed to professional development.

- Decided in January that goals not presented in order of importance.
- Goals to be worked on over a few years.
- Goals continue to be a provincewide focus.
- Working with CASL is more important. They have gone to small project work throughout the year. Their meeting time has been extended at the national conference. Our president will attend that conference to do this work. Vital piece to connect across the provinces. National advocacy is not to reinvent the wheel.
- The Calgary Foundation's Lorne MacRae Intellectual Fund is still a focus for our annual conference inclusion. We are urged to contribute to the principle of this fund.
- Handbook corrections are ongoing.
- On behalf of the Council, Irene will send thank-you notes to LAC, ALT and ALC for partaking in this conference.
- New letter to Education Minister Ron Liepert not done yet. Purpose is to request that Alberta School Library Day be declared to align with National School Library Day. (Table officers meeting in June requested his comments on our website and visit to a school with an exemplary school library program.)
- Thank you for contributions to the database of speakers. This is used for conventions and conferences. Encourage people in your district to take part in this PD opportunity in support of the council's goals.
- Changes to next year's executive: Debbie Feisst is leaving as LAA representative and Nancy Ingram is the new northwestern regional president.

6.3 President-Elect: Fern Reirson
- Joined three groups—Strategic Alliance of Libraries Association
  - Representatives from Alberta Library, LAA, trustee associations, ASLC.
  - Only three reps have been attending. Connections are limited. Mandate and purpose are unclear.

- Education Librarians Network—postsecondary—cross-section of public and separate schools across the province—provincial perspective of librarianship—at last meeting took a look at new math curriculum. Summer institute about this work was held in July.
  - Significant changes to high school math—four levels—two qualify for postsecondary.
  - Because teacher-librarians are curriculum partners with their staffs, they should be involved with resources and place emphasis on the affective, reflective thinking in the new curriculum.
- Conversation about a number of databases. Postsecondary institutes seeing consequences of students without skills in information literacy.
- Coalition for School Libraries devised a mission statement at the inaugural meeting in September 2006. It is the rights of children to have access to the school library.
- The mission statement of the coalition revised to read "To advocate for the implementation of the Canadian Standards as defined in the CLA document." "Achieving Information Literacy Standards."
- Concern over our interest in this group. We do not need ATA permission to be a part of this group. Past president will pursue this work.
- PEC suggested gaining ear of the government through parents because parents have a stronger voice. Examples of organizations with strong public support include SPEAK, APPEAL, ACE Networking. Together is more effective.
- ATA rep supports grassroots influence of parents. They are heard more readily. Look for strategic alliance. It is beneficial to use own personal grassroots networks.
- If regionals have parental contacts who may be interested in the coalition, pass names to Irene.

6.4 Past President: N/A
6.5 PEC: Greg Jeffery
- Media spots on Global began on March 19. ATA spent $50,000. Global added $58,000 more. Video clips can be seen on the ATA website.
- School administrators committee recommended that ATA give all active members an annual membership to a specialist council. This will be presented at ARA. No council will receive less funding. Smaller councils will do better financially.

- April 19 budget announced $25 million on a sliding scale for only one year—3 per cent for public schools and 7 per cent for private schools.
- Does not meet inflation rate and means increased cuts to public education falling behind by 2–3 per cent.
- Executive council had an emergency meeting with an 18-point plan approved in principle. Presented on May 12 to local presidents.
- Get colleagues involved with what is coming.

6.6 ATA Staff: Lyle Krause
- Since September work has been challenging in Teacher Welfare. Ninety per cent of agreements expire during this budget.
- Parkland strike, strike action in Buffalo Trail, Wild Rose last week—rescinded strike notice at 3 pm.
- Government 3 per cent this year is not enough. Potential unfunded liability deal. There will be challenging times ahead. For 2007/08 school year, 54 of 62 districts are coming to the bargaining table.

6.7 Publications: Dianne Dunse
- No copies of report available. Can be e-mailed if needed.
- 2007 *Teacher-Librarian Today* is due in November. Submissions by end of June. Dr Oberg's students will be submitting articles about intellectual freedom and social responsibility. Anything is welcome.
- Creating a database of *Teacher-Librarian Today* is possible with new TNET. *ATA News* and *ATA Magazine* are on a database.
- Publication costs are increasing. Discussion at seminar about print versus electronic access to council publications. TNET is not ready for online journals.
- New editor Diane GallowaySolowan was introduced. Diane thanked the council for the opportunity to be involved. Council participation acknowledged by president and gift was provided.
- Point of action: ATA should consider a searchable database component to the ATA publications by special councils.

6.8 Alberta Education: Terry Kernaghan
- Sale history of *Focus on Inquiry* provided. Sales have been brisk.
- Promising as we are on the right track after hearing Dr Ross Todd.
- Updating *Focus on Inquiry* needs to be considered.

6.9 University Liaison:
- Brief updated provided by Dr Oberg.
- TL-DL program continues to grow with 80 students. Fifty are in diploma, 35 in masters and 8 more just came on. Ten per cent are Alberta residents.
- Grande Prairie area working to offer a local group course.
- The graduate coordinator commented that GPAs and leadership experience of new applicants into this program are the highest in the university.

6.10 LAA Representative: Debbie Feisst
- E-mailed report submitted.

6.11 Website: Maria Mirka
- Website updated regularly. Most of site is public access. Members-only section is the executive and *Teacher-Librarian Today*. There is concern that this section is limited to specific core positions on the council. Creating access for all ASLC members is still an issue. Login accounts can only be created for active associate and life members of the ATA. This is why most information is sitting in public access section.
- Please submit documents in PDF format for uploading.
- Thanks given to April Tilson for outstanding work. Information has been transferred to new site.
- A collaborative area for executive will be created following the conference.
- Request was made for more teaching and learning ideas for the site. Please send your ideas and materials to mamirka@cbe.ab.ca.
- Updated brochure will be ready for the Beginning Teachers' Conference.

6.12 Conferences
ALC/ASLC Conference 2007: Dianne Leong-Fortier
- Sessions have been reduced from ten to six since the last conference.
- As of April 6 registration numbers were high.
- Dianne created a PowerPoint presentation. She encouraged committee to add academic libraries and school libraries.
- Thanks from president for role as conference chair.

Kaleidoscope 9: Cathy Yusep
- Report provided by Maria Mirka.
- Responses from invited speakers. Continuing invitation acceptance process. All invitees have expressed delight with the

DVD and mini kaleidoscope included in the invitation package .

- Planning continues. Online registration payment to be available by spring 2008.
- Designing a new logo to be used by K9 and future Kaleidoscope conferences.

ASLC/ETC Conference 2008: Donna Grove

- Joint conference with ETC to be held in Calgary on April 18–20, 2008. Pat Doyle is ETC cochair. Theme: "Mega Trends and 21st Century Learning."

6.13 Regional Reports

South East: Grace MacDougall

- Work to create collaborative connections to the social studies with fiction and nonfiction beyond the textbook. Model as a group and then return to schools.

Calgary: Jacquie Vincent

- Beach blanket books for summer reading was a final PD session.
- Regional awards banquet was held. Regional is losing a number of T-Ls to retirement.
- Projected initiatives for next year—PD on inquiry.

Edmonton: Jill Usher

- Provided by Fern Reirson with regrets from Jill Usher.
- In the fall, a training session was held with the Online Reference Centre.
- A strategic meeting with teachers and T-Ls looking at the council's goals. We are attempting to find our own half-day PD session during school time.
- Online survey to group for PD opportunities—school.
- Would like to see a template for T-Ls to enter their developed teaching resources on ALSC website.
- Four new executive members including two high school T-Ls.
- Edmonton Public's new superintendent is Edgar Schmidt.

Peace: Sherry Nasekin

- Centred membership is in Grande Prairie. Small in numbers. Ten are able to meet. One is a high school person. Vast geographic differences a challenge for membership in this region.
- Elementary schools working on assessment of information literacy skills, Online Reference Centre.
- New superintendent in Grande Prairie.

7. Election of Officers

- The following people are allowing their names to be considered for the following positions:
Conference cochair: Donna Grove, acclamation
Publications editor: Diane GallowaySolowan, acclamation
President-elect: open. Presidency is now two years; therefore, we don't require a president-elect for this year.
Fern Reirson, president. With a shift of two-year presidency, Fern Reirson becomes president moving from president-elect to president for a two-year term beginning at AGM 2007 to AGM 2009.
Donna Grove, treasurer
Lynda Smith, secretary
Maria Mirka, webmaster

8. Awards
Award of Merit: Diane GallowaySolowan
Nominated and presented by Fern Reirson. Recognized for joining different levels of teacher-librarianship, providing PD for the council and teachers of Alberta, and serving as ORC project coordinator who involves T-Ls in reviewing potential resources to add to ORC. Works with public libraries, government and Alberta Library, both as T-L and public librarian for 24 years.
Executive council member, lead teacher for the ATA Instructional Leadership PD group. Wrote and published articles professionally for provincial publications.
Award of Merit: Sheryl Connery
Nominated by Northwestern Regional. Presented in absentia by Sherry Nasekin. Acceptance speech read by Sherry Nasekin. Active force promoting learning and love of books. She retired last year and is currently in London.

9. Action Items
9.1 Report
Three goals outlined at the last AGM to be ongoing work.
9.2 Fees

- Brought forward from last year's AGM.
- Want to align with ETC.
- Executive council working on this. May no longer be an issue.
- Fees will remain at the $30 amount—advertise.
- Examine membership. Fort McMurray and Central Alberta still have members in these areas. Looking at how to set up regionals. North, Central and South to meet the needs of membership.

- Will look at teleconferencing and videoconferencing to establish meetings across the province. Will be examined closely over the next year. Some councils don't have regionals. Collect feedback to bring to the executive.

10. New Business
  10.1 Beginning Teachers' Conference: September 2007 in Edmonton: call for presenters. It is vital to have ASLC presenters at this conference. Not only do we raise the profile of our profession and of school libraries but also inform and educate new teachers as to what we do.
- Jacquie Vincent did last year—Diane GallowaySolowan promoted the council.
- Key places to present are at other regional conferences.
- Lyle Krause commented that it is a must to present to network with colleagues.
- Greg Jeffery—Beginning Teachers' Conference in Calgary and Edmonton.
- Dianne Leong-Fortier and Maria Mirka will cover Calgary.
- Fern Reirson will cover Edmonton.
- Display our new ASLC banner.
- Acknowledge Fern for her work on updating the display board. Consideration taken regarding FOIP (kids' faces).
- Contact conventions to present.

  10.2 Presentation of proposed future conference dates and plans:

School Year	Month	Cohost Group
2006/07	April	Alberta Library Conference
2007/08	April	Educational Technology Council
2008/09	November	Kaleidoscope (ASLC) (Consider one day of sessions at Alberta Library Conference in Jasper and/or AGM at Kaleidoscope in November with officers taking over in June 2009 or videoconference into Red Deer location)
2009/10	April/May	Explore Joint Alberta/Saskatchewan Teacher-Librarian Conference: ASLC and SSLA. Precedence has been by Western Canada School Administrators' conference.

- Irene—Rationale:
  - Under impression that this is the last year to be with ALC.
  - Felt that we honour Kaleidoscope as the annual conference, so members do not need to choose to use their financial resources.
  - Re-evaluating the conference schedule.
  - What would happen to the AGM for K9 year? Lyle will check into possibilities of videoconferencing. Networking meeting in Red Deer? Workday to develop goals?
- Lois noted that our liaison's term with ALC is to 2009. Lois believes she made a motion at the 2001 AGM. Diane Oberg thought the connection to ALC goes further back than 14 years. Began in the '80s. Be creative—Linda Shantz-Keresztes attends Ontario super conference. Have one day for school library day. Show our membership is growing. Have people come for one day at Alberta Library Conference.
- Lyle suggested we follow up on archives to provide clarity for the 2009 conference. Fern will follow up to locate a possible contract. (No motion found in previous years' AGM minutes.)

  10.3 Thank you to LAA and trustees for our liaison with them every second year for ALC conferences. Thank you to outgoing executive members. Irene welcomed Fern Reirson as new president. Old/new meeting immediately following the AGM led by Fern Reirson. Table officers meeting led by Fern on June 2 at Donna Grove's house, in Calgary. Fall meeting: September 21–22, Calgary. Donna to book ATA.

News and Awards from the Regionals

Southeastern, *Grace MacDougall*

Our small group of teacher-librarians met monthly in the 2006/07 school year. We focused on increasing connections with *Focus on Inquiry* to the new social studies documents. We linked appropriate literature and nonfiction materials and used a variety of book lists to achieve these reviews.

This fall, we will become familiar with the Shortgrass Library System that will be implemented in all schools.

We will be fortunate to host author Carol Matas this spring. She will be touring schools for nearly a week and plans to spend an evening with us as well.

The regional is struggling to continue. Personally, I submitted my letter of retirement in June. I might continue to work on a contract basis for a few months in 2007/08. My library is following the pattern of three others in the district, closing at least half of the space for a classroom. Many elementary schools are so full that they are taking the last available space to create more classrooms. The provincial guideline of 18 to 1 for primary classes is difficult to achieve in older buildings. Our school gave up the staff room for a kindergarten room, followed by the computer and music rooms, and now the library. This is happening in three other elementary schools. One school is literally boxing up the resources and using the space for students.

Grace MacDougall, Southeastern Regional president, retires. All the best!

To Grace
by Sharon Samcoe

"Roll up your sleeves
And get the job done!"
Could be Grace's motto
As a teacher-librarian.

For—
    Collaboration
    Technology
    Inquiry focus
    Advocacy
    Literacy
She inspires all the rest of us.

Demanding
Understanding
Creative and persistent.
Enthusiastic problem solver,
She's an asset to our district.

We wish her well as she makes the change
—probably a short one.
The pursuit of knowledge
And love of books can never be retired.

Calgary, *Jacquie Vincent*

We have endeavoured to offer professional development opportunities for members. On October 17, 2006, about 25 members attended Connecting to Evocative Literature (which followed WordFest and led into International School Library Day) with Alberta authors Tyler Trafford and Cathy Beveridge. Both authors are featured on the Calgary Board of Education's (CBE) supplemental resource list for the new social studies curriculum in Grades 4 and 7, and the CBE online book club, Wired for Words. They spoke about how they develop their stories, including research. Participants had an opportunity to talk about ways to connect literature to the curriculum for students' learning.

In January 2007, keynote speaker Diane GallowaySolowan from the Online Reference Centre presented Where Is Your Library in the Digital Age? She spoke about creating e-carts. Breakout sessions included

- the Calgary Public Library e-Library;
- Drs Shauna Rutherford and Slix Hayden, University of Calgary reference librarians, who spoke about the preparation of high school students for university research;
- Nicholas Glass from teachingbooks.net;
- and representatives from EBSCO databases and GALE databases.
  About 40 attended.

Twenty-four members attended the regional council breakfast at the Calgary Teachers' Convention on February 16, 2007.

On May 3, 2007, Patricia Harvie of Indigo-Chapters Books presented beach blanket books for summer reading. The regional's AGM followed immediately.

A retirement and awards banquet was held on June 7, 2007, to honour retiring teacher-librarians and winners of the Bev Anderson Award of Merit for Teacher-Librarians, the Bev Anderson Award of Merit for Administrators and the Tom Colbens Award for Library Assistants.

Wired for Words

by Linda Shantz-Keresztes

Wired for Words, a joint venture between the United Library Services (ULS) and the Calgary Board of Education, was a great success. On April 19, the annual sale evening at ULS found teacher-librarians from the popular online youth book club assisting local school librarians in selecting great reads for school-age children. Diane Langston, ULS manager of Children's Books and School Collection Development, was delighted by this first-time event with the Wired for Words team. All

(Left to right): Linda Steen, Hawkwood Elementary; Jacqueline Vincent, Langevin Science School; Linda Shantz-Keresztes, Forest Lawn High School; Diane Langston, ULS; and Patricia Farley, Hillhurst Elementary.

Wired for Words teacher-librarians are Calgary Regional members. Check out the Wired for Words site (www.wiredforwords.com) for great book suggestions for children aged 8 years through to mature readers. Wired for Words teacher-librarians are available for workshops promoting avid readership through an online book club for kids. Contact Linda Shantz-Keresztes (ljshantzkere@cbe.ab.ca) for more information.

Outstanding Calgary Principal Recognized for His Contribution to the Forest Lawn High School Library Program

The Bev Anderson Award of Merit for Administrators is presented by the Calgary Regional to recognize an outstanding contribution made by an administrator to a school library program. Tim Main, principal of Forest Lawn High School, is this year's recipient.

The following excerpt has been submitted by Linda Shantz-Keresztes, teacher-librarian at Forest Lawn High School, from her nomination and award presentation at the Calgary Regional annual retirement and awards banquet.

Tim Main is an exemplary principal in positioning the teacher-librarian as a learning leader of inquiry-based learning through information literacy and technology learning across all curricular areas.

This year I have been fortunate to arrive in a learning culture, such as Forest Lawn High School (FLHS), where the administrator understands the

important learning role that the school library and staff play in ensuring academic success for our diverse community of learners.

Tim embraces the library as the learning hub of the school through his administrative leadership with staff and students. This year, the library has taken on the title of Library Learning Central at FLHS with the amalgamation of the library, computer learning centre, career centre and student homework centre. Staff and students understand that Library Learning Central provides a wide variety of resources and services for supporting lifelong learning for the whole school community.

Tim acknowledges the vital leadership role played by the teacher-librarian. The focus of the school library program in support of the school's renewal plan is to ensure that all students are successful in their learning and prepared for their postsecondary futures. His strong and effective leadership in profiling the teacher-librarian within the school's leadership team also included my role as education technology liaison between our school and district technology leadership. This successfully profiled the teacher-librarian as a technology and learning leader, with a focus on inquiry-based learning across all curriculum disciplines.

Tim's awareness of the teacher-librarian as a key instructional leader is best demonstrated by his assignment of a 1.0 FTE teacher-librarian placement within a flexible timetable. Tim understands the complexity of the teacher-librarian's role in support-ing teachers, students and parents in a high school community of 1,600.

Tim Main, principal of Forest Lawn High School in Calgary, is presented with the Bev Anderson Award of Merit for Administrator by Linda Shantz-Keresztes, of the Calgary Regional.

With our school's diverse learning community, access to library computers is essential to students' ability to complete their classroom assignments. By increasing the library assistant time to 1.5 FTE, Tim enabled the library opening time to be extended from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM. The library assistants help students and teachers with computer technology issues, which has been extremely successful for the whole school community.

Tim also recognizes the need for ongoing profes-sional development for library staff in the area of new technologies and encourages a flexible arrange-ment for library staff to be trained during school time with other technology leaders in the school. With an updated library lab and wireless portable lab, the library staff has the proficiency and interest to become more technologically savvy as it pertains to computer issues and application software.

Our school has also been selected for the district "laptop for every teacher" project, which will provide professional development for staff. Library Learning Central will also acquire a new learning and teaching centre with the newest technologies for professional development, as supported by the school's upcoming Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AISI) project.

Tim has valued my leadership in forming a local teacher-librarian leadership group. He has spoken with our group and with other administrators regarding the potential of the teacher-librarian leadership group in supporting AISI initiatives on 21st century learning, technology and information literacy through inquiry-based learning.

Tim is a hands-on, approachable school adminis-trator. He has willingly met with me on a regular basis to gain a better understanding of the emerging role of the new breed of teacher-librarians who are trying to meet the needs of the 21st century learner. Tim's informal reflections during our discussions demonstrate his understanding of information literacy, inquiry-based learning and the importance of the library in supporting student learning through "just right" technology use. He has encouraged my leadership growth in a positive way by continually exploring how the Forest Lawn High School library can more effectively foster successful learning for all through site-based and virtual learning initiatives.

Tim Main is a greatly respected administrator, who has been an educator for 30 plus years and has just recently announced his upcoming retirement from the Calgary Board of Education to take on new educational challenges.

Greater Edmonton, *Jill Usher*

On October 11–12, 2006, Greater Edmonton Regional School Library Council (GERSLC) and Alberta Library's Online Reference Centre (ORC) offered a training session for teachers, teacher-librarians and library technicians to help maximize use of the ORC. Diane GallowaySolowan facilitated the workshop, and several representatives from the various online databases introduced their products including those recently added to the ORC. Both after-school sessions were well attended and informative.

A GERSLC strategy planning session was held on January 13, 2007, at M E LaZerte High School in Edmonton. All members were invited to attend. Nine members met to discuss the three goals of the ASLC: advocacy, inquiry and curriculum connections and other provincial initiatives. It was agreed that GERSLC support professional development collegial support instead of the advocacy initiative. It was recommended that we host regular focused professional development meetings where members could discuss and share issues/strategies/solutions that focus on curriculum connections and inquiry initiatives as well as any other identified priorities with each other.

At our April executive meeting we decided to plan for four teacher-librarian professional development days in 2007/08. Members will be surveyed to identify the top PD priorities of members and to determine the best day and time for these PD sessions. This survey will provide the information for PD planning for 2007/08.

Our AGM was held last June in Edmonton.

An issue of concern is the insufficient number of teacher-librarians interested and available to share the load. The same people are involved in most of the organizational aspects of the regional. It is challenging to get others involved when the pool we draw from is small and perhaps dwindling.

Todd Babiak, author of The Book of Stanley, *recently serialized in the* Edmonton Journal, *speaks at the GERSLC AGM in June 2007.*

Wendy Thurber Gratton Receives Award of Merit

What a school thinks about its library is a measure of what it thinks about education.

—*Harold Howe, former US Commissioner of Education*

Based on the quotation above, it is evident that Wendy Thurber Gratton believes in quality education and understands the importance of the school library program. When I came to Windsor Park Elementary School, I remember Marilyn Dale, the teacher-librarian who was there before me, saying that Wendy had made certain that there was money in the library budget. When administrators designate money for the library, it is evidence that they believe in the importance of the school library program. Although the allotted teacher-librarian time has decreased with the decrease in funding, Wendy has always ensured that a teacher-librarian was in place. I asked her how it was that she understood the role of the t-l since many administrators no longer seemed to, and she told me that she had worked with Julie Bentrud and Glen Huser during her teaching career. I immediately understood that she had worked with the best—no wonder a teacher-librarian was viewed as important!

Wendy has always emphasized my role as a collaborative one. I want to thank her for

- listening when I had concerns and successes to share;
- encouraging my specialist council work. The year I was provincial president, we had newspaper and television coverage regarding the role of the teacher-librarian and, of course, Wendy was always interviewed and shared her views about the necessity for teacher-librarians in schools;

Wendy Thurber Gratton (right), principal of Windsor Park Elementary School in Edmonton, is presented with an Award of Merit by Lois Barranoik of GERSLC.

- including the library as a regular agenda item at each staff meeting;
- inviting the Honourable Gene Zwozdesky to visit our school library when the Grade 3 teacher and I were teaching a collaborative unit. He asked some pertinent questions about the importance of teacher-librarians;
- highlighting the school library program during the board presentation two years ago. Just as Dianne Oberg states in an article found in *Teacher-Librarian* (February 2006, 15), "as mentors providing visibility and importance for the teacher-librarians, supportive principals spoke highly of the teacher-librarians in their schools and gave clear evidence that they trusted the teacher-librarians' knowledge and expertise." Thank you for being supportive in this way.

Although you are retiring, it is fitting to honour you with the Award of Merit. Administrative support is critical to the school library program and you have demonstrated this support through both speech and action. It is a well-deserved reward, Wendy.

Laurie Elkow Receives Award of Merit

by Fern Reirson

GERSLC presented an Award of Merit to Laurie Elkow, principal of Jackson Heights Elementary School, in Edmonton, for her commitment toward building exemplary school library programs. Laurie has long been a supporter of school libraries at numerous schools. As her school's teacher-librarian, when asked how Laurie can afford to have a teacher-librarian on staff, I can say that there is only one reason—priorities. As Laurie has been heard to say, "There is always money for what is a priority." How did this priority become a reality at Jackson Heights School?

Laurie cares about children first and foremost. She chose to have a teacher-librarian work directly with children and teachers daily instead of having extra administrative and clerical support in the school office. Laurie has recognized that a library is an ongoing investment. She has budgeted money to develop a new library collection toward meeting the standards outlined in *Achieving Information Literacy: Guidelines for School Libraries in Canada*. At Jackson Heights Elementary, she supported a shared leadership model and worked with the school's instructional leadership team, which was composed of a teacher-librarian, classroom teachers and support staff. Laurie recognized the role of a teacher-librarian as that of a "teacher of teachers" and relied on her teacher-librarian's expertise and leadership in areas of curriculum, collection, technology and inquiry development. She acted as a critical friend and cheerleader for school libraries, offering an outside view to question practices and goals. "Why are you doing that? Why do wish to do that?" Laurie not only supported but initiated opportunities to promote school libraries in our school district and province by hosting special events at Jackson Heights related to school libraries or working with students, staff and parents to inform our school board and/or others about the important role of a school library program in the life of a school. Even when other school needs and voices demanded attention, Laurie kept the development of an exemplary school library constantly in focus. She did not permit other priorities to distract us from our goal.

Laurie has been a friend of school libraries because she puts children first, acts as an investor in school library programs, and as a critical friend, cheerleader and mentor for the leadership of a teacher-librarian in her school. Thank you, Laurie, for your exemplary support of school libraries in your role as a school principal and leader.

Laurie Elkow (left), principal of Jackson Heights Elementary, in Edmonton, is presented with an Award of Merit by Fern Reirson, GERSLC past president.

Guidelines for Contributors..........

Teacher-Librarian Today is published to
- enhance the competencies of school library professionals;
- increase knowledge, understanding and awareness of the role of school library programs in education; and
- stimulate thinking, explore new ideas, offer various viewpoints and share information about learning resources and school library programs.

Articles from all educators are welcome. Teacher-librarians are especially invited to write about aspects of teacher-librarianship and school library programs that interest them and to share ideas with colleagues. Submissions are requested that will stimulate personal reflection, theoretical consideration and practical application. Articles that present differing perspectives; innovative, cooperatively planned and taught programs; trends and issues in teacher-librarianship; research findings; or reviews or evaluations of learning resources in all media are appreciated. From time to time, the editor may identify specific themes or topics for special issues and invite submissions on these topics.

Manuscripts should be submitted by e-mail with an accompanying hard copy mailed to the editor. A cover page should include the contributor's name, professional position, degree(s) held, address, and telephone and fax numbers. A recent photograph and related biographical information are also requested.

Manuscripts may be up to 3,500 words long. References to literature made in the text of the submission should appear in full in a list at the end of the article. Literature not cited in the text but providing background material or further reading should be listed similarly.

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