

PNLA QUARTERLY

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
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welcome to spring



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THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

PNLA QUARTERLY

PNLA Quarterly: The Official Publication of the Pacific Northwest Library Association

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President's Message

DANIEL MASONI



While living in Kansas, I once crawled over a quarter mile to get within camera range of the eagle in the Flint Hills National Wildlife Refuge. Looking out my window this morning, I can count nineteen eagles resting on the cliff-face behind the Unalaska Public Library. Our treeless landscape in the Aleutians allows the eagles to gather to hunt and fish together as well as group for mutual defense from foxes. You should see what happens to any groceries that are left in the rear box of a pickup truck... Well, it's best said that they don't last long. Like the eagles up here in Unalaska, library professionals must sometimes group to ward off predators and share knowledge.

Don't forget to book early for the August PNLA Conference in Boise, Idaho. Attendees will enjoy that great August weather in Boise, as well as that special feeling one gets from communing with one's peers. Mary DeWalt, Conference Chair, has an excellent set of programs lined up, ranging from the Internet and Censorship to Technical Processing and Personnel. And, don't forget that Sherman Alexie will be our keynote speaker. Book early, and hopefully often, as Alexie promises a program that will appeal to both library professionals and staff members.

I'd also like to introduce you all to Linda Frederikson's work. Linda has done the Employment section of the PNLA Web site for several years. In February, Linda brought her skill to bear on the site as a whole as Larry McCallum moved to new employment in Colorado. Check out www.pnla.org for announcements, employment possibilities, the Young Readers Choice Award, and much more.

From the Editor

MARY BOLIN

Calling all authors! What would you like to share with your colleagues? What expertise do you have, what issues concern you, what ideas or experiences would be useful or interesting to others? Write an article and send it to me! The *PNLA Quarterly* welcomes contributions from all library types on the full range of topics in librarianship and related areas. I love to get an email message with the subject line "Article for PNLA Quarterly," so make my day and send me the article you've been dying to write. I've been very gratified with the contributions I've gotten so far, so you'll be in good company. I'd also welcome ideas for article topics and potential authors. Authors need not come from the PNLA region, so if you have colleagues elsewhere who might have a good article to contribute, please let me know. I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

MISSION

The Pacific Northwest Library Association is an organization of people who work in, with, and for libraries. Its mission is to facilitate and encourage communication, networking, and information exchange for the development and support of libraries and librarianship in the Pacific Northwest.

Call For Submissions

All contributors are required to include a short, 100-word biography and mailing address with their submissions. Each contributor receives a complimentary copy of the issue in which his/her article appears.

Submit feature articles of 1,000-6,000 words on any topic in librarianship or a related field.

We are always looking for short, 400-500 word descriptions of great ideas in libraries. If you have a new project or innovative way of delivering service that you think others might learn from, please submit it.

Summer 2003 Issue (Deadline June 15, 2003):
Fall 2003 Issue (Deadline September 15, 2003):

There are no themes for these issues. Please submit any articles or items of interest.

Please email submissions to mbolin@uidaho.edu in rtf or doc format.

Submission Guidelines

Format

Please submit all documents as either a .doc or an .rtf

Font style

PNLA Quarterly publishes in the Verdana font, size 8.

Spacing and punctuation:

- Please use a single space after a period.
- Please use full double dashes (i.e., "--" not "--")
- Please place punctuation within the quotation marks.
- Please omit <http://> when quoting Web site addresses

- Please place titles within text in italics (not underlined).
- Please do not capitalize nouns such as "librarian" unless the word is included in a title.

Spelling

Web site, Internet, email, ILL; please use the spelling conventions of your country.

Citation Style

Please use whatever style you wish, but please do not use footnotes.

Additional Information

Please submit a 100-word biography and postal address with article.

Idaho Court Assistance is Library Assistance

RUTH PATTERSON FUNABIKI

Increasingly, judicial systems in the Northwest are becoming information providers, and libraries are significant beneficiaries of this movement. In Idaho this development is known by the terms "court assistance" or "courthouse assistance."

Librarians are often on the front lines when patrons need information about the law. Patrons turn to libraries for legal information, especially on evenings and weekends, when traditional legal services are not available. Although constrained from participating in legal matters, most librarians are pleased to help patrons locate basic legal materials such as legislation or state code sections. Idaho's Court Assistance Project, a new service, is a powerful tool for librarians to use in helping citizens who need information about navigating the Idaho court system.

History of the Idaho Project

In Idaho, the Court Assistance Offices (CAO) project originated with the Idaho Supreme Court's Committee to Increase Access to the Courts. In recent years, increasing numbers of *pro se* (self-represented) litigants were appearing in Idaho courts. In some jurisdictions the vast majority of litigants participating in family law cases were *pro se*. Citizens attempting to handle important matters such as protection orders, power of attorney, or divorce, were novices when confronting the mechanics of legal forms and procedures. Court employees, whose workloads were already on the rise, were overwhelmed by the additional responsibility of providing instruction. Committee members recognized that this trend was not likely to change, and the Committee decided to address the problems that resulted when large numbers of untrained citizens represented themselves in civil legal matters.

Patrick Costello, a former magistrate judge, directs the Idaho Court Assistance Offices Project. Based at the University of Idaho, the products and services provided by the Project distribute information and instructions far beyond traditional judicial services.

In Idaho, there are three aspects of Court Assistance: 1) live assistance in county courthouses, 2) videos distributed to public libraries, and 3) a Web site with directories, printable forms, and instructions. The videos and the Web site are the primary resources for public librarians responding to patron information needs.

How to Use Court Assistance Materials

A good starting point for librarians and library patrons is the Web page entitled "The Courthouse Assistance Offices Project" found at www2.state.id.us/cao/. The Web page identifies county courthouses with CAO personnel available. It also lists other CAO services and products.

The CAO Web site is not limited to Court Assistance Project services. It also lists toll free numbers for patrons to call for lawyer referrals and basic legal advice, such as the Idaho State Bar legal advice hotline. Links to an assortment of printable brochures and pamphlets produced by other organizations and government agencies are also provided. The topics include a wide variety of subjects such as, "How Do You Find A Good Lawyer?" or "Una Introducción Al Sistema Judicial de Idaho" or "Thinking About Bankruptcy?"

Local CAO offices may have their own Web pages. The Ada County Office is a good example, at: www.adaweb.net/cao.

Paper (and Video) Products

One of the earliest products of the Project is a series of video productions in Spanish and English. These videos are directed at citizens who might not know the structure of the Idaho court system. The videos also address the specifics of domestic violence and custody procedures. The Court Assistance Project videos were distributed free to publicly funded The CAO Web site (www2.state.id.us/cao) addresses the needs of patrons whose needs extend to filling out legal forms and filing them appropriately.

Ruth Patterson Funabiki is the Technical Services Librarian at the University of Idaho Law Library. Prior to accepting her present position in 1983, she worked in academic libraries, a music library, and a law firm library. She is a member of the LILI Board, and she served on the Membership and Book Award Committees of the Idaho Library Association. She can be reached at: funabiki@uidaho.edu

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Using email, voice-over Internet protocol, instant messaging, interactive chat, and other technological tools, librarians are designing products, services, and procedures to provide reference services to patrons and customers in new, innovative ways. In the United States, many of these new services are made possible by federal dollars administered by state library agencies in the form of Library Service and Technology Act (LSTA) grant funds.

In April 2002, the Washington State Library Commission awarded LSTA grants to seven virtual reference projects in the state. The intent of these grant awards was to encourage collaboration between different library types and to enhance remote access to library resources and services through electronic methods. Institutions participating in the grant cycle include academic, public, and special libraries.

At Washington State University (WSU) Vancouver and Clark College, the \$30,000 demonstration project is being used to develop a cooperative virtual reference desk service that benefits students at both institutions, located in the southwest corner of Washington State. Specialized software provides WSU Vancouver and Clark College librarians with the ability to offer reference and instructional assistance in a live chat environment with the Internet being used to provide real-time, synchronous assistance to students, regardless of location.

Located only about ten miles apart, WSU Vancouver and Clark College have user populations, collections, and services that are correlated but different. Clark College is a community college serving a large commuter student population in vocational and academic transfer programs. WSU Vancouver also serves non-residential students, but at the junior, senior, and graduate level. Although students from Clark College may eventually transfer to WSU Vancouver and although students from both institutions often take classes on the different campuses, each institution is a separate entity. In the past, librarians often met together on an informal basis but the libraries do not share an administrative structure, staff, budget, catalog, or database resources.

Before actual work on the project could begin, many decisions had to be made. Virtual reference would be a new service, requiring new software, and it would be one that crossed institutional boundaries. What would be the scope of the service? Who would be the primary clientele? How would privacy and confidentiality of user transcripts be handled? What sources could and could not be used? Who would staff the virtual reference desk? What competencies would be required of those staffing the desk? How would staff be trained and how would training be delivered? When would the service be offered? How would students get access to the service? What technological requirements would be required on the librarian and the user sides? How would grant award costs and donated time be shared? What would the service be called? How would it be marketed?

From the initial grant award date until the first day of live service in September 2002, a number of tasks were accomplished. We chose "24/7 Reference" software and received vendor training in July. After naming the service "Ask a Librarian," we branded and customized Web pages within the software and integrated the new software into current library Web site pages. We programmed scripts and messages within the software, trained and scheduled staff, determined a schedule, decided on some initial procedures and policies, and did extensive testing of the software before going live. During fall term, the WSU Vancouver/Clark College virtual reference desk was open seven days, twenty-seven hours per week, with eight librarians and reference assistants from both institutions participating in the project. Our initial goals during this period were accomplished in that we became familiar with the software, finalized interagency agreements, and began gathering data to help determine

Ask a Librarian: Implementing a Virtual Reference Project in Washington State

LINDA FREDERIKSEN

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Linda Frederiksen is Access Services Librarian at Washington State University, Vancouver. She can be reached at: frederik@vancouver.wsu.edu

Dream Weavers—

Bringing cultures, ideas & services together.

CONFERENCE FLIER

FEBRUARY 2003

MARK THE DATE

Pre-Registration Deadline	June 27
Pre-Conference Registration Deadline	July 11
Pre-Conference Workshops	August 13
Conference	August 14 & 15
PLNA Board Meeting	August 16

Idaho To Host Annual Conference

Mark your calendars for August 13-15 and join us for the PNLA annual conference in Boise, Idaho. This year's theme, *Dream Weavers—Bringing cultures, ideas & services together*, is planned with the voices of membership in mind. Conference Planning Chair Mary DeWalt says the five tracks were formed based upon feedback from last year's conference. Here's a brief preview of what's in store.

Intricate Threads

The Management/Special Issues track will emphasize buildings from concept to fundraising, including how to make them environmentally sound. Other programs will include state library issues, how to have a successful election/bond, fundraising, and analyzing your library's services.

Interwoven Movements

The Adult Service Track will present adult authors and poets. There will be programs on readers advisory, book discussion groups, networking with other non-profits and lots of information on outdoor Idaho.

Lifelong Patterns—Foundations for Kids & Teens

A children's author panel, Teen Advisory Boards, raising the bar for children's and teens reference service, arts-based learning to support literacy, incorporating brain development research into story times, and the presentation of the Young Readers Choice nominees are some of the choices you can choose from this track.

Interweaving Books & Bytes

Information Technology/Library Instruction ses-

sions will feature a host of current issues: Virtual Reference, the A to Zs of Information Literacy for First Year Students, Viewing Pornography on Library Computers, and Adaptive Technology for Special Needs users.

Tapestried Realms

Pondering how to build a diverse staff/student base, find time to get your graduate degree in library science, or reexamine existing practices within your workplace and community? Pop into programs under the support staff/potpourri track for tips including some from an award winning paraprofessional.



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *DoubleTree Riverside Hotel*
www.doubletree.com
- *Idaho Shakespeare Festival*,
www.idahoshakespeare.org
- *Boise Convention & Visitors Bureau*,
www.boise.org
- *Western Idaho Fair*,
www.idahofair.com
- *Discover Idaho*,
www.visitid.org
- *Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument*
www.nps.gov/hafo/home.htm
- *Idaho Human Rights Education Center*,
www.idaho-humanrights.org
- *Visit Sun Valley*,
www.visitsunvalley.com
- *PNLA*, www.pnla.org

You've read his books. You've seen his movies. Now hear what Sherman Alexie has to say.

Author, poet and screenwriter, Sherman Alexie grew up on the Spokane Indian Reservation. His first book, *The Business of Fancydancing* was selected by the *New York Times* as a "1992 Notable Book of the Year," and his

film of the same title opened at the 2002 Sundance Film Festival.

His works include *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* (1993), the basis for the acclaimed film *Smoke Sig-*

nals; Indian Killer (1996); *Reservation Blues* (1995); and *Toughest Indian in the World* (2000). Attend his Keynote Address, *The Business of Fancydancing*, Wednesday, August 13, 7 p.m.



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Conference Sponsors & Exhibitors

- Idaho Library Association
- OCLC
- Veicon
- ACLU
- ProQuest
- EBSCO
- Integra
- Pacific Northwest Library Association

Opportunities Not to be Missed

Wednesday, August 13, brings you two pre-conference workshops giving you the world of ideas through a cultural lens.

A morning session highlights human rights and includes a tour of the newly dedicated Idaho Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial. Les Bock of the Idaho Human Rights Education Center and Azam Houle of Boise Public Library present *Human Rights From a New Perspective*.

PNLA and the ACLU of Idaho are joining together to cosponsor a preconference featuring a nationally-known speaker on free speech and protecting your community's intellectual freedom rights from

censorship and other threats in our troubled times.

Each workshop includes lunch and is scheduled for just half a day so you will have time to “train” tour the area and take a relaxing float down the beautiful Boise River.

Thursday and Friday, you’re invited to enjoy free breakfasts sponsored by the Idaho Library Association, Veicon, and OCLC. Or start Friday morning with *Simple Stretches for Home or Office* and juice.

And be sure to participate in our Exhibit Scavenger Hunt, IF Auction, and Idea Exchange.

Experience the Idaho Shakespeare Festival on Thursday with dinner and a performance of Oscar Wilde’s *The Importance of Being Earnest* under the stars. Relax with friends at our annual CORKS/CANS/POPS event and our Friday Banquet featuring the Kawa Taiko Drummers.



Make plans to stick around for the Western Idaho Fair, August 15-23 or visit Southwest Idaho’s various other attractions.

Integrating Curriculum in School Library Media Programs through Flexible Scheduling

JUDITH BAKER

Schools traditionally operate on strict schedules. Bells ring to start the day, call students to lunch, end the day, and sometimes summon students to their next classes. Minutes count. Every bit of time in both the student and the teacher day is planned. And yet one area in particular within the school could benefit from relaxing this strict allocation of time. That area is the school library media center.

While traditionally school libraries have operated under the same strict schedules as other special classes, more and more schools are discovering that by opening up the media center to more flexible use, the library can become the center of integrated learning that provides an authentic bridge between curriculum studied in the classroom and the lifelong need to acquire, analyze, and use information.

Commonly called flexible scheduling, this approach is one way of establishing a strong tie between curriculum and the learning center. Through flexible scheduling, classes do not have specific times each week to come to the library for lessons, but rather library instruction is open to classes when it is needed. Library instruction is an extension of the skills being taught at that particular time in that particular classroom. Flexible scheduling may also include a flexible schedule for student book checkout.

Students still receive formal instruction in the learning center, but an open schedule allows teachers to arrange as much or as little time during any given week for lessons in the media center. Teachers schedule the time when the curriculum in the classrooms drives an authentic need to use the media center resources. In such a scenario, one particular class may be in the library several days in a row during one week, and have no library instruction during times when curriculum does not call for use of the learning center (van Deusen: 16).

Rather than using a fixed schedule to provide instructional time in the library, teachers choose when such a time is most appropriate to their needs, based on projects and assignments they are working on in the classroom. Integration to the curriculum exists when flexible scheduling allows students to learn the information skills they need for particular projects, be they note-taking or evaluation of resources.

Another aspect of flexible scheduling is to give access not only to classes when they have the need, but also to individual students throughout the school day. An open library schedule provides time for individual students to use the resource throughout the week rather than only during scheduled time (Ohlrich: 35).

A key component of flexible scheduling is collaboration time between the media center teacher and classroom teachers. It is through cooperative discussion between library teacher and classroom teacher that librarians are more able to provide authentic instruction.

Why Flexible Scheduling Is Important

An open library schedule in which students and teachers determine the appropriate times to use the library based on their curriculum needs promotes active learning. The American Association of School Librarians' book *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* charges school librarians with the job not of teaching in isolation, but rather, of playing an active role as partner in the educational process. Additionally, the learning center teacher needs to be the leader in developing information literacy. Education has long emphasized authentic learning, the idea that student learning is most pronounced when learning has a purpose. By integrating curriculum between classroom and library, literacy skills become more than skills learned in isolation, but rather an integral part of students' abilities to actively use information literacy skills in a realistic way. By providing students with a learning center where they are free to come as the need arises, or where they come as a class when skills become useful, students are engaged in active learning (van Deusen: 17).

In isolation, skills taught in the library—note-taking, finding print sources, searching for Internet sources, evaluating sources, writing

Judy Baker is in her first year as learning center teacher at Prairie Hill School in Cary, Illinois. Prairie Hill School is in its first year as a 5th and 6th grade building. This year has been a year of transition for the learning center and all the classroom teachers. After a slow start, classroom teachers are working collaboratively with the learning center to coordinate classroom work with research available in the learning center. For the past seven years, Baker was a fifth grade classroom teacher. She can be reached at: jbaker@cary26.k12.il.us

bibliographies – are skills that offer no real transfer to student development as a life-long learner. As such, these are *merely* means to find—not use—information. According to Kreiser and Hortin (361), more critical learning takes place in the library when it is used for authentic research, including “[interpretation], critical evaluation, reflection and appreciation of resources, research, and materials.”

As part of a study on how effectively school media centers have been in implementing ideals expressed in *Information Power*, McCarthy was part of the team that investigated barriers to successful use of the school library. After budgetary concerns, the area most often cited as a detriment to integration of curriculum was lack of a flexible schedule (211). Findings concluded that rigid schedules offered little time for collaboration and fewer chances to integrate the curriculum (209). Further, collaboration and time to do it are essential to providing quality services in the learning center (208).

As resources available in a school media center change, information is easier to retrieve. Technology allows us to find, copy, and store information with ease. A wider application of information literacy is through analyzing the materials and resources, techniques that require practice by doing for a purpose (Kreiser and Hortin: 361).

Another reason given for the advantages of flexible scheduling is that students receive more individual attention as they look for and use materials for which they have a specific need (362).

By opening the media center to students through flexible classroom scheduling and open time for them to browse, students make greater use of materials and begin to see the library as a valuable resource. According to a study by Kresier and Hortin (362), students who were able to use the library for specific needs, reported a more positive attitude, and consequentially the library was used more by students.

Another advantage often cited of flexible library scheduling is that it allows more collaboration time between media center teacher and classroom teachers (van Deusen: 18). Key to improved integration of the library with existing curriculum and as a support for information literacy is the time for teachers to work together to plan activities that enhance integration. *Information Power* advocates collaboration between all members of the school staff in this endeavor.

Components of Flexible Scheduling

In the role of instructional consultant, the librarian is in a position to support the teacher’s instruction in such a way that students gain meaningful experiences in the library/media center to relate to work they do in the classroom. As a consultant, the librarian needs not only to work collaboratively with teachers to plan integrated activities, but also to provide support materials for use by the classroom teacher. This consultation role increases with the addition of support staff to help in the library with clerical and non-teaching related tasks (van Deusen: 18).

Through a flexible schedule in the media center, the teacher librarian’s role of educational consultant includes addressing learning standards applicable to information literacy. One of the English/Language Arts Standards requires reading skills to include finding, choosing, and using relevant information. Without instruction on how to conduct a search – either through a library catalog or on the Internet—students are faced with a sometimes-limitless range of choices in materials. Through instruction based on content directly related to work in the curriculum, students can learn not only to find all these sources, but also how to narrow down the

choice to material which is appropriate for the current lesson (Summers: 30). Rather than teaching students merely to locate materials, learning center teachers help students learn to analyze the information (Kreiser and Hortin: 361). The process rather than the actual material is emphasized, but by basing the process on material with which students are familiar, it becomes an integral part of the lesson.

Another standard that can be wholly supported by the media center is students’ application of complex thinking and problem solving skills when interacting with media. Students are asked to make critical judgments in their use of materials. By allowing significant periods of time for students to work in the library, they become more familiar with what it has to offer and more adept at analyzing and evaluating information sources (Summers: 30).

School Culture

In order to successfully establish flexible scheduling for the library, a certain culture needs to exist—or be established—within the school. An important component is that administrators, teachers, and students recognize that when a student has a need to find information, he or she should be able to find it within a reasonable amount of time, while the student has the interest. By having library resources available at many times during a day, this need will be met expediently (van Deusen: 17).

A second component of the school culture necessary for open scheduling in the learning center is the willingness of teachers and the learning center teacher to allow time to work collaboratively. In many districts, library time provides time for teachers. Under this configuration, not only will they lose planning time, they will have to allow additional time to work with the media center teacher. The media center teacher must also allot time from a busy day to meet with classroom teachers.

Because a curriculum that is integrated into the school library permits students to come to the library at a time that facilitates their learning, classroom teachers and the librarian must plan lessons together so that student needs can be determined. By meeting together to plan what the classroom teacher’s objectives are for any particular lesson, curricular integration by the librarian can include literature, print, and non-print information resources, and lessons that supplement classroom instruction (Kreiser and Hortin: 381). Librarians are responsible for understanding the curriculum at each grade level, as well as determining what materials would be appropriate for the assignment relative to timeliness, relevancy, and developmental levels of the students (Weeks: 56).

This classroom teacher-library teacher collaboration means that librarians can be available to teachers when the need arises. It is through the flexible library schedule that librarians can provide not only services to children, but also services to teachers.

A third part of school culture that is important to establishing a fluid library schedule is the principal’s support of such a program. Research by van Deusen indicates that if principals expect librarians to collaborate with teachers, the collaboration is more likely to occur. Principal support of a non-traditional library schedule reinforces for all teachers the importance of collaboration in helping students become information literate through use of the media center. (17). Further, Lankford asserts that flexible access to information instruction is most successful when not only librarians, but principals, support the concept (21).

cont.

Integrating Curriculum in School Library Media Programs through Flexible Scheduling - cont.

Positive Effects Of Flexible Scheduling

The positive results of making the learning center available to students at times they most need it is significant. Through open accessibility to the library, students are allowed more exposure to all types of materials—non-print as well as print. According to Kreiser and Hortin, students develop a more positive attitude to the library when they have greater access to it. This not only includes allowing students to find research materials, but also to support their recreational reading (363). Kreiser and Hortin further cited a study by Nolan (1989) in which fifth grade students used the library more for enjoyment as well as research when the library was made more available to them (362).

An environment that encourages non-planned trips to the learning center has been cited as helping develop students as active learners. If students have access to resources as needs arise, the constructivist approach to learning is engaged. When that happens, students are more willing to search a variety of print and electronic resources (van Deusen: 17). In addition, teachers find students are more likely to explore topics in more depth when they have access to information when they need it (Lankford: 23).

Flexible scheduling is also found to enhance the individual attention students receive in the learning center. As students interact with librarians on topics in which they are currently engaged, students benefit from personalized attention (Kreiser and Hortin: 362).

Establishing A Flexible Schedule

Establishing flexible scheduling in the library/media center involves a variety of strategies. Among them are correlating skills taught within the library curriculum with what is taught in classrooms; access on a flexible basis; collaboration between classroom teacher and library teacher; support of administration; and learning based on making resources available when they are needed (van Deusen: 16).

First of all, flexible scheduling does not mean *no* schedule. Rather, it means scheduling according to the needs of students rather than by time increments. Flexibility means the schedule can be changed, and that time is provided for students to use the media center other than those blocked out in increments equally to each class each week (Fox: 10).

Flexibility can also mean who teaches the lesson. In a collaborative setting, the classroom teacher may be the better person to provide instruction during time that students are in the learning center. Additionally, librarian and classroom teachers may find it more advantageous to work together in a lesson using a team teaching model of instruction (Ohlrich: 38).

Scheduling on a flexible basis also involves flexibility relative to the developmental levels of children. While students in the intermediate grades may be better served by offering library time when they are working on particular projects in the classroom, the needs of younger children may be for a fixed schedule for checkout and return of materials. Even within a fixed schedule for lower grades, the learning center teacher may find that these students occasionally need extra time relative to what they are working on in the curriculum. With a flexible schedule, teachers in lower grades may schedule additional time when they need it (Fox: 10).

Additionally, students in intermediate grades may require prescribed time each week for checkout of recreational materials. Scheduling should recognize these needs and may

call for time that children also are exposed to guidance in selecting materials for recreational reading (van Deusen: 17). The key to flexible scheduling is to recognize the developmental needs of students, and to make sure that not only research needs are met, but also the joy of reading.

When providing a flexible schedule, the learning center teacher also needs to remember to allow time within each day for his or her own planning. This planning time may be used for collaboration among teachers or working independently to provide materials and lessons appropriate to curriculum needs (Fox: 11).

Another important facet of establishing a flexible learning center schedule is allowing time for collaboration. Collaboration begins with the learning center teacher establishing what should be mastered at each grade level. While working with classroom teachers on integrating lessons between classroom and library, these skills are incorporated within lessons students are learning in the classroom (Ohlrich: 36).

Collaboration not only allows the librarian to work with students on curricular areas they work on in the classroom, but also allows classroom teachers to build on the lessons students have learned during library time. As the learning center teacher and the classroom teacher collaborate on skills, the classroom teacher is able to tie what students have learned in the learning center with what they are working on in the classroom (Ohlrich: 37).

Flexible scheduling not only includes assisting classroom teachers with research endeavors, but also providing support materials for topics students are studying in the classroom. For example, if students are learning about the Revolutionary War, the learning center teacher, through collaboration with the classroom teacher, might provide literary support with "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere."

Another important part of establishing a flexible schedule is to make the services of the learning center well known. Librarians are responsible for publicizing services within the school. Librarians may want to keep classroom teachers abreast of the various reading programs sponsored by the library. Learning center teachers need to let classroom teachers know about programs run through the learning center, such as National Reading Week, Dr. Seuss Day, Rebecca Caudill awards, or any other programs supported by the library (Fox: 11). Flexible scheduling means that librarians can run a variety of programs in the library that support reading. To make these programs successful, classroom teachers need to be involved. Involvement can also include parents and other community members who might join in planned programs offered within the library. Involvement by volunteers could include reading stories that relate to areas covered in the curriculum, or about topics in which they have expertise.

Establishing a flexible schedule would be difficult to accomplish without a support staff to help the learning center teacher with administrative tasks. Additionally, support staff also provides access for students to the library when the learning center teacher is working with student groups or meeting with teachers or teams (van Deusen: 18).

Careful planning is an important element to establishing a library service system within a school that is not dependent on fixed library times. The question of media center instruction is not *what* skills will be taught, but rather *when* they will be taught.

Integrating Curriculum in School Library Media Programs through Flexible Scheduling - cont.

Planning involves collaborating with teachers early in the year to establish a rough schedule for the entire year. Teachers provide input to the content they intend to cover at what time (using a scope and sequence they provide early in the semester), as well as the developmental levels of their students. Classroom teacher and library teacher then collaborate on the types of information skills that need to be part of the curriculum at what times. A schedule is set, allowing time for assessment of library skills. Often blocks of time are scheduled during periods when students will be working on projects that require extensive library use. Adjustments can be made in the schedule as the semester progresses (Fox: 11). Flexibility is the key to success.

The librarian's job in planning is to clearly decide and communicate to the classroom teacher the skills that will be taught. He or she will decide what to teach and how to teach it. Through an understanding of the curriculum used in the classroom, the library teacher coordinates the information skills to integrate with the curriculum (van Deusen: 16). Additionally, since the library teacher works with all grade levels, he or she is responsible for determining the skills taught at various grade levels so they can spiral with the curriculum (Ohlrich: 36).

Planning also involves establishing the library teacher's schedule for necessary planning time and lunch. Additionally, time needs to be allowed to select material needed by classroom teachers, as well as for various administrative tasks required in the library.

Flexible scheduling also requires a plan for providing assessment. Again, library teachers need to collaborate to decide how students will be assessed on information skills, and how that information should be shared with the classroom teacher. Assessment could involve collaborative grading on final projects, with the librarian providing input on the portion of the project directly related to the library lesson (Ohlrich: 37).

Keeping track of skills taught for each class is also necessary. One way to do this is to list skills to be covered in a plan book, then record dates they are covered for each class. The library teacher also needs to keep a record of special library activities such as book talks or other actions promoting reading. Additional record keeping involves the time each classroom spends in the library so that time can be equally distributed throughout the year (Ohlrich: 38).

Not All Support Flexible Scheduling

While much current literature supports a flexible schedule for school library/learning centers, not all school librarians agree. One concern is that teachers would not support such a schedule because they lose valuable planning time of their own if students are not assigned weekly time in the library. In addition to losing their own planning time, they have to find additional time to collaborate with the learning center teacher (Ohlrich: 38).

Johnson supports a fixed library schedule for a variety of reasons. Among them is that the learning center is not only a source for developing information literacy, but also the place where students should be exposed to literature and the joys of reading. By eliminating a regular time for children to go to the library, he contends, the library is no longer in a position to help develop lifelong readers. Additionally, when library time is scheduled to integrate with curricular projects only,

children lose the opportunity to practice information literacy skills on a more regular, but smaller basis. Lastly, the onus on scheduling time in the library is placed on already too-busy classroom teachers. Some may never find the time, so their students are denied the library instruction (Johnson: 39).

Regardless of the lack of unanimous support, flexible scheduling in a school media learning center is an important way to assure schools meet the goals established in *Information Power*. By providing students with access to resources, materials, and instruction when they need it, the school library plays an active role in helping children develop lifelong information literacy skills.

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Comic Books in My Library?

TABITHA SIMMONS

Yes. Comic books do belong in your library and every library. Now that graphic novels are widely available, it is possible to insert comic books into any library collection.

Let's begin with a definition of the term "graphic novel." Every picture is a piece of the story in a graphic novel. It is the dynamic format of image and word that delivers meaning and enjoyment to graphic novel readers. Whether fiction or factual, graphic novels rely on the fusion of visual components and verbal text to communicate. Graphic novel readers have learned to understand print, but can also decode facial and body expressions, the symbolic meanings of certain images and postures, metaphors and similes, and other social and literary nuances teenagers are mastering as they move from childhood to maturity. Picture books combine images with words. While the illustrations repeat the verbal text in a picture book, the sequential art within a graphic novel supplies germane aspects of the narrative that the words do not. The reader is called upon to understand what is happening in and between the sequences of images as well as in the verbal text. Like any other esthetic insight, the ability to "read" images that portray character, mood, and tone must be developed through experience. Many librarians identify all such image and word co-dependent works as "graphic novels."

So, you might ask, what can graphic novels do for my library that our other offerings do not? According to ALA and YALSA, graphic novels can do a great deal for your library and its patrons. Comic book collections in libraries can (and do) generate favorable publicity for the library. Librarians with comic book collections notice that word-of-mouth about the new service brings new patrons to the library. In addition, as a part of your collection, graphic novels will:

Assist Poor Readers - Comics and graphic novels are excellent tools for use with children and young adults with poor reading skills.

Connect with Visual Learners - As educators become increasingly aware of the importance of different learning styles, it is clear that comic books can be a powerful tool for reaching visual learners.

Develop Strong Language Arts Skills - Several studies have shown that students who read comic books regularly have better vocabularies and are more likely to read above grade-level.

Encourage Unmotivated and "Dormant" Readers - Teachers often use non-book materials to encourage reading. Comic books are an ideal medium to spark interest, equate reading with enjoyment, and develop the reading habit.

Convey Educational Messages - Government agencies, the military, museums, and other nonprofit organizations have long used educational comics to reach general audiences.

Stimulate Readers to Explore Other Literature - Many comic book fans become avid book readers. Comics can stimulate interest in all types of fiction (fantasy, sci-fi, historical, etc.) as well as mythology, legends, and nonfiction.

Engage Adult Readers - The average age of American comic book readers is 25. Many readers who were avid fans as teenagers continue reading into adulthood, broadening their taste in comic book genres to reflect more mature interests.

Kids like comic books. This is, without question, the most compelling reason for libraries to purchase them. In addition, many comic books and graphic novels represent serious works worthy of serious attention. While graphic novels are an incredible resource for children, they are not just for children. Graphic novels are available for every interest and age group. Comic books also represent a uniquely American art form and an important aspect of popular culture that should be preserved. Traditionally, libraries have collected, disseminated, and preserved all types of literature. No defensible reasons suggest why comic books should be excluded from this mission.

Assuming that you are ready to add graphic novels to your collection, remember that graphic novels should be selected for your library using

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The Implementation of an Accelerated Reader Program in a Middle School

TERRY BANNISTER

Accelerated Reader (AR)¹ is a popular program that is used in thousands of schools throughout the US and Canada. It has its fans and its detractors, with some believing that it is an excellent way to get students to read, particularly those with lower skills and enthusiasm. There are studies that support this belief as well as a number that challenge it, and some that are critical of the characteristics of the program itself. This article describes the successful implementation of an AR program in a middle school.

When I applied for my first teaching job, I was hoping to work half time, so that I would be available to take care of my ailing father. When my principal offered me the only part time position he had in the school and it was in the library, I wasn't sure. It had the same pay and benefits as a teaching position, but I had never seen myself working as a librarian! I proceeded to meet the veteran librarian of twenty years. She also worked half time, also for family reasons. She gave me a tour, showed me the ropes, and described the duties of our jobs. "Why not?" I said. I took the job, since it was a foot in the door for the teaching job I thought I wanted.

I took the job on a provisional basis; I had to complete my library science certification in the required time frame. Again, not a problem. I thought, if I don't like the job, I'll go into the classroom and teach. But I fell in love with my new job; it offered every possible challenge and more. Just as I was getting somewhat comfortable with my job and feeling somewhat confident a few months later, it happened. The AR project was dropped into my lap. Not a problem for me, I said! At least I had to think that in order to survive.

The AR System is a reading software program for K-12 schools. The program is used in nearly 40,000 schools, with 30 percent of schools in the U.S. and Canada participating in AR. The AR software has quizzes covering nearly 20,000 books. AR books are divided by grade-level reading ability and are given a "point" value. Students in an AR program are assessed to determine their reading level and are then assigned a point goal to reach, so that if their reading level is 5.5 and their point goal is fifty, they can then choose books from that reading level and read ten five-point books, five ten-point books, and so on, to reach their goal.

My new working partner was not sold on the AR program. She was from the old school, where students came to the library to read on their own, not because they were required to. Our principal, however, was in love with the idea of having this reading program. He wanted to see reading scores raised, and see students reading. I, on the other hand, was excited for two reasons—I was new on the job, and I too was excited to see more students read and check out books! Who wouldn't be an advocate for reading? The students were to be tested, assigned their reading levels from their results, then start reading books at that level. They would acquire points by reading the books and passing a quiz written for the book. They would complete their assigned point goal in this way.

I had missed the formal AR training that had come to our district only months before, so my first step was to go talk to someone who already had the program in place. I found another middle school librarian who was very happy with the program and seemed to have ironed out the wrinkles.

When I visited this librarian at her school, what I saw was phenomenal. The library was a busy, there was a constant flow of students coming in and out, and they all seemed content and happy. The librarian gave me a tour and described how she operated the new program. Students were everywhere, in every aisle, while many were at computers looking up books and completing tests for the books they had just read.

This librarian had gone all the way with her AR program. She displayed the names of students who had accomplished their goals and those who were close. Individual reading levels were not displayed, so as to not

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The Implementation of an Accelerated Reader Program in a Middle School - cont.

embarrass anyone. This was a large library for a middle school, although the neighborhood served is a low-income one. The room offered the space for testing. There were also items that students could buy as a fundraiser for the program. The money raised went to providing awards to students who reached their reading goal. When I completed my visit I gave the librarian a hug—her enthusiasm had completely rubbed off on me!

I returned to my school ready to get busy. The first step was to make sure we had all the books for which we had quizzes. The quizzes are distributed on disc, with about twenty-five quizzes on one disc. We averaged about two or three books for every ten we needed, mostly popular titles owned by many school libraries. We ordered the titles we needed and added them to the library collection.

Before implementing the program, we also had to label the books with their AR reading level, and their value in AR points, so that students could use that as a guide in choosing what to read. We placed that label on the back of the book, so that when a student pulled the book out the label was easily seen. The students can also find AR books by searching the library's computer and looking at printed lists.

We wanted things to run smoothly for students and to save time for them, especially since our library is small and our school crowded, so we took one more step. We placed a green dot on the bottom of the spine to indicate that a book was an AR title. This allowed students to scan the shelves and spot the AR books. The students seem to like it. If they went to the shelf for a specific book, they could adjust their eyes to look for the green dots. In our second year, we took it a step further as we had more students in the AR program. We began color-coding by reading level. For example, if a book's reading level was under 3.0, we used a small hot pink dot. For 3.1 to 4.0, we used dark blue, orange for 4.1 to 5.0, and so on.

We are in our third year of this program and it continues to grow. Every year I add to our collection of books and

tests. More and more tests are being created, and we are acquiring them for books in our collection that were not previously AR books. I periodically take a list of our accelerated reading titles to two of our closest local public libraries. That way, if students need AR books that are already checked out from the school library, they can get them from the public library.

In recent years, seventh grade students have been required to take a reading class, and are therefore assigned an AR goal. There are about 480 seventh grade students, so there may be as many as 900 books checked out at any one time just for that grade. They visit the library every week or every other week. But AR is only a piece of the puzzle in getting students to read. In the seventh grade reading class the requirement to acquire AR points is only 25% of the grade for that class. They are not just reading for points all the time, as some critics of the program have feared.

We all know how much we have to do in a day and how busy we can be, but I have to say, it has all seemed worth the extra work to me! Our circulation has doubled over the last few years and I have learned to tackle a new project. Now if I could just get those other teachers to

stop coming in so much to do research with their classes, I could spend more time with the students selecting and discussing books! Seriously, I have the best of all the worlds, except for trying to learn the names of all 979 of our students. I haven't even tried.

We are in our third year of this program and it continues to grow. Every year I add to our collection of books and tests. More and more tests are being created, and we are acquiring them for books in our collection that were not previously AR books.

1. For a discussion of AR and a look at various points of view on its effectiveness, see Cuddeback, Meghan J., Ceprano, Maria A. "The Use of Accelerated Reader with Emergent Readers." *Reading Improvement* 39:2(Summer 2002):89-96; Stevenson, Jean M. ; Camarata, Jenny Webb. "Imposters in Whole Language Clothing: Undressing the Accelerated Reader Program." *Talking Points* 11:2:8-11 (Apr-May 2000); Biggers, Deborah. "The Argument Against Accelerated Reader." *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* 45:1: 72-75 (Sep 2001); Persinger, Jennie M. "What Are the Characteristics of a Successful Implementation of Accelerated Reader?" *Knowledge Quest* 29:5:30-35 (May-Jun 2001); *ERIC Bibliography—Accelerated Reader* www.indiana.edu/~eric_rec/ieo/bibs/accl-rdr.html

Growing up on a dairy in the southern part of Oregon left little opportunity for me to vacation. This left me only the chance to dream and fantasize through reading a good book. I remember reading the *Little House on the Prairie* series and pretending to be Laura Ingalls. I enjoyed many horse stories, some with sad endings, but intriguing to me nonetheless. I watched the *Wizard of Oz* on television, and later read the book. It was fun to read about good and bad witches and see the bad ones get what they deserved in the end. As I grew up, my reading involved stories that had tragic endings or tragedy within the story. I was allowed to read mostly what I wanted. It helped me to learn who I was and yet gave me a sense of being on a journey with the characters in the book.

As an elementary school teacher, I see books being banned or "censored" from school libraries, with many parents being leaders in the decision-making. Their reasons are numerous and broad for why they feel that certain books should not be in the hands of young children. Many are being challenged because they depict violence, cruelty to animals, or rebellious children. Other books are challenged because they do not depict "real life" and some parents do not want their children thinking animals can fly and or that wizards exist.

The American Library Association states that between 1990 and 1999, 5,718 challenges were reported to the Office for Intellectual Freedom. Of those, just over 25 percent were cited for sexually explicit material. Interestingly, 71 percent of those reported challenges were made at school libraries, with almost 60 percent of those challenges being from parents (Credaro, 2001).

Censorship is an issue for US schools and libraries, but other parts of the world experience it as well. In Australia, for example, during the last decade there has been a shift away from censoring books that depict or discuss bodily functions, and toward those stories that have an element of fantasy in them. An informal survey was conducted involving the Australian teacher librarians. The survey revealed some interesting trends. Of the 23 Australian schools that responded to the survey:

Two were private primary schools, neither of whom had experienced any challenges.

Four were church-affiliated primary schools, only one of which had a challenge, with the item subsequently being removed.

One K-12 school, and one K-10 school, both with church affiliations, reported no challenges.

Four were secondary public schools, with only one of these reporting a challenge. The item was subsequently removed.

Three church-affiliated secondary schools responded. One reported three challenges, with no removals. Another reported one challenge with no removal, whilst the last had two items challenged, both of which were subsequently removed.

Nine public primary schools responded, with two having two challenges (one removal in one case and no removals in the other case). Two more reported one challenge each, with neither item being removed. However, a further two reported the reclassification of one item, prior to an impending challenge.

Of the librarians that completed the survey, few purchased material that was controversial. Some thought it was a school policy and others stated that they avoided controversial material to cater to the needs of students. They also stated that if any material that was purchased were questionable, they had a restricted area in the library to house it. Many librarians reported meeting with community members and parents to discuss any new material that might be controversial. It is clear that they choose their books very carefully and steer away controversial material.

Censorship and the Freedom to Read

DIANE MIRES

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Censorship and the Freedom to Read - cont.

The notion of intellectual freedom as it applies to libraries is based on the idea of free access to information. The right to read is not specifically guaranteed in the United States Constitution, nor in the Bill of Rights, so the library community has developed its own "Bill of Rights" based on the principles of the Constitution. One of the policies that addresses censorship issues states, "Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment" (McClure, 1987).

The freedom to read is a fundamental value of librarianship. Although we live in a democratic society, this "freedom" seems to be continuously under attack. Both public and private groups are working to remove or limit our access to reading materials. They want to be the ones that will determine what is good and what is bad reading for the rest of us.

It is important to clarify what we mean by the freedom to read. K-12 students are children and minors, under the care of their parents until they reach legal age. Parents who want to allow their children to read *Playboy*, or even more graphic and explicit material, are able to allow this in their home, away from the schools. The schools should not violate a family's beliefs and values. Parents who want to allow their children to read extreme controversial material are not restricted from doing so. Those kinds of books are available in bookstores and public libraries. Removing a book from a school setting, limiting access to certain grades, or obtaining parental consent before use does not mean it is "banned" from the community, just that schools cannot endorse age-inappropriate, vulgar, indecent and violent reading material in their libraries and classrooms. Everyone agrees that no student should read a book over parental objections—the teacher should find another acceptable book for that student.

The American Library Association affirms these propositions in regard to The Freedom to Read:

- It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority.
- Publishers, librarians and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation contained in the books they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what books should be published or circulated.

- It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to determine the acceptability of a book on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.
- There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.

- It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept with any book the prejudgment of a label characterizing the book or author as subversive or dangerous.

- It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.

- It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a bad book is a good one, the answer to a bad idea is a good one. (American Association of School Librarians, 1998)

Book banning was a common practice in the 1990s. From 1991 to 1994 the number of formal demands for the removal of books from public and school libraries has increased by more than 50 percent. There were as many as 4,500 instances of book challenges last year, and 42 percent of the complaints were successful in having the offending books banned (ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom Data Bank).

What is even more surprising about the banned books is their subject matter. They are not generally racist or sexually explicit books, nor even those about witchcraft (although Harry Potter has certainly made some of the parents in my classroom a bit nervous). Some of the books that are being banned or challenged are the best-loved classics, such as *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, the Newbery-Award-winning *Bridge to Terabithia*, and *The Catcher in the Rye*. Australia has seen popular series such as the Sweet Valley, Animorphs, and Goosebumps frequently condemned for their lack of literary merit, although research suggests that readers of books like this progress to more challenging books, and informal interviews with young people have revealed that if it were not for the existence of these books, they would not read anything beyond the television guide.

Not all books are "banned" in the same manner. Some censorship issues are handled very quietly, the books just

Book banning was a common practice in the 1990s. From 1991 to 1994 the number of formal demands for the removal of books from public and school libraries has increased by more than 50 percent. There were as many as 4,500 instances of book challenges last year, and 42 percent of the complaints were successful in having the offending books banned.

Censorship and the Freedom to Read - cont.

seem to disappear from the shelves of the library. Those responsible for this kind of banning are not just parents who do not want to go through the trouble of a formal hearing, but also librarians, who, fearing for their jobs or fearing harassment, take the books off the shelves themselves. School districts, under constant scrutiny from the public, encourage their librarians to be cautious about the kinds of books they order.

Another form of censorship that many people probably are not aware of is from the publishers themselves. Many manuscripts that contain rough language or stories dealing with tough issues are rejected. This makes authors more cautious about including certain words and cautious about the subject matter they write about. Unfortunately, this could affect the quality and credibility of their work.

So what do our kids think of censorship and the banning of books from their school or public libraries? The first step for them is to get informed as to what censorship is and ways that they can have a voice in the decisions being made as to what they can and cannot read. While elementary students will probably find it difficult to be heard, especially if their parents are not in agreement with them, they should still have a voice. High school students could become more involved by being heard through letters to the editor, attending school board meetings, and even writing to the school board members in their communities. Other ways of getting involved and being heard are to organize a club and protest censorship with their classmates. This allows them to share the work of writing letters and organizing other protest activities. Circulating a petition will certainly get attention as well. The petition shows that students are not alone in their views and may even convince other people receiving the petition that there are a large number of people that support the opposition to censorship.

Some of the best children's books I have read contain material that readers might find troubling. Students in my classroom enjoy reading about someone else having to deal with the same issues that they do. One example of this is the story *The Great Gilly Hopkins*, by Katherine Patterson, that was banned in school libraries in Albemarle County, Virginia, because it contained curse words and took God's name in vain. The book is about a tough-talking, angry foster child who is redeemed by love. The parent who filed the complaint had not even read the book! The school board got together with a group of educators and twice they recommended it stay on the shelf. In the end the superintendent had the book removed anyway. One fifth grade reader wrote in a book report on *The Great Gilly Hopkins*, "This book is a miracle." His teacher followed up with, "There is little doubt that if Mrs. Patterson's Gilly hadn't cussed like a trooper that lost boy would have been denied his miracle."

School librarians need to be aware of censorship issues and respond appropriately and offer suggestions for preventing these challenges. Our literature is rich with humor, drama, and examples of human lives that demonstrate moral issues as an integral part of our daily lives. Most books worth reading will involve readers in moral dilemmas and may engage them in issues that involve some kind of religious implication. The American public school, with its diverse religious affiliations and its commitment to open discussion, is an excellent environment for airing a variety of beliefs, and how they impact behavior. This in turn aids students in the discovery of their own convictions and beliefs.

The teacher's role is vital in helping students recognize the issues and dilemmas that our country faces everyday. When handled appropriately, students will show their own beliefs about what is religious, what is moral, and if the literature that they read guides them to conclusions for the direction of their own lives.

However, individuals and organized groups in our country have challenged many books that have been selected for public school classrooms and libraries because of what they perceive to be immoral, antireligious, anti-Christian, or anti-biblical content. Procedures must be developed by teachers, librarians, administrators, and school boards that are aimed at both preventing confrontations, and responding to those that continue to arise.

In addressing the issue of censorship in school libraries, it is important to look at the main purpose of the school, not just the library. If education is to be grounded in the foundation of exposure to different ideas, then it is extremely important that students be exposed to a range of reading materials as well. It is difficult to have a system which allows parents, professionals, and the children themselves to judge what should, and should not, be available and accessible in school libraries.

All librarians are required to consider their obligations not only to our professional organizations, but also to employers, the students, and the community. However, having decided that the inclusion of an item will add depth or scope to the school's collection, there must be a commitment to fight for its retention. To do any less will surely compromise personal ethics, and prevent the fulfillment of our professional obligations.

Annotated Bibliography

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News

Report of Cataloging Programs held at AkLA 2003, Juneau, Alaska, March 6-9, 2003

TERI ARION

There were five cataloging programs offered at the Alaska Library Associations AkLA 2003 conference. Wow! Many thanks to Julie Moore Iliff, AkLA Cataloging Roundtable Chair, for making these programs happen. Programs were well attended by catalog librarians, reference librarians, and technical services support staff.

Here is a quick summary of the cataloging programs with highlights from each program, with "take-home messages" from each:

Tricky Cataloging – This program was held as a panel discussion. Attendees were asked to bring their tricky cataloging examples and questions. Panel members had their own tricky cataloging examples, including creating a bibliographic record for a lynx skull, creating records for maps, and cataloging an oral history on audiocassette.

Take-home messages: cataloging is a science and an art; use AACR2, LCRIs, and MARC21 rules as a "consistency guide." Attendees were interested in the various paper and online "Cataloging Tools" used by catalogers.

Your Friend MARC – Attendees were given an introduction to USMARC format for bibliographic description. The presentation provided MARC format and code basics for cataloging newcomers as well as a quick refresher quickie for experienced catalogers.

Take-home message: create quality records useful to your users.

Why Catalogers are Crucial to Librarianship – This program was held as a panel discussion with cataloging guru Michael Gorman, (via teleconference). It was a lively discussion about why catalogers and quality cataloging are the foundation for librarianship. Gorman asked for questions and responded frankly and thoughtfully. A few highlights from Gorman's Q & A:

Why it is necessary to teach cataloging in library school? Librarians need the knowledge of bibliographic control, and how information is organized to best retrieve that information. Gorman commented on what he believes to be "a mismatch between what library schools teach and produce vs. what is actually needed."

How could cataloging courses be improved? Provide teachers who convey the message that cataloging is the intellectual foundation of librarianship. Teach students the codes and formats as the foundation to librarianship. Teach a "philosophy of librarianship."

Take-home message: Catalogers are indeed crucial to librarianship.

Now my Serials are Called What? – This program provided a basic overview of the new AACR2 Chapter 12 "Rules for Continuing Resources," MARC tagging for those rules, the hows and whys of the current changes, and what to look for in the future. In addition, the new rules for serial title changes were discussed in detail.

Take-home message: be aware of the changes and go with the flow.

Making Digital Collections Findable – Rosario Garza from BCR gave an overview of cataloging digital collections. Digital collections are the hot new thing—it seems that everyone is getting special projects (and grants) to digitize collections in libraries. Along with having materials digitized, the items must be findable. The most common and complete way to describe the materials is by using MARC and AACR2R. Rosario also discussed other possibilities and standards that people are using to provide access to these digital collections: Dublin Core cataloging, OCLC's Content DM.

Take-home messages: the concepts are the same; the items must be described and made findable; following rules and standards lead to consistent records.

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PNLA Annual

Conference Keynote: Sherman Alexie

Author • Poet • Screenwriter

Sherman Alexie is a Spokane/Coeur d'Alene Indian from Wellpinit, Washington—a town on the Spokane Indian reservation.



Shortly after the publication of his first book, *The Business of Fancydancing*—a collection of poetry and stories—Alexie was described as “one of the major lyric voices of our time” in the *New York Times Book Review*, which selected the book as a “1992 Notable Book of the Year.” That same year Alexie received a National Endowment for the Arts Poetry Fellowship. In each year from 1998 to 2001, Alexie won the World Heavyweight Championship Poetry Bout at the Taos Poetry Circus, becoming the first poet in the history of the Bout to hold the title four consecutive years. He also won the regional 1999 New York Heavyweight Poetry Bout. Alexie’s several books of poetry include *Old Shirts & New Skins*, *The Summer of Black Widows*, and *One Stick Song*.

Alexie’s first collection of short stories, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, published in 1994, was a citation winner for the PEN/Hemingway Award for Best First Fiction. In the same year he also earned a Lila Wallace-Reader’s Digest Writers’ Award.

Alexie’s first novel, *Reservation Blues*, published in 1995, was selected as a *Booklist* Editors Choice Award for Fiction and was awarded an American Book Award from The Before Columbus Foundation in 1996. His most

recent novel, *Indian Killer*, published in 1998, was a *New York Times* Notable Book and was selected as one of ten “Best of Pages” titles by *People* magazine. For his skilled fiction writing, Alexie was named one of *Granta* magazine’s Summer Fiction Edition, “20 Writers for the 21st Century.”

In June 1999 *The New Yorker* called Alexie as one of the top writers for the 21st Century. He was one of twenty writers featured in the magazine’s Summer Fiction Edition, “20 Writers for the 21st Century.”

Alexie’s first screenplay, *Smoke Signals*, based on his book *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, became the first feature film produced, written and directed by American Indians. It premiered at the 1998 Sundance Film Festival, where it won the Audience Award and Filmmakers Trophy. *Smoke Signals* also received a Christopher Award in 1999. Alexie was nominated for the Independent Feature Project/West 1999 Independent Spirit Award for Best First Screenplay.

Alexie is a 2001 recipient of the PEN/Malamud award, honoring excellence in the art of storytelling, for his most recent book, *The Toughest Indian in the World*. His film, *The Business of Fancydancing*, which he wrote and directed, was selected for the 2002 Sundance Film Festival. He is also working on the screenplay adaptation of his novel *Reservation Blues*, which he will also direct and co-produce for SearchParty Films.

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Idaho Court Assistance is Library Assistance - cont.

This is probably the most valuable resource from a librarian’s point of view.

For instance, a patron who desired a name change could go to the Project site and click on “Court Information, Forms and Instructions.” From the “Instructions Available” column on that page they could click on the title to read or download PDF files for “INSTRUCTION FOR NAME CHANGE” and “NAME CHANGE HEARING SCRIPT.” Those instructions would lead them to the “Categories of Forms Available” column, where they would click on “Name Change.” Once there, they could print or download the PDF forms identified in the instructions. Similar forms and instructions are available to address legal matters such as small claims, landlord/tenant issues, domestic violence, paternity, and divorce.

Libraries Linking Idaho and Court Assistance

Although the Court Assistance Project is promoting its resources in various ways, it lacks the information distribution tradition and image of a public library. Idaho has many more

libraries than county courthouses, and libraries are often open during the evening and on weekends to serve their patrons. For this reason, in June 2002, the Libraries Linking Idaho (LiLI) Board agreed to create a spot for the Court Assistance Project in the updated LiLI Web site. Board members are hopeful that the LiLI Web site will draw library staff and patrons to use and promote Court Assistance Office materials.

Conclusion

Idaho’s Court Assistance Office Project is a good example of how libraries can work with other public agencies to serve their mutual patrons. Using Web resources allows us to draw together the products and resources of diverse information providers. Cooperation between agencies is one model that libraries may apply to improve services while addressing the financial challenges of today’s library environment. ■

Ask a Librarian: Implementing a Virtual Reference Project in Washington State - cont.

how the remainder of the project would proceed.

Some of the issues we encountered during this first phase of the demonstration grant project included patron authentication, software troubleshooting, and use of the service. Although the front Web pages of both the WSU Vancouver Library and Cannell Library at Clark College featured prominent buttons linking to the Ask a Librarian service, and we promoted the service in library instruction sessions, use of the service was at first disappointingly low. Following the creation of several brief course assignments by Clark College librarians, activity began increasing.

While the chat environment requires a slightly different set of question negotiation skills, all virtual reference staff quickly adapted to it. Most of the questions asked at the virtual reference desk could be answered using the numerous electronic resources we each had at our disposal. Since users designate an institutional affiliation at login, librarians are able to direct students to appropriately licensed resources.

During the remainder of the grant period, we will continue

gathering data to help us evaluate the use of the virtual reference service. Some of the quality standards we may use to assess the service include: accuracy of responses, satisfaction, repeat users, awareness of the service, cost, question completion time, and accessibility. A priority of the project was to encourage libraries to build relationships and share human resources. To that end we will also be looking at questions related to collaboration, such as how well we worked together, some of the barriers, conflicts, and tensions experienced in collaboration, and future incentives to collaborate that might exist apart from grant funds.

At mid-point in the project, overall satisfaction with the service is fairly good, from both the librarian and the student perspective. Although use of the service is less than we anticipated, librarians at WSU Vancouver and Clark College are learning a great deal not only about virtual reference but also each other. The ability to chat and co-browse integrates well with traditional reference and provides another avenue for instruction that is not bound by time or space.■

Comic Books in My Library? - cont.

the same criteria that you would use in selecting any other item: quality, popularity, and diversity. Many of today's comic books do present questionable material, including raw language, extreme violence, sexual activity, the objectification of women, and flagrant disrespect for authority, to name a few. As with any collection-building effort, librarians must make an effort to identify comics and graphic novels appropriate for their user community. You will find that the Young Adult Library Services Association—www.ala.org/yalsa/, Comic books for young adults—a guide for librarians—ublib.buffalo.edu/lml/comics/pages/, *The 101 Best Graphic Novels*, by Stephen Weiner, *Comic Buyers Guide*, *Comic Shop News*, *Previews*, and your local comic shop can be extremely helpful when making your selections.

You will be able to purchase graphic novels from Ingram, BWI, Koen, Amazon.com, Barnes & Noble, or your local comic shop. You can find a comic shop close to you by using the

Comic Shop Locator Service—csls.diamondcomics.com/. If you can not find a suitable local comic shop, I invite you to contact me at 208-882-9499 or tabitha@safaripearl.com. I strongly encourage you to consult a comic book shop such as mine, because the owners of comic shops truly love the medium and most will assist you in a way none of the other suppliers are capable of. Good comic shop operators are aware of community standards, and read graphic novels regularly. Their knowledge may prove invaluable to you. Comic shop owners will usually match discounts available from other vendors and funds that you spend locally remain in your local tax base. Local comic shop owners will also usually be excited to help with programming and promotions in your libraries. Ask your local comic shop about free comic book day, which will occur on May 3, 2003 and remember those shops when you are planning your summer reading programs.■

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