

When *Wife* Meets *Mother*: Norwegian School Libraries - An Arena For Teacher/Librarian Identity Conflicts

*Suzanne Bancel
Lerkeli
3840 Seljord,
Norway
sbancel@hotmail.com*

Abstract

This article explores various reasons for the lack of school library services in Norwegian primary schools. The basic thesis is that libraries and primary schools have developed differently despite sharing common origins from the European Age of Enlightenment. Libraries and library work can be seen as belonging to a masculine metaphor, primary schools and teaching can be seen as belonging to a feminine metaphor. These metaphors reflect traditions and attitudes that affect everything from basic democratic ideologies to ways in which we relate to classroom space and library space, as well as the ways in which teachers and librarians organize and advocate for working conditions. This causes conflicts in defining the role of the teacher-librarian and the school library in Norwegian primary schools.

The goal of this paper is to present conflicts between teachers and librarians about school library services in a new light. My interest in this problem started ten years ago when I began work as the library director in a small rural town. One of the rooms in the local school was used as the school library. When I extended the public library services to include services to schools it became evident that there were misunderstandings and disagreements with the teachers and school administration about what my role should be. This puzzled me, and to understand the reasons for these misunderstandings, I realized I needed to examine my assumptions about Norway.

I grew up in a middle class town outside of New York City. There were school librarians and libraries in all the primary and secondary schools. Naively, I assumed the situation would be the same in Norway. After all, Norway is one of the richest countries in the world. Its wealth is funneled into a bureaucratic system that aims to provide a decent standard of living, health and social services and education to all its inhabitants, whether or not they are citizens. Norway has one of the highest levels of education and literacy in the world and its reputation for promoting democracy is well known. Everything considered, it seemed to me that Norway would have a well-developed school library tradition, and teachers who integrated school library services into their teaching.

Sadly, this is not so. Statistics from the year 2000 show that students in primary schools (age 6 to 16) only have access to school librarians 1.8 hours a day. There are 577,363 primary school students in Norway, but only 552 people with a library degree working in primary schools. Statistics do not specify whether these people are working as librarians or not. (Norwegian Directorate for Public Libraries, 2001) In the PISA survey conducted in

2000, Norwegian 15 year olds received only average scores in reading, mathematical and cross-curriculum activities, a result the Minister of Education found «disconcerting» (Clemet, 2002). A study conducted in 2001 shows that despite the 1997 education reform that lowered the school age from 7 to 6 years old, Norwegian 3rd graders are weaker readers than their pre-reform counterparts (Norwegian Board of Education, 2001)

To librarians, there is an obvious connection between the lack of library services to school children and average to poor achievements on national and international education tests. But it seems that school politicians, educators and the Norwegian ministry of education have other priorities than library services when allocating funding to schools.

In order to gain some insight into why a country which has the technological, economic and intellectual resources necessary to provide world-class school libraries, does not recognize the connection between libraries and students' academic achievements, I needed to approach this issue from three different perspectives: from the perspective of control and democracy in the development of public libraries and primary schools, from the perspective of teaching and librarianship as female professions, and from the perspective of gender-based identities of teachers and librarians.

Democracy and control

Cultures and societies take form as we try to make sense of our lives. We do this by creating similarities and differences: Sweet or sour, comfort or discomfort, friend or enemy. Social anthropologist Jorunn Solheim says that the most fundamental difference we use in organizing our lives is that between our understanding of *masculine* and *feminine*. The meanings we give these terms function as metaphors. They create a symbolic universe that both subtly and openly defines our society (Solheim, 1998).

Solheim says that ideas we connect with the masculine have to do with distance, objectivity, analysis and closure. The feminine metaphor connotes intimacy, subjectivity, intuition and openness. She theorizes further that ideas of "sameness" depend on intimacy and subjectivity. I can only be intimate with those with whom I feel similar. My feelings of similarity are based on subjective perspectives. Ideas of "difference" or "individuality", however, are based on distance and objective perceptions. Individuality belongs to the masculine metaphor, as sameness belongs to the feminine metaphor. These metaphors are useful in understanding the inherent tensions in democracy. We can also apply these metaphors to libraries and schools, institutions that claim legitimacy through the role they play in democracy.

Norway, like many European countries, is an old country, yet a relatively young nation. Norway was a Danish colony for 400 years, from the 1400's until 1814, when it became a Swedish colony until its independence in 1905. The population has always been small. Today it is nearly 4.5 million- just a little more than half the population of New York City. This population is spread over nearly 234,000 sq. kilometers. The Norwegian landscape is rugged and mountainous which has contributed to a culture based on small, isolated communities.

The combination of a small, homogenous population, a rugged geography and independent farmers has played an important role in Norway's cultural history. We can

suggest that the basis for trust, unity and cooperation has grown out of small, homogenous groups whose members shared a deep tacit knowledge of each other. On the other hand, because most communities were isolated from each other, independent, local identities developed, reflected in dialect, music, folk art and local tradition. These elements contribute to a Norwegian paradox: «sameness» as a fundament of society, yet a strong belief in a natural given «individuality». The Norwegian icon Thor Heyerdahl is a good example of the latter.

Like the majority of western countries, Norwegian schools and public libraries have shared origins in the Age of Enlightenment. To date, historical research done on Norwegian school libraries has focused on continuity and progress. School libraries have been traced back to book collections in the first secondary schools (16-20 year olds) located in Christiania (Oslo) in the 1700's (Gloppe, 1994). The research has seldom focused on the slow paced development, the organization of school libraries, or the lack of school librarians. The school library – public library connection in Norway is prescribed by law. While the Education Act requires all schools to have a library and “someone” responsible for that library, the Public Library Act requires the public library to provide consulting services to the school library. Both require cooperation agreements between the two institutions. Furthermore, the Municipal Act gives each municipality the right to create joint libraries, instead of separate school- and public libraries. In her doctoral thesis, Elisabeth T. Rafste points out that an important difference in the development of school library services in Norway compared with the United States, is that school libraries in Norway are closely associated to public libraries, while in the U.S., they are quite separate from the public library (Rafste, 2001).

Advocates of both schools and libraries base these institutions' legitimacy on the historic and current role they play in supporting democracy. Yet democracy can be implemented and understood in many ways. Democracy can be promoted through ideas of “sameness”: common background, common values, common goals. These commonalities provide a stability that again gives room for the free exchange of ideas. Democracy can also be promoted through ideas about “equal opportunity” and “equal access”. The focus, in that case, will be on providing equal opportunity despite differences. All democracies combine ideas of sameness and difference. The combination is what keeps democracies from falling into either fascism or anarchy. Yet the institutions of democracy can reflect more of the one kind than the other. This may have to do with whether the institution itself responds more to the masculine metaphor or the feminine metaphor. The goals of Norwegian schools stipulated in the Education Act, are *sameness, intimacy, culture and usefulness*. The goals for public libraries, stipulated in the Library Act are *equal access, privacy, culture and usefulness*. I suggest that the goals of Norwegian primary schools belong to the feminine metaphor, while the goals of public libraries belong to the masculine metaphor.

In understanding differences between public libraries and public schools it is important to look back to the 1900's. The situation in Norway differed from that in continental Europe and the United States, where one can see Romanticism as both a progression from, - and a reaction to The Age of Enlightenment. Ideologies from the Age of Enlightenment: the concept of the individual, rational thought, and a break with tradition, became tightly entwined with ideologies from Romanticism: tradition, emotionality, and inner development. (Slagstad, 2000). Both public schools and public libraries tried to embrace all of these conflicting ideas. Juggling conflicting approaches is complicated at any time, but in Norway in the early 1900's it was even more so. Debates were carried on about

which language should be used, Riksmåal, closely related to Danish, or Landsmaal, a constructed language based on Norwegian dialects. There were debates about how Norwegian independence should be achieved, and what form it should have. – Should Norway be a republic or a monarchy? There were debates about women's rights, socialism, and temperance.

In light of all the opposing voices facing the Norwegian population at that time it is not surprising that schools maintained and strengthened their role as a unifying source. The "same" school and the "same" education for Norway's children, has remained the ideal for Norwegian primary education to this day. Reasons for this "enhetsskole", or "unifying school", once connected to creating a nation and a "Norwegian" identity, are now connected to preserving a national identity, as well as building healthy individual identities in the face of a rapidly changing world. (National Primary Education Curriculum for 1997).

Public libraries of the early 1900's, inspired by developments in English and American libraries, developed a platform as the guardian of democracy. One of the influences in this development was the public library's close association with the Association for Popular Education, founded in 1851 (Vestheim, 1997). The compatibility between these two institutions was grounded in ideas of life-long education, and citizen's rights to information and knowledge regardless of social standing. This last point was deeply rooted in the ideologies of all the social movements (temperance, independence, etc.) referred to above. Public libraries have, at least in the minds of librarians, always been associated with the idea of life-long learning and non-interference in people's intellectual life. Research shows however, that Norwegian public libraries in the early 1900's were based on middle-class, philanthropic ideals. Among other things, there were clear ideas about suitable and unsuitable literature for library collections and until the advent of open shelving, library users' requests were also subject to librarians' scrutiny. (Ringdal, 1985) Yet, the early part of the 20th century was a time of library reform. Norwegian public librarians were enthusiastic about developments in Anglo-American library practices. Between 1900 and 1920 (ibid.), 90 Norwegians, most of them women, received their library education in the United States.

The returning "America-librarians" brought with them many new ideas, among which was the close connection between libraries and schools. The editor of *For folkeopplysning* wrote,

One knows that in England and America, countries where public libraries have obtained the highest professional standards, schools and libraries are intimately associated. The library is considered an integral part of the educational system on an equal footing with the schools. The schools provide the foundation, but the library provides a school for every individual, for the rest of his life." (For folkeopplysning IV 1919 s. 82).

Nils Ringdal suggests that ideas from the United States, among them the idea of library services designed for children, played an important part in librarians taking over the role as advocates for school libraries from teachers (Ringdal, 1985). I believe another impetus was that public libraries were losing status at this time, an idea I will return to later in this paper. Perhaps part of the enthusiasm discernible in the editor of *For folkeopplysning* comments reflects a need to associate Norwegian public libraries with the "success" of those in America. Clearly, Norwegian public libraries felt the need to be associated with schools in

order to strengthen their legitimacy. Perhaps this is why whether the public library was the kind of library public schools needed was never questioned.

The early 1900's was also a time for school reforms. Anne Sethne and others were inspired by new educational theories emphasizing learning through activity, both as ways an educational method, as well as a way of socializing students. (Dokka, 1988 and Hagemann, 1992) Norwegian education and library reformers were certainly responsive to ideas of modernity: the individual, differentiation, belief in progress. On many levels their goals and methods were compatible. Yet, while educators promoted the idea of young students' inner growth through reading and discovery, the application of these goals, the library, did not develop within the school context.

Many educators, Anne Sethne among them, called for the development of school libraries, but it was the public librarians who took up the torch. Public librarians felt they had a mission. One of them was to save children from ignorance, another to save them from the rigidity of the current school system. The Buskerud County library inspector wrote, "School library collections are of the utmost importance for the child's spiritual development, while attending school..."(Fylkesinspektøren for Buskerud, 1920, p.108).

Another librarian writing to *For folkeopplysning* waxed poetic on the topic, Children are to us like the blessed Spring which we must all protect. So easily does frost encroach upon the child's soul, this frost is our greatest concern. Let the mission of all libraries in this country be to protect this blessed Spring, weakening forever the grip of the freezing night." (For Folkeopplysning. V 1920, s. 66).

These objectives were shared by many educational reformers of the day, and since they worked within the educational system, they could realize their mission in many different ways. Public librarians, working outside of the educational system could only comment on and advocate for school libraries. In doing this, they transferred ideals from the public library sphere to the school library. They believed that children's use of school libraries would be a guarantee for their later use of the public library. Perhaps cultivating future public library users was more important to public librarians than developing libraries that would help schools achieve their educational goals.

Since 1935 it has been a legal requirement that Norwegian public schools have school libraries. Yet only a few municipalities¹ have implemented it. This, I believe, is partly due to the metaphorical differences between the two institutions. The "masculine" individualistic ideals that the public library can practice are difficult to unite with the school's "feminine" collective goals.

The Norwegian minister of education, Kristin Clemet, a right-wing politician is currently implementing education reforms with a clear liberal-instrumental profile, one that potentially undermines the school's collective goals. It will be interesting to see if this has any effect on the development of primary school library services.

Professional conflicts

Understanding the development of the teaching and librarian professions is also an important factor in understanding the development of school library services. New theories on professionalism still refer to William Goode's trait or characteristics theory, published in 1969. Goode's theory states that professions are based on abstract knowledge that a society believes provides solutions to actual problems. Only those holding this knowledge can practice it. Professions organize, develop and transmit this knowledge, and are the sole judge of the implementation of this knowledge. There is a kind of "mystery" connected to the attaining of this knowledge. Furthermore, there are certain service ideals to be fulfilled: The practitioner decides his or her clients needs, there is an element of sacrifice, or a "call" mentality- even to the point of risking one's life for the profession's ideals. Finally, the professional society has some ethical code by which both society at large and the professions own members are expected to live. Goode classified primary school teaching and all forms of librarianship as semi-professions, since neither of these occupations fulfills all the characteristics listed in his theory.

Roma M. Harris points out that theories of Goode and others who attempt to define what makes some occupations "professional" and others "vocational" or "semi-professional" are flawed as long as they do not also take into account the specific way in which female dominated occupations have been understood and valued by society (Harris, 1992). One of Harris' main points is the dilemma librarians face when searching for status within their respective fields. The "career path" often leads women away from their users and into administrative positions. This creates a conflict in the service and knowledge based criteria for professions. Within the library field we also see more status and pay given to librarians working in computer-related areas, while those librarians working with the general public, especially those working with children, have the least chance for career advancement. This is reflected in developments in Norwegian library education. A master's degree in library science is only available through Oslo University College. The program focuses on information organization and retrieval². There is no higher degree offered through the Oslo University College in library work with children, in schools, literature and media knowledge or library sociology, although all these areas would fulfill Goode's "service" criteria.

One final point in Harris' critic of Goode is the role played by unions and interest organizations. Harris states that the impetus for professionalism is dissatisfaction with salary. Occupations try to achieve more status and salary through two different routes, unionization or professionalism. She points out that many teacher and nursing organizations in the United States have interest organizations that operate similarly to unions. Librarians and social workers, on the other hand, rely on interest organizations that disassociate themselves from unions. This pattern is recognizable in Norway as well.

There has been little research done on the development of the librarian profession in Norway. Yet, we can get an idea of the development of library profession by looking Norwegian library history. It becomes clear that women were wanted as cheap labor, while their credentials were less in demand.

By the early 1900's women dominated the library field in Norway. Many of them had traveled to the United States for their education. We can assume that the majority came from middle class backgrounds, since an American education was an expensive undertaking

(Ringdal, 1985). Many Norwegian women librarians returning from the United States found that their competency was not always valued in the same way as that of their male counterparts. The professional certification these women acquired was compared to other alternatives, like internships at the University Library. These internships attracted men, or perhaps were only open to men through an “old boys” network. Several important names in Norwegian library history, Nils Hjartøy and Wilhem Munthe among them, criticized women librarians with American education for being technicians, instead of well-oriented intellectuals. In 1918 Hjartøy accused women librarians of holding library wages down, “Library work is seen by many as some sort of suitable charity work [...] Young daughters of rich bourgeois pappas think this must be the ideal past time for them while they wait to be married” (Ringdal, s. 143). 18 years later Hjartøy was still concerned with the “negative” influence women had on the library profession. In one of the most central political documents in Norwegian library history he stated, “Certified librarians in public libraries are most often ladies from a conservative middle-class background. They tend to have conservative values. Many of them are not in the least interested in current events, or the enormous societal problems most people concern themselves with.” (1936). Hjartøy was a dynamic innovator for Norwegian libraries. He was closely involved in the Social Democratic Party (Arbeiderpartiet), which was rising to power at this time. His attitude reflects several things not least class conflict between the “middle-class ladies” and workers. He was, however, blind to the discrimination these “ladies” were subjected to. They had little access to positions in the university library, and their middle-class mores made agitating for higher wages unthinkable. Perhaps women entering the field of librarianship were only able to reconcile their role as middle-class women with their role in the labor force through interest organizations that spoke to the legitimacy of the institution in which they worked, but not to their specific legitimacy as working women.

Furthermore, library work is “masculine” work. It is work based on analysis and organization, and its ethical code is based on distance, or non-interference in other’s intellectual pursuits. Female librarians may have chafed under the discrimination they were subjected to, but their gender gave them no specific claim to the field of librarianship, and their small number may have caused them to view their lower wages and lack of advancement as a result of their own inferiority, or as symptomatic of the general treatment of public libraries, but not as a result of gender discrimination. If this is so, then today’s working conditions for librarians in Norway is still influenced by the gender and class values of the previous century.

The history of teacher’s organizations in Norway is a long one, starting in the 1830’s. Teacher’s organizations were influenced by conservative values as well as socialist ideologies. Motivation for organization came from feelings of discrimination as well as the desire to implement school reforms, whether they were inspired from the growing field of developmental psychology (Hagemann, 1992) or Eastern Europe’s “learning through working” theories of education. (Tøsse, 1997 and 1998). While I have suggested that librarians had no specific “gender-claim” to their field, and that this affected their motivation for organizing, female teachers could make gender-specific claims to the field of teaching, not least to certain school reforms. This has influenced the way teachers have organized their profession.

Although women taught as early as in 1632, they were first allowed by law to teach young children in rural schools from 1860 (Hagemann, 1992). At the same time different laws

were ratified in the cities that slowly gave women access to teaching in city schools. However, women's access to teaching posts in the cities increased more as a result of urbanization, a growing population and the need for cheaper labor, than as a result of a change in thinking. In 1870, 29% of all teachers in city schools were female, by 1890 the percentage of female teachers in these schools had increased to 62% (*ibid.*). Yet the teaching posts open for women were different than those for men and advancement possibilities were limited. Money saved on lower wages for female teachers, was used to give raises to male teachers. Women had to pay for attending teacher certification programs, while men could attend teacher-training colleges free of charge. The fee requirement for women must have had the same filtering effect that educational costs for librarians had, making early teaching and librarian posts far more accessible for middle-class women than working class women. In this way librarians and teachers in the early 1900's came from similar backgrounds, although the development of their professional identities followed different paths.

Differences between the teacher population and the librarian population must have contributed to their beliefs about their professions and their motivation for organization. One obvious difference is that there were more teachers than librarians. For those working with colleagues it is possible to discuss, compare, refute and support ideas and attitudes. The majority of women teachers lived and worked in cities. Their shared experience of discrimination led them to break out of the teacher's union in 1911 and form their own. Many of these women were also active in the Norwegian women's movement, which had women's right to higher education and the vote as two important issues. These women were aware of their female identity and how it affected their daily lives. Their will to organize was motivated by this awareness. At the same time education reforms were focusing on children's learning potential rather than children as learning automatons. Anna Sethne was one of the spearheads for these reforms as well as the leader for the Norwegian Women Teacher's Association for 20 years. Perhaps it is possible to say that in the early 1900's elementary school teaching in Norway was not only becoming a female field, it was a field in harmony with society's values for and perception of middle-class women. This gave room and a voice to women teachers that they were able to use in fighting for their legitimacy as educated working women.

There are implications that teachers were gaining status as librarians began to lose status. School reforms in the early 1900's created a need for more teachers in both rural and urban areas. In 1901 laws were passed allowing women to matriculate in teacher training colleges. This change was in part due to the growing need for teachers. Schools were seen as instrumental in creating "Norwegian citizens", and teachers played a key role in this.

Libraries on the other hand were fighting for funding, governmental recognition, and the establishment of a Norwegian library school, something that would not happen until 1940 (Vestheim, 1997). The struggle for library recognition at the same time as schools and teachers were receiving greater attention may have seemed strange and even unfair to librarians. After all, both groups claimed they played key roles in democracy, and librarians had more education than most teachers. A completed secondary education (Examen Artium, completed between the age of 19 and 20) was required for either studying at a library school in the United States, or for a library internship at the university library. In Norway in the early 1900's this was considered a high level of education. This requirement also acted as a filter, making library work more accessible for the middle class than the working class (Vestheim, 1997). A nine year education was the only requirement for attending teacher training college.

This was a four year program, so the total education was not less than for librarians. However, the lower entrance requirements meant a wider pool of candidates. Many male students came from rural and worker backgrounds, while women, who had to pay for their training at separate schools, came mostly from middle class homes (Hagemann, 1992). Differences in education, possibly class background and the perception of declining status may have contributed to the disdainful comments in appearing in articles in the library periodicals *For folkeopplysning* and *For folke- og barneboksamling*, in the early 1900's. One librarian writing from a small public library said,

For he [the ideal teacher] will place the greatest emphasis on joining together the school and the library in a common goal. If attempts at this fail, it will in nine out of ten instances, be due to the teacher's lack of understanding, in which case it can be a good thing to shake up the teacher's ideas about libraries (Ansteinsson, 1917, p. 70).

Teachers were also critical of librarians. In 1911, a group of teachers delivered a letter to Deichmansk library director Haakon Nyhuus complaining about the type of literature delivered to the schools. This literature was chosen by the *Central Committee for Norwegian primary schools*, which the teachers referred to as "The many-headed beast known as the "Central Committee" [...] ", and suggested that it "should be retired to a quiet corner somewhere ..." (Ringdal, 1985, p. 162). Ringdal also states that "Haakon Nyhuus had with some justification viewed primary school libraries as rival institutions..." (ibid).

Why did libraries begin to lose status as more women became involved in library work, while schools retained status? Part of the answer lies in the way arguments for the practice of and legitimacy of each profession harmonize with society's view's on gender appropriate activities.

Norwegian public education based its legitimacy on a platform of "sameness" as guarantee for democracy. The goal was not only the same education, but common identity and common values as well. The school was seen as an institution where identities were formed, and to achieve this a certain amount of intimacy with students was required. In government papers preceding the latest school reform, in national curriculum plans and other documents, primary education continues to base its legitimacy on its role as a cultivator of democracy, "Primary school education...shall promote equality, intellectual freedom and tolerance...", and "... education shall ... strengthen a common knowledge, cultural and value basis..." (Education Act, 1998). The goals of the Education Act are to be achieved through close cooperation with each student's home. The rhetoric in this law and other documents is laced with feminine values and ideas of fostering. The national curriculum uses the word *upbringing* nearly as often as *teaching* and *knowledge*. Based on this we can say that primary schools in Norway belong to the female metaphor.

Another route to democracy is the "every man for himself" path. A definition of equal opportunity and equal access is arrived at and citizens are expected to do their best, without institutional involvement or identity forming. The Norwegian Public Library Act states that the goal of the public library is to "promote enlightenment, education and other cultural activities...to all those who live in Norway." (The Public Library Act, 1985). The main focus of Norwegian library education is on information organization and retrieval, while other areas such as library sociology and literature sociology receive less focus. Based on this, it can be said that activities we assign male values to: analysis and organization are core elements in

Norwegian library education. The library's institutional legitimacy, grounded in its role in a democratic society, though not as clearly expressed in masculine terms as the school's legitimacy is expressed in female terms, can still be seen as a "masculine" institution. The law states that public libraries are to promote cultural activities, which is something other than the common cultural basis the school law aims for. Libraries promote diversity and provide information as the basis for debate and an exchange of ideas. Debate and the exchange of ideas are connected to the public domain- which we again know is the masculine domain, while the school, the classroom, and its legally decreed connection with "the home" are connected to the feminine, domestic sphere.

Wife And Mother

According to Jorunn Solheim, the *Mother* is modern western culture's metaphor against which women are measured, and measure themselves (1998). Viewed in this way we can understand the success of female professions as the degree in which they match the *Mother*. Teachers not only work within a *feminine* institution, the way in which they perform their work, and the way educational goals are defined by legal and educational institutions fit notions of gender appropriate behavior. We see this in activities that "domesticate the classroom" such as craft activities in connection with holidays (Bilken, 1995), in the teacher's evaluation of students' knowledge *as well as* behavior, and quite clearly in the teacher's close contact with and responsibility for children. The harmony between the metaphorical *Mother*, teacher's understanding and performance of their job, and the school's institutional feminine rhetoric in legal documents all contribute to creating strong institutional and professional identities.

The public library and public librarians do not have similar strong institutional or professional identities. One obvious explanation for this is that librarians are always in a minority position at work, which makes them outsiders. But they are also "outsiders" within the context of gender appropriate work. Both the work - analysis and organization, and the library institution belong to the masculine metaphor. I suggest that there is a conflict between the female librarian profession and librarianship and the library understood as masculine activity and institution. In attempting to reconcile this conflict librarians have developed a specific "assistant" identity that can be metaphorically expressed as the *Wife*. Library discourse conceals this from us in many different ways. For example, librarian ethics value non-judgmental attitudes in library user's use of library resources. This becomes obvious in debates concerning free access to information on the Internet. These attitudes are understood as a protection of user's privacy and democratic rights. Incorporating both popular and canonical ideas of "quality" in collection development policies is understood as an acknowledgement of diversity and equality. Yet, providing on a user demand basis is also the action of an assistant, one who's only job it is to provide, not to evaluate. We know that librarians do in fact evaluate and censor. Yet these actions are performed outside the public scrutiny, and, at least in Norwegian libraries, the majority of discussions and debates on these issues are kept "in the kitchen". The combination of loyalty to the library's institutional goals, and concealing the actual work it takes to meet these goals is like the wife's seemingly effortless, yet constant loyal support of her husband's needs. It contributes to keeping librarians active in the public sphere without threatening society's ideas of women's competency and ability to implement decisions.

One of Solheim's main points is that women have different possibilities to define boundaries than men. A mother can define boundaries for her children, although children constantly debate these boundaries. But a wife cannot define her husband's boundaries, although he often defines hers. Boundaries are a conflict area in the school library. Elisabeth Rafste discovered that high school libraries in Norway were "porous". The room was used for everything from traditional library activities, to a canteen (Rafste, 2001). In Cynthia Giorgis' study it was apparent that some teachers felt they had as much right to define the library space as the librarian herself (Giorgis, 1994). Teachers can call children in to class and send them out. Librarians however, cannot shut their doors. Rafste also discovered that teachers defined the premises for teacher-librarian cooperation in high school libraries, something Giorgis' study and other studies support.

Librarians who try to participate on an equal footing with teachers meet challenges on several levels. Incorporating the "masculine" aspects of librarian identity: Privacy, diversity, analysis and organization into the "female" aspects of teacher identity: intimacy, sameness, and fostering threatens our basic need for separating the masculine from the feminine. It introduces different ways of thinking about intellectual freedom and growth, different skill needs for finding information, and ultimately different goals for education. These goals would perhaps remove the idea of "sameness" from Norwegian primary education ideolog Teachers and librarians would have to reexamine the ideas and traditions each job is based on, especially the ways in which each job has formed specific ways of meeting gender expectations. This is quite a challenge in a country that prides itself on gender equality. Yet if we do not take a close look at these issues, school libraries will never become "the heart of the school", as they were proclaimed in 1967 (Gloppe, 1994).

It is not up to the librarian or the teacher alone, to bring about the changes that would vitalize school library services. I hope that this discussion has shown that hindrances to necessary change exist on every level, from the institutional to the existential. Librarians need to explore their own history. Recent research continues to tell a story of progress, loyalty and selflessness. Our "library heroes" are men. No one seems to question the non-union profile of the Norwegian Library Association, nor does anyone question why public school libraries continue to reproduce the public library in schools instead of functioning as small research libraries. This is reflected in the fact that the Minister of Education focuses on issues of direct relevance to library services, like research skills, computer skills and cross-curriculum activities, without ever mentioning either school libraries or librarians as necessary in meeting education goals related to these areas. Teachers need to consider how their work can be enriched by viewing school librarians as partners in teaching. An important step towards this goal is teachers and librarians freeing themselves from the roles of mother and wife, so they can work together in promoting learning among young people in different, yet equally important ways.

References

- Ansteinsson, Jon. (1917). Comment. *For folkeopplysning: Tidsskrift for boksamlinger og folkeakademier*. II 1917, 70.
- Benneche, Olaf. (1920). Om små folkebibliotek. *For folkeopplysning: Tidsskrift for boksamlinger og folkeakademier*. V 1920, 66.
- Bilken, Sara Knopp. (1995). *School work: Gender and the cultural construction of teaching*. NY: Teachers College Press.
- Clemet, Kristin. (2002) *Pisa undersøkelsen – utfordringer for skolen*. [On-line]. Available: <http://odin.dep.no/ufd/norsk/publ/veiledninger/045051-120002/index-dok000-b-n-a.html>
- Dokka, Hans-Jørgen. (1988). *En skole gjennom 250 år: Den norske allmueskole – folkeskole – grunnskole 1739-1989*. Oslo: NKS.
- The Education Act. [On-line]. Available: <http://odin.dep.no/ufd/engelsk/regelverk/lover/014101-200002/index-dok000-b-n-a.html>
- Fischer, Carl. (1919). *For folkeopplysning: Tidsskrift for boksamlinger og folkeakademier*. IV 1919, 84-85.
- Fylkesinspektøren for Buskerud. (1920). Innberetning. *For folkeopplysning: Tidsskrift for boksamlinger og folkeakademier*. V 1920, 108.
- Giorgis, Cynthia. (1994). *Librarian as teacher: Exploring elementary teachers' perceptions of the role of the school librarian and the implementation of flexible scheduling and collaborative planning*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Tuscon: The University of Arizona
- Gloppe, Elisabeth. (1994). *Skolebiblioteket – et pedagogisk stebarn?*. Hovedoppgave til cand.polit. graden. Oslo: Pedagogisk forskningsinstitutt, Universitetet i Oslo.
- Goode, William J. (1969). USA. Amitai Etzionia (Ed.), *The Semi-professions and their organization : teachers, nurses, social workers*. (pp.266-313) New York : The Free Press.
- Hagemann, Gro. *Skolefolk: Lærernes historie i Norge*. Oslo: Ad Notam Gyldendal.
- Harris, Roma M. (1992). *Librarianship – the erosion of a woman's profession*. NJ: Ablex publ.
- Hjartøy, H.J. (1936). *Vår bibliotekpolitikk*. Oslo: Arbeidernes Oplysningsforbund.
- Norwegian Directorate of Public Libraries. (2001) *Bibliotek 2001*. [On-line]. Available: <http://www.bibtils.no/Publikasjoner/aarbok/aarbok2001.pdf>

The Public Library Act. [On-line]. Available:

<http://www.bibtils.no/Omsb/InEnglish/llibraryact.htm>

Rafste, Elisabeth T. (2001). *Et sted å lære eller et sted å være?: En case-studie av elevers bruk og opplevelse av skolebiblioteket*. Oslo: Unipub.

Ringdal, Nils Johan (1985). *By, bok og borger: Deichmanske bibliotek gjennom 200 år*. Oslo: Aschehoug.

Slagstad, Rune. (1998). *De nasjonale strateger*. Oslo: Pax

Solheim, Jorun. (1998). *Den åpne kroppen: om kjønnsymbolikk I moderne kultur*. Oslo: Pax.

Tøsse, Sigvart. (1997). *Kunnskap, danning og opplysning : kunnskapssyn og dannelsesideal i norsk folkeopplysning på 1800-tallet*. NVI-rapport. Trondheim: Norsk voksenpedagogisk forskningsinstitutt.

Tøsse, Sigvart. (1998). *Kunnskap til makt : politisk opplysningsarbeid i norsk arbeidarrørsele frå 1880-åra til 1940*. NVI-rapport. Trondheim: Norsk voksenpedagogisk forskningsinstitutt.

Vestheim, Geir. (1997). *Fornuft, kultur og velferd: Ein historisk-sosiologisk studie av norsk folkebibliotekpolitikk: Doktoravhandling. Avdelning för biblioteks- och informationvetenskap, Göteborgs Universitet, 1997*. Oslo: Samlaget.

¹ Each municipal school has a room with books. However, collection management and services are neglected in many (the majority?) of these schools.

² The program is presented online at this address: <http://www.hio.no/index.php3?malgr=e>