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## Editorial: The Synergy of Making Connections

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"Making connections" was one of the themes that emerged during the doctoral defense of a student at the University of Alberta this week. It was the doctoral defense that brought Julie Tallman from the University of Georgia to Edmonton, and we are taking the opportunity of that event in our work as supervisors of graduate students to share our work as editors of *School Libraries Worldwide*. Most of our editorial work related to the journal is conducted over the Internet and the telephone lines. Rarely do we get the chance to work in the same office, to share conversations over meals, and to laugh and enjoy the company of old and new friends.

This experience reminded me of the important synergy that comes from working together, from making connections with others in our field (see, e.g., Oberg & Henri, 2002). The synergy of working across districts, across countries, across oceans, and across boundaries of all kinds has enriched the development of school librarianship in countless ways. Making connections can be developed in the virtual world, but to sustain long-term complex relationships over great distances requires understanding and trust, and these are best developed through time spent together in a face-to-face environment. In the article cited above, James Henri and I noted three themes related to making connections: "short but intensive engagement in each other's lives; mutual involvement in international association work; and making and carrying out informal agreements and commitments" (p. 49). The time that Julie and I are spending together this week exemplifies those three themes. Making connections is critical to the success of all of us who work in the school library field, and we hope our message will encourage you to reflect on and celebrate the gifts that can come from making connections.

Thank you to Theme Editor Denise Agosto for her excellent work on the Theme Section "Gender and Digital Technologies." Denise has written a literature review and discussed research conducted by herself and others related to the theme, and then she has described how the work of the contributing authors relate to the theme. The authors who have contributed to the Theme Section work in the United States and in Iceland.

The author of the research article that begins this issue, Myrna Machet, works in South Africa. She was one of a team of researchers who replicated in South Africa the Roehampton Institute study of children's reading habits in England. Her article focuses on the findings of the South African study related to young people's reading of information texts. One of the surprising

findings of the study was that the reading interests of young people in South Africa were quite similar to those of young people in England.

The author of the second article of this issue, Margot Filipenko, works in Canada. In her article she shares some of the findings from her doctoral research conducted in an early childhood education classroom. Her study reminds me of the debts we owe to researchers in fields outside the school library field. Her findings have much to offer us in our work in information literacy teaching.

*Dianne Oberg and Julie Tallman*

### *Reference*

Oberg, D., & Henri, J. (2002). Information transfer and transformation in teacher-librarianship: Synergy across the Pacific. *International Information and Library Review*, 34(1), 35-56.