
Editorial

Focusing on Research

With this issue, after seven years of production, the format and focus of *School Libraries Worldwide* has changed. The Editorial Board of *School Libraries Worldwide*, at its meeting in July 2001 at the IASL conference in Auckland, New Zealand, decided that a shift in the balance of SLW content was timely. This shift in the content emphasis of the journal, toward more research dissemination, will take *School Libraries Worldwide* one step closer to being the preeminent research journal in our field. This goal has come into the range of the possible because of the support of the Association for the journal and because of the success of another IASL initiative, the International Forum on Research in School Librarianship. These initiatives, along with the Association's research award program, reflect the increasing interest in and support of research within the Association.

The first issue of *School Libraries Worldwide*, IASL's international journal for school librarianship, was published in January 1995. Its success has been made possible by the inspiration, persistence, and hard work of many people. Two individuals were especially significant in the early development of the journal. Sigrún Klara Hannesdóttir, a Past-President of IASL, encouraged the Association to support the development of a scholarly and professional journal to carry on an international dialogue about school librarianship; and Gerald Brown, a Past-Vice-President of IASL, helped to define the goals and policies of the journal. The IASL Executive Board of Directors has allocated the financial resources needed for its production, and the journal's Editorial Board members have provided essential advice to the Editor and have reviewed the manuscripts submitted for publication. The current members of the Board are listed in each issue of the journal. Appreciation for services rendered in the past is also very much due former Editorial Board members: Paulette Bernhard (Canada), Norma Jeffrey (Australia), Jocelyn Mete (Vanuatu), Yap Foong Mui (Singapore), Pierre Overduin (South Africa), Mel Rainey (Fiji), and Diljit Singh (Malaysia).

From the beginning of the journal, each issue has focused on a theme. The SLW Editorial Board has now decided to work toward using the major part of each issue of the journal to focus on current research and to include, at the back of each issue of the journal, a theme section, introduced by a Theme Editor and including three or four articles on the theme. Gary Hartzell, a professor in the Department of Educational Administration, University of Nebraska at Omaha, USA, took up the challenge of developing the first Theme Section, which focuses on the role of the principal in school library development. The Theme Section includes articles on the principal's role in

developing school libraries, in implementing flexible scheduling, and in evaluating the school librarian. The section concludes with an article by Gary Hartzell on why principals often have narrow views of the school librarian's role and what school librarians can do to change these perceptions.

Opening this issue are two articles developed by researchers investigating practice in information literacy instruction and in school library education. The first article, by a school library educator and researcher from Scotland, James Herring, and two teachers from a school in England, Anne-Marie Tarter and Simon Naylor, reports an evaluation of the PLUS information skills model. Their research offers a deeper understanding of the information-seeking process from the perspective of young people. This article will be of interest to library researchers as well as school librarians and classroom teachers, not only for the model of teaching information skills itself, but for its impact on young people's way of thinking. The comments of the students, their teachers, and the school's librarian are interesting and insightful.

Anne Russell, a school library educator and researcher from Australia, reports on an exploration of her postsecondary teaching process in an online module in school library education. Teaching online presents new challenges to instructors accustomed to teaching face-to-face, especially in terms of developing a learning community. Anne's research suggests that instructors and their students might benefit from a deeper knowledge of how students with different personality preferences experience an online learning community. Anne's article offers some challenging, at times provocative, insights into how online instruction needs to address some of the psychological and social dimensions of learners. It is an informative article and potentially useful for practitioners, educators, and instructional designers.

I am pleased with the new format for *School Libraries Worldwide*, and I look forward to hearing from you, our readers, about the new format. I am also looking for more research articles for upcoming issues, so do contact me if you are interested in submitting a research article.

Dianne Oberg
Editor