

THE VIEW FROM THE INTERSECTION OF SCHOOL LIBRARY WOMEN & WORK

by Linda Esser

This essay addresses some of the silences in the library literature regarding school library women. First and foremost, it is about the intersection of their identities as women and their identities as school librarians; the essay attempts to explain that their work cannot be, should not be, considered as separate from the women who enact it. These women are not taken off the shelf each morning and set in motion in school libraries, only to then be put back on the shelf when the last child or teacher leaves the building. Rather, school library women bring a biography of lived experiences to their work. Those experiences accompany them into the building in the morning, stay with them as they carry out their work during the day and leave with them at the end of the school day. They are women who have chosen to become school librarians, not school librarians who are coincidentally women — a subtle but critical distinction the profession has yet to make.

“Our Female Heritage”

“School librarianship—frequently regarded as a low status and alien activity by both the education and library professions.”
Reader in Library and Information Services, 1974, p. 57

In 1993, Grover and Fowler reviewed published research and doctoral dissertations written about school librarians and school libraries for a five-year period (1987-1991). They reviewed a total of 153 research reports covering 183 topics. Not surprisingly, more often than not, research emphasis in the field focused on profession processes rather than school library users or the individuals who carry out their work as school librarians. Forty-one reports categorized under the heading “Library Media Specialist” were “concerned with the preparation, role, activities, or professional status of a library media professional” (Grover & Fowler, 1993, p. 243). The list of topics within that category is wide-ranging, covering professional education, employment trends, role of the school library media specialist and necessary personality characteristics. During the last thirty years, Grover and Fowler explain, the predominant theme in the research has been the attempt to define the field, “to delineate the school library media program and the role of the school library media specialist by evaluating library

media programs, surveying the role perception and exploring the characteristics of exemplary programs” (Grover & Fowler, 1993, p. 242). This theme accounts for more than one-third of the research literature from 1987-1991.

Kenneth Haycock (1995), a noted scholar and researcher in the field, provides another comprehensive review of the research literature. His review of the research covers a range of topics that deal with issues as diverse as the school librarian’s role in student reading habits to public librarian/school librarian cooperation, but most focus on single aspects or roles of librarians and their work. He notes numerous studies document the effects of school librarians and libraries on student learning and achievement.

Perhaps the most grating aspect of the research literature on school librarianship is the virtual absence of discussion of school librarians as women, or school librarianship as a female-intensive profession. Jane Ann Hannigan and Hilary Crew addressed this issue in a 1993 article in *Wilson Library Bulletin* and Hannigan (1994) came back to it again in her “Keynote Address to the Association of Library and Information Science Educators” (ALISE). In the address, Hannigan describes the basic premises upon which the profession of library and information science have been built and the effects of these premises on women: “white, middle-class, male paradigms...have systematically, if unconsciously, silenced and excluded women” (p. 297). She recommends that “we re-examine our history and the basic premises, both of that history and of current theory and practice to include ideas, people, and practices that have been excluded” (p. 297). In particular, she points to the example of school librarianship. She refers to its rich history of “innovative and creative women; yet they and their contributions are almost never discussed in either text or classroom” (Hannigan, 1994, p. 298).

Hannigan (1994) wonders whether this systematic exclusion of women from the history of librarianship limits the kinds of questions we ask within the discipline. Hannigan and Crew (1993) suggest that feminist scholarship can disrupt the silences in the literature regarding library women and their work. “Feminist scholarship reaffirms the need for situational/contextual explanations and acknowledges both difference and connectedness between women and the men with whom they work” (Hannigan & Crew, 1993, p. 28). Therefore, researchers need to acknowledge the authenticity of women’s subjective experiences and ways of knowing as inquirers and participants. Hannigan (1994) challenges each researcher in the discipline to break the present mold, take risks, and make clear to editors of journals and books the need to address the concerns of library women throughout the professional literature. “We simply must develop a body of literature for our field that is gender-fair and more truly representative of over half of the population” (p. 311).

However, Hannigan and Crew have overlooked difference and connectedness between library women and the library women with whom they work

in their advocacy for feminist research scholarship. Research that accepts Hannigan's (1994) challenge confronts the female-intensive character of librarianship and examines situational/contextual explanations as centered there rather than on the periphery.

Roma Harris (1992) places library women at the center of her work, *Librarianship: The Erosion of a Woman's Profession*. An avowedly feminist scholar, Harris defines female-intensive professions as "occupations in which a very high proportion of the workers are women" (p. 3). Although women numerically dominate female-intensive professions, it is primarily men who exercise control by holding a disproportionate number of positions of authority. Technology and management are considered "masculine" domains of library work, while service roles and work with children are relegated to the province of library women.

Harris comments that the literature of female-intensive professions is saturated with "examples of what might best be described as an obsession with status" (Harris, 1992, p. 3). The author explores the topics of self-doubt and self-blame in female intensive professions. She suggests that this deprecation does not come from the perspectives of outsider sociologists and theorists alone but that some of the most strident self-abnegation comes from within, with librarians blaming each other for their marginal professional status.

The author writes at length on Dee Garrison's (1979) pivotal work, *Apostles of Culture: The Public Librarian and the American Society, 1876-1920*. Along with Suzanne Hildebrand (1995) and Christina Baum (1992), Harris reads Garrison from a feminist scholarship framework. According to these scholars, Garrison posits that women are responsible for the feminization of the profession and its attendant problems of low status and low pay. Further, Garrison contends that the predominance of women in library work is responsible for the hundred years' war over the professional standing of librarianship.

Apostles of Culture (1979) made public what was obvious to the library workforce—that the workforce was, and continues to be, dominated by women—and placed that dominance in a historical context. However, Garrison's work has had another, less salutary effect on librarianship. To be feminized is to be compared to masculinized and found wanting. Because of Garrison's work, feminized and feminization have become words with negative connotations, a condition to be avoided by moving toward the masculine model of a profession and the technological domain. Garrison's work seems to suggest that feminized and feminization are librarianship's dirty words.

Clearly, librarianship, particularly youth services librarianship, is a female-intensive profession. In 1995, one out of five persons awarded the degree of Master of Library Science in the United States accepted positions connected to youth services in public or school libraries. Of that number, the

majority of those who accepted positions related to work in youth services in libraries were women: 94% in public libraries; 92% as teacher-librarians (Zipkowitz, 1995).

An analysis of the listings of secondary, middle and elementary schools taken from the *Directory of Kentucky's Libraries and Archives: 1994-1995* (Bank, 1994) reveals that, in secondary schools, approximately 97% (216 of 222) of school librarians were women; in middle schools, 95.5% (178 of 186); and in elementary schools, 99.4% (619 of 622). These statistics are probably similar to other states, with the substantial majority of school library women in positions at the elementary school level.

Daniel D. Barron's (1995) "School Library Media Program Women: A Celebration of Our Female Heritage," praises the many women who have contributed to the history of school librarianship. Barron presents an abbreviated chronological history of the development of school libraries and the major events and school library women that have shaped them. It is ironic that one of the few published articles on school library women is written by a male. While focusing on "our female heritage," Barron ignores gender and claims that same heritage for both male school librarians and school library women. There are indeed male school librarians. Their numbers are few and they are more likely to be found working in secondary and middle schools rather than elementary (Bank, 1994).

Male school librarians may explain their work and their place in schools in very different ways from their women counterparts. Questions remain as to whether, as Barron (1995) suggests, a collective experience of "our female heritage" (p. 4) exists, one that is common to all school librarians. Where do the contributions of men to the history of the profession fit into "our female heritage"? If the research on school librarians is to be gender fair as Hannigan (1994) proposes, then school library men must be invited to explain their work and the place their work holds in their lives. The stories of both men and women should offer further insights into how professional practice is enacted in school libraries.

Sarah Innis Fenwick's "Library Service to Children and Young People" (1976) in *Library Trends* presents a chronological, glowing "house-history" of the development of library services to children and young adults. Fenwick focuses on the changes in the education system and school curriculum that occurred in tandem with the growth of youth services in libraries during the Progressive Era. Surprisingly, she credits young people as "instigators of the development of library services to fit their needs" and remarks that the "spontaneous pressure of youth on community services can be traced throughout the history of the public library" (Fenwick, 1976, p. 330). Fenwick's description of school libraries and their role in the education setting are nearly euphoric.

In many schools the library has become a media center in every dimension of the term—a learning center for students, a resources center for

teachers, a study center, a viewing and listening center, a communications center, and a variety of other designations that attempt to interpret to the school population what a library means to teaching and learning in today's schools (Fenwick, 1976, p. 355).

In contrast, Elaine Fain (1978) takes a critical look at the history of youth services in libraries in "The Library and American Education: Education Through Secondary School." Fain places the growth and development of public libraries as institutions committed to the education and acculturation of adults and children, particularly immigrant children, in social, economic, cultural, ethnic, racial and gender contexts. The author does not flinch from pointing out that this missionary-like zeal of children's services library women was less than altruistic and deeply embedded in the biases of the dominant culture of the late 1800s and early 1900s. Effie L. Power, considered one of the early luminaries in the development of youth services, stated in a 1914 pamphlet that "what children read depends very largely upon temperament and racial tendencies" (Fain, 1978, p. 341). Power's judgment of Jewish, German, and Slavic children was no less discriminatory and harsh.

Fain references the work of critical cultural and education historians David Tyack and Michael Katz and library historian Michael Harris in her reading of the history of youth services in libraries. She examines the role of progressivism in both librarianship and education, and discusses the effects of the acceptance of the first Certain Report by the National Education Association (NEA) and American Library Association (ALA), and its effect on the development of school libraries. Fain explains the changes in both education and school librarianship brought about by the launch of Sputnik in 1957, when school libraries moved from an emphasis on reading guidance and motivation to a curriculum centered place that supported scientific learning models in academic disciplines.

Commenting on the status of school libraries, Fain writes that school libraries and school librarians have failed to fulfill expectations. Bedeviled by budget constraints, controlled by state legislatures, departments of education and local school boards, exhorted to ever increasing responsibilities by leaders of national and state professional associations, and engaged in a near-constant identity crisis, the idyllic school libraries and school librarians described by Fenwick (1976) quoted earlier in this essay are largely the stuff of professional myth. Elaine Fain observes,

Throughout the literature on school libraries there runs an undercurrent of disappointment. It is over the disparity between the idea of the school library (and the school librarian) as being at the hub of a creative instructional program, and the actuality—the school library has frequently had only a marginal role....

On various occasions the blame for the failure to reach the ideal has been laid on teachers, administrators, school librarians, or stu-

dents (or all of them combined). . . . The debate appears to be endless and rather futile, perhaps because so many unstated premises about education are assumed by all participants. In general, however, it seems to have passed into the library literature that school libraries are now or should be media centers; further, school librarians have on the whole ceased to question the wisdom of this progression (Fain, 1978, pp. 344-345).

Here, then, is Roma Harris's (1992) blame game played out in the arena of school librarianship. Anyone who reads the literature of school librarianship cannot escape the finger-pointing in article after article and self-help book after self-help book. Teachers are blamed for not understanding the importance of information literacy and the school librarian's role as "instructional consultant" or the recent, more palatable designation of "instructional partner." Administrators are blamed for not understanding the role of the school library and school librarian in the instructional program of the school, and for lack of financial support for the library's program. National and state professional association leaders blame building-level school librarians for lack of initiative in securing funding and an inability or reluctance to implement the proscribed tenets of *Information Power* (AASL & AECT, 1988, 1998), commonly known as "IP1" and "IP2".

This particular blame game is not a new one. Rather, it is deeply embedded in the history of school librarianship, of school library women caught up in a game with rules not of their own choosing. Pearl Carson (1930) argues that school librarians should have "a rank on any school faculty equal to that of teachers, should receive the same salary as they if offering the same qualifications of education and experience as theirs" (p. 44). Thus, as early as 1930, the status of school librarians and the working relationships between school librarians and classroom teachers was a topic for discussion and, apparently, a site of conflict. In "The Librarian and the School Faculty," published in *Wilson Bulletin for Librarians*, Carson makes a case for school librarians whose qualifications are at least equal to those of classroom teachers. Her advocacy for equality of salary, position and social privileges carries with it acceptance of responsibilities to attend the same meetings teachers are expected to attend. In addition to equal salaries, Carson advocates for the same vacation time as teachers with added salary for any additional weeks' work done in the school. She laments the fact that these conditions do not always prevail and raises the question that, if school librarians and teachers are not treated equally, "is the failure due to the librarians' offering insufficient qualifications or to the schools' lack of recognition of what should be expected of librarians?" (Carson, 1930, p. 44). Even with equality, Carson explains, difficulties remain.

A change of attitude, it seems, is needed between librarians and teachers, if the two are to work together harmoniously and efficiently on a school staff. . . . There prevailed, it seemed to me, in both librarians and teachers a lack of tolerance and bigness of spirit. Teachers refused to understand the necessity and reason-

ableness of many of the librarians' requirements of them; and, on the other hand, too many librarians recognizing only the need for exactness, accuracy, and detail in their work, valuable as these are, were failing to look up and on out of the valley of their own narrow conceptions of life and duty (Carson, 1930, p. 45).

Searching for Perspectives in the Wider World of Women and Work

“There is much to be discovered where
teacher identity and a person's identity intersect.”
Maxine Greene

Maxine Greene's (Greene, 1995, p. vii) statement is as relevant for school library women as it is for classroom teachers—both female-intensive low status professions. Much remains to be discovered where school librarian identity and a woman's identity intersect. In order to understand the constraints and possibilities that operate around school librarians negotiating work relationships with classroom teachers, the profession must venture beyond the limited literature of school librarianship for fresh perspectives to where scholars in anthropology, sociology and education have researched the kinds of interactions and relationships that take place among women negotiating relationships with women within the wider world of work.

Women United, Women Divided: Comparative Studies of Ten Contemporary Cultures (Caplan & Bujra, 1982) is a collective work on the issue of solidarity of female workers. Ten feminist sociologists and anthropologists examine the concept of female solidarity, a product of the women's movement, in very different cultural contexts. This concept assumes that women, as members of a biological “sisterhood,” have a necessary basis for solidarity. However, the biological fact of sisterhood does not automatically generate sisterly feelings among groups of women. Janet M. Bujra (1982) quotes Wallman, who suggests that we carefully examine this kind of thinking: “the significance of being female...varies with the technology, setting, class, context, task, rank, age, profession, kinship, wealth and economics” (p. 18). Bujra concurs with Wallman's admonition for caution with regard to the use of women as an analytical category and comments on specific instances where the analytical category of women does not hold up under scrutiny. One of the instances described by Bujra is particularly enlightening when considering the relationship between school library women and classroom teachers: “within any one society women are often divided against themselves in terms of their differential relation to class and status hierarchies, as well as factors such as age and kinship affiliation” (Bujra, 1982, p. 19).

The notion of solidarity expresses itself in different ways in the research presented. These expressions range from “tacit moral support, through instrumental assistance, to organized cultural activities specifically focused

on women's concerns" (Bujra, 1982, p. 14). Many of the participants described in the studies were in situations where they were oppressed as women. Bujra and her colleagues found that, rather than challenging their oppression, women often acted together in ways that reinforced it. In other situations, the forms of solidarity were imposed on women by patriarchal social and cultural constructs. Women in these situations "exhibited no unity whatsoever" and "were deeply divided among themselves" (Bujra, 1982, p. 15). From their research, the scholars perceived there is no cross-cultural female solidarity. "Gradually it emerged that, in considering women co-operating and supporting each other, we were facing a different analytical issue, which had to do more with the social and ideological manifestations of various forms of the sexual division of labor" (Bujra, 1982, p. 14).

The story of the Mathare woman is one of the ten ethnographies about women collected in *Women United, Women Divided*. Each day, the Mathare woman negotiates her work activities with an intricate network of women who brew an illegal beer called *buzaa* to eke out a subsistence living for herself and her children. Because she is one of the *buzaa* brewers and engages in the same kinds of work activities, she understands their needs and they, in turn, understand hers. These women give her assistance in numerous ways. If she requires equipment to brew *buzaa*, she calls on members of her production network. They warn her of imminent police raids, inform her relatives and friends when she is arrested or seriously ill, and care for her children if necessary. She cannot successfully carry out the work of production without their assistance (Nelson, 1979).

The Mathare woman has formed and holds membership in many networks. According to Barnes, anthropologists use the concept of networks to describe a "configuration of cross-cutting interpersonal bonds in some unspecified way casually connected with the action of this person and the social institutions of their society" (Barnes, 1972 : 3)" (Nelson, 1979, p. 79). Nelson (1979) comments that networks are not unique to women, that all individuals hold membership in networks. Nelson (1979) focuses on and distinguishes between two distinct networks formed by the Mathare woman. These are effective and extended. Effective networks are those "in which the members interact frequently, and links connect all the members" (p. 80). Effective networks are activated daily to cope with a variety of problems and are characterized by interacting members living and working in close physical proximity to one another. Extended networks are less structured. Members may be friends, relatives or acquaintances.

Reciprocal exchanges are integral to an effective network. Members of the network are expected to abide by the "ethic of neighborliness and friendliness" (Nelson, 1979, p. 88) when enacting these reciprocal exchanges. Members know that ignoring this convention is to risk sanction by others in the network and the ultimate sanction of deliberate exclusion.

Like the Mathare woman, Five Towns' (Lortie, 1975) teachers have similar unwritten rules for reciprocal exchanges. In Five Towns, the etiquette rule seems to be "live and let live, and help when asked" (p. 195). Classroom teachers control the extent of their engagement with colleagues. Closeness or distancing is a matter of individual choice. "The norms respect the individual's right to choose between association and privacy; they also protect individual teachers against unsolicited interventions by others.... Those who want close relationships with peers can undertake them, but all are supposed to render assistance when asked" (Lortie, 1975, p. 195).

Considering school library history in the light of Fain (1978), Carson (1930) Bujra (1982) and the other writings discussed in this paper, an argument can be made that school library women and classroom teachers are deeply divided against themselves. School library women, operating under professional constructs not of their choosing, violate the "ethic of neighborliness and friendliness" (Nelson, 1979, p. 88) and break the rule of "live and let live, and help when asked" (Lortie, 1975, p. 195) in their day-to-day exchanges with classroom teachers. Perhaps it is not teachers who "refuse to understand the necessity and reasonableness of many librarians' requirements of them" (Carson, 1930, p. 45) but school librarianship that disdains understanding how teachers' effective networks operate.

Effective Networks as Collaborative Cultures

The research findings of Hargreaves (1994, 1991) suggest that collaboration among teachers takes place in one of two kinds of school cultures: one that supports teachers working together and one that imposes what Hargreaves terms "contrived collegiality" (Hargreaves 1991, p. 53). The author characterizes a collaborative culture as one that is spontaneous, voluntary, development oriented, pervasive across time and space, and unpredictable. In contrast, Hargreaves describes contrived collegiality as administratively regulated, compulsory, implementation-oriented, fixed in time and space, and predictable. Hargreaves explains:

Scheduled meetings and planning sessions may form part of collaborative cultures, but they do not dominate the arrangements for working together. In collaborative cultures, much of the way teachers work together is almost unnoticed, brief yet frequent, informal encounters. This may take the form of passing words and glances, praises and thanks, offers to exchange classes in tough times, suggestions about new ideas, informal discussions about new units, sharing problems or meeting parents together. Collaborative cultures are, in this sense, not clearly or closely regulated. They are constitutive of the very way that the teacher's working life operates in the school (Hargreaves, 1991, p. 53-54).

Consider both the effective network of the Mathare woman (Nelson, 1979) and Hargreaves' description of a collaborative culture. It can be argued

that a collaborative culture is a kind of effective network, one specifically related to the school setting and the work relationships teachers negotiate with each other. Both are an essential part of the way the school librarian's and the Mathare woman's work lives operate. In both the effective network and the collaborative culture, encounters among members may be brief and are often informal. Reciprocal exchanges in both the effective network and the collaborative culture are convention bound (Lortie, 1975; Nelson, 1979). Both the effective network and the collaborative culture cannot exist unless relationships are negotiated that form the links to complete them.

Collaborative planning between school librarians and classroom teachers appears to be a consistent site of conflict. The role of the school librarian as "instructional consultant" (AASL & AECT, 1998) or "instructional partner" (AASL & AECT, 1999) is central to what the published documents and public stance of the profession describe as legitimate activity for school librarians. The recent revision of *Information Power* (AASL & AECT, 1998) uses the more palatable instructional partner, replacing the off-putting instructional consultant (AASL & AECT, 1988). According to these documents, whether an instructional consultant or an instructional partner, as part of their work school librarians are directed to engage in collaborative planning with classroom teachers.

In 1998, Miller and Shontz reported the results of their research on high-service school libraries. The researchers collected data from 628 schools for the study. Of these schools, 141 (22.4%) met the authors' criteria for high-service schools. These criteria include services traditionally provided by school librarians such as curriculum integrated skills instruction, "collaborates with teachers," "helps teachers develop/implement/evaluate learning" and "provides flexible [library media center] schedule" (Miller & Shontz, 1998, p. 31). Miller and Shontz (1998) compare data for informal and formal planning at the elementary, middle and high school levels. The authors conclude that school librarians in high-service school libraries spend significantly more time engaged in both formal and informal instructional planning than do their counterparts in non-high-service schools, making a case for collaborative planning.

Reading against the texts of the research report is instructive. The statistics reported by Miller and Shontz (1998) clearly connect high-service schools with formal collaborative planning between school librarians and classroom teachers. However, a reconfiguring of the statistical data appears to support the conclusion that, for the elementary schools included in the study, more collaborative instructional planning between school librarians and classroom teachers takes place informally than formally. This "read" on the data cuts across high-service and non-high-service schools. In high-service elementary schools, school librarians engage in informal collaborative planning with teachers 1.39 hours more frequently each week than they do formal collaborative planning and in non-high-service elementary schools, 1.24 hours.

Arguably, school librarianship is about service. Carrying out that service requires negotiating relationships with classroom teacher colleagues. The professional guidelines, standards, and self-help books tell us repeatedly that this is the case. It would seem, then, it is essential that we make sense of how these relationships operate, of the factors that enable these negotiations and the factors that interfere. This will not happen, however, as long as the profession continues to ignore the fact that these exchanges take place between school librarians and classroom teachers, both members of female-intensive, low status professions. As long as research in school librarianship continues to view these exchanges as decontextualized, isolated events referred to as “collaboration,” scholars in the field will continue to produce, as Michael Harris (1986) describes, results that are “professionally palatable” (p. 525) and that support what is already determined to be standard professional practice.

Dan C. Lortie’s (1975) *Schoolteacher: A Sociological Study*, examines the world of classroom teachers and the meanings they give their work. Interviews were conducted with ninety-four classroom teachers selected by a random sampling procedure. Survey data from teachers in a second school district provided additional information for the study. Lortie’s research is exhaustive and is considered pivotal in the field of education despite its gender-biased texts. The author presents a chronological and sociological history of education in the United States. In addition, he examines the issues of recruitment to the field of classroom teaching and teacher retention. His perspectives on the extrinsic and intrinsic rewards of teaching, and their effects on teacher sentiments and behaviors are crucial to understanding the constraints school library women face in their relationships with classroom teachers.

In some instances, Lortie (1975) finds the same kind of informal relationships that Hargreaves (1991) characterizes as a collaborative culture. Some of the teachers from Lortie’s “Five Towns” (p. 193) reported jointly planning classes and occasionally switching classes for short periods of time. The teachers who identified themselves as having a great deal of contact with other teachers were usually individuals who worked in a mutually agreed pair relationship initially based on friendship. While a great deal of cooperation occurred outside of the classroom, the teachers chose to maintain classroom boundaries when they worked with their students. Lortie suggests that this is a consistent pattern with teachers.

The pattern is striking; positive events and outcomes are linked to two sets of actors—the teacher and the students...But all other persons, without exception, were connected with undesirable occurrences. Negative allusions were made to parents, the principal, the school nurse, colleagues—in fact, to anyone and everyone who “intrudes” on classroom events. The cathected scene is stripped of all transactions save those between teacher and student (Lortie, 1975, p. 169).

Five Towns' teachers described "a good day" in terms of having students to themselves, as a day when the classroom door could be closed and teaching was ascendant, a school day without interruption. The reason behind the teachers' statements and Lortie's conclusion is critical to understanding one of the fundamental barriers to achieving the kind of collaborative interaction dictated by the professional literature. Classroom teaching provides two kinds of rewards to teachers: extrinsic and intrinsic. Extrinsic rewards are usually considered those that are monetary in nature and individual teachers have little control over them. Salaries and salary schedule decisions are in the hands of bargaining units, local school boards and state legislatures. Intrinsic rewards are psychic in nature. Unlike extrinsic rewards, the degree and intensity of intrinsic rewards can vary. Psychic rewards accrue to teachers as a result of positive interactions with students. Increased efforts on the part of the teacher can increase those rewards. Lortie (1975) comments that "student affection and regard are...intrinsically rewarding; people normally enjoy being the object of affection and esteem" (p. 120). When students work with other classroom teachers, the school librarian, or special area teachers, the flow of psychic rewards to the classroom teacher is interrupted. The result, according to Lortie, is that teachers become competitors for the accrual of psychic rewards.

In trying to elicit favorable feelings from students (whatever the motivation), teachers are willy-nilly placed in competition with each other; some will obviously succeed better than others (Lortie, 1975, p. 120).

There is a very clear, unmistakable, message in Lortie's work for school librarianship as a profession, school library women as individuals and, in particular, for the professional leadership and its continual quest for power and prestige in the education arena. It is a message that classroom teachers have been futilely sending to school librarianship for years. Classroom teachers have, through silent and persistent resistance, consistently opposed a contrived collegiality planning structure imposed by an outside force unrelated to the usual authority hierarchy in the school. "Given the linkage between cellular isolation and opportunities to optimize psychic rewards, it is not surprising that many teachers resist alternative instructional arrangements" (Lortie, 1975, p. 141).

There is little doubt that this oppositional reading of the texts discussed in this essay will engender much head-wagging in mainstream school librarianship and leave the taste of "bitter milk" on the profession's palate (Grumet, 1988, p. xi). School library women, in particular, rarely question the pronouncements of national and state professional leadership, and the pronouncements progress unchallenged into standard professional practice. The multi-disciplinary perspectives on the intersection of school library women and their work suggest that there are situational/contextual explanations for the long, unsuccessful struggle to enforce a contrived collegiality instructional arrangement on classroom teachers. Why should school library women have control over classroom teachers' work lives?

What are the political, economic and social rewards that would accrue to national and state professional organizations should school library women succeed? It is past time to dare disturb this particular universe.

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