INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6” x 9” black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

UMI
A Bell & Howell Information Company
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor MI 48106-1346 USA
313/761-4700 800/521-0600
AN INVESTIGATION
OF FOUR EXEMPLARY SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALISTS
AND HOW THEY INCORPORATE
MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE INTO THE CURRICULUM

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By
Mary Elizabeth Shorey, M.Ed.

*****

The Ohio State University
1996

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Kenneth R. Howey, Adviser
Dr. Janet Hickman
Dr. William Taylor

Approved by
Adviser
College of Education
Copyright by
Mary Elizabeth Shorey
1996
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate how four exemplary school library media specialists view their profession; how they perceive themselves as library media specialists and educators; and how these beliefs have influenced them in one area of their responsibilities, the incorporation of multicultural literature into the curriculum. In particular, the study presented (a) how these school library media specialists describe their attitudes and responsibilities in relation to the roles of teacher, information specialist, and instructional consultant, (b) how contextual factors, namely the administration, the resources, and the collegial relationship among professionals enable or constrain these roles and responsibilities, (c) how these school library media specialists pursue their own continuing professional development, and (d) how they define, justify, promote, and use multicultural literature in their schools.

The method of investigation was naturalistic inquiry using case studies and incorporating participant observation, interview, and document analysis. Participant selection was conducted by purposeful sampling. Data were analyzed in an interpretive manner.

It was found that these individuals viewed their profession as multifaceted and dynamic. They were service-oriented and proactive in their practice, knowing the curriculum of their schools and their clientele — the school community. They possessed a broad knowledge of their collections and the availability of information, the teaching/learning process, and how to apply their knowledge to a variety of situations. They were life-long learners and informal leaders. They worked well with their
colleagues and were respected by the administration, teachers, and students. Each was aware of her own biases, was able to consider multiple perspectives, and was active in incorporating multicultural literature throughout the curriculum.

This study concluded that exemplary school library media specialists have numerous attributes that allow them to excel in their profession. These individuals were able to reflect on their practice. Collaboration took place between the school library media specialist and teachers when the environment of the school was conducive to it. Administrative support is important. An understanding and awareness of self and of others is necessary to be effective in encouraging a multiple perspective.
To my Mother and Father,
my first and most influential teachers
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the many people who encouraged and supported me throughout my doctoral program. In particular I would like to thank my adviser, Dr. Kenneth Howey, for his guidance, and my friend and colleague, Dr. Betty Cleaver, for her insight and wisdom.

Thanks to Bill Gossard, Dr. Robert Jewett, Joan Wiley, Marge Cambre, and Jon Tafel for their friendship and encouragement. Special thanks to the four exemplary school library media specialists who shared their thoughts and experiences with me.
VITA

April 17, 1952
Born
Boston, Massachusetts

August 1973
B. S. in Education
University of Maine Portland-Gorham
Gorham, Maine

1973-1978
Elementary School Teacher
School Administrative District #61
Bridgton, Maine

1978-1979
Graduate Research Assistant
Utah State University
Logan, Utah

May 1980
M. Ed. in Instructional Media
Utah State University
Logan, Utah
1979-1993  
Associate Director of Media Skills  
College of Education  
The Ohio State University  
Columbus, Ohio  

1994-1995  
Graduate Teaching Assistant  
College of Education  
The Ohio State University  
Columbus, Ohio  

PUBLICATIONS  


vii


FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Education
Studies in: Professional Development; Reading, Children's Literature, and Language Arts; and Instructional Design and School Library Media.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vita</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Statement and Purpose of Study</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of Study</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of the Methodology</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations of the Study</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of Terms</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Chapter</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Review of Related Literature</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The School Library Media Specialist</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Background</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is the School Library Media Specialist?</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Instruction Consultant</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An informal leader in professional development</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Information Specialist</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing the collection</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Teacher</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible scheduling of classes</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting critical thinking</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being an effective teacher</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research on Perceptions about the School Library Media Specialist ..........28
Context ..............................................................................................................30
Becoming an Exemplary School Library Media Specialist ..............................32
Professional Development of the School Library Media Specialist ..............32
  Pedagogical Development ..............................................................................33
  Understanding of Self and Others ...............................................................33
  Cognitive Development ................................................................................34
  Theoretical Development ............................................................................35
  Professional Development ............................................................................36
  Career Development .....................................................................................36
Working as an Instructional Consultant and Teacher to Integrate Literature ....37
The Value of Literature ....................................................................................38
  Reading to Develop Readers ........................................................................38
  The School Library Media Specialist’s Contribution ....................................40
  Inviting Students to Explore Literature ....................................................40
    Author visits .........................................................................................41
    Book talks .............................................................................................42
    Storytelling ............................................................................................42
    Read-aloud sessions ..............................................................................43
  Inviting Students to Respond to Literature ..............................................44
  Helping Students “Think More” — Nurturing Social Development ............45
Encouraging a Multicultural Perspective .........................................................49
  Goals of Teaching from a Multicultural Perspective ....................................51
  Becoming an Effective Multicultural Teacher ............................................52
  Teaching about Culture ...............................................................................54
    Levels of Integration ...............................................................................55
  The School Library Media Specialist’s Contribution ....................................58
The School Library Media Center’s Collection .................................................60
  Selecting Multicultural Materials for the Collection .....................................61
Multicultural Literature as a Vehicle for Developing a Multicultural Perspective ..................................................62
  Types of Multicultural Literature ................................................................64
  Evaluating Multicultural Literature ..........................................................64
  Using Multicultural Literature ..................................................................67
Conclusion ........................................................................................................70
Summary of Chapter .........................................................................................71

3. Methodology ...................................................................................................72
  Rationale for Research Methodology ............................................................72
  Selection of Research Questions .....................................................................74
  Selection of Site and Participants ..................................................................75
  Role of the Researcher ...................................................................................77
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration’s Support of Multicultural Education</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with Teachers and Support of Peers</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rewards</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Contextual Factors</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Growth</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in Courses and Inservice Activities</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State and National Professional Involvement</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Involvement</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributing to the Professional Growth of Others</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource and Information Sharing</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building a Professional Development Materials Collection</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing Professional Development</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Library Media Specialists as Leaders</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Professional Development</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Library Media Specialist’s Perception, Promotion, and Implementation of Multicultural Literature</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of Multicultural Literature</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Multicultural Literature</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion and Importance of Multicultural Literature</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becoming Multicultural</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of Materials/Development of Collection</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Selection Criteria</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author perspective</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stereotypes</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of Multicultural Literature</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with Students with Multicultural Literature</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with Teachers with Multicultural Literature</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborating with Others</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of Lessons</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparing Practice to Curricular Approaches</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant and Sleeter Typology</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banks’s Levels of Integration</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of integration levels</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes in Teaching</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Interest</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why Present Multicultural Literature?</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Implementation of Multicultural Literature</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revisiting the Research Questions</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Chapter</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epilogue</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Problem

Today, more than ever, students need to be encouraged to develop views which will allow them to successfully function in a society which is diverse and ever-changing. The population of the United States is growing more diverse ethnically, culturally, and linguistically. Sobol (1990) stated that “demographers tell us that by the year 2020 one of every three people in the United States will be what we now call a ‘minority’” (p. 27). Western European dominance in the United States is diminishing. Students must be prepared for a changing world by developing an understanding of the similarities and differences of their cultures and the cultures other than their own. An introduction to and the study of traditions and customs, struggles and accomplishments, issues and perspectives of cultures can acquaint students with the global society. It can also serve as a source for developing identity and pride in students of cultures that traditionally have been under-represented in the school curriculum. By becoming conscious of multiple perspectives and other cultures and by looking deeper into their own culture, students can develop a broader view of what is involved in a global society, a society which will be the society of the adults who are now the students of the 1990s.
Acquainting students with the diversity or multiculturalism of the society is not taking away from the customs and values of the Western tradition, but it is adding to it. Wills (1991) stated, “Multiculturalism is not a deviation from the study of one’s own world, but a precondition to it. Who knows only one thing, knows not even that. A thing entirely isolated would be unknowable” (p. 18). Madigan (1993) responded, “To know the white world without any sense of how it relates to the world of people of color is not to know the white world.” (p. 176). Banks (1989) believes that “mainstream American students” have developed an unrealistic view of society because of the lack of information about cultures other than the dominant culture presented in the school curriculum. He supports inclusion of multicultural elements in the curriculum and contends that,

When people view their culture from the point of view of another culture, they are able to understand their own culture more fully, to see how it is unique and distinct from other cultures, and to understand better how it relates to and interacts with other cultures. (p. 189)

Schools are accepting the challenge to bring multicultural awareness to the students of the 21st century. Various programs are encouraging awareness, tolerance and empathy for others, recognition of others’ feelings and circumstances, and confrontation of prejudice and stereotyping (Brown, 1992; Gould, 1991; Johnson and Smith, 1993; Sleeter, 1992).

One way to introduce students to the various aspects of multiculturalism is through the reading and discussion of books written by and/or about people from many cultures. R. Craig Roney (1986) stated,

Literature is a valuable resource to help children deal with the complexities of modern society. Contemporary realistic fiction in particular—true-to-life stories set in recent times—can provide a wealth of data for children to use as they attempt to understand the ethnically diverse nature of the modern United States. Such books provide opportunities, albeit vicarious, to meet people of other ethnicities, and in a relatively nonthreatening manner. (p. 464)
The school's library media specialist is in a critical position to help infuse multicultural awareness into the curriculum. Collection development (a plan for selecting library books and audiovisual resources for the school library media center) with a strong consideration of multicultural needs as well as balance is an important task of the specialist (Sharp, 1992). For the collection to be available to everyone, school library media specialists must believe that the school library media center is an essential place in which to acquaint students and teachers with multicultural views. They must develop an inviting and nonthreatening environment in which students and teachers may come to discover the intricacies of other worlds. (Skeele and Schall, 1994). Rasinski and Padak (1990) stated, "In the context of an environment that promotes interpersonal caring, the development of prosocial behaviors and attitudes, selflessness, and citizenship, teachers and children can use literature to explore and act upon their cultural values and beliefs" (p. 576).

With the support of the principal and classroom teachers, a school library media program can be strong and effective. (Haycock, 1985). To gain this support, the school library media specialist must be perceived as knowledgeable and valuable to the overall school program (Ervin, 1989).

The school library media specialist provides the collection and the environment for discovery, and also works with teachers and students to encourage and guide them toward an understanding for others and their cultures (Skeele and Schall, 1994).

The school library media specialist's role is diverse and dynamic and includes working as a teacher, information specialist and instructional consultant (ALA/AECT, 1988). The school library media specialist must see him- or herself as a professional and be able to define the responsibilities of the position. Understanding the roles and responsibilities of the school library media specialist is the foundation for working effectively as a professional. As an information specialist and teacher, the school
library media specialist teaches students about accession, acquisition, and interpretation of materials. As an instructional consultant, the school library media specialist collaborates with teachers on projects and assists teachers in their own development by doing such things as alerting them to new books and materials and presenting ways to integrate them into the curriculum (ALA/AECT, 1988).

**Problem Statement and Purpose of Study**

School library media specialists can be reactive members of a school community or they can be proactive initiators involved and effective in being change agents and leaders in various aspects of school life (Miller & Spanjer, 1985). The school library media specialist’s role is to work with both students and teachers in the school environment and promote the development of reading and literacy (ALA/AECT, 1988). Because students need to become aware of a multicultural society and teachers need to foster this awareness, the school library media specialist can play a major role in encouraging students and teachers to develop this awareness through the reading of and reflection on multicultural literature.

This study describes the attitudes and activities of four exemplary school library media specialists with regard to the following questions:

1. How do these school library media specialists describe their attitudes and responsibilities in relation to the roles of (a) teacher, (b) information specialist, and (c) instructional consultant?

2. How do the contextual factors, namely the administration, the resources, and the collegial relationship among professionals enable or constrain these roles and responsibilities?
3. How do these school library media specialists pursue their own continuing professional development to enable them in the above roles and responsibilities?

4. How do these school library media specialists define, justify, promote, and use multicultural literature in their schools?

**Significance of Study**

In the last few years the body of literature on multiculturalism and diversity generally has increased. The scope of publications addressing various aspects of multicultural literature for children has grown to include numerous books and articles directed to teacher educators and the classroom teacher on the character and quality of the literature and arguments for its use. However, very little information has been published on the role the school library media specialist can assume in incorporating multicultural literature into the collection and encouraging its use. Except for Johnson and Smith's *Dealing with Diversity through Multicultural Fiction: Library-Classroom Partnerships* (1993), a report on a structured school library media program in New York City promoting multicultural awareness, little work has appeared to address this phenomenon. A search of Dissertation Abstracts, the ERIC database and the school library media literature has failed to locate any in-depth study that deals with the role of the school library media specialist in the integration of multicultural literature into the curriculum. The search also has failed to locate recent literature on how the exemplary school library media specialist defines his or her roles and responsibilities and acts upon his or her beliefs. Therefore, the information obtained from this study should contribute to the growth of knowledge in the field of school library media.

Second, an examination of how exemplary school library media specialists' beliefs about teaching and multiculturalism are manifested in practice could provide insight on how multiculturalism is introduced to students.
Third, this study may shed light on some of the working and environmental conditions which encourage or discourage the school library media specialist in roles such as teacher, information specialist, and instructional consultant.

Overview of the Methodology

This study investigated four female school library media specialists in elementary or middle schools. These school library media specialists had been in their positions for at least 5 years, and each was working in a single school library media facility. These school library media specialists were chosen as exemplary for this study because they were: (a) held in high regard by their peers, (b) involved in numerous self-initiated professional development activities, (c) advocates for the use of multicultural literature, (d) active members of professional organizations, and (e) active in curriculum and other school-based committees. The school library media specialists selected were from diverse cultural backgrounds, two were white, one was Puerto Rican, and one was African-American. The primary methods of data collection were in-depth guided interviews and participant-observation.

Literature Review

In preparation for this study, four areas of the literature needed to be examined: those concerned with the school library media profession; the value of and practices in children's literature; multicultural education and multicultural literature; and teaching and learning.

The historical background and professional guidelines describe the foundation of the school library media profession and help clarify the role of the individual in the position of school library media specialist. The literature on the value of children's literature and the practices to encourage reading relate to the library media specialist's
beliefs and actions in working with children's literature with the school community. The body of research on multicultural education and multicultural literature defines the phenomenon and addresses issues related to it. And last, because the school library media specialist functions as a teacher, the literature on teaching and learning is pertinent and is important to examine.

Limitations of the Study

1. The individuals chosen for this study do not represent the entire profession of school library media specialists. These individuals have been singled out for their achievements and their active participation in the field of school library media. I chose to examine practices of these exemplary practitioners to provide models for others in the profession to emulate.

2. Although each school library media specialist is working daily with audiovisual materials and equipment and is introducing students and teachers to new technologies (CD-ROMS, Internet, etc.), this aspect of the job will be addressed only when it relates specifically to the incorporation of multicultural literature into the curriculum.

Definition of Terms

Collection. The information base (print and nonprint) and equipment available to assist in satisfying the overall goals of the school and the learning objectives designed for specific curricula.... In addition, materials to enrich and extend the curriculum and to meet the personal information interests of the students....[Also included] are professional materials and information services to help teachers keep abreast of trends, developments, techniques, and research in the areas of teaching and learning (ALA/AECT, 1988, pp. 69-71).
Culture. The ever-changing values, traditions, social and political relationships, and world views shared by a group of people bound together by a combination of factors that can include a common history, geographic location, language, social class and/or religion (Nieto, 1992, p. 111).

Exemplary. An adjective meaning emulative, praiseworthy, noteworthy, worthy of imitation (Family Word Finder, 1975) or of serving as a model (Webster’s Third New International Dictionary, 1976).

Parallel culture. A term coined by children’s author, Virginia Hamilton, to represent cultures other than the dominant culture. This term has been adopted by several scholars who write about multicultural literature to be used in place of the “uncomfortable term minority” (Cai & Bishop, 1994, p. 70) and to accord equal status to the cultures designated as parallel.

Instructional consultant. One of the roles of the school library media specialist performed when he or she is “participating in... curricular design and assessment projects, helping teachers develop instructional activities, providing expertise in the selection, evaluation, and use of materials and emerging technologies for the delivery of information and instruction, and translating curriculum needs into library media program goals and objectives” (ALA/AECT, 1988, p. 35).

Information specialist. One of the roles of the school library media specialist performed when he or she is “providing access to the library media center, providing adequate resources, providing assistance in locating information, guiding users in the selection of appropriate resources, developing flexible policies for the use of resources, and providing retrieval systems” (ALA/AECT, 1988, pp. 27-31).

Multicultural literature. Literature that represents the various aspects of the lives of peoples from many cultures, usually other than the dominant culture. (See additional definitions on pages 62, 173, 174.)
Teacher. One of the roles of the school library media specialist which overlaps the other roles. A function of the teacher is to assist the student in developing strategies to analyze information, and understand and use materials for further growth.

Summary of Chapter

Chapter 1 outlined the problem, stated the purpose of the study, summarized the significance of the study, provided a brief overview of the methodology, described the areas in which the literature was reviewed, stated the limitations of the study, and presented the definition of terms. Chapter 2 provides a review of related literature.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

We need to be concerned about the best education for all children of this nation and how they can best learn and work together. Nieto (1992) stated, "One of the primary purposes of education is to give young people the skills, knowledge, and critical awareness to become productive members of a diverse and democratic society..." (p. 269). One way to develop these abilities and awareness is through a school library media program that acknowledges and encourages global and multicultural perspectives and offers resources which promote a diverse and dynamic view of the world. Such a program allows students and teachers to become cognizant of their own cultural backgrounds and the cultural backgrounds of others.

The school library media center collection is probably the strongest resource and vehicle the library media specialist has for encouraging multicultural awareness (Skeele & Schall, 1994). Through exposure to literature and instructional materials all members of the school community should have the opportunity to experience both familiar and unfamiliar worlds. How the school library media specialist uses and promotes the use of the collection is of crucial importance in developing a multicultural perspective.
I will first present the literature of the school library media profession. The historical background and professional guidelines describe the foundation of the school library media profession and help clarify the role of the individual in the position of school library media specialist.

The School Library Media Specialist

Over the last 50 years the role of the school library media specialist has changed considerably. Rather than the librarian of yesteryear who shelves, checks out, and recommends books to students, the library media specialist is a professional who has combined a knowledge of books and audiovisual equipment and materials, a grasp of information technology, an understanding of contemporary teaching and learning, and a commitment to cooperative involvement and service (American Library Association / Association for Educational Communications and Technology, 1988).

The school library media specialist is, above all, a professional. In Ohio, the first qualification is possession of a bachelor's degree before one can become a credentialed school library media specialist (Ohio Dept. of Education, 1985). Preparation for the school library media specialist certification includes instruction in library and information science, education, communication theory, children's and adolescent literature, and technology, as well as instruction in the areas of leadership, planning, and management. The school library media specialist is trained to be a literature and technology expert, a manager, a communicator, and a partner in the educational process. The position is service oriented and the activities offered through the school library media program reflect the philosophy of the school community (ALA/AECT, 1988). To grow as a teacher, an information specialist, and an instructional consultant, the school library media specialist must be aware of present research and especially research on factors which affect student learning. Part of the school library media
specialist job requirement is to read widely and to become knowledgeable about a range of topics found through reading professional books, professional journals, reviews, and publishers' and vendors' catalogs (Myers, 1990). Without this reading, the school library media specialist cannot be wholly effective in any of his or her roles. To be effective, school library media specialists must develop professionally and then share their knowledge with others in their school communities.

**Historical Background**

An historical perspective of the school library media profession is helpful in understanding the role of the school library media specialist of the 1990s. The school library media specialist is a relatively new position in the educational system in the United States. Over the last 50 years, the duties and responsibilities of the position have changed with educational needs and trends. For example, before 1960, the responsibilities assumed by school library media specialists were quite different from what students and teachers see today. In the early 1900s, a school was fortunate to have a school library and librarian. The duties of that individual were very much like those of the traditional public librarian who was in charge of keeping print materials in order and checking out books for recreational reading or overseeing the use of reference books in the library. It was not until 1920 that standards were published for secondary school libraries and 1925 for elementary school libraries (Gillespie & Spirt, 1983). These standards, developed by the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Library Association (ALA), dealt more with collection development than with the role of the librarian and they were created as a response to the need of administrators for official guidelines.

The first set of national K-12 school library standards, *School Libraries for Today and Tomorrow, Functions and Standards*, was published in 1945 by the ALA. This
particular set of standards dealt not only with collection and facility but also with the specific services to students and teachers. Roach (1989) explained the five roles which the school librarian was expected to assume in these standards. These were:

- Reader Services to help students read better, read more and to expand their reading interests;
- Guidance Services to encourage social and occupational development of students;
- Reference Services to teach students and teachers how to find and use the various library resources;
- Curriculum Development to plan with teachers to involve the library in the total school program and
- Organization of Materials to manage the collection for use by students and teachers. (pp. 14-15)

Fifteen years later, the ALA published *Standards for School Library Programs* (1960). This publication, a cooperative effort among twenty educational organizations, expanded the role of the school library media specialist and emphasized more service to teachers and students. The document also contained quantitative guidelines for collection development, facility improvement, program expansion, and professional qualifications. The librarian was encouraged to strive for an effective school library program and also work cooperatively with district materials centers and community libraries. By 1960, audiovisual materials were beginning to be seen as valuable tools for learning and were added to the realm of materials appropriate for the school library collection. In the document's introductory chapter, it was stated that, "In the education of all youth, from the slowest learner in Kindergarten to the most intelligent senior in high school, an abundance of print and audiovisual material is essential" (p. 3).

The complexion of the school library changed dramatically with the help of government funding in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Audiovisual equipment and materials appeared in schools in great numbers due to federal funding in the form of the National Defense Education Act of 1958. Other federal funding came from Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 which provided for the establishment of school media centers as well as for the purchase of both print and nonprint materials (Walch and Brumbaugh, 1975). Nonprint materials included films,
filmstrips, records and posters. Many school libraries became media centers. They housed these materials as well as books and the librarian was in charge of their care and the audiovisual equipment needed to use them. Some schools employed audiovisual specialists to deal specifically with the equipment and materials. Audiovisual specialists and school librarians realized that they shared many of the same interests and worked in much the same service capacity. Thus, as these professionals worked together to define their combined field, an expanded view of duties and concerns developed.

In 1969, the Division of Audiovisual Instruction of NEA in collaboration with ALA defined a new role and the organizations jointly published *Standards for Media Programs*. This document presented recommendations for changing the traditional library and the more recently developed audiovisual programs to a unified library media program. "Librarian" was too narrow a title to describe the individual in charge of this program. "Media specialist" was designated as the title to represent the individual who was knowledgeable about all forms of instructional materials and promoted the use of print and nonprint media (ALA, 1969). This professional was to work closely with the classroom teachers, administrators and curriculum committees as a resource consultant who team taught, designed instruction, and helped plan the overall curriculum.

The media specialist was becoming a necessary member of the educational community. Teachers and students were increasingly turning to the media specialist for assistance in teaching and learning. As the media specialist concept grew, more individuals were joining state and national organizations which dealt with audiovisual and library issues. Various library and audiovisual projects were being undertaken in schools and research on the quality, use, and effectiveness of media was being conducted. The library media field was becoming a profession. Walch and Brumbaugh
trace the evolution of library media as a profession to five developing forces. These forces were (a) expansion of theoretical research in the area of media, (b) leadership within the area of media, (c) the establishment and growth of professional organizations with accompanying publications, (d) federal laws and funding to support the concept of the school library media center, and (e) the development of modern communications and their acceptance by the educational community. Also adding to the professionalism of the field was the development by many states of a single certification for school librarians and audiovisual specialists (Walch and Brumbaugh, 1975).

*Media Programs: District and School*, a joint effort of the American Association of School Libraries (AASL) and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) was published in 1975. These sets of “guiding principles” stressed the concept of a unified school library media center where the “role of the media program changed from a support service to an integral part of the total instructional program of the school” (ALA/AECT, 1988, p.vii). The role of the media specialist was extended by including competency in instructional technology (Hug, 1989). The document divided the role of the media specialist into four basic functions: design, consultation, information, and administration. Design consisted of establishing policies, formulating programs, designing inservice education, developing instructional materials, and initiating and participating in curriculum development. The consultant function was assumed when the media specialist recommended instructional materials, helped identify teaching and learning strategies, worked with teachers in curriculum development and implementation, and assisted students in developing techniques for finding, using, and evaluating information. Information and administration functions were directly related to building and organizing the collection and assisting those using the media center (ALA/AECT, 1975, pp. 6-9).
The most recent school library media guidelines, *Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs*, published by ALA and AECT in 1988 was a response to the changes in education, the proliferation of information, and advancements in technology. This document serves as a guide for school library media professionals as they decide in what ways they will expand their services to teachers and students in this information age. It is stated in the introduction to the publication that the guidelines were developed to “provide a sound philosophical basis for the continued development of school library media programs to meet the needs of students in the twenty-first century.” (ALA/AECT, 1988, p. ix). In this document, the term “media specialist” is changed to “school library media specialist” to better define the position. The school library media specialist is considered a leader and expert in the integration of the library media program into the instructional program of the school. Three overlapping functions, information specialist, teacher, and instructional consultant represent the school library media specialist’s role (ALA/AECT, 1988).

(Note: The American Association of School Librarians and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology are currently working on new guidelines for the school library media program. These guidelines will give more extensive attention to the role of technology and how school library media specialists can and should incorporate it in their work.)

**Who is the School Library Media Specialist?**

Since the publication of the 1975 guidelines, the professional literature has been replete with articles about the role of the library media specialist (Craver, 1986; Ely, 1982; Hortin, 1985). Various models which involve the school library media specialist in collaboration with the teacher have been developed to help the school library media specialist take a proactive role in curriculum development as an instructional consultant.
(Cleaver and Taylor, 1983; Eisenberg and Berkowitz, 1988; Liesener, 1978; Loertscher, 1982; Turner, 1985). A number of articles have been published which emphasize teacher and information specialist roles and encourage school library media specialists to take a direct part in working with students (Aaron, 1988; Hughes, 1986; Jay, 1986; Mancall, Aaron, and Walker, 1986). These specific roles are reviewed next.

The Instructional Consultant

The instructional consultant works in a variety of ways with teachers to improve the educational experience for students. The school library media specialist can work with teachers in a collaborative effort to plan and design learning experiences, both in the classroom and in the school library media center. Cleaver and Taylor (1989) suggested that to effectively perform the role of instructional consultant in a partnership, the school library media specialist must possess:

1. Expertise on the conceptual implications of information and how these relate to higher order thinking skills and metacognition.
2. Expertise in cognitive theories such as information processing, schema theory, learning styles, teaching styles, and so forth.
3. Expertise in instructional design.
4. Expertise in literature, reading, and human development.
5. Expertise with instructional materials, inquiry and resource-based teaching, and learning. (p. 4)

By working as an instructional consultant, the school library media specialist uses knowledge of literature and other instructional materials to collaboratively plan and develop a lesson with a teacher. The knowledge of instructional development principles and learning theories give the school library media specialist the credibility needed to help the classroom teacher structure lessons for students. Through this collaborative effort, the library media specialist develops a greater understanding of the curriculum and of the individual students in the school and increases communication with the school’s teachers.
Grazier (1976) saw the school library media specialist entering the curriculum development process at the planning stage, developing the program with the teacher, and remaining involved in the program through the evaluation stage. This partnership is possible only when the teacher and the administration view the school library media specialist as a fellow educator and someone who has competency in media, curriculum, management, and human relations. Once the staff is accepting of the school library media specialist’s knowledge and role, the school library media specialist can “collaborate in the selection of learning materials, disseminate information about new materials based on user need profiles, help in the design of instructional strategies, and offer in-service programs” (p. 201).

The instructional consultant works with the teacher in a partnership manner in diagnosing learning needs and designing and assessing programs to meet those needs. Among the many advantages of this partnership, is the fact that two teachers instead of one are working for and with the students. Haycock (1985) called the school library media specialist a “teacher-librarian” to emphasize and strengthen the role school library media specialists play in the educational process. He believes that their major task is that of an instructional consultant “to work with classroom teachers to plan, develop, and implement units of study which integrate research and study skills” (p. 105).

This belief is reiterated in the 1986 American Association of School Librarians (AASL) position statement on the contribution of school library media programs to elementary education. Vandergrift and Hannigan (1986) developed twelve principles relative to the role of the elementary school library media specialist. They stated under Principle Four:

The elementary school library media specialist must be an active partner on the instructional development team, working with classroom teachers on a variety of connections between learning styles, teaching strategies, and the resources of the school library media center. (p. 171)
If the school library media program is to be an integral part of the school, the school library media specialist in charge of the program must work successfully with the teachers in the school. All individuals are unique and the school library media specialist needs to take this into consideration when working with them. For example, if the school library media specialist knows a particular teacher's interests, or how the teacher perceives the link between teaching and the school library media program, whether the teacher grasps new ideas and changes quickly or is a slow adopter, and how the teacher conceptualizes various innovations, then the library media specialist can be better prepared to address program issues and concerns at a level which will be most beneficial for the teacher. As well, broad knowledge of adult development can help the school library media specialist when working with teachers (Vandergrift, 1994). It will help the school library media specialist to interact appropriately, and may ensure a better understanding of how the other person views the world.

An informal leader in professional development. The instructional consultant role is often expanded to include the tasks of the professional development specialist (Haycock, 1988; McGiffin, 1990; Walker, 1988; Watkins and Craft, 1988). The school library media specialist is expected to keep current on information accessibility and retrieval and relay this information to others. The school library media specialist often is the first to know about new technologies and instructional resources or laws and policies that affect the use of materials. This information is understandably disseminated to teachers through formal and informal professional development opportunities.

As someone who has an overview of the entire school curriculum, the school library media specialist is able to direct appropriate information to those who will benefit from gaining knowledge about various materials, technologies, or events. The
school library media specialist in this way is a leader and provider of services that strengthen the school program. The school library media specialist is very similar to the teacher leader; both teach students, assist and collaborate with other teachers, and are both agents in the professional development of others.

McGiffin (1990) portrayed the school library media specialist as a person who makes connections to assist others in their teaching and learning. She described the school library media specialist as:

Someone who connects people and ideas to curriculum and instruction; a person who is in the unique position to network with community, educational and cultural institutions and the school to provide valuable resources and professional development programs for oneself and classroom colleagues; someone who can see the "big picture" of a school and coordinate people, programs and materials to benefit students. (p. 215)

To see the "big picture," the school library media specialist must also be a partner with administrators and with teachers on curriculum committees. By knowing what is happening in each curricular area and at each grade level, the school library media specialist can concentrate on gathering more information which relates to the school's mission and have that information available in the school library media center or present it directly to the teacher who is in need of the information.

Professional development activities can be formal, specifically assigned topics and scheduled events as Haycock (1988) suggested or they can be informal acts which are embedded in the everyday tasks of the school library media specialist. Haycock (1988) stated,

As a curriculum developer and educational leader the teacher-librarian has a professional obligation and responsibility to lead seminars and workshops on the effective use of the resource centre. Topics range from the operation of audiovisual equipment to the implementation of effective teaching strategies. In-service education is carefully planned and pursued. It demands a critical analysis of need based on relevant educational principles, a real reason for teachers to attend, effective teaching by the teacher-librarian and involvement by participants. (p. 121)
Watkins and Craft (1988) emphasized the informal one-to-one interaction between the school library media specialist and the teacher as a viable and effective means of professional development. They have observed a variety of informal professional development activities in which the school library media specialist is involved on a daily basis. They indicated that the school library media specialist informs teachers about professional conferences and journal articles and professional books and materials, orients new teachers to the school library media center, trains staff in the operation of audiovisual equipment and computers, arranges for the preview of materials, and encourages the use of school library media center materials and equipment (pp. 111-112). An advantage to teachers and staff of the professional development activities offered by the school library media specialist is that the programs are offered on-site in the school library media center, or in the classroom, and are directly related to topics which teachers are to implement or integrate into their teaching.

Just as teacher leaders work to encourage the use of various teaching techniques by peer coaching and modeling (Joyce & Showers, 1982; Armbruster, Anderson & Mall, 1991), school library media specialists can serve as models through demonstrations. For instance, the school library media specialist may be asked to model introductions to shared reading or literature discussion in a classroom. In order to be effective the school library media specialist must know the rationale behind the strategy and the philosophy behind the action.

Because of the school library media specialist's particular expertise in literature as well as in technology and information skills, the school library media specialist is able to alert teachers to new books for their students (Myers, 1990). The school library media specialist assists teachers in developing literature units by acquainting teachers with the books, the author information, and any audiovisual materials that relate to the
unit's theme. Many of these activities are embedded in the school library media specialist's on-going duties and are not always recognized as professional development.

The Information Specialist

School library media specialists know where to find information for themselves and for others. They are experts on the availability and the acquisition of information. They are educated in selection and reference techniques to assist teachers and students in locating and obtaining materials for teaching and learning. The information specialist practices the traditional tasks of the profession, obtaining and organizing materials, and managing their accessibility. In the 1990s, however, the tasks are much more involved than simply processing and stamping materials, guiding and assisting students. With the increase in information has come an increased need to know the newest materials and technology and how to obtain and use them.

Developing the collection. Collection development is much more complex than it was in the past. School library media specialists are expected to have a balanced collection, presenting various perspectives on issues and events that are current and timely. The scope of the collection is wide and varied and includes an assortment of formats and delivery systems. The collection should reflect the curriculum of the school and meet the needs of both the students and the teachers. Instructional materials and the equipment to access information, from the airwaves or electronically, are all considered within the collection of the school library media center (ALA/AECT, 1988).

To keep the collection up-to-date, the school library media specialist must be informed about new products, techniques and technologies. This responsibility demands that exploring and inquiring be a part of the job. Searching journals and review sources and attending conferences help the school library media specialist
choose new materials which meet the curricular needs of the school. With this knowledge of materials, the school library media specialist can acquire necessary additions to the collection and can readily offer what Liesener has referred to as "alerting and awareness services" to those in the school community (1985, p. 15).

Aaron (1981) categorized the tasks of the information specialist under support functions: selection, acquisition, organization, and circulation. She sees these functions as "the foundation for direct involvement" of the school library media staff in instruction (p. 54). This role complements the roles of instructional consultant and teacher. Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs (ALA/AECT, 1988) lists the responsibilities of the information specialist as:

- providing access to the library media center
- providing adequate resources
- providing assistance in locating information
- guiding users in the selection of appropriate resources
- developing flexible policies for the use of resources
- providing retrieval systems. (pp. 27-31)

These managerial and service responsibilities allow for easy access to the collection by the students and teachers.

Without the knowledge of how to use the collection, however, students and teachers are unable to optimally benefit from available information. Eisenberg and Berkowitz (1988) stated, "Concerns have grown beyond 'access to materials' to encompass information use, manipulation, and evaluation within the overall research process" (p. 12). A school library media specialist must guide the teacher or student not only in identifying and seeking information, but also in interpreting it (ALA/AECT, 1988).
The Teacher

Vandergrift (1994) stated, “Finally, of all the roles library media specialists play, it is the teaching role that has the most powerful and profound influences on those with whom we work” (p. xii). School library media specialists spend a great deal of time teaching students about locating information sources and how to acquire skills to access and use those sources. Information skills include receptive, reflective, and expressive skills. Receptive skills include listening and observation skills as well as data gathering skills. Critical thinking and problem solving are considered reflective skills. Expressive skills include writing, speaking and presenting verbally or through the production of media (Lundin, 1990).

Flexible scheduling of classes. Such skills, however, should not be taught randomly and in isolation (Carletti, Girard & Willing, 1991). Resources need to be presented and skills need to be taught when there is a purpose for learning how to employ the skills, when a lesson or project requires it (Hansen, 1987; Hansen, 1993). Many school library media specialists have turned to teaching skills when needed and away from the set weekly teaching of predetermined skills with little connection to the subjects being taught in the students' classrooms. To be most effective, the information skills curriculum is integrated with the curriculum of the respective classes when they use the school library media center (Eisenberg & Berkowitz, 1988; Walker & Montgomery, 1983).

In order to accommodate teachers and students at the time the instruction is needed, many school library media specialists have instituted a schedule which is open for individuals and groups throughout the day. Called flexible scheduling, this practice is the move away from scheduling classes into the school library media center at a predetermined time to offering instruction and reference assistance when needed (Jay,
Flexible scheduling is tied to the belief that we learn when there is an authentic reason for learning, not when an artificial situation is fabricated to accommodate an instructional objective.

**Promoting critical thinking.** The school library media specialist’s role in instruction is not simply to direct students to appropriate information and teach them information skills, but it is to present a variety of information, pose questions, and assist and encourage students to broaden their views and expand their decision making capabilities. Vandergrift and Hannigan (1986) presented the AASL position that students “must have the opportunity to develop critical skills through guided experiences in the exploration and evaluation of a wide range of resources in the school library media center” (p. 171).

Because the school library media specialist is involved in the students’ development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, the specialist must think beyond the task of simply directing students to resources. He or she must know the resources and have a thorough knowledge of their content. The student can examine several sources and decide for him- or herself what he or she wishes to conclude from the information. Huck, Hepler, and Hickman (1989) stated that “when children’s information all comes from one source, they are likely to accept the author’s selection and interpretation of facts without question. Two or more books provide a built-in comparison” (p. 688).

Through guiding questions and interaction with the student, the school library media specialist introduces ideas and views that the student may not have previously considered and invites the student to think more critically. Mancall, Aaron and Walker (1986) suggested that to be critical thinkers, students must “be better observers, applicers, and evaluators of ideas and information” (p. 20). They expanded their definition with a quote from Norris (1985) who stated that “students need more than the
ability to be better observers; they must know how to apply everything they already know and feel, to evaluate their own thinking, and especially to change their behavior as a result of thinking critically” (p. 20).

Like all teachers, school library media specialists must encourage students to be critical thinkers (Hughes, 1986; Jay, 1986). They guide students to materials and through projects which will help them develop the ability to think - to locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and use information that will broaden their perspectives and prepare them for life in an ever-changing society. Aaron (1988) stated, “The library media specialist teaches students how to gain physical and intellectual access to information and ideas that reflect diversity of experiences, opinions, and social and cultural perspectives” (p. 85). She continued,

Attitudes and values of particular concern to the library media specialist are those that encourage students to realize their potential as informed citizens able to think critically and solve problems effectively in a complex, information-rich society; stress the importance of observing rights and responsibilities relating to the generation and flow of information and ideas; and promote an appreciation of the value of literature and other recreational media in the life of an educated society. (p. 86)

Exposure to fiction and nonfiction as well as to a variety of reference sources, such as encyclopedias, atlases, and almanacs, helps develop students’ views of the world (Skeele & Schall, 1994). School library media specialists can be an important force in introducing students to problem solving and decision making skills through the use of literature. The discussion of literature, whether taking place in the classroom or in the school library media center, is a natural way to invite students to express their views and think about the responses of others. With the school library media specialist as a facilitator, small groups of students can compare several books on one subject for similarities and differences in the way the information is presented. Students may be asked to examine writing styles, bias, and accuracy when they look at biographies, informational books or novels. Finding the theme of a story or looking for the moral of
a fable encourages students to think about the main idea of the work and exercise their understanding of the literature. (Huck, Hepler, and Hickman, 1987).

The school library media specialist may at times use a discussion group or tell a story as a form of instruction. Lessons may be presented by reading books aloud to a group, by using puppets or by showing a videotape (Carletti, Girard & Willings, 1991). All of these methods of instruction can be conducive to the development of critical thinking.

Being an effective teacher. Teaching in the school library media center is much the same as teaching in the classroom. An individual, no matter what the setting, needs to be versatile and able to adapt to a variety of teaching situations and tasks. Porter and Brophy (1988) synthesized the positive characteristics of a good teacher. They have formed a picture of good teachers as semi-autonomous professionals who are:

* Clear about their instructional goals
* Knowledgeable about their content and strategies for teaching it
* Able to communicate their goals and expectations
* Making expert use of instructional materials
* Keenly aware of their students' abilities and needs
* Addressing higher and lower cognitive objectives
* Monitoring student understanding and providing appropriate feedback
* Integrating their instruction with other subjects
* Accepting responsibility for student outcomes
* Thoughtful and reflective about their practice (p. 75)

These characteristics are essential for the effective school library media specialist as well as for the effective teacher.

In addition, the school library media specialist must be able to interact with a variety of people, be receptive to ideas, and be a proactive contributor to the school community. The school library media specialist needs not only to be a good teacher but also a public relations specialist and a leader (Edsall, 1984). A leader is seen by others in the school as someone who has earned respect through experience and expertise,
someone who has strong beliefs in a program or in a course of action, someone who has
the interest of the community and not his or her own interest in mind (Lieberman, Saxl,
& Miles, 1988). Kullesaid (1988) described school library media specialists who have
become informal leaders. She stated,

They converse with students, teachers, administrators, and parents on
matters of concern to them. They often take on responsibility for activities
which are not in their job description, but which put them in touch with the
rest of the school community in ways which increase communication, build
trust, and draw clients into their program frame of reference. They identify
projects which will allow them to initiate, adapt to, or resist changes in their
working environments, and to preserve or expand programs already in place.
The best managed library media programs have a clear focus of leadership, a
visible leader willing to accept responsibilities and a ‘presence’ throughout
the school—not just in the library media center. (p. 312)

To be a leader, a school library media specialist must have proved he or she is a
valuable asset to the school community. To work effectively as an instructional
consultant, an information specialist, and a teacher, the school library media specialist
must present him- or herself as a professional and be perceived as one by colleagues.

Research on Perceptions about the School Library Media Specialist

Much has been written about the attitudes toward school library media specialists
and expectations held by others in the school. During the 1970s there was a widespread
concern among school library media specialists and school library media specialist
educators about how the role was defined by colleagues and administrators. The
literature reportedly suggested that school library media specialists and colleagues did
not agree on expectations for the role. (Beatty, 1981; Bias, 1979; Bucher, 1976; Cantor,

The concern and confusion over the role of the school library media specialist
may have developed from the all-encompassing definition of the school library media
specialist as instructional consultant, information specialist, and teacher. Did this
multifaceted role spread too thin the school library media specialist? Were the
expectations too high? Too broad? Or did the earlier defined traditional librarian remain the traditional librarian? Mohajerin & Smith (1981) stated that "research on the perceived role of the school media specialist reveals the usual patterns of slow attitude change by all types of educators, including media specialists themselves" toward this new role (p. 155).

Scott (1986) revealed that the school library media specialist position was no longer perceived as a clerical position by four groups of educators (teachers, principals, school library media educators, and school library media specialists). The respondents emphasized the technological role over librarianship and perceived those individuals with higher academic degrees as being more effective in all areas. Of the groups surveyed, the teachers held the most conflicting expectation for the school library media specialist indicating that the specialist did not cooperate in developing programs for individualized learning, didn't have planned instruction during scheduled library classes, and often had poor interpersonal skills.

Ervin (1989) found that teachers and administrators were not aware of the potential of the school library media specialist in the schools. The specialists she studied indicated that there was a low degree of acceptance of their instructional design capacity and therefore this service was rarely used. She did find, however, that the school library media specialists who were highly valued by their colleagues had more years of experience and better knowledge of their collections. This allowed them to serve their teachers and students quickly and effectively. These school library media specialists also more commonly served on curriculum committees, and knew the subject areas taught by their teachers. The school library media specialists who held advanced degrees were also more highly regarded.

Materials selection, library management, reference/resource to students, and reading promotion were those skills ranked as most essential by principals in a survey conducted by Edwards (1989). The principals saw very little necessity for the school
library media specialist to possess skills in instruction, curriculum planning, and audiovisual production. These perceptions contradict the profession's stand on the importance of the school library media specialist as teacher and instructional consultant.

In yet another study, Roach (1989) found that teachers and principals had a more positive attitude toward the position when the school library media specialist had a high level of performance in staff development activities in the school library media center and when the school library media program was useful to them. The specialist had a positive attitude about the position when he or she was actively involved in school-wide planning. Roach suggested that agreement on the actual functions of the school library media specialist and communications among teachers, principals and school library media specialists about the function are necessary in developing positive attitudes toward the position.

Context

Understandably, each school situation is different. Often a school library media specialist cannot function effectively because of the environment of the school. A strong school library media program depends on several factors, one of the most important being the support of the principal (Haycock, 1985). If a principal does not understand the importance and concept of the school library media program, funding and other resources may be diverted to other curricular needs. On the other hand, a principal who supports the school library media specialist and becomes involved with the school library media program sees the program as an integral part of the school.

In a summary of the U.S. Department of Education Office of Research and Improvement report, *What Works: Research about Teaching and Learning*, it is stated that the principal is considered a key role in effective school library media programs.
The authors stated, "principals in schools with exemplary resource center programs establish evaluation procedures, integrate the resource center in instructional programs, encourage student and teacher use and provide flexible scheduling" (Dept. of Education., 1987, p. 14). Undoubtedly this degree of involvement may not exist in all exemplary schools, but some degree of support will be evident.

An examination of the library media services in public schools appearing on the U.S. Department of Education's 1986 list of exemplary public and private elementary schools was undertaken by Loertscher, Ho, and Bowie (1986) to determine service availability and status. They found that "support of administrators, teachers, and parents is recognized as a requisite of excellence in fully staffed library media programs" (p. 152).

Another factor for successful programs is an environment that encourages and is conducive to the continued learning of teachers and interaction among colleagues. Little (1982) found that in successful schools,

- teachers valued and participated in norms of collegiality and continuous improvement (experimentation); they pursued a greater range of professional interactions with fellow teachers or administrators, including talk about instruction, structured observation, and shared planning or preparation. They did so with greater frequency, with a greater number and diversity of persons and locations, and with a more concrete and precise shared language. (p. 325)

In her study of school as workplace, Rosenholtz (1991) considered various factors of school effectiveness. She reported that success is present in schools with shared school goals, teacher collaboration, opportunities for professional development, teacher confidence in their own instructional practices, and teacher commitment. To take advantage of a positive environment for learning and teaching, the school library media specialist must recognize the opportunity for success, be a contributing member of the school community, and be an initiator and promoter of a strong school
library media program. Those school library media specialists who take advantage of opportunity excel in such climates (ALA/AECT, 1988; Edsall, 1984; McGiffin, 1990).

Becoming an Exemplary School Library Media Specialist

As noted in several perception studies (Ervin, 1989; Scott, 1986), the school library media specialist with an advanced degree and experience in the field is understandably seen as more valuable to the teachers and principals than the inexperienced specialist. This was also the case in a study conducted by Christensen (1991) who examined the characteristics of school library media specialists who had exemplary high school programs. These specialists were experienced professionals involved in curriculum development and instruction, making teaching a part of their school library media program. They participate in a full range of school activities and are respected as leaders by their colleagues. Christensen found that those school library media specialists studied were intelligent, abstract thinkers who were also realistic, flexible, concerned about others, imaginative and creative, and generally satisfied with their lives (pp. 247-252). It is not clear how such attributes were determined, however.

Professional Development of the School Library Media Specialist

How do school library media specialists become exemplary in a profession that is dynamic and ever-evolving? How do they develop into professionals? One way is through a desire to grow and an active involvement in professional development opportunities which nurture growth. Professional growth is different for each individual and their programs of professional development, both formal and informal, should reflect that. Whether as a teacher, information specialist, instructional consultant, a novice or an experienced educator, the school library media specialist can choose to concentrate on a number of categories of development.
Howey (1985) offered an expanded view of staff development that includes six functions. These are pedagogical development, understanding and discovery of oneself, cognitive development, theoretical development, professional development, and career development. School library media specialists as consumers and as providers should be aware of these areas of development. Not only is the school library media specialist concerned about his or her own professional development, but is also concerned about the professional development of colleagues and may serve as a provider of professional development activities (Turner, 1988).

**Pedagogical Development**

Activities which emphasize techniques and strategies for particular curriculum areas are focused upon at the pedagogical level of development. Usually presented as technical skills and "hands-on" activities in workshop form, pedagogical development opportunities are often seen as being "brief, atheoretical, and lacking in personal relationship to the life of teachers and their classrooms" (Howey, 1985, p. 58). Interestingly, in the school library media field many skills are technical and school library media specialists learn how to use the tools of their trade through such workshops. They then bring back the knowledge learned and implement it into their programs and transfer the information to the teachers in their schools. It is not uncommon for the school library media specialist to be the authority on technology in the school and provide skills training on-site to teachers and students (Turner, 1988).

**Understanding of Self and Others**

Knowing oneself and confronting one's beliefs and attitudes helps individuals understand themselves and others. Howey (1985) stated, "The degree of understanding teachers have of their own behavior and how they have changed over time is directly
related to the nature and quality of interactions they have had with others, certainly including the myriad daily interactions in schools” (p. 59).

School library media specialists are always interacting with students, teachers, and administrators (ALA/AECT, 1988; McGiffin, 1990; Vandergrift, 1994). By being aware of who they are as learners, teachers and individuals, school library media specialists can be more flexible in their teaching and in their collaboration with others. Mertz (1987) noted that “self-knowledge, in effect, enables people to grow and to relate to other people in more productive, richer ways” (p. 30).

Cognitive Development

At what level we perceive, process, and react to information makes us different from one another. Cognitive development is not uniform in all individuals and can be influenced by age, experience, and capacity. Stage theorists such as Piaget, Kohlberg, Loevinger, and Hunt argue that “human development, personality, and character are the results of changes in underlying cognitive and emotional structures” (Howey, 1985, p. 60).

School library media specialists, through their library media collections, are in a position to introduce teachers to other views and ways of thinking (Latrobe, 1992). In meetings where the discussion of literature or the examination and evaluation of the content of various software and materials takes place, school library media specialists can pose questions about considerations and various decisions the teachers will need to make to use these materials in their classrooms. Often school library media specialists present new books to teachers and invite their response and reaction (Driessen, 1989). Because more multicultural books are being published and purchased (Bishop, 1994; Horning & Kruse, 1991), more issues concerning culture need to be addressed. For example, if the perspective of an author from a parallel culture other than the dominant
culture is discussed, teachers may be challenged to consider alternative perspectives and reflect on their own beliefs and feelings about the subjects and views presented (Bennett, 1995). Discussion and interaction with others who possess different views introduce teachers to issues and ideas that they may not have previously considered.

**Theoretical Development**

Educational theories are often disregarded by practicing teachers (Howey, 1985). Many teachers go through curriculum mandates without knowing why they are teaching, what they are teaching, or whether they are employing effective strategies for those students they are teaching. Teachers need to see the importance of theory and how it positively affects practice before they can begin to balance theory and practice in their classroom teaching. Howey, Matthes, and Zimpher (1987) argued that “theories supporting the core functions of teachers do exist; but to be meaningful (and hence used), they should be grounded in practice, and teachers should have multiple opportunities to both act and reflect upon these theories” (p. 77).

As part of the school library media specialist’s job, he or she peruses educational journals and alerts teachers to articles in their fields of study (Driessen, 1989; Myers, 1990). With more and more articles being written by practitioners who report on actual classroom cases and relate their experience to theory, teachers are becoming more accepting and less suspicious of research and theory, and may embark on their own inquiry through action research projects (Berthoff, 1987; Goswami & Stillman, 1987).

The school library media specialist may encourage teachers to try new strategies presented in these educational journals or to become familiar with professional books that promote various theories or principles, for example, those underlying the whole language movement (Haycock, 1988b). This encouragement may influence the teachers to reflect on their practice, experiment with alternative teaching strategies and develop their own beliefs grounded in both theory and practice.
School library media specialists have many opportunities to relate theory to practice to continue their growth as professionals. Research in such areas as critical thinking, and learning and teaching styles strengthens the school library media specialist's expertise in both teaching students and providing information to colleagues (Bracy, 1992; Rezabek & Cook, 1992).

Professional Development

Howey (1985) contended that "teachers rarely engage in research and development that contributes to their own knowledge base" (p. 61). They are not often seen as 'true' professionals because they do not contribute to nor make judgments grounded in "an identifiable, empirically supported knowledge base" (Howey, Matthes, and Zimpher, 1987, p. 77). Howey (1985) suggested that selected teachers should engage in systematic inquiry and collaborative research. School library media specialists, in their roles as instructional consultants, encourage collaboration between themselves and their teachers. In some cases, this collaboration can develop into experiences that advance the practitioner's professional development (McGiffin, 1990).

Career Development

Traditionally, teachers have had few avenues for career development other than advancing to positions in school administration. In recent years, however, teachers have found opportunities to expand their roles through leadership experiences while remaining involved in classroom teaching. These teachers work with other teachers as peer coaches, team leaders, or mentors, and in some cases as resource people (Ackland, 1991; Anastos & Ancowitz, 1987; Howey, 1988; Little, 1985; Wasley, 1989).
Seen by many as a resource person, the school library media specialist also can serve as a leader on curriculum teams that deal with aspects of literature and technology. Through modeling and coaching, school library media specialists can also encourage their colleagues to try new strategies in these areas (Vandergrift, 1994; Zingher, 1990).

School library media specialists who take advantage of staff development opportunities and become actively involved in professional experiences, often grow to become educational experts and leaders. They advance professionally and assist other teachers in their professional development (McGiffin, 1990).

Working as an Instructional Consultant and Teacher to Integrate Literature

Often school library media specialists assist teachers in developing an understanding of the use of various literary genres throughout the curriculum. In recent years, literature has been integrated with other disciplines (Huck, Hepler, & Hickman, 1993; Tompkins & McGee, 1993). School library media specialists readily acquaint their teachers with literature and ideas for possible units of study designed around literature (Driessen, 1989; Hansen, 1987; Myers, 1990).

The importance of the school library media specialist's involvement in literature use is emphasized in one of the twelve principles that codify the role of the school library media center in elementary education that appear in AASL's 1986 position paper. Vandergrift and Hannigan (1986) stated:

Principle Five: The elementary school library media specialist must be an active participant in schoolwide reading programs based on the best of children's literature to assist students in acquiring not only the ability to read but an appreciation for and a habit of reading for personal satisfaction and enjoyment as well as for information. (p. 171)
The Value of Literature

Literature, entire books with well-developed stories and characters, is being used with children as a way to create readers. Whether a book is read aloud to a child or is read independently by the child, books are helping children develop language skills and understanding of the function of text. Literature also allows children to discover new worlds and experiences that help them grow. Literature is valued, then, for cognitive and affective development. Literature is important in developing a child's language and cognitive abilities. It is also important in enriching a child's life (Huck, 1990).

Reading to Develop Readers

Numerous research studies undertaken in the last forty years have supported the idea of using literature as a means for developing literacy (Cohen, 1968; Cullinan, Jaggar, & Strickland, 1974; Goldfield & Snow, 1984; McCormick & Mason, 1986; Rasinski & Deford, 1985; Reutzel & Cooter, 1990; Sulzby, 1985).

Many of these literacy studies examined the effects of literature read aloud to the child by either a parent or teacher. This practice allows the child to hear the narrative, the natural flow of language. Through hearing literature read by the parent or teacher, the child's experience with language grows and language skill and understanding develop (Trelease, 1982).

One of the often cited literacy studies is by Cohen (1968) who observed the effect of literature on vocabulary and reading achievement. Second-graders who were considered “socially disadvantaged” (p. 209) participated in classes where literature was read aloud to them by their teachers every day of the school year. The read aloud sessions were followed by story-related activities such as discussions or art or drama projects. The literature selected to be read for the study was chosen for its flowing...
language and universal childhood experiences. At the end of the study, the children showed an increase in both vocabulary and reading comprehension.

The positive effects of literature use do not diminish as the child ages. Literature has been used to motivate the reading habit, study the literary form, and increase comprehension and vocabulary in students in middle and upper grades (McWhirter, 1990; Moss, 1992; Nagy, Herman, & Anderson, 1985).

Huck, Hickman, & Hepler’s (1993) affective values of children’s literature have become the accepted rationale for including children’s literature in the school curriculum (Cullinan, 1987; Tompkins & McGee, 1993; Wepner & Feeley, 1993). They suggest that literature enriches a child’s life by (a) providing enjoyment, (b) reinforcing narrative as a way of thinking, (c) developing the imagination, (d) offering vicarious experiences, (e) developing insight into human behavior, and (f) presenting the universality of experiences (pp. 8-12).

Good literature stretches the child’s imagination encouraging him or her to invent possible solutions to situations and to consider things in different ways. This allows the child to think critically about a situation and to develop various perspectives on that situation.

Reading a variety of literature expands a child’s world and allows him or her to vicariously experience different places, different people, and different times. Literature can present the universality of experience. Readers can see how different from others they are and how similar to others they are; they see how all individuals share some of the same challenges in life and some of the same joys. Readers can empathize with the characters they encounter and develop an understanding of them. They come away from reading with a richer perspective on the ways of life and the human condition (Huck, 1977).
The School Library Media Specialist's Contribution

School library media specialists are aware of the importance of introducing students to a rich and varied selection of literature for pleasure and enrichment, with the aim of encouraging a life-long reading habit. Their broad knowledge of books allows them to suggest appropriate books for a variety of situations. Myers (1990) stated that, "Library media specialists have a depth of knowledge of literature that helps us see patterns and relationships among many kinds of books" (p. 190). A focus of the mission and challenges for school library media specialists in Information Power (ALA/AECT, 1988), the guidelines for school library media programs, is the "promotion of literacy and the enjoyment of reading, viewing, and listening for young people at all ages and stages of development" (p. 7).

To promote literacy one does more than simply provide a library media collection teeming with good literature and instructional materials. The learning environment must be inviting and facilitated by a knowledgeable school library media specialist who is receptive to the student's needs (Baker, 1984). The school library media specialist, serving in the role of teacher, must know how to encourage students to read and to inquire and to discover. Wepner and Feeley (1993) stated,

[to build a] literacy-rich environment, teachers are the key to successful reading and writing programs: teachers who know children, who know children's literature and instructional materials, who know the dynamics of literacy learning and teaching, and who can orchestrate all this knowledge into an exciting, vibrant, literacy program that invites children to want to be lifetime - not sometime - readers and writers and potential members of the Scribal Society. (p. 29)

Inviting Students to Explore Literature

How to pique a student's curiosity about books and guide that student to become involved in reading is a major concern of the school library media specialist. In a study
of the role of the elementary school library media specialist in a literature-based reading program, Bishop and Blazek (1994) found that

Interest in reading was nurtured here through attractive, colorful posters, bulletin board displays, and even stuffed toys representing literary characters; through informal conversations with the students; through planned lessons with classes and small groups of students; and through the coordination of a variety of special activities, such as reading contests and schoolwide projects. (p. 148)

School library media specialists also invite students to engage in reading through other means, such as author visits, book talks, storytelling, and read-aloud sessions.

**Author visits.** School library media specialists play a primary role in planning and organizing school programs which feature children’s book authors. Often a yearly occurrence in schools across the United States, these visits feature an author talking about ideas and experiences associated with his or her books, answering students’ questions, displaying the galleys or artwork from a book, and explaining the publishing process. The author may interact with students in various classroom programs and school library media center activities that the school staff has prepared for the visit (Brodie, 1990; Coleman, 1990; Moss, 1990; Stepanian, 1990; Wise, 1990).

The preparation for the visit is time consuming for the school library media specialist, but the outcome is often positive (Brodie, 1990; Coleman, 1990; Diebel, 1990). Brodie (1990) suggested that the presence of a children’s book author in the school “stimulates interest in the author’s books [and] allows children to become acquainted with an author as a person...”(p. 10). At one school, as reported by Diebel (1990), student reading increased after an author visit. The students knew more about the author and illustrator and were eager to learn more about authors in general. In addition, students became more involved in their own writing and expressed an interest in the publishing of their own work.
**Book talks.** A book talk, the reading of an excerpt from a book, is a technique for introducing a book and is frequently used by school library media specialists to entice students to read. A favorite book is chosen by the school library media specialist and a section of the book, either the first few pages or an exciting episode, is selected and read aloud to the students. The purpose of a book talk is to elicit interest and excitement about the book. Some school library media specialists discuss several books during a book talk session, incorporating books of various interest levels or linking several books by theme (Huck, Hickman, & Hepler, 1993; Pappas, Kiefer, & Levstik, 1990; Rochman, 1984).

There are a variety of ways to present book talks. They can be dramatized with the school library media specialist taking the role of one of the characters in the book (Graham, 1993). They can be augmented by displaying an object which is important to the story (Pappas, Kiefer, & Levstik, 1990). Or, a book talk may be simply a brief reading of a special part of the book. Rochman (1984) stated, “building up details and atmosphere is important. But I have learned not to overdo it. A talk about a good book leaves space; it touches the imagination, and then leaves reader and story alone together” (p. 39). She continued, “The book talk’s effectiveness goes beyond the immediate increase in circulation. Sharing a wide range of titles encourages talking about feelings and imagination and ideas” (p. 39).

**Storytelling.** Storytelling, one of the earliest forms of communication, also stimulates the imagination. Students hear a story and create their own images of the characters, the situation, and the setting.

A good storyteller engages the student in the story through predictable, cumulative, and repetitive language. The storyteller encourages the students to be active participants by inviting them to recite parts of the story, tell their own stories, or
take the role of a character in the story being told (Nelson, 1989; Reed, 1987). Students develop their attention spans and their critical listening skills as they carefully listen for cues to refrains of a story. As they hear the progression of a story, students better understand sequence and the sense of story framework, the beginning, the middle, and the end of the story (Peck, 1989; Roney, 1989).

Peck (1989) stated, “In addition to promoting development of language and literacy, storytelling provides a forum for children and adults to interact within the rich cultural context of folktales and other stories” (p. 138). Storytelling in the school library media center can introduce students to folktales and other stories from many different cultures that may be in the center’s collection. After students have heard a tale told by the school library media specialist, the students can be guided to other tales that are available in print. Roney (1989) suggested,

In the short term, telling stories motivates children to read and write themselves. From my own experience, I have learned to introduce the printed versions of many stories immediately after telling them, then to provide time for interaction with a variety of books. The children always come to the literature with a rush and, without fail, choose to read first (and, often, exclusively) those stories which have been introduced through storytelling. (p. 520)

**Read-aloud sessions.** Many of the same benefits of telling a story are inherent in reading stories aloud to students. Read-aloud sessions differ from storytelling in that a printed story within a book is actually read, not told. When preparing for a “read-aloud,” school library media specialists choose good literature that both lends itself to oral presentation and is relevant to the interests of the intended audience. A book selected for a read-aloud session should spark student interest. Yocom (1993) stated, “The selection of appropriate books depends on such criteria as knowing the children, their literary needs and interests, their depth of literary understanding, and their background in children’s literature” (p. 103).
As discussed previously (See Reading to Develop Readers, p. 38), there is a large body of literature on the benefits of reading aloud to young children. Huck, Hepler, & Hickman (1993) suggested that reading aloud to students is the “time to stretch their imagination, to extend interests, and to develop appreciation of fine writing” (p. 721). Vardell & Copeland (1992) saw the benefits of reading aloud for students as “expanding knowledge of vocabulary and sentence patterns, extending background experiences, exposing them to books too difficult to read on their own...[and becoming] familiar with authors and types of reading that they may not have discovered through their independent choices” (p. 78).

Inviting Students to Respond to Literature

The culmination of a storytelling event or read-aloud session is often an activity that encourages the students to respond to what they have just heard. Students can become involved in a discussion about the story or may express themselves in some cases through drama or art projects. Each student has a unique personal perspective on the story and his or her response will reflect that perspective (Reed, 1987; Huck, Hepler, & Hickman, 1993; Pappas, Kiefer, & Levstik, 1990; Tompkins & McGee, 1993).

When school library media specialists and teachers engage students in discussions of a book or a story, they guide and expand the students' initial responses by asking questions that encourage interpretation (Pappas, Kiefer, & Levstik, 1990; Yocum, 1993). As students share their thoughts, opinions, and perceptions about the story with others, they dig deeper into the meaning of the story, going beyond the literal level of the text. These interpretations reveal feelings and views and open up avenues for further responses. In reporting on the benefits of book discussion groups, Fiderer (1990) stated, “Through talk, the insights expressed by one reader helped expand the
thinking of the other. Talk also enabled each of the readers to explore his own thinking in an attempt to discover meaning” (p. 75).

School library media specialists should elicit responses to the books they present to students to encourage the students’ intellectual and social development. Students need to and want to think about stories they either have heard or have read on their own. Kiefer (1993) reported, “It often seemed that when a book was puzzling rather than pretty, children talked more about it, argued more about it, wrote more about it, and created more art and drama in response to it” (p. 280). Students want to address the conditions they encounter in literature and consider the consequences. They want to examine the issues and discuss actions and solutions. Huck, Hepler, & Hickman (1993) suggested, “[through literature] children can rehearse and negotiate situations of conflict without risk, trying out alternative stances to problems as they step into the lives and thoughts of different characters” (p. 69). When guided and encouraged, students will embrace the opportunity to explain and express their opinions. Kiefer (1993) found that students even want some challenge in interpreting the illustrations they encounter in picture books. She stated, “Older children also seemed to agree that an important criteria for a picture book was not to make it ‘easy for you to find things’ but to ‘make us think more’” (p. 280).

**Helping Students “Think More” — Nurturing Social Development**

Society needs individuals who can make intelligent, well-informed decisions. The qualities necessary for a contributing, thinking citizenry are developed through opportunities to be knowledgeable, to learn about others, to make decisions, and to take on responsibilities (Seefeldt, 1993). How can literature be used to nurture social development? School library media specialists promote literature as a way of learning about life. They expose students to a wide variety of literature that represents many
cultures and heritages, interests and needs. They acquaint students with the similarities and differences of the many people who make up the world. School library media specialists help remedy misconceptions and encourage appreciation for others by presenting accurate information through literature (Bowie, 1992; Nauman, 1987; Sharp, 1992; Snyder, 1992; Zingher, 1990).

Pang (1991) contended that students “can be empowered to use their minds, enthusiasm, creativity, and skills to contribute to their communities,” and believes, as Hahn (1984) does, that in order to be empowered, students “should become confident in their abilities to make a difference in society, become confident in making sound decisions, become secure in their judgments, and believe in their interconnectedness with others” (Pang, 1991, p. 179).

These behaviors do not happen automatically. Students need guidance and inspiration from their teachers and school library media specialists as they develop a questioning, objective attitude that will shape their beliefs. Ramsey (1987) suggested that before teachers (and school library media specialists) attempt to guide students to view the world openly and with empathy, they must be aware of their own attitudes, the attitudes of the community, and their students’ awareness and social patterns. School library media specialists, like everyone else, have formed their assumptions and judgments from experiences. Through these experiences, points of view and biases are formed which shape their perceptions of other people. By confronting their biases and attitudes, school library media specialists can examine the roots of their beliefs and try to develop a more accepting view of others.

School library media specialists, like teachers, can model for students a willingness to adopt an open point of view. Ramsey (1987) stated, “how they [teachers] respond to all children’s differences will have an impact on how children come to view differences” (p. 41). To become more understanding of others, Ramsey
(1987) recommended "approaching the experiences of other groups as learners and to maintain a stance of respect for the integrity of other ways of life and a sense of humility for the limits of our own understanding" (p. 43).

Walsh (1988) contended that students' prejudices can be reduced by giving them a "different conceptual lens through which to view the world" (p. 281). Students can experience different worlds and different viewpoints through literature. Walsh (1988) continued,

Research suggests that direct teaching of prejudice-reduction techniques may be ineffective, whereas indirect teaching of the skills and dispositions needed to combat prejudice is effective. This simply means that merely telling students they should not be prejudiced is ineffectual. Historical events and literature relevant to issues of prejudice (e.g., To Kill a Mockingbird, The Anne Frank Story [sic]), used with sensitivity and care, are essential. (p. 281)

Pate (1988) reported on several studies in which a positive outcome of reduced prejudice was apparent when literature and other materials drew students emotionally into the lives of the characters. Literature allows students to understand the common bonds of humanity. Literature can usher students into the lives of others and help them identify and empathize with characters with universal problems and concerns (Huck, Hepler, & Hickman, 1993). Seefeldt (1993) stated that students can "become aware of the stories, myths, folktales, and songs of those persons whose voices have been silenced or who demand recognition and support. Through this initial awareness, children may build a sense of oneness with others" (p. 9).

By introducing students to various aspects of their world and to a broader view of the outside world through literature, school library media specialists give students the opportunity to reflect on situations that may be unfamiliar to them. Students can form opinions, make decisions about what they have read, and refine their understanding of the story. This cannot be done, however, by simply reading or listening to a story. School library media specialists should be available to guide and interact with students
to encourage thoughtful reflection and responsible decision making (Aaron, 1988). Educational activities and opportunities need to be designed to promote thinking, to facilitate free discussion, and to honor a variety of perspectives.

Issues of justice and stereotyping can be addressed through the discussion of characters' actions and the resulting consequences. Both young children and middle schoolers have a keen sense of justice (Huck, Hepler, & Hickman, 1993; Pang, 1991). One way to confront stereotyping is by presenting a book which contains blatant stereotypes, using that book to explain that stereotyping can hurt (Zingher, 1990). Zingher (1990) stated, “Children also need to learn that words and pictures can sting, that books and films presenting offensive portraits of groups can cause embarrassment. Stereotyping can prevent children from seeing the complexity of others” (p. 17).

When they understand the underlying effects of stereotyping, students can better decide for themselves whether what they have read or heard is accurate or biased. Rudman (1984) believes that a reader should look upon a book with a critical perspective. She stated, “... a reader needs to come to a book with an awareness of its potential for inherent messages” (p. 5). If students can “learn to identify overgeneralizations and stereotypes and attend to meaningful social behaviors,” they may become more aware and less prejudiced (Byrnes, 1988, p. 270).

The more that students are exposed to different views of the world and the idea that they must respect diversity, the more realistic they will be when confronting the global society of the 21st century. Understanding, tolerance, empathy, and belief in their interconnectedness with others, coupled with sound decision making and critical thinking allow students to become productive members of a diverse and dynamic society. (Ramsey, 1987; Banks, 1989; Bennett, 1995; Nieto, 1992).
Encouraging a Multicultural Perspective

“Developing a multicultural perspective means learning how to think in more inclusive and expansive ways, reflecting on what we learn, and putting our learning into action” (Nieto, 1992, p. 216). A multicultural perspective, the acceptance and appreciation of cultural differences and respect for human dignity and universal human rights, can be nurtured in students by teachers and school library media specialists who present accurate information and experiences and guide students in their understanding of their culture and the culture of others. The United States is made up of many cultural and subcultural groups. Before attempting to encourage or develop a multicultural perspective, one must consider the meaning of culture (Banks, 1989; Bennett, 1995; Trachtenberg, 1990). There are many definitions of culture (Banks, 1989; Benner, 1995; Bullivant, 1989; Goodenough, 1957; LeVine, 1986; Nieto, 1992; Spradley & McCurdy, 1975; Trachtenberg, 1990; Triandis, 1975). Trachtenberg (1990) attempted to differentiate between the two meanings of culture, “high culture,” related to art, philosophy, etc. and the term, “culture,” traced to modern social science. He stated that the “culture” connected to social science thought refers to the ways in which different groups of people organize their daily lives within national or ethnic groups, urban neighborhoods, companies and professions, and other settings” (p. 610). Triandis (1975) also made a distinction between “subjective culture” and “material culture.” Bennett (1995) paraphrases Triandis’s definition of subjective culture as “the world view or the way a cultural group perceives its environment, including stereotypes, role perceptions, norms, attitudes, values, ideals, and perceived relationships between events and behaviors” (p.56).

Banks (1989) summarized various ideas related to culture and concludes that culture consists of knowledge, conceptions, and values that are shared through communication with others in a social group. Culture is the “values, symbols,
interpretations, perspectives that distinguish one people from another in modernized society” (Banks, 1989, p. 7). He expanded his definition of culture to include Bullivant’s (1989) idea that culture also is “a social group’s design for surviving in and adapting to its environment” (p. 27). This adaptation allows the group to survive over time, casting off outdated adaptation strategies and devising new ways to cope with future situations.

These present day definitions of culture seem to emphasize shared knowledge and belief systems rather than the habits and behaviors of a group of people, as was the case prior to the 1950s (Bennett, 1995). Nieto (1992) suggested that,

culture can be understood as the ever-changing values, traditions, social and political relationships, and world views shared by a group of people bound together by a combination of factors that can include a common history, geographic location, language, social class and/or religion. (p. 111)

From the understanding of culture comes the definition of multicultural. The meaning of multicultural varies with the background, concerns and theoretical framework of the individual and context in which it is discussed. In some cases, the term, “multicultural,” has been defined solely by race, while other definitions include such descriptors as special needs, gender, religion, and sexual orientation (Diegmuller, 1992). For example, Ramsey (1987) contended that multiculturalism (as described in multicultural education), “encompasses many dimensions of human differences besides culture: race, occupation, socioeconomic status, age, gender, sexual orientation, and various physical traits and needs” (p. 3). Banks (1989) envisions a multicultural society as one in which many cultures exist. Its members are of various subgroups, each programmed by its own culture. These subgroups “differ from each other on various grounds: social class, ethnicity, race, culture, gender” (Banks, 1989, p. 39).
Goals of Teaching from a Multicultural Perspective

A multicultural perspective is one in which multiple standards for perceiving, understanding, and acting are developed to better allow the individual to participate with others in social interactions and relationships. Teachers and school library media specialists who intend to guide students toward a multicultural perspective need to consider the goals of their teaching.

Ramsey (1987) listed eight goals which she believes are important to foster an understanding in young children of differences and similarities of others and how each individual interconnects with the other. These goals are:

1. To help children develop positive gender, racial, cultural, class, and individual identities and to recognize and accept their membership in many different groups.
2. To enable children to see themselves as part of the larger society; to identify, empathize, and relate with individuals from other groups.
3. To foster respect and appreciation for the diverse ways in which other people live.
4. To encourage in young children’s earliest social relationships an openness and interest in others, a willingness to include others, and a desire to cooperate.
5. To promote the development of a realistic awareness of contemporary society, a sense of social responsibility, and an active concern that extend beyond one’s immediate family or group.
6. To empower children to become autonomous and critical analysts and activists in their social environment.
7. To support the development of educational and social skills that are needed for children to become full participants in the larger society in ways that are most appropriate to individual styles, cultural orientations, and linguistic backgrounds.
8. To promote effective and reciprocal relationships between schools and families. (pp. 3-5)

Brown (1992) focused on basically the same goals as Ramsey. She emphasized the importance of recognizing and appreciating the cultural identity of every student, as well as developing respect for all groups, and affirming the diversity within our society. She believes that by developing social interaction skills in students, positive intergroup relationships will occur.
Before students can attain these goals, teachers and school library media specialists must be open to a multicultural perspective.

**Becoming an Effective Multicultural Teacher**

A multicultural person is one who is willing to reeducate him- or herself by learning about other cultures. However, to better understand other cultures, individuals first need to examine their own cultures - their family backgrounds, their histories, their value systems, and with whom they identify (Baker, 1994; Cameron, 1992; Mitchell, 1987).

Nieto (1992), Ramsey (1987), and Bennett (1995) encouraged teachers to confront their own racism and biases before attempting to teach about cultural diversity. Until teachers realize that some of the societal messages that they have internalized are influenced with bias or racism, the importance of multiculturalism cannot be effectively addressed or taught by them. Nieto (1992) stated, “Our own reeducation means not only learning new things but also unlearning the old. The process is a difficult and sometimes painful one. It is nevertheless a necessary part of becoming multicultural” (p. 275).

New perspectives are built, as well, with the understanding of multiple historical perspectives (Bennett, 1995). Reexamining and questioning the interpretation of history allows an individual to consider various points of view on the same events. Nieto (1992) suggested that, “becoming a multicultural person means learning to see reality from a variety of perspectives” (p. 275).

Some student behaviors are influenced by the students’ cultural backgrounds (Bennett, 1995; Larke, 1992). Effective multicultural teachers and school library media specialists need to be aware of the roots of these behaviors and to be sensitive to them. They must also consider the possibilities that their own actions may be misinterpreted by their students from other cultures (Willis, 1993).
Culture also may be involved in the way students prefer to learn (Banks, 1989; Bennett, 1995; Brown, 1992; Larke, 1992; Nieto, 1992; Willis, 1993). Bennett (1995) presented five cultural factors that she believes affect learning styles. She contended that the socialization process, sociocultural tightness, ecological adaptation, the biological effect (nutrition and physical development) and language dictate an individual's preferred learning style. She stated, "learning styles are a component of cultural behavioral styles, habits, values, predispositions, and preferences that develop during the child's cultural socialization process" (p. 182).

Research maintains that child-rearing practices and social class (different values and practices) are responsible for the learning styles children develop (Nieto, 1992). However, Nieto (1992) warned against dichotomizing learning, suggesting that there are also differences in learning styles among individuals from particular ethnic groups. Willis (1993) questioned whether students from different cultures really learn differently. In an interview with G. Pritchy Smith, Willis quoted Smith as warning against cultural learning styles becoming one more label of inferiority for nonwhites. However, Smith believes that the body of research on cultural learning styles is well enough established to present the concept to teachers.

Au (1993) focused on cultural difference in interactional style and warns that "these differences should not be interpreted to mean that students of diverse backgrounds should be characterized as having a certain set 'learning style' " (p. 119). She stressed a change in classroom situations to better support each individual's learning. She believes, for example, that "conventional classroom recitation imposes a structure for participation that may not be appropriate for students of diverse backgrounds" (p. 109).

Willis (1993) quoted G. Pritchy Smith as stating, "Socialization within a particular culture shapes a student's ideas of what is important to learn, and of how to
go about learning it. Some cultures condition children to approach the structure of knowledge holistically rather than in small, separate parts” (p. 7).

Sleeter (1992) described Shade’s (1989) learning style distinctions - analytical vs synergistic - and explains how both learning styles are produced by cultural styles and survival strategies. Sleeter contended that the predominant teaching strategies used by the majority of teachers “tend to serve white middle class children better than low-income children and children of color” (p. 71). She suggested that teachers try other instructional approaches such as cooperative learning to better serve a larger number of their students.

A variety of teaching strategies, then, may be effective in promoting learning among various cultures. Cooperative learning techniques, individualized learning, the hands-on, discovery approach, and global and analytical problem-solving may all need to be incorporated in the repertoire of teaching techniques. Knowing about the cultural influences that shape learning will allow teachers to better understand how all students learn.

**Teaching about Culture**

When introducing any cultural group, teachers should make sure that accurate information is presented. Willis (1993) in an interview with James Banks quoted Banks as suggesting that teachers [and school library media specialists] use primary sources and “authentic voices” (p. 3). Authentic voices are statements about a culture from people of that culture.

Willis (1993) continued to quote from the interview with Banks who warns teachers against perpetuating stereotypes by presenting information about cultures as if all individuals in that culture are alike. Banks prefers that teachers examine concepts instead of characteristics and behaviors of a cultural group. He stressed, “the first
priority is to teach students about \textit{concepts} - such as immigration, intercultural interactions, and racism - using various groups and their experiences as the vehicle to explore them” (p. 2).

Brown (1992) believes that concepts, generalizations, and understandings about diverse cultures can be developed in a variety of ways. She contended that one can develop an understanding of cultural diversity through, among other things, discussing cultural experiences, learning accurate information about historical events and conflicts, comparing customs and beliefs of various groups, and using the literature, art, and music from different cultural groups as a way to introduce the contributions of the various cultures. She sees these practices being incorporated into all aspects of the curriculum.

**Levels of Integration**

Banks (1989) has created a framework of four levels of approaches for integrating what he calls “ethnic content” into the curriculum. Although he admitted that often these approaches are combined and blended in actual teaching situations, they can be recognized as discrete approaches and implemented as such.

He labeled the first level of integration as the “contributions approach.” Teachers introduce the heroes, holidays, and discrete cultural elements (food, dress, etc.) of a group into the curriculum when heroes and holidays of mainstream America are being studied. Teachers need to have a basic knowledge of the individuals and events. Banks considers this a beginning for integration, but warns that this approach may result in trivialization of ethnic cultures when focusing only on one individual or one aspect of the culture without examining how this affects the American culture as a whole. Often when heroes’ birthdays or holidays are studied in isolation, no connection is made to the significance that that life or event had on society. He also contends that when
studying contributions, "little attention is given to their meanings and importance within ethnic communities" (p. 193).

Level 2, the "additive approach" to integration is "the addition of content, concepts, themes, and perspectives to the curriculum without changing its basic structure, purposes, and characteristics" (p. 195). This approach may be achieved when a unit or book about a cultural group is added to the curriculum. A disadvantage of doing this is that the information may be added in a segmented way without addressing the underlying issues associated with the culture.

The "transformation approach," the next level of integration, reconsiders the curriculum and fundamental goals, structure and perspectives. This approach allows the study of "concepts, issues, themes and problems from several ethnic perspectives and points of view" (p. 196). Banks believes that this approach will better foster the understanding that a variety of ethnic and cultural groups have influenced and participated in the development of the U.S. society and culture, that there is a shared American culture.

The fourth level of integration of ethnic content encompasses the tenets of the transformation approach, but also adds the elements of decision making and social criticism. The "social action approach" encourages students to take action against the inequities in society and "participate effectively in social change" (p. 198). Banks described the approach as including "all the elements of the transformation approach but adds components that require students to make decisions and take action related to the concept, issue, or problem studied in the unit" (p. 198).

Grant and Sleeter (1985) have created a typology of the various multicultural education programs that they have found appearing in the professional literature. They view these programs as approaches for inclusion of multicultural education in the curriculum. The audiences for these programs range from minority students only to the entire student body.
The first program, "Education of the Culturally Different," is designed to provide the minority student access to the standard curriculum by using "culturally relevant curriculum, materials, and language as a bridge into mainstream culture" (p. 100). This approach encourages teachers to hold high expectations for minority students.

"Ethnic Studies" is a curricular add-on or substitution which focuses on teaching about ethnic groups as distinct entities and is a program targeted either to all students or to ethnic minorities only. This approach examines a culture without relating its accomplishments to society as a whole.

"Human Relations" programs appear in multiracial schools and emphasize the "prevention of conflict between members of different ethnic groups, development of tolerance for different groups, and development of a positive self" (p. 100). To incorporate this approach, teachers need to become knowledgeable of the various cultures represented in their school and include content in the over-all curriculum that addresses the importance of all cultural groups.

"Multicultural Education," what Grant and Sleeter view as the most prevalent approach mentioned in the literature, targets all students. This approach advocates the development of "ethnic self identities" and encourages learning about other cultures and building tolerance toward others. Grant and Sleeter suggest that this is done by integrating information into the entire curriculum and by "using teaching strategies that build on different students' learning styles" (p. 101).

The fifth approach in Grant and Sleeter's typology is "Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist." This approach teaches all students to critically analyze situations in American society and take action to better the unequal relationships that exist.
The School Library Media Specialist’s Contribution

The school library media specialist can integrate multiculturalism into the school library media program in various ways. A number of articles contain ideas and suggestions for incorporating multicultural literature and activities into the school library media program, but none examine the possible level of integration (Banks, 1989) in which the experiences might take place (Bowie, 1992; Green & Schaefer, 1992; Hefner & Lewis, 1992; Kardaleff, 1992; Ruggles, 1992). The suggestions for introducing and emphasizing elements of diversity use some of the practices (displays, book talks, read-alouds, storytelling) mentioned earlier in this literature review.

Hefner and Lewis (1992) listed literature and activities recommended for better understanding a variety of cultures. Ruggles (1992) listed resources pertaining to the music of many cultures. Bowie (1992) addressed the needs of African Americans and suggests ways of presenting historical perspectives, dispelling persisting myths and misconceptions, and integrating African American literature and folklore into the curriculum. Some of the activities he described can be adapted to other cultures. For example, when school library media specialists present book talks and story hours that focus on folktales from different areas of the world, Bowie suggested that they include “map study” of the different countries, and encourage discussion that highlights similarities and differences among cultures as well as the histories of the countries from which the tales come (p. 40).

The school library media specialist is encouraged to use a variety of story forms and activities to introduce students to other cultures. A literary experience can become a cultural experience as displays are created around various themes and activities developed to represent a culturally diverse world (Kardaleff, 1992). Participants in these activities can include members of both the school community and the local community. Green and Schaefer (1992) stated that
As one of the few people in the building, along with the principal and the school art specialist (if one exists), who usually has contact with the entire student body, the media specialist has a chance to arrange experiences for large numbers of students. To further multicultural education, the school media center needs to be not only a repository of books, media, and even multicultural artifacts, but also a resource center for community connections. Storytellers, authors, performers, and artists-in-residence from several cultures easily weave into the school’s fabric of experience through the media center. (p. 100)

In the programs developed to encourage a multicultural perspective, it is essential that the school library media specialist provide for all learners. The importance of this charge is apparent in the mission statement adopted by AASL and AECT. It is the professional mission of the school library media program as stated in Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs, “to ensure that students and staff are effective users of ideas and information” (ALA/AECT, 1988, p. 1). Two of the responsibilities, stated as “challenges,” directly address concern for the changing population and commitment to providing services and expertise to all people. These are (a) “to provide intellectual and physical access to information and ideas for a diverse population whose needs are changing rapidly,” and (b) “to ensure equity and freedom of access to information and ideas, unimpeded by social, cultural, economic, geographic, or technologic constraints.” (ALA/AECT, 1988, pp 3-5).

Physical access to information requires students to have access to facilities, personnel, equipment, and the collection. Intellectual access indicates competencies that enable students to locate and evaluate information for their own needs (Snyder, 1992).

School library media specialists, in their teaching role, encourage students to be specific in their ideas and requests. They teach students how to access information by showing them methods of locating and searching reference sources. The specialist explains the use of the resource and then guides students to interpret, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the information they have found for their classroom and
individual needs (Aaron, 1988). Aaron (1988) recommended that school library media specialists teach students "how to gain physical and intellectual access to information and ideas that reflect diversity of experiences, opinions, and social and cultural perspectives" (p. 85).

The School Library Media Center's Collection

Skeele and Schall (1994) believe that physical access and intellectual access to information are fundamental tenets of any school library media program. They recommend that the program's policy statement should address issues of access, balance, and equity to and for all people. Skeele and Schall stated that programs that "foster climates of equality evolve from carefully examining and adapting collection development, user services, and the curriculum activities" (1994, p. 84).

The collection should be representative not solely of the population which it serves, but also representative of the diversity of the U.S. and global society which students will meet in the future (Sharp, 1992). Vandergrift and Hannigan (1986) support a collection that contains information about all cultures and is available to all students. They believe that in a school library media center which houses such a collection, students "break through the confines of their own restricted worlds to read and view media representing all aspects of our pluralistic society and thus learn to recognize and deal with perceptions of the world which differ from their own" (p. 172).

Reference materials, periodicals, audiovisual materials and fictional works are considered part of a school library media center's collection. A balance of subjects covered by these materials is essential for a well-rounded collection. Information Power : Guidelines for School Library Media Programs. (ALA/AECT, 1988) addresses the importance of including materials for "all learners" as follows:
The collection includes materials to meet the needs of all learners, including the gifted, the mentally, physically, and emotionally impaired, and those who are culturally disadvantaged or from linguistic minorities. When the internal holdings do not meet all needs, library media specialists are responsible for making arrangements to secure materials from other sources. (p. 73)

Selecting Multicultural Materials for the Collection

One of the major tasks of a school library media specialist is to select materials for the school library media center's collection which will meet the interests and reflect the diversity of the school population. Latrobe (1992) stated that the collection and program activities must "represent a broad spectrum of ethnic and cultural viewpoints,... [and] support the integration of cultural literacy into all areas of the curriculum" (p. 3). She also believes the school library media specialist must include in the collection materials in languages other than English. The school library media specialist needs to be aware of stereotypes in materials and "help students and teachers recognize stereotypical portrayals in print and nonprint formats" (p. 3).

The profession's accepted criteria for selecting any materials for the school library media center collection considers the "appropriateness" of the materials to the educational program and school community and to the students for whom the material is selected. In addition, the guidelines for school library media programs state that materials should "represent diverse points of view... and stimulate growth in analytical and thinking skills" (ALA/AECT, 1988, p. 74).

Children's literature specialists recommend that multicultural literature be evaluated not only by the standards for any good literature — well-developed plot, characterization, setting, theme, and style, etc. — but also by criteria specific to the content (Bishop, 1992; Harris, 1992; Huck, Hepler, & Hickman, 1993; Yokoto, 1993). Before school library media specialists select multicultural literature, they should have some appreciation for what is meant by multicultural literature.
Multicultural Literature as a Vehicle for Developing a Multicultural Perspective

Multicultural literature, a component of the multicultural education movement, has been defined in several ways. To some, multicultural literature is "books by and about people of color" (Kruse, 1992, p. 30). To others, multicultural literature is more inclusive. Yokoto (1993) defined multicultural literature as "literature that represents any distinct cultural group through accurate portrayal and rich detail" (p. 157). Bishop (1992) defined multicultural literature as "literature by and about people who are members of groups considered to be outside the socio-political mainstream of the United States" (p. 39). Even though she has expanded the definition of multicultural literature, she admitted that multicultural literature most frequently refers to books about people of color in the United States (Bishop, 1992).

Horning and Kruse (1991) in their examination of the history of literature by and of people of color have found that most of the United States children's literature of the 19th and much of the 20th centuries contained little about cultures other than the cultures of Western Europeans. The books that were available that depicted other cultures were usually written by authors from the dominant culture and contained characters who were often stereotypically portrayed and facts that were misrepresented (Harris, 1992).

Early acknowledgement of the need for unbiased depictions of the African American in children's literature was made in the early 1940s by several children's librarians in the public libraries of New York City and Chicago. These women believed their patrons were not being served through the majority of books, although a few books written by African American authors had been published in the 1930s. Motivated by this concern, these librarians compiled and published bibliographies containing titles of available books that were appropriate portrayals of African Americans (Horning & Kruse, 1991).
However, it was not until 1965 when Larrick published an article in the *Saturday Review*, entitled "The All-White World of Children's Books," that the inequity in children's book publishing was recognized (Sims, 1982). This disclosure, as well as the strength of the Civil Rights Movement and the emphasis on the multicultural education movement in the public school in the late 1960s, fueled the fire for developing a body of children's literature that would present an accurate portrayal of cultures other than the dominant culture in the United States. During this time, several children's book editors made a concerted effort to find and publish authors of other cultures. In the late 1960s, the Council on Interracial Books for Children, which critiques books and encourages authors and illustrators of color, was founded and the Coretta Scott King Award was established to acknowledge the contributions of African American authors of children's literature (Horning & Kruse, 1991).

As media coverage of the civil rights issues declined in the 1970s and 1980s, so did the number of published multicultural books for children. However, in the late 1980s, attention to multicultural literature was renewed as attention to the diversity within the United States was again being encouraged. Horning and Kruse (1991) stated,

> Although awareness grew throughout the last half of the twentieth century, during the late 1980s an increasing number of teachers, librarians, and parents from varied racial and cultural backgrounds recognized that no child is equipped for the present or for the future without opportunities to see a multicolored society reflected in books and other media. (p. 7)

The evolution of multicultural literature has followed the pattern the United States has taken in recognizing and acknowledging the diverse population of this country. The increased interest in, and hence, authorship and publication of multicultural children's literature is a manifestation of present day concerns. Taxel (1994) stated, "Like other cultural artifacts, children's literature is a product of convention that is
rooted in, if not determined by, the dominant belief systems and ideologies of the times in which they are created” (p. 98).

**Types of Multicultural Literature**

Multicultural literature should be examined not only for its literary characteristics, but also for the purposes it is supposed to serve (Cai & Bishop, 1994). Bishop (1992) stated that “multicultural literature is one of the most powerful components of a multicultural education curriculum, the underlying purpose of which is to help to make the society a more equitable one” (p. 40). With this in mind, Cai and Bishop (1994) have proposed multicultural literature as “an umbrella term that includes at least three kinds of literature: world literature, cross-cultural literature, and ‘minority’ literature or literature from parallel cultures” (p. 62).

In the context of Cai & Bishop’s framework, world literature includes folktales, fiction and nonfiction from non-Western countries. Cross-cultural literature is of two kinds. One type features more than one cultural group within the same story. The other type of cross-cultural literature is about persons from one culture written by someone from another culture. Parallel culture literature is literature written about a certain culture by someone from that culture. Bishop (1993) contended that when a multicultural literature collection includes a predominance of world and cross-cultural literature, “the authentic voices of people of parallel cultures will still not be heard, even though one of the goals of incorporating multicultural literature into the curriculum is to include those whose voices have historically been excluded” (p. 2).

**Evaluating Multicultural Literature**

Lists of considerations and recommendations for evaluation are available in publications which review children’s multicultural literature to help educators choose
appropriate and high quality books for students. The criteria presented in these books cover general accuracy, problems with language, stereotypes, integration of cultural information, illustrations, tokenism, and author's perspective (Bishop, 1994; Council on Interracial Books for Children, 1974; Kuipers, 1991; Miller-Lachmann, 1992; Rudman, 1984; Slapin & Seale, 1992). Bishop (1992) suggested that to become confident in selecting multicultural literature, it is necessary to become acquainted with such resources, become informed about the traditions of other cultures, and to read extensively in literature written by “insiders” (p. 46).

Many children's literature specialists, as well as authors of multicultural literature, recommend that multicultural literature be parallel culture literature, written from an insider's perspective (Bishop, 1992; Harris, 1992; Howard, 1991; Myers, 1991). This means that a book about a culture should be written by someone of that culture.

There has been some disagreement over this position by those who feel that individuals from any cultural group can effectively write about another cultural group (Cameron, Narahashi, Walters, & Wisniewski, 1992; Esbensen, 1992; Kruse, 1992; Laskey, 1996; Madigan, 1993; Rochman, 1993). Nauman (1987) suggested that good multicultural books have an “authentic cultural perspective” and are written by “perceptive and experienced authors with good credentials” (p. 204). Yokoto (1993) contended that individuals living within a culture know the nuances of the culture and incorporate cultural details naturally into a story. However, she stated that authors have successfully written about another cultural group’s experiences with “a sensitivity gained through extensive research and participation in cultural groups outside their own” (p. 159).

In contrast, author W. D. Myers (1991) believes that as an African American he brings to his writing the “cultural substance” of his experience as an African American (p. 120) This is an impossibility for someone outside the culture. Howard (1991)
supports Myer's view and suggests that authors from outside the culture have difficulty in translating the emotions of the everyday life and the history connected to the culture into stories about that culture. However, she believes that it is possible for someone to write about another culture if the person is "emotionally and experientially" of that culture, and if the person is "aware in his or her bones of the intertwining history and geography and biology and blood and sweat and life so he or she can indeed feel, to some degree..." like a person from the culture of which he or she writes (p. 94).

Illustrators, as well as authors, from outside the culture sometimes present inaccurate information and out-of-date imagery of the culture. Yokoto (1993) provided an example of this by relating a scene from a book in which food and clothing suitable only during ancestral worship are used inappropriately to illustrate a family dinner. The generic "Indianness" of the portrayal of dress, shelter, and origin of Native Americans in some books also has been criticized for its inaccuracies (Caldwell-Wood, & Mitten, 1992, p. 31). This practice perpetuates the stereotype that all Native Americans are alike.

Language is another concern when examining multicultural literature (Bishop, 1994; Miller-Lachmann, 1992; Yokoto, 1993). When inappropriate or demeaning language appears in a book, the character speaking the language can be seen as laughable. Students may imitate that language for a similar reaction. This, too, perpetuates stereotypes. In reviewing The Indian in the Cupboard (Banks, 1980), Slapin and Seale (1992) emphasized the inaccurate language presented in the book. They admitted that there are characteristic speech patterns for Native speakers, but "I help...I go... Big hole. I go through...Want fire. Call Spirits." is not typical of those patterns (p. 120). Authentic dialogue is important in good multicultural literature (Yokoto, 1993). To be able to recognize authenticity, Howard (1991) suggested that reviewers must immerse themselves in a large body of authentic works.
Another criterion for evaluating multicultural literature examines the way the cultural group is defined (Bishop, 1994; Yokoto, 1993). Often a group is given an overarching label which in fact takes in many cultures. For example, "Asian Americans" from Cambodia are quite different from "Asian Americans" from Japan. To best present an accurate portrayal of a cultural group, Yokoto (1993) suggested that there should be dialogues and relationships within the story that are authentic and that rich cultural details be a natural part of the story.

Inaccuracies and stereotypical portrayals are detrimental to the image of the culture and damaging to the self-esteem of an individual from that culture when characters are depicted (visually and verbally) in a way that perpetuates the myths of the culture (Bishop, 1994). Therefore, when reviewing literature for selection, one should be sensitive to the culture presented and consider what possible effects the work might have on the self-esteem of a child of the culture portrayed. Cai (1995) stated that "cultural authenticity is the basic criterion in the sense that no matter how imaginative and how well written a story is, it should be rejected if it seriously violates the integrity of a culture" (p. 2-3).

Using Multicultural Literature

Multicultural literature can be used for read-aloud sessions, for independent reading, and for literature study groups (Bishop, 1994). The literature does not need to be singled out as something unusual, but rather should be integrated into the curriculum as a natural part of the literature program. Rochman (1993) supports the integrated use of books from all cultures. She stated, "the best way to promote them is together, not patronizingly as something cute and exotic and apart, but as good books" (p. 12).

One way to incorporate multicultural literature into the curriculum is through thematic units. Books from all cultures can easily fit into units with universal themes,
such as families, peer friendship, and self-awareness (Johnson & Smith, 1993). The various perspectives of these books can be discussed and appreciated as they are compared to one another.

Books from all cultures can also be used in genre studies. Folktales allow students to develop an awareness of other cultures and to understand and appreciate different literary heritages. Biography, historical fiction, contemporary fiction, and poetry also provide opportunities to examine the similarities and differences of many cultures. These genres are also conducive to discussion of such things as appropriateness of themes and authenticity of information, setting, characterization, and historical beliefs (Norton, 1990).

Multicultural literature as the central focus of a study can be used to encourage students to become critical thinkers as they are introduced to multiple perspectives on world history and events (Bishop, 1993). Bishop (1994) stated,

> Many of these books offer opportunities to examine critically the society in which we live, and the values and assumptions that underlie conflicts, events, and behaviors. When such concerns are an inherent aspect of a book — either fiction or nonfiction — it is important that they be confronted and discussed. (p. xii)

Books about slavery, the westward movement, or the Holocaust invite students to think. Even controversial books have their place in literature discussions. African American children's book author, Candy Dawson Boyd, when interviewed by Lewis (1994), advised teachers

> Don’t disregard a piece of literature... because it’s controversial... The stereotypes in these books can be used to spark wonderful discussions — if you’re educated about them. Arm yourself with knowledge about the controversy surrounding the book and the historical period in which it was written. (p. 41)

Rasinski and Padak (1990) proposed adapting Banks' framework for integrating ethnic content into the classroom as a structure for incorporating multicultural literature
into the curriculum. The authors believe that too often multicultural literature is read and briefly discussed by the teacher and students with little consideration for the cultural values and beliefs presented. Rasinski and Padak encouraged teachers to look deeper into the literature and to invite students “to view the problems, themes, concerns, and concepts from the perspective of different cultural groups” through the transformation approach in Banks’ framework (p. 577). Once students become aware of these problems and concerns, then teachers should allow students to “take action” by presenting them with information and ideas which will prompt them to be “thinking and caring people who can be moved to act on values and beliefs that are developed through thoughtful analysis” (p. 578).

Some believe that if multiculturalism is overlooked in the curriculum, left out of genre studies, left out of the units on universal topics like family, home, and self - then students will be unrealistically prepared for their membership in a global society (Bennett, 1995; Bishop, 1994; Ramsey, 1987). Librarian G. Moore-Kruse, in an interview by Madigan (1993), stated,

That which is invisible or minimized is always a very big message. If children grow up never seeing, never reading, never hearing the variety or the wide range of voices, they lose so much. They will not be equipped for today, not to mention tomorrow. The world will go right past them. They are going to be stunned that everyone is not like them. It is not only white children who are ill-equipped without diverse images; all children are ill-equipped if they have not had an opportunity to see themselves and others as valued beings... (p.174)

Incorporating multiculturalism into the school library media program is an important first step in introducing students to the world and multicultural literature is an important aspect of multiculturalism. As Bishop (1994) stated, “Literature is one of the vehicles through which we adults transmit to children our values, our attitudes, our mores, our world views, our philosophies of life” (p. xiii).
Conclusion

The school library media profession is an evolving one. School library media specialists who plan to be effective practitioners in the 21st century must have a broad knowledge of education as well as librarianship. They will be working with teachers and with students and will encourage and promote student learning. The position of library media specialist will continue to be multifaceted; a teacher, an information specialist, and an instructional consultant.

The role of literature in educating individuals is as important as ever and will continue to serve as a vehicle to understand our world. Literature for a global society has taken on another dimension of importance and may be used by educators to develop an awareness and understanding of the diverse society of the 21st century. Those who use this literature will need to scrutinize their beliefs, their actions, and the literature and materials they plan to use to be able to most appropriately present information related to diversity to the school community.

There is limited professional literature that examines the roles and responsibilities of practicing school library media specialists. The profession is replete with literature on what should be, but very little literature is available on what is. How the practitioner defines his or her role has also not been addressed in the professional literature. The body of literature on the school library media specialist and the use of multicultural literature is practically nonexistent, but for those articles and book chapters reviewed.

This review has exposed a need for an examination in these areas and in how school library media specialists perceive the importance of their role in encouraging multiculturalism through the introduction of literature integrated into their daily duties and their interactions with teachers and students, alike.
Summary of Chapter

This chapter reviewed the body of literature on the school library media profession, the value and use of children's literature, multicultural literature, and teaching and learning. This literature was examined with the roles and responsibilities of the school library media specialists in mind and how he or she incorporates multicultural literature into the curriculum. Chapter 3 will describe the methodology of the study.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to describe and to understand the perspectives of four exemplary school library media specialists and how they put into practice their ideas and beliefs. I chose a qualitative mode of inquiry to assist me in developing this investigation.

Rationale for Research Methodology

The school library media specialist’s world is one which is socially constructed, complex, and everchanging. It is not a world of observable, measurable facts. Qualitative inquiry allows the researcher to uncover the complexities, contradictions, and sensibility of social interactions (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992), and therefore seemed the most appropriate for this study.

The features of qualitative methodology fit the need for a closer look at the professional lives of the four school library media specialists, the schools they work in, and the children and teachers they work with. A quantitative approach would not afford a holistic description of the phenomena being studied and would be of a much narrower focus. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) stated that,

1. Qualitative research has the natural setting as the direct source of data and the researcher is the key instrument.
2. Qualitative research is descriptive.
3. Qualitative researchers are concerned with process rather than simply with outcomes and products.
4. Qualitative researchers tend to analyze their data inductively.
5. “Meaning” is of essential concern to the qualitative approach. (pp. 29-32)

To observe the school library media specialists in action and interpret what was observed, I needed to be at the workplace recording in detail the events as they happened. Observing the work of the school library media specialists generated new questions that informed the study. Through inductively examining the data I was able to create a picture of each case studied.

The case study method of qualitative inquiry was chosen for this investigation because it is a method used when one wishes to be particularistic, descriptive, holistic, and inductive; concerned with understanding and describing process more than behavioral outcomes (Merriam, 1988, p. 31). It is a “bounded system” (Smith, 1978), a case where there is a specific person, process, and/or context to examine.

Bromley (1986) defined the case study as a method of inquiry which

gets as close to the subject of interest as it possibly can, partly by means of direct observation in natural settings, partly by its access to subjective factors (thoughts, feelings, and desires), whereas experiments and surveys often use convenient derivative data, e.g. test results, official records. Also, case studies tend to spread the net for evidence widely, whereas experiments and survey usually have a narrow focus. (p. 23)

This study was conducted in an interpretive manner. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) suggested that interpretation is the “act of making sense out of a social interaction” (p. 19). Interpretation takes place when the researcher attempts to understand the meanings the participants make of their actions and interactions and tries to report it in some form. I chose to observe and interview the school library media specialists and through examination of the data collected, construct meaning in regard to the research questions which guided my inquiry.
Throughout these observations and interviews I collected “thick description,” (Geertz 1973) detailed and solid descriptions which captured the perceptions of the participants that they brought to their experiences and interactions. This thick description generated patterns which were determined by understanding the organization of the context, observing those in it, and listening to what individuals had to say about the events that occur there.

Selection of Research Questions

My initial interest in the topic of school library media specialists implementing multicultural literature into the school curriculum developed in 1990 when I conducted a study on multicultural literature use by school library media specialists in the state of Ohio. However, it was not until several years later in 1993 when I was out in the schools observing school library media specialists that my broad interest was narrowed to four questions which were to guide my inquiry. These were:

1. How do these school library media specialists describe their attitudes and responsibilities in relation to the roles of (a) teacher, (b) information specialist, and (c) instructional consultant?

2. How do the contextual factors, namely the administration, the resources, and the collegial relationship among professionals enable or constrain these roles and responsibilities?

3. How do these school library media specialists pursue their own continuing professional development to enable them in the above roles and responsibilities?

4. How do these school library media specialists define, justify, promote, and use multicultural literature in their schools?
As I proceeded with the study, numerous additional questions under each guiding question were asked of the participants. Open-ended questions were grounded in the understandings of the literature of the library media profession, children's literature, multicultural education, and professional development. "Grand tour" (Spradley, 1979) questions, broad questions which are asked to elicit a broad picture of the participant helped in developing the foundation of the study. Many other questions emerged from the answers to questions asked at the outset of the study. This emergent design is typical of qualitative research methodology.

Selection of Sites and Participants

During autumn 1992 when I began forming my ideas for this study, I visited a number of schools and quickly realized that the sites for the study would have to be schools that have a full-time school library media specialist on the premises five days a week. Many of the school buildings in the area have school library media specialists who are at the school only one day a week because they have the responsibility to maintain library media centers in five separate schools. I wanted to observe in-depth a school library media specialist who concentrated all his or her efforts on one library media program in one school.

Because I was examining the implementation of multicultural children’s literature, I chose elementary and middle school sites as those most likely to use that literature. To provide some diversity in setting, I set the criterion for school location to represent at least one urban school, one suburban school, and one rural or small city school.

As I visited numerous library media centers I saw a range in ability exhibited by the school library media specialists. I decided that the study would feature the exemplary school library media specialist with the intent that this would most inform
future recruitment and preparation for the profession and present a model for practicing school library media specialists.

The participants were chosen by purposeful or criterion-based sampling. Purposeful sampling is "based on the assumption that one wants to discover, understand, gain insight; therefore one needs to select a sample from which one can learn the most. ...Criterion-based sampling requires that one establish the criteria, bases, or standards necessary for the units to be included in the investigation; one then finds a sample that matches these criteria" (Merriam, 1988, p. 48).

The criteria list for selection of exemplary school library media specialists was created after discussing possible criteria with practicing school library media specialists. The exemplary school library media specialists were to be: (a) in the position of school library media specialist for at least five years, (b) held in high regard by their peers, (c) involved in numerous self-initiated professional development activities, (d) advocates for the use of multicultural literature, (e) active members of professional organizations, and (f) active in curriculum and other school-based committees. I also decided that because the study examined the aspects of multiculturalism, at least two of the participants in the study should be from a culture other than the dominant culture.

Goetz and LeCompte (1984) suggested that this type of selection by criteria is called, ideal-typical-bellwether-case selection. This occurs when the researcher "develops a profile of an instance that would be the best, most efficient, most effective, or most desirable of some population and then finds a real-world case that most closely matches the profile" (p. 82).

With the participant criteria stated, I then asked professors in school library media and children's literature areas, and other school library media specialists to recommend individuals who they believed met the stated criteria.
Role of the Researcher

In qualitative inquiry, the researcher is the human instrument which observes and records the data of the study. Erickson (1986) suggested that the task of a case study researcher is to “uncover the different layers of universality and particularity that are confronted in the specific case at hand — what is broadly universal, what generalizes to other similar situations, what is unique to the given instance” (p. 130).

I chose the role of participant as observer. In this role, I was able to observe the participants in context. Denzin (1989) stated, “a participant as observer makes her presence as an investigator known and attempts to form a series of relationships with the subjects such that they serve as both respondents and informants” (p. 163). Although I made my presence known, I tried to be a noninterventionist, attempting to see what would have happened had I not been there.

“Standard qualitative designs call for the persons most responsible for interpretations to be in the field, making observations, exercising subjective judgment, analyzing and synthesizing, all the while realizing their own consciousness” (Stake, 1995, p. 41). In qualitative methodology, the researcher ultimately offers a personal view of the conducted research. Stake (1995) suggested that even “observational interpretation will be shaped by the mood, the experience, the intention of the researcher” (p. 95).

Merriam (1988) suggested that the researcher be sensitive to the biases inherent in case study research, biases such as one’s worldview, one’s values, one’s perspective. As a teacher and a school library media specialist, I knew I would filter the events and situations that took place through a lens which would influence my interpretation of the study. I understood the language of the school library media specialists and many of the practices endemic to the profession. I also knew that I was an advocate for the school library media specialist as a provider of professional development opportunities.
for the teachers they served. In addition, I believed in the importance of implementing multicultural literature into the curriculum. By recognizing these biases and knowing that I would be subjective in the way I chose to design the study and interpret it, I conducted the study while incorporating safeguard procedures such as triangulation, member checks, peer debriefing, prolonged engagement, and persistent observation to establish trustworthiness (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). In addition, I chose to present this study in a language that is easily understood by practitioners, as free as possible from research terminology which might discourage the teacher or school library media specialist from reading the document.

Data Sources and Organization of Study

Field observation, interview, and document analysis were the means of data collection for this study. Thick description was produced from these sources which allowed for the construction of interpretation. Continuous analysis of the data informed and shaped the study.

Participant Observation

Participant observation is a way to collect data on the activities taking place at the setting, the actions of the participants, and the intentions underlying the actions from the perspective of the people being observed (Patton, 1990). Glesne and Peshkin (1992) suggested that participant observation is a way to “learn firsthand how the actions of your others correspond to their words...” (p. 39). By gaining personal knowledge of the context and observing the actions and interactions of the participants, the researcher can develop an insider’s perspective which assists in interpretation.

Data collection, through the use of field notes, began with participant observations of the daily routines of the school library media specialists in the school.
library media center. Special events, such as Book Week programs, book sales, and author visits conducted by the school library media specialists were also observed and recorded. My observations guided my inquiry and often interview questions which were connected to known behavior developed from these observations. Participant observations also occurred during informal discussions with the school library media specialists.

Rapport building took place as the school library media specialists and I talked about the concerns and duties of the school library media profession. Rapport building is important during this type of data collection so the participants will be comfortable about disclosing their beliefs and feelings to the researcher. One of the participants, Diane, and I had been co-workers and friends prior to this study. We had developed rapport and trust in our earlier roles, thus I believed that Diane’s comments to me from the outset were more candid than those of the other participants who I got to know as the study progressed.

Denzin (1989) considered rapport to be “frequently employed to describe the degree to which interviewers and the respondents are able to actually take one another’s role” (p. 118). The fact that I shared an interest in multicultural literature with the participants and was, like each of them, a school library media specialist by profession, assisted in rapport building for this study. On several occasions, the participants saw me outside of my role as researcher when we met and talked informally at the local and state library media and/or children’s literature conferences or at local bookstores.

Scheduled observations took place eight times at each of the four schools over a two year period, from Spring 1993 to Spring 1995. Questions relating to what had been observed were often asked directly after the observations. Answers to these questions were captured through field notes.
Interviews

Interviews are used to record those events which are important in developing understanding related to a study but have taken place before the study has been initiated. Interviews are also conducted to find out things we cannot directly observe. Patton (1980) stated, "...We cannot observe how people have organized the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world — we have to ask people questions about those things. The purpose of interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter into the other person’s perspective" (p. 196).

Three interviews were conducted of each school library media specialist over a two year time span. The first interviews were conducted early in the study, during Spring 1993. The answers from the questions posed at this time (and the observations which took place between the time of the first and second interviews) helped me develop the questions for the next interviews. The second interviews were conducted early in 1994. The transcripts of these interviews were presented to the school library media specialists for “member checking,” which is a practice in attempting to guard for the accuracy of the data. A final interview was conducted during early Spring 1995 before the data was analyzed. After the analysis was written, the school library media specialists again were asked to read the analysis related to them for accuracy. They were asked to respond to the analysis. This response is presented in the epilogue section of this study.

The questions for the interviews were designed as open-ended questions with the hope that the participants would interpret the questions as they saw fit and answer them in their own terms.

Interviews of teachers, students, and principals at each research site were conducted in the same fashion, using open-ended questions, but at only one time during the study, Spring 1994. Three teachers from each school were selected from teachers who were available at lunch time or at recess or during a free period away from the
classroom on the day I was visiting the school to observe the school library media specialists. Students were interviewed at random at lunch time or at recess or during study hall. The answers to the interview questions were used to support my observations and as comparative information to confirm or bring into question the school library media specialists’ perceptions of actions and interactions described in the study.

Documents

Glesne and Peshkin (1992) stated that “documents corroborate your observations and interviews and thus make your findings more trustworthy.... [They] provide both historical and contextual dimensions...” (pp. 53-54). Documents in the form of bibliographies, newsletters, district policies, and annual reports were collected and examined throughout the study.

Analysis of Data

Bogdan and Biklen (1992) referred to data analysis as “the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, field notes, and other materials that you accumulate to increase your own understanding of them and to enable you to present what you have discovered to others” (p. 153). Glesne and Peshkin (1992) stated that “data analysis involves organizing what you have seen, heard, and read so that you can make sense of what you have learned” (p. 127). Data were collected and analyzed throughout the duration of this study. After each observation or interview, I read field notes or listened to audiotapes of the interviews and recorded patterns or themes that surfaced.

The data were analyzed as individual case studies and as cross-cases. Merriam (1988) suggested that “each case in a cross-case analysis is first treated as a
comprehensive case in and of itself” (p. 154). The individual cases were then examined as a whole. Themes were compared for similarities and differences. An interpretation was developed based on evidence from all four cases studied.

**Trustworthiness**

To assure rigor in qualitative methodology, the concept of “trustworthiness” has been presented (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). The criteria for trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability parallel the quantitative criteria of reliability, and internal and external validity.

**Establishing Credibility**

To guard against personal bias and the application of predisposed theories, the researcher validates his or her findings by establishing credibility through several strategies (Patton, 1990). Triangulation of multiple sources, long-term observations at the research sites, peer examination, and member checks were used for this purpose in this study.

**Triangulation**

Triangulation is the comparison of various means of data collection from multiple sources (Denzin, 1979). This technique is used to check for consistency and differences in data. I was able to compare the findings of this study through observation field notes, interview transcripts, and documents.

**Long-term Observations**

The two years in which this study was conducted allowed me to observe at length in the research setting and to build rapport and trust with the participants.
Peer Debriefing

Peer debriefing is a process where individuals not connected to the study examine the methodology, data, and findings, and pose questions to the researcher which will assist in making the study more credible. “The task of the debriefer is to be sure that the investigator is as fully aware of his or her posture and process as possible... The inquirer’s biases are probed, meanings explored, the basis for interpretations clarified” (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, p. 308).

Throughout the study I was verifying and validating my data and interpretations by presenting my findings to two colleagues who were familiar with my study from the outset. These individuals scrutinized my interview questions and interpretations of data as we discussed aspects and implications of the inquiry. Although these colleagues knew the library media profession and were familiar with some of the body of multicultural literature, they offered unbiased suggestions relating to the data and analysis.

Member Checks

Merriam (1988) stated that member checking is the practice of “taking data and interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking them if the results are plausible” (p. 169). Transcripts and analysis were shared with the participants throughout this study. At the end of the study the final analysis was given to each participant. After the participant had read the analysis, I asked her to respond to it. The epilogue section is included to present these responses.

Transferability

Transferability in qualitative methodology is the parallel to external validity or generalizability in quantitative methodology. A case study is not conducted with
replication in mind. Instead, “one selects a case study approach because one wishes to understand the particular in depth, not because one wants to know what is generally true of the many” (Merriam, 1988, p. 173). Reader or user generalizability is more appropriate for case study research. The reader decides what within the findings will best apply to other situations. Wilson (1979) suggested that “generalizability [transferability] is ultimately related to what the reader is trying to learn from the case study” (p. 454).

Transferability is established through thick description “so that anyone else interested in transferability has a base of information appropriate to the judgment” (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, p. 124-125).

Merriam (1988) suggested that it is also important to explain how typical the case participants, contexts and situations are in comparison with others, so that readers can make comparisons with their own situations. I have described the contexts and individuals in the study and have stated that the individuals are exemplary school library media specialists which place them in a category above typical.

**Dependability and Confirmability**

Dependability and confirmability in qualitative methodology are parallel to reliability and objectivity in quantitative methodology. Merriam (1988) suggested that readers of case study research should think about the dependability or consistency of the results. She stated, “rather than demanding that outsiders get the same results, one wishes outsiders to concur that, given the data collected, the results make sense - they are consistent and dependable” (p. 172). Dependability can be ensured by the researcher stating his or her position and through triangulation of data. Both of these techniques were incorporated in the study.

Dependability and confirmability also can be established through an audit trail, a description of the procedure followed in conducting the study. Materials for an audit:
field notes, transcribed interviews, documents and descriptions of categories were preserved for undertaking an audit trail.

Summary of Chapter

Chapter 3 provided a rationale for using qualitative methodology for this study and described the case study method of inquiry. The method of selection, sources of data and analysis followed. Chapter 4 is a presentation of the themes that emerged from the data and an analysis of those findings.
The purpose of this study was to investigate how four exemplary school library media specialists view their profession, how they see themselves as library media specialists and educators, and how these beliefs have influenced their incorporation of multicultural literature into the curriculum.

This chapter opens with an introduction to the participants and is followed by four sections relating to the major research questions of this study. The first section examines the different roles each plays in the position of school library media specialist. The second section examines the contextual factors that affect these roles. The school library media specialist’s participation in professional development is the focus of section three, while section four presents their ideas and concerns about multiculturalism, in particular with respect to children’s literature.

Introducing the Participants

Diane

"This is the hardest one - and I need help." A teacher rushes into the school library media specialist’s office holding the book *Masai and I* (by Virginia L. Kroll). Diane, the school library media specialist, had pulled a number of books and materials
from the center's collection several days ago after talking with the teacher about a proposed program she was planning as a culminating activity for a unit on Africa.

Without hesitation Diane says, "Ok, one group can be the 'I' and the other the 'Masai.' You can get all these different voices, but make it consistent. I bet they'll learn it in no time." Diane knows that the book is written as a comparison of two cultures. She suggests that the sections describing each culture be read alternately by two groups of students, each taking the voice of either a member of the Masai culture or an African-American.

The teacher asks what they'd need for props. Diane gives the teacher a few ideas and adds, "I'll script it for you. Give me tomorrow to do the script on it. What time should I come down to your room?"

Interestingly, several months after I observed this exchange I asked the teacher about the unit. She talked about the success of the program but never mentioned Diane's help in pulling it together until I reminded her of Diane's part. This is fairly common. The school library media specialists' work often goes unnoticed, especially when they play the role of instructional consultant, as Diane was doing here.

Diane knows literature and has a keen sense of the way literature can be extended through other forms of expression: plays, choral readings, songs, writing, posters, etc. Her knowledge of books and their authors is evident in the displays she has placed around the school library media center. Quite often an author's books are featured on top of the bookshelves that are first seen as you enter the center. Information about the author is presented in various forms: students' drawings, information sheets, students' writing.

Diane has been a children's public librarian, a classroom teacher, a children's services consultant for the state library system, and for 9 years, a school library media
specialist. For the last 7 years she has worked in this alternative elementary school, a literature-based school in an affluent suburb of a large Midwestern city. During the planning stages for Henderson Elementary, Diane was invited to apply for the school library media specialist position because the administration knew of her expertise in literature and her background in libraries. Diane’s first task at Henderson was to design the facility that now houses the school library media center.

The media center is on the first floor at the west end of the building and opens onto a small, tree-shaded flower garden. The room often is filled with light from the many windows along one side of the building. In one corner by the door to the garden is an area often used for the classes which the school library media specialist conducts. Shelves of picture books open onto the area, which contains several floor cushions and a large ficus tree. Next to the tree sits a very large toy bear. When asked, “What do you like about the library media center?” one child replied, “I like how she makes us comfortable and how she makes us feel at home. She has a carpet in here, she has cushions, she has a bear that kids can sit on and she makes it feel like home.” The school library media center is an inviting place.

Decorating one wall of the center are four large posters with the word “Peace” in various languages. Stuffed animal book characters sit on the tops of the bookshelves just below these posters. On another wall, a handmade fairy tale quilt hangs high above the bookshelves. There are displays of books on the tops of the low bookcases which are located throughout the room. Two rotating racks of paperback books stand near the entrance to the center and the circulation desk. During the mornings Diane’s half-time aide is often seen receiving returned books or checking out recently selected books to children from this desk. Opposite the circulation desk are shelves dedicated to the magazines and journals, some for the students, some for the teachers, that are received monthly.
Behind the circulation desk is the processing room which houses the equipment needed to run the school library media center. Off of this room is the library media specialist’s office. On the door is a student-drawn cut-out picture of Diane.

Students move freely in and out of the media center, dropping off books, using the computer, viewing sound filmstrips, looking up information in the reference section, or huddling in a small group to watch a video in the audiovisual room near the reference section. The school library media specialist has instituted a flexible schedule allowing students to work individually or in small groups on their own projects throughout the day, but still accommodating formal classes when the need arises.

Diane knows all the students in this school of 550 and calls them by name as they enter the center or ask for her help. Besides working with students in groups to introduce them to new books or teach them information skills or help them develop their critical thinking skills, Diane works with individuals in guiding their reading growth. One student commented, “I thought my favorite type of book was fantasy, and I really didn’t like historical fiction, but she showed me some books that she thought I’d like even though I didn’t like historical fiction, and it turned out that I did like them.”

Diane is particularly knowledgeable about the center’s collection of 10,000 books and audiovisual materials and can easily retrieve items from the collection for students and teachers. This is evidenced by one student’s comment, “I ask her something, and zip, she knows where it is!” A teacher remarked, “Sometimes I see her in the hall and say, ‘Do you know about this?’ and within minutes sometimes she is at my room with a handful of books. It’s pretty incredible.”

Teachers often turn to Diane because of her knowledge of books. Diane’s interest in library work began in high school when she volunteered as a student assistant in the school library. Diane not only has an A.B. in English with a minor in Education and a
Master's of Library Science, but also a PhD. in Education with emphasis in children's literature, reading and language arts. Diane thinks her education gives her credibility with her teachers and principal. The teachers and principal use her services because they recognize that she has a vast knowledge of literature and is able to easily locate the materials and information they need. They also know that if she can't find what they need, she usually can refer them to someone who can.

Diane also keeps her school abreast of what is happening in the district. She is a member of a variety of committees — the professional development committee, the career education committee, and the North Central evaluation committee. One teacher stated, "She's very involved throughout the district, she's on lots of committees. She comes back and shares the information with us."

This is one way Diane develops herself professionally. She also involves herself with state and national organizations. She presents programs at state and national conferences and also serves on the governing boards and committees of professional organizations. She is presently the Central Region Director for the state library media association and is on the International Relations Committee of the American Library Association.

The school library media specialist and the teachers and staff at Henderson Elementary School are sensitive to the need for multicultural awareness among their students. As a 99% white student population, students at Henderson seldom have the opportunity to interact with individuals from diverse backgrounds. Several of the district's belief statements within the official mission policy address this concern for students to be aware and sensitive to individuals of all cultures. The belief statements pertaining to diversity are as follows:

(a.) It is essential to prepare individuals to live in a rapidly changing society...,  
(b.) Understanding of and respect for diversity are essential for the well-being of society...,
(c.) We are part of an increasingly interdependent global community..., and
(d.) It is essential that schools promote responsible citizenship.

Diane chooses to respond to these rather vague statements interspersed throughout
the district’s mission policy by using the literature and materials in the school library
media center to promote awareness and understanding.

**Tere**

The fifth-grade boys and girls rush into the school library media center and scurry
to the tables by the shelves that hold the fiction collection. Tere, the school library
media specialist, comes into the area with a large box of cloth pieces and places it
among the packages of needles and loose spools of thread, box of binding, bottles of
glue, and pieces of muslin with penciled sketches drawn on them. The table is covered
with materials for the students’ art project, which is an extension of a book Tere has
recently read to the students. She turns to the children and says, “All right class, here
are the *arpilleras* that you started last week. Today we have some colorful cloth and
the needles and thread to continue our project.” The word *arpilleras* rolls off Tere’s
tongue. Tere is a native of Puerto Rico and has been living in the continental United
States for over thirty years.

This activity is an extension of the book, *Tonight is Carnaval* (by Arthur Dorros)
which describes a family preparing for Carnaval, the event celebrated by the people of
the Andes during the three days and nights just before Lent. The book is illustrated
with *arpilleras*, pictures made of small pieces of sewn cloth which depict the events of
everyday life of the people of the Andes. The students are attempting to make their
own *arpilleras*, depicting an event in their lives.

The school library media specialist has introduced the culture of the Peruvian and
Bolivian Incas as her contribution to the fifth-grade unit on explorers. The school
library media specialist is serving in her role as teacher. She holds class for this fifth grade group once a week at the time designated for it.

Tere is the school library media specialist at Lincoln Elementary School, which has a population of 489 students in its K-6 classes. Lincoln is a traditional elementary school in a suburb of a large Midwestern city. Situated in a well-established neighborhood of expensive homes, Lincoln Elementary serves children from a 94% white, generally upper middle-class population.

Tere is always quick to greet the students, teachers, and visitors to the school library media center with a cheerful welcome. She commends students for their book selections and praises them for returning books as she or one of her many volunteers checks in or out books they’ve chosen from the center’s collection of 15,075 items. Tere has no paid support staff, so she must depend on parent volunteers to help her with some of the tasks of her profession.

The school library media center is situated in the very center of the school building. Low bookcases form two of the walls, leaving the center open to the adjacent corridors and partitioned rooms of various sizes. One side of the facility houses study carrels and audiovisual equipment set up for listening and viewing. The other side has been designed as a reading area with original children’s book illustrations showcased on the walls. Students’ artwork is also displayed in this area and throughout the center.

Samples of writings, posters and other drawings by students about children’s author Patricia Polacco’s books decorate the center. Mrs. Polacco is this year’s visiting children’s book author/illustrator, and the students have prepared for her visit with a variety of book responses and extensions. Patricia Polacco’s many books are displayed on top of the bookshelves throughout the center.

When Mrs. Polacco comes to Lincoln Elementary School, she will be signing books for children in the reading area of the school library media center. Before Mrs.
Polacco's visit, the students will be involved in a bookmark design contest which the school library media specialist has organized. The winning bookmark will be signed by Mrs. Polacco and then duplicated so each student will receive a bookmark autographed by the author/illustrator. Decorating the center with the students' work and conducting the bookmark contest are just a few things that Tere does to prepare for the author visit.

Tere has been a school library media specialist at Lincoln Elementary School for seven years. She had been a library media specialist at three other schools in other states for twelve years before coming to Lincoln. Although Tere's B.S. degree is in Government and Sociology, the experience of working in a college library during the summers of her undergraduate years prompted her to continue in school and get an MLS degree. Volunteer work in a school library after her children were born, courses in education and her desire to work with children influenced Tere to pursue a career as a school library media specialist. Even though Tere does not hold a degree in education, she regularly takes education courses and attends conferences and workshops related to various aspects of education.

Tere is always reading reviews of new children's books and materials and trying to "keep current" with the literature and materials that have been deemed appropriate and effective for school and classroom reference, themes, and units. Tere works hard to keep her teachers informed about these materials and the books and materials that are available in the school library media center.

And Tere is successful in promoting the materials in the center. One teacher commented, "She tries to bring up things in the staff meetings when we are all together to make us more aware." Another teacher responded, "She'll ask us if we need things. If she knows we are doing a particular unit, she'll bring down things that we don't even know are there."
Tere knows the curriculum of the school and keeps it in mind as she orders materials for the collection. A teacher commented,

The key is in her knowing the curriculum... because she is able to keep her eye open for things that she knows will plug into it. It's hard for us to know the curriculum for one grade, but gosh, she has to know seven different curriculums from K through 6 and be aware of what will fit in.

The school library media specialist also makes learning exciting for the students. Tere assists them in their reading choices and expands on the areas which the classroom teachers are emphasizing at the moment. One student said, “I like how she gets people to read. She has different tricky ways to get people to read.” Another student commented, “I like how she makes learning fun, like the award books. She didn’t tell us there was a pizza party until all of us had read some of the award books.” Tere rewarded her students by ordering pizzas for everyone to celebrate their achievement of reading at least one of the Newbery Award books.

In addition to knowing the school curriculum, Tere tries to stay familiar with the district’s ever-evolving mission. She is in close communication with the other school library media specialists in the district and works with them on developing district-wide programs. She also was instrumental in developing the philosophy of the district’s multicultural committee. The committee initiated an ongoing writing project which commemorates the Martin Luther King anniversary. Although she no longer sits on the committee, she does a lot with multicultural activities. For example, recently she was involved with a school-based group that organized a multicultural “Days of Creation” event with visiting artists and community members participating to educate students and staff about various cultures. She is also responsible for the school's author visits, which often introduce the students and teachers to authors/illustrators who publish books on multicultural topics and themes.
Tere feels strongly that her school community should be introduced to as many different cultures as possible in relation to the curriculum they study. When asked, “Are you aware of multicultural books, materials, and displays when you enter the media center?” a teacher replied,

There are constant displays and not just during Black History Month or this or that. It seems to be that if she is doing fairy tale books then there is a cultural thing behind her. A lot of times she takes the book jackets off and saves them for display and so maybe it is sports, but she has an array of Jackie Robinson and this person and that person, so there are differences and she tries to show those differences through the displays and a lot of times the books will be displayed too. That’s what draws the little ones. We always see books on top of the shelves.

Asked if the school library media specialist ever shows students literature or materials about people from other cultures, one student replied, “Yeah, we did something about that so we are aware, like African folktales. She’s making us look past our own cultures and stuff and we are learning more about other ones.”

Tere’s school encourages multicultural awareness. Within the school’s learner outcomes developed in 1992 is the goal “I am becoming a culturally aware person.” The district’s school library media program has expanded their learner outcome statements to include the following.

I am aware and appreciative of diverse cultures through my exposure to literature and factual information. I respect an author’s ability to provide a view of various cultures, not necessarily their own.

I appreciate how literature contributes to and preserves the diverse cultural heritage of our nation. Through being well-read and informed, I understand the responsibility of being a good citizen. I also value the cultural diversity of other countries and people. I use my ability as a discriminating person to appreciate my community and the larger community - my country.

There are also district-wide efforts to make multiculturalism a part of the everyday program of all the schools. The district employs a multicultural education coordinator, and a formal document for systemic development for cultural diversity is in place. The district subscribes to the belief that,
in this diverse world, there is a need for education which is multicultural in nature. Students need to be aware of the elements that form diverse cultures and perspectives, including their own. At all levels, students should have on-going opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes concerning race, cultural-ethnic backgrounds, gender, age, religion, handicap and other human differences. ([School] Multicultural Plan for Cultural Diversity and Systematic Districtwide Development for the 21st Century, 1994)

Thama

Thama adjusts her earpiece, shuffles a few papers, and directs her attention toward the camera. She takes her cue and begins,

Hello, my name is Thama ______, I'm the library media specialist at [King] Middle School and this is Joyce _______, a multicultural specialist with [Metropolitan] Public Schools and we'd like to welcome you to the telecourse, "Expanding Horizons for K-8 Students Through Multicultural Literature." The first session will present a brief history of multicultural literature and provide a working definition of the term "multicultural." It will center and focus on American Indians. The second session will be looking at Asian Americans and Latinos and the discussion will be involving poetry, folklore, and some of the arts involved in these cultures. And, finally, the third session...

Thama is a co-presenter for a district-wide mini-course to acquaint teachers with various aspects of multicultural literature. She was asked to moderate the course because she is the school library media specialist at King Middle School, an alternative school which focuses on foreign languages and international studies. She is working in her role as instructional consultant and professional development specialist.

Thama has been a school library media specialist for eight years. Eight years ago the middle school curriculum at King was converted to one that emphasizes various languages, cultures and global issues. Although the building was not brand new, the idea was, and the teachers and staff were hired with this new mission in mind. Thama was asked to apply for the school library media specialist position even though she was five months short of receiving her library media certification.
Thama’s master’s degree in comparative literature with an emphasis in African/African-American literature, her certificates in ESL and French, her bachelor’s degree in English, her experience teaching French, language survey, and English for 2 years in a middle school setting, and her library media training made her a desirable candidate for this new position. Thama also had spent two years in the Peace Corps in Niger, West Africa teaching English, and before she became a school teacher, she worked for four years in several bookstores in the state.

Thama had a varied background and was asked to use her expertise in language, literature, and library media to reconceptualize and develop the school library media center’s collection with an emphasis on materials that would support a languages and international studies curriculum.

The school library media center at King Middle School, which houses 20,880 items, is a very large tri-level facility with each level open to the previous level. The audiovisual presentation room is on the first level and can be used for large group meetings. The area is easily darkened because there are no windows in the entire facility, situated in the center of the school building.

Large tables surrounded by chairs fill the second level of the school library media center, the largest room of the center and the one where most patrons enter. Bookshelves which house the fiction collection are located along the walls of this level. Thama’s half-time aide often is seen at one of these bookshelves reshelving books or assisting students in their search for a particular title. On top of the shelves are large triptych displays of endangered animals from around the world produced by the students at King Middle School.

The third floor of the center, a much smaller space opening onto the second level much like a loft, contains the two reference areas, large storage area, and the library media specialist’s office. Much of the center’s activity occurs in this area.
The reference areas are decorated with informational posters, a display case containing artifacts from around the world, and a bulletin board where flags from a variety of countries are hung. The half-wall which opens to the second level holds the magazine shelves filled with magazines such as *Beijing Review*, *Paris Match*, *Jeune Afrique*, and *Bunte*.

Adjacent to this area is a larger reference room where the many reference books are housed. Tables and chairs, two copy machines, and a computer help fill this area.

Students work in groups in the magazine areas. One or more students wander up to the third level to check for information in a reference book. Other students rush to the computer to get information from the Middle Search program or X-PRESS.

If group work gets particularly noisy, Thama often is seen going over to the students and asking them what they are working on. On one particular day, Thama speaks to a cluster of girls who are tittering over something other than an assignment. Among protests, she asks several of the girls to leave the center. A few stay to use the reference materials. Thama is firm with the middle schoolers but one can sense that the students like her and she likes them.

As Thama turns away from the students, a student helper is waiting to ask about her next task. Thama directs the helper to her next assignment in French. Thama knows her helper is in the French Immersion class and takes advantage of her knowledge of French. As the helper starts to work, a teacher walks in to check on his students, asking Thama several quick questions.

If Thama is not guiding individual students to information, answering questions, or working with teachers, she may be supervising an on-site book sale, helping a teacher set up for an audiovisual presentation, conducting a book talk, showing students and teachers how to use a computer program, or doing one of the many administrative tasks she has to do. She has 665 students to serve and only one half-time aide, so her time is precious and her duties many.
The curriculum at King Middle School focuses not only on cultures from around the world, but also on the various cultures here in the United States. The population of the middle school is 63% non-white. There are programs in French Immersion, Spanish Immersion, and other courses in German, Chinese, Swahili, and Japanese. The students direct their attention to the idea of interdependence and examine the themes of culture, choices, and change. Thama is responsible for materials that support all of the programs at the school. She purchases a wide variety of reference materials and tries to find a balance of multicultural titles by authors of various cultures to add to the fiction, biography, and history collections.

An African-American, herself, Thama admits she is most familiar with African-American authors. Through recent courses in adolescent literature, popular culture, and global education at the local university, she is broadening her knowledge about Asian-American and Latino authors and novels.

Thama often takes part in programs at the school that are related to African heritage. She has a first-hand knowledge of life in West Africa, experienced during 1976-1978 as a Peace Corps volunteer. She taught an African Studies course after school during her first year at King Middle School.

Thama organized the multicultural luncheon for teachers that was held last year at the school. She encouraged teachers to use various television programs on Black History during the school’s African Awareness Week. Thama also contacted vendors of African artifacts and books and engaged them to exhibit and sell their merchandise in the library media center throughout that week. One teacher commented about Thama’s involvement,

She developed a multicultural luncheon that went along with the multicultural unit she presented and it was really fun. They presented recipes and you could sign up for what you wanted to make and then they gave you the recipe and you could make it and then we had a teachers’
luncheon. You could dress up from a different culture, it added to camaraderie plus learning.

The current Region One representative for the state's TESOL board, Thama tries to involve herself in professional organizations at the local and state levels. She has presented programs for the state foreign language association on language immersion techniques and the state library media association on creating a multicultural middle school library. She has received grants for travel and study and for program development. During the summer of 1992 Thama received a fellowship to Harvard University to study teaching and listening techniques using videotape.

She is seen as an instructional consultant on multicultural materials, a colleague with knowledge of audiovisual utilization, and a librarian who is able to help teachers and students find and use information. One teacher stated,

Our media specialist goes far beyond her duties. Not only does she make the kids knowledgeable about the library, the books and materials, but she also works with them on other extra-curricular things. In the past I've seen just a librarian in a library doing regular routine, but I see our media specialist as another person, another tool to educate all the students.

Thama keeps the school's mission in mind whenever she designs units or orders materials for the school library media center. The district encourages multiculturalism through their district-wide policy. King Middle School promotes awareness and understanding by having as its foundation the idea of interdependence which is explained in the mission statement as follows:

We acknowledge that the countries of the world are becoming increasingly interdependent. To prepare for this interdependence we seek to develop thoughtful, creative, caring adults able to function effectively as individuals and citizens. Our students need to develop awareness and understanding of various global issues, cultures, and languages. We at [King Middle School] seek to provide students with the background for developing international perspectives as their passports to the future. (Passport to the Future)
Karen

The classroom lights dim. The eighth-grade students become quiet as the school library media specialist rises from a chair in front of the room with an open book, The Terrible Things: An Allegory of the Holocaust (by Eve Bunting), in hand. Music is heard in the background as she begins to slowly, quietly, but passionately read,

The clearing in the woods was home to the small forest creatures, the birds and the squirrels shared the trees, the rabbits and the porcupines shared the shade beneath the trees, and the frogs and the fish shared the cool brown waters of the forest pond. They were content, (pause) until the Terrible Things came...

Images of the Holocaust appear from slides projected behind her. The students listen and watch in silence.

This is the beginning of a nine week unit on the Holocaust. The school library media specialist is working collaboratively with the language arts teacher, who, at the moment, is in charge of the slide projector and tape recorder — equipment that plays an important role in setting the mood and place for this unit.

The school library media specialist is serving in her role as teacher.

Karen is an exemplary school library media specialist. She has been a school library media specialist for 24 years, and has worked in this middle school in a small city in the Midwest for 22 years. Karen has designed the school library media center facility at Greenwood Middle School as well as the school library media program. She is fortunate to have a large facility to house the collection of 30,000 items and accommodate the students who use them.

This facility, situated in the very center of the school building, is a hub of activity. Displays are located throughout the large room in places where the students will take notice, pause, and examine them. Often the school library media specialist designs and creates a theme display. On the “kick-off” day of the various theme displays, the
school library media specialist and her two full-time aides often dress in clothing that echoes the theme. For example, when baseball was the theme, baseball shirts and caps were worn. If the students didn’t notice the theme display and books related to it on their own, the costumes alerted them to it.

Karen often has materials around her displays to make them interactive. Not only are there books to browse, but there are poems to read and audiotapes to listen to.

Magazines and periodicals line the foyer of the center. Above the magazine racks are bulletin boards displaying national and local current events and issues specific to Greenwood Middle School. They are colorful and full of information of interest to the students and teachers.

Whenever you walk into Karen’s school library media center, you know you will find something going on. Students are searching the shelves, asking questions of the staff, accessing information on the computers, listening to audiotapes, viewing a videotape, or reading. Girls and boys are seen sitting together working on projects or talking among themselves. At times there’s a bit of a tension from the teasing among the group members that is typical of the middle school atmosphere. At times the students forget their focus, which is also typical of the middle school atmosphere. The students freely talk among themselves without disturbing the other students at work. When there is a disruption, the personnel quickly curtail the problem. But the students are at the center for a purpose and are on task.

Students go in and out of the school library media center throughout the day. There are no set information skills classes, except during the fall term for introductory lessons presented to incoming 6th-grade students. Teachers are free to schedule special presentations and assistance with lessons and projects. Often the room with a portable divider (the “annex”) adjacent to the center is used for special group work. Karen also uses the annex to display students’ work or posters and information on particular authors and illustrators when she gives an introduction for an author study. Karen uses
commercially produced materials for these presentations, as well as materials she has collected herself, if she has had the opportunity to meet the authors or illustrators at conferences or bookstore book signings she has attended. She makes it a point to meet authors whenever she can so she will be able to bring back first-hand information to her teachers and students.

Karen has become well known over the years in her area of the state as someone who has a vast knowledge of literature and instructional materials and knows how to integrate them into the curriculum. Because of her knowledge and because she enjoys sharing her knowledge, Karen is sought after by teachers for advice when they are planning their lessons or for ideas for possible units.

One of Karen's teachers boasted about Karen's knowledge of books and how this knowledge assisted the teacher with a conference presentation she was to give. She stated,

She knows books better than anybody.... I came to her a couple of months ago, I was doing a presentation on reflection for a conference, and I told her what I was doing and that I had to kind of change the slant a little. And she just went to a box and pulled out this beautiful book that was just perfect for what I was doing. I told her I needed a book that was a good introduction on reflection, and she got me this book of short stories that were all reflective stories, they were like fables. I tell her what I'm looking for and she just knows where it is, she knows her books, fiction, nonfiction, teacher materials. She really works hard at getting a good library of teacher resources for us.

Because of this knowledge and her dedication to teaching and service, Karen was voted her district's 1990 Teacher of the Year.

Karen is heavily involved in local, state and national professional organizations. She often leads presentations with her teachers about the many programs they have developed and implemented at Greenwood Middle School at the yearly conferences of these organizations.
During the 1993-1994 school year, Karen and one of Greenwood's science teachers were selected by the American Institute of Metallurgic Science to travel to Boston and work as part of a team for two weeks during the summer to design interdisciplinary units of study aimed at middle school students. In Boston, they teamed with scientists and engineers and teachers from across the country to conceptualize a program that would be of interest to middle schoolers and that would fit into the middle school curriculum. Karen and the science teacher then brought the program to their school and spent the autumn term field testing the effectiveness of it with the students at Greenwood.

This example illustrates that Karen does not limit her involvement in her school to library media related activities. She is active on many school committees, attending each department committee meeting, serving as chairperson of the language arts committee, and being a member of the building design committee. Locally, she was the charter president of the county reading association and is now its returning president. Karen also writes articles for professional journals and chapters for books on the role of the library media specialist and on integration of literature across the curriculum. With all this committee and professional organization work, Karen still finds time to volunteer at her two sons' swim competitions.

Karen's interest in library work began in junior high school when she was a student aide in the school library. This work continued through high school, so it was natural that when she was choosing majors in college that she decided to add library science to her history and political science major. Two weeks after receiving her B.S. in Education, she began an MLS degree with emphasis on law libraries. During her master's program, she worked in the university's educational media center library and again realized how much she enjoyed working in that type of facility. Karen chose to change her area of emphasis to educational librarianship and took additional coursework in educational curriculum.

104
Upon graduation, Karen saw a school library media position advertised in Colorado. Because she wanted to see a different part of the country from the Midwest, she took the position and stayed in Colorado for two years. Twenty four years later she is still working as a school library media specialist. She explains that her longevity (22 years) in her position at Greenwood and her track record working with the teachers has given her credibility and has helped develop a trusting relationship with her colleagues.

Indeed, teachers seem to be comfortable working with Karen. They often are seen consulting with her on various ideas for the units they are planning. She is able to rattle off book title suggestions as if they were multiplication facts. Karen knows literature and can, effortlessly it seems, make connections between different pieces of literature and the audiovisual materials she has in her school library media center. This knowledge and talent endears Karen to the various teachers she works with on developing units. Her principal also appreciates Karen’s efforts and her presence in the school library media center, and when commenting on her work with students and staff exclaimed, “Sometimes I think I’ve died and gone to heaven.”

Karen is also quite familiar with multicultural literature. Because her first position was in a Hispanic community in Colorado, she deliberately searched out Hispanic literature that favorably depicted the culture. Karen also looked for books that would depict cross-cultural relationships. She stated, “In that particular community there were lots of problems between the Blacks and the Hispanics, so I was looking for positive pictures in literature to put in the library to show good relationships.”

Karen continues to collect multicultural titles for her school library media center. In Colorado, Karen took it upon herself to find appropriate literature out of concern for the children from various cultures in her school. Now, she is required to include multicultural titles in the collection. During the 1990-1991 school year, the school district of which Greenwood Middle School is a part was sanctioned by the NAACP and investigated for discrimination by the Office of Civil Rights of the U.S. Department
of Education. Since that time, all district schools have been required to include "goals and activities to promote interracial and multicultural understanding" in their school (Intercultural Affairs Advisory Committee report, 1991). The district was required to institutionalize a multicultural curriculum at all levels, provide training in multicultural awareness for their staff, and formulate mission statements for the school and the community which address issues of diversity.

Karen was serving on the Schools for Effective Change Committee when it was charged with the task of developing this statement for the schools. The committee recommended an emphasis on awareness and dialogue and developed a mission statement which reads, "Create an environment that encourages openness and respect for different ethnic groups and cultures at all grade levels" (Intercultural Affairs Advisory Committee report, 1991, p. 30).

Karen I would have to say that as a result of the commitment I made when the district was sanctioned by the NAACP for discrimination, I do try harder to find multicultural materials. I'm conscientiously aware of it [now]. Maybe before [the sanctions] I thought to do that. It wasn't something that I was avoiding or ignoring, but now I make a very concerted effort when I look at a book display. When I put together an author board I try to get as many cultures represented as possible. Even when I order professional books, making an attempt with our teachers. I'm always looking for multicultural materials.

Four Exemplary School Library Media Specialists

All of these school library media specialists perform a variety of tasks in their positions and appear to be needed and appreciated by those they serve. These women are exemplary school library media specialists. How Diane, Tere, Tharna, and Karen view their roles and themselves in those roles, and what they believe their professional responsibilities to be are examined in the first research question.
The Multiple Roles of the School Library Media Specialist

Question 1: How do these school library media specialists describe their attitudes and responsibilities in relation to the roles of (a) teacher, (b) information specialist, (c) instructional consultant?

Although Diane, Tere, Thama, and Karen are employed in four quite different settings: an alternative elementary school (Henderson), a traditional elementary school (Lincoln), an alternative middle school (King), and a traditional middle school (Greenwood), they all work across the three overlapping roles that have been documented in the national guidelines for school library media specialists (American Library Association, 1988). These roles are teacher, information specialist, and instructional consultant.

When asked how they present themselves to the school community, as librarians (information specialists), teachers, instructional consultants, collaborators, or administrators, the four women professed to being “all of the above.” Obviously, within the position of school library media specialist an individual works with both students and teachers, and often administrators, in a variety of roles.

The Overlapping Roles

Because the roles of the school library media specialist have no distinct parameters, their position is a hard one to define. How the individual library media specialist describes her role for herself is what defines what she does in her position: teacher, information specialist, instructional consultant. In particular, the roles of information specialist and teacher are hard to separate for these women. How these duties are perceived by others tends to be a concern. Tere feels that the position is a unique one but is sometimes seen as the traditional teacher, which she contends, she is not.
Well, I have a problem with that [perception], because a lot of people see us as teachers first, librarians second. I'm not a teacher first. I'm a librarian first. I'm a facilitator and within my role as a facilitator I teach certain skills, certain information that children need, but I do not evaluate the children in an official capacity. I evaluate them because, yes, we do activities and I say, "you did a great job," or "you could have worked on that a little harder," but that's not my role. My role is to facilitate... I tell them about materials and show them how to access those materials in my role as a teacher. I do not have the evaluations and I do not have all the other requirements as teachers do in the classrooms and I do not see myself as such. I see myself as a librarian-facilitator-teacher.

Tere’s perception of herself as “facilitator” is reinforced by one of Lincoln Elementary’s teachers.

[Tere’s] a facilitator for a lot of different things, I think. She pulls book collections for us, she works with the kids on finding what they need within the library or even when it is not their library time. She is real good at including them in it just when they need to be. She does a lot with teaching them skills on how to use the library, whether it be using the computer or other ways. She also reads to the children on the themes that we are using with the authors that we are talking about, so there is an integration.

Thama also sees the importance of facilitating, assisting both the students (as teacher and information specialist) and the teachers (as information specialist and instructional consultant).

Thama I think you teach and you facilitate, at your best. It depends on the knowledge base your students start with, it depends on the student’s focus, it depends on their need and timing, all those are factors. The same is true when I'm working with teachers. I try to make the library user-friendly so they don’t come in here and get frustrated trying to find something.

I teach as often as I facilitate. Ideally, what I like to do is get a child to a point where first of all they are comfortable with materials, they know how to access information and they are not just copying. They are understanding it enough so that they can give the information back in their own words or say it in such a fashion that I know they understand. So, that’s my goal. To work them up to that capacity.

In contemplating the various roles of the school library media specialist, and particularly the role of teacher, Diane takes issue with the idea that the “library” is often considered a discipline, presented in a self-contained skills class, scheduled once a
week at a given time. And that the librarian is the sole teacher of that discipline similar
to the physical education teacher or the music teacher. She believes there’s much more
to it.

Diane I think it is a multifaceted job, and I think we are all of those things, [librarian, collaborator, administrator, professional developer, etc.] but for so many years, and still, the model is, “Librarian as Teacher,” which I see over and over again. The teachers who want to drop off their kids at the door of the library for a class are just seeing the Librarian as Teacher, and that’s a 1970s model. You know, you can have a “library class” and children can be scheduled in the library once a week for 30 minutes or whatever, but that’s not the purpose of the library. The library is a resource, it provides a service, and when it is used as a discipline the service part of it is not there. The resource that it is is lost, too. I think the librarian is a teacher, but I also think the librarian administers and the librarian is a staff developer and there is more to the role than just teaching children the Dewey Decimal System or how to find books on the computer, that’s just a small part of what it is.

The manager/administrator function of the school library media specialist spans each role. Management for optimum use of the center is a task of every school library media specialist. Diane was instrumental in changing the teachers’ idea of the library as a discipline when she instituted flexible scheduling into the library media center. Diane previously read about the concept of flexible scheduling of the library media center, observed centers that had implemented flexible schedules, attended conference workshops on the concept, introduced and promoted the concept to her principal and teachers, and initiated the concept in her center.

Diane’s belief in flexible scheduling of student groups and the freedom for individual children to use the school library media center whenever they choose shows in the daily management of Henderson Elementary’s center. The school library media specialist often is teaching one group as other children work on their own in various areas of the center.

All four school library media specialists follow the flexible scheduling concept. Even though Tere’s school, Lincoln Elementary, requests scheduled library classes,
students are still allowed in the center on their own throughout the day. The traditional teaching role of the school library media specialist was as a teacher of library skills during a “library class.”

Teaching only the “library class” is far removed from what any of these school library media specialists thinks is her job responsibility.

Tere  The least that I do is teach skills because I feel so strongly that it is a worthless activity to teach the children in isolation, to do research when there is nothing they need to research. I do teach some basic skills on using the library where I really reinforce it and talk to the kids and impress them to remember where the fiction books are located, what the call number is. I repeat that over and over again. But we also work on projects and share books and view videos and filmstrips.

Thama  There’s always something going on in the library. I help students with assignments, I assist teachers with videos and teaching materials, I suggest books for free reading. I do more than teach a skills class.

I’m a real believer in teaching skills when a child comes in with a task, when they need to learn that skill. We go through finding the materials, going through the use of the catalog. I show them how to use the atlas, the CDs, I put them online, whatever they need. I point these things out to them. I think that’s a lot more valuable than teaching them a skill in isolation. They are using the resources instead of listening to a lecture. That information becomes valuable to them. Then when they come in again they will know how to find what they need. After they understand how to find materials I give them the responsibility of teaching others. They feel good about that. There’s much more going on in that process than what would go on in a traditional library skills class.
(Telephone conversation 3/22/96)

Karen  I do a lot of individual reading guidance of a lot of different kinds — some book talks, some with a cluster of kids. Sometimes I see myself as the teacher-librarian or the literature specialist, being the person to share and put in front of our students as a class information about several authors.

Diane  We have different things to do in the library. There is video previewing, sound filmstrips. We have a Macintosh. There are reference materials. I organize things and bring in speakers. We had a man who is a bat expert from [the local university] who brought in this little bat. I bring in people. For Book Week we have various people come in from the community and tell the children what their favorite books were when they were children.
The Multifaceted Job

Diane’s position carries many more duties than she mentioned above. Diane involves herself in a wide variety of tasks for her school and her students. I often observed Diane in the school library media center performing a range of tasks such as checking in and out materials for students or phoning the public library reference desk for additional information for a student or recommending books to individual children. On one afternoon she was explaining the floor plans of the library media center to a class of students who were about to design their own plans for a building project. On another, Diane was in full stride, traveling down the hall to moderate a teleconference she had set up in the principal’s office between author/educator Charlotte Huck in California and students who had just read *Princess Furball* (by Charlotte Huck).

In one two month period, Diane was involved in participating in a Right to Read Week program and in entertaining a visiting author for several days, as well as carrying on her regular duties in the school library media center. Diane was instrumental in inviting the author and securing his appearance at Henderson Elementary School. She greeted the visiting author and folklorist, Eric Kimmel, and introduced him to the assembly of students in the multipurpose room at Henderson.

After introducing the author to the students, Diane stationed herself behind the video camera which she had earlier set up in the room. While taping the visit, she kept an eye on the students in the audience and spoke to several of the over-active ones throughout the program. The various teachers involved in the program turned to Diane for direction as she oversaw its smooth progress.

Previous to Eric Kimmel’s visit, Diane had been busy acquainting teachers and students with his work and his life. Diane constructed displays of his folktales, conducted classes on storytelling, and held discussion groups on comparing folktale origins. She prepared bookmarks with Eric Kimmel’s autograph on it for each student.
in the school and arranged for multiple copies of the author's books to be available for sale in the school library media center.

A month later, Diane extended her library media specialist role to include that of actor. She participated in the program, "Stories from Around the World," which was conceived and produced by all the school library media specialists in her district to promote Right to Read Week. This program incorporated drama and storytelling with a variety of children's literature about people from other cultures. Diane performed in the enactment of a folktale from Mexico, a poem about a Chinese family, and a folktale from the Inuit Eskimos. These tales were interspersed with rhymes and riddles about countries around the world. The program was presented at each of the elementary schools in the district.

Diane and the other school library media specialists in her district scripted the program, made elaborate costumes, backdrops and props, and spent hours rehearsing for the yearly event. The author visit and the book week presentation are just two of the activities in which Diane has participated to promote an interest in and love for literature.

All of the school library media specialists conduct and participate in a variety of learning experiences. None teaches only library or information skills, techniques for finding information. Neither does any of them simply point the way to books and materials in the center. As Diane said, "This is a multifaceted job." The school library media specialists function as information specialists, knowing what materials are available, and knowing the quality of those materials. They also serve as teachers and instructional consultants. Added to these official roles also should be promoter of good literature.
Understanding the Learning Process

These school library media specialists recognize the importance of the learning process. They have read and studied in the areas of child development and learning theory. How students process information, how they solve problems, and how each individual student best interprets information is of concern to them.

Philosophy of Learning

Each school library media specialist believes her philosophy of learning contributes to the way she works with students and teachers and allows her to function in the overlapping roles of teacher, information specialist, and instructional consultant. They believe that if students are allowed to take ownership of their learning they are more interested in what they are doing and in making decisions about their paths to learning. Each specialist’s philosophy encourages exploration and choices.

Diane

I believe that people who are engaged and involved, and who have a say in what they do, care more about it — that we have choices. My philosophy of learning is that you are involved in it, you contribute to it, you engage yourself in something. And there are different ways of doing things, not just one way. There’s a choice.

I think there is also learning that you can get from other people. And I believe that part of my philosophy of learning for children is that it doesn’t all come from the teacher, but it can come child to child, or child to teacher. That there are various configurations. That the teacher is not the fountain of knowledge, but that we all come to this knowing different things and are different people and so we will piece together. We’ll make us all know more than we did before. We can learn by putting ourselves into different situations with different people.

Karen

I look at learning with such a multiple approach to materials and the different ways kids learn, and in some cases, the way teachers approach learning — that together we can reach and do different things. Part of my philosophy is keeping the teachers abreast of what’s going on in the print and nonprint world so they can enrich and enliven their classrooms.

Every new book, every new topic is fun for me. I think I’m pretty enthusiastic about that, so when a kid comes in and wants help with whatever project he’s working on it’s not a labor to go find that information.
As I work with kids and recognize their style of learning, I try not to set up roadblocks for them where they can’t learn.

There Sometimes I think I want [students] to have a broader view of things, I guess because my background is in social science. I just feel that social studies is very important and language and reading is so important and so basic to anything that they do. I want teachers to really stress more reading, more talking and sharing with the kids, not to be so fragmented in their scheduling. That’s why I’m trying to integrate, so we will have a little more time to allow the kids to explore and look for information, so they can really discover the world around them. Looking at a textbook and little ditto sheets does not give them that, not at all.

Thama I’m very big on facilitating. Initially, I want to give [students] the ability to access, and then I just let them go, let them continue on their own, because I don’t want to pressure a student to learn something. It’s more important to me that they find the information that they want so that they are satisfied with their search. It’s always more exciting to find it on your own, then you feel like you’ve accomplished something. You’ve discovered something.

Critical Thinking Skills

Students are encouraged to explore and discover information. They are guided by the school library media specialist in the process of finding information and then are assisted in examining what they have found. All of the specialists in this study regard locating materials as only the first step in guiding students on their quest for information. Once the information is found, students must decide how to interpret and use it. Students need to have many sources of information. They need to be able to analyze and evaluate the information they find to consider whether or not they wish to use it. School library media specialists help students develop critical thinking skills which will allow them to analyze and synthesize information.

Students are given the opportunity to develop skills through guided experiences when the school library media specialists pose questions and encourage students to examine the books and materials they have found. This practice helps students expand their decision-making capabilities.
When asked how they promote the development of critical thinking skills, the school library media specialists responded in various ways, but all saw the importance of using multiple sources to encourage students to formulate their own conclusions.

**Thama**

Kids have to look at information and know what they are looking at. It’s not a matter of finding a page and running it off. I want them to be able to read it and to understand it. They have to hear it. They have to talk about it, discuss it. That helps them to remember it and to actually get it down from their heads into their hearts. I encourage them to use several sources. A lot of times they’ll tell me that this book is not the same as that one. I’ll ask them what the difference is and ask them why. They begin to see the differences in style, how information is presented... and from that I can lead them to various sources. It begins to come together in a way that allows them to draw their own conclusions.

**Karen**

We’re trying to teach kids to use multiple sources for research. I tell them how the encyclopedias differ. Using different sources and recognizing point of view is important.

Tere, Karen, and Diane use discussion about literature to lead the students into critically thinking about consequences and comparisons.

**Tere**

We make connections. When I’m working with the younger children I try to relate the stories to their own experiences to help them understand what is going on in the story. The children do a lot of retelling and that makes them remember the details of the story. Sometimes we do drawings so they have another way of expressing themselves and whatever they thought about the story. If they illustrate the story they have to think how they are going to do it.

With the older children, I ask a lot of questions, “Well, what were the issues? Do you have any feelings about this? What was the background?” Then when we finish a project I ask them to reexamine what they know. “Let’s go back to the causes. What have you learned?” I try to ask them when they are reading, “What do you think was important about the story?”

**Karen**

When I do book talks, I leave kids openings for their feedback and their reactions to issue-oriented books. I’d rather pose questions to kids about a book or a comparison of books, to have them look for the injustices or the values. Have them think about where it sits with them in the inside.

**Diane**

Asking them to compare and contrast and analyze and synthesize is critical thinking, and that’s what you do with literature. Or summarizing. You have to think about how you are going to summarize this. And so there it is, it’s just right there when you talk about it. I ask, “What does this remind you of?” You’re constantly having them link things together. They’re linking and thinking.
Student Preferences and Learning Styles

These women make it a point to offer information to the students in a variety of ways so students will broaden their knowledge of literature and be able to retrieve, digest and make meaning from what is available. Each school library media specialist is aware that individuals learn differently and therefore each presents information in a variety of ways to the students. Diane, for example, recognizes differences in her students' preferences for visual and auditory formats, individual or small group participation. One teacher commented on one of Diane's teaching techniques. She stated, "She teaches through visuals by using the books and also a dry erase board for note taking to help visualize oral language. She involves the kids in her discussions too."

Karen acknowledges differences in learning styles and takes them into account when she purchases materials. Lately, she has been particularly aware of the quality and quantity of visuals in books as well as in audiovisual materials. Karen's center and annex are full of posters, audiotapes, videotapes, and picture books as well as the adolescent literature common in middle school. Her displays offer bags and boxes containing jokes, puzzles, and question and answer cards for students who might become overwhelmed with information from traditional sources. She wants the materials in the collection to attract and hold the attention of all the students in her school, and therefore offers a variety of media from which students may choose.

Tere and Thama both consider the way they themselves learn when they present information. They are aware of their own learning styles and therefore are sensitive to the learning styles of others. They, too, design their lessons and purchase materials for the school library media centers with learning style differences in mind.

Tere

Of course I learn differently from other people, that's why I do everything—I talk to the kids, I write it out for them. Our activities are in different forms so the children can choose what they are most comfortable with. If they are better at reading, or if they are better at doing a drawing, for instance, they
choose their activities. When we have skills I sometimes give them worksheets to do, I have them share. I don’t give grades, so why not share and learn that way.

Thama believes her background as a foreign language teacher has influenced her lesson design and the various strategies she uses. She first started thinking about learning styles when it came to testing her foreign language students in her former job.

Thama  
My task as an educator was to look at their strengths and their weaknesses, minimize their weaknesses, and enhance their strengths, so I tested in a lot of different ways. Those that could speak the language well and couldn’t write it well, were given just as much point value on an oral test as on a written test, so that they all had a chance to succeed. I think that is important when we are looking at teaching and learning styles. It’s very apparent to me that Black students often when learning a language can hear it and speak it much better than they can read it and write it. That’s where the testing should be formulated for them and that’s how they should look at it. Students should not assume that...if they speak it, that they can automatically read it and write it. That’s not true. That wasn’t true for me when I was learning a language. As far as the teaching is concerned, one should do as much oral work as written work; balance it out and vary the learning experience.

Assisting in the Learning Process

School library media specialists guide the students in the learning process. They introduce students to a variety of learning opportunities and invite them to think about their many choices for learning. Through purposeful inquiry students can explore and discover a wide range of information that is available to them.

Instructional Strategies

All of the school library media specialists assert that they at times use lecture, one-to-one, small group instruction, large group instruction, and discussion techniques, and present information through audiovisual materials. Each form of presentation requires an understanding of the instructional strategies involved. Cooperative learning and group work are also encouraged. In each of the school library media centers, I
observed students in groups, working cooperatively, talking about assignments and projects and whatever else seemed important to them at the time.

**Traditional Instructional Practices**

Author studies have been undertaken by all of the specialists to give the students a broad view of one individual’s life and works. Karen takes the responsibility upon herself to compile author units for the adolescent literature her middle school students read and her teachers use in their lessons. She doesn’t simply find biographical information in the reference books she has on hand. She designs posters, which she calls “author boards,” which contain photographs of the authors, biographical information, public relations promotional sheets, autographs, and letters to the students at Greenwood Middle School from the author. Karen purchases additional books by the author, videotapes about the author’s life, and audiotapes of the author reading his or her books. Karen wants to make sure her students can obtain information through various media.

Karen I believe in the multiple materials approach. I think picture books are a good example of that. A kernel of information represented in a picture book can be real beneficial. I’m a firm believer in the use of video for learning too. Our kids are of a visual society whether we want to accept that or not. We can use a video source to reinforce knowledge. It’s pictorial, moving. I think good videos are worth their weight in gold. I think the interactivity of CD-ROMs. Computer based learning is wonderful too because it does keep kids focused, and it is visually exciting. I’m a firm believer in that approach to learning.

Book talks are performed by all the school library media specialists to introduce books to their students. Other traditional instructional practices of the school library media specialists, storytelling, read-aloud sessions, and author visits are common responsibilities of Tere, Diane and Karen. Although Tere is reluctant to tell stories because, “I’m not very good and sometimes I think the children have a hard time with
my accent," she does occasionally include a bit of storytelling as she does a read-aloud session.

These three engage the children in read-aloud sessions and discussions about the readings. Tere said she does "lots of read-alouds, and I have the children read aloud, too." Read-aloud sessions provide Diane and Tere the opportunity to pose questions and present issues to their elementary school students and urge them to think about the consequences that may occur. Karen strongly recommends read-aloud sessions in the middle school setting and believes these sessions invite the students to think about what she has read to them and encourage the students to read other books by the same author.

Thama, the other middle school library media specialist, on the other hand, has no strong feelings about read-aloud sessions, but mentions that the teachers conduct them in their classrooms. She prefers to be the "resource person more than the reader." This is where Thama differs from the other three school library media specialists. She develops author studies, but only occasionally presents book talks. She doesn't feel she should read an entire book to the students or lead discussions separate from activities occurring in the classroom. She also does no storytelling, another traditional form of instruction performed by the school library media specialist nor does she plan author visits to her school. Again, she believes that her strongest role is as a facilitator, assisting students in finding information and teaching them how to synthesize what they have found.

The Teacher

No matter what role is most prevalent at a particular time in the workday of the school library media specialist, she is always teaching. At times the teaching is more apparent than at others. Occasionally she takes over the classroom teacher's role and presents a formal lesson to a class.
Even though Thama does not subscribe to all of the traditional presentation activities of the school library media specialist, she does function in the role of teacher as she expands on classroom units and projects in the school library media center. One teacher commented on a unit that Thama presented after the students had studied the Mayans in a Spanish class. She stated, “Thama took my Spanish Immersion class and did a unit with them about the Mayan Indians and developed the unit herself and presented that to them.” Thama gathered information from the library media center for this unit and while presenting it, also introduced the students to the resources from which she obtained the information.

At other times, and most often when in the teaching role, the school library media specialist collaborates with the classroom teacher and, although performing as a teacher, also falls into the information specialist role. These lessons in Thama’s library media center are in conjunction with what the teacher currently is doing in the classroom. Either the teacher asks for Thama’s assistance or Tharna offers to work with the class when she sees what is being presented in the classroom. Occasionally they collaborate during the planning stage of a lesson. A teacher commented on the way Thama extended one of her lessons.

We were doing some work using timelines in my class and she showed us different books on the 1920s and 1930s and she guided us to the almanacs. It’s kind of like in the classroom we give the foundation, and she in turn takes it a step further, and we research it even more.

The other school library media specialists are also considered teachers as well as information specialists and instructional consultants and are involved in a variety of lessons and educational experiences for the students. One teacher listed a few of her class’s activities in which Diane has been involved.

She teaches research skills, but also is available when my students need someone besides me to bounce off ideas for their writing. Sometimes they talk about a visiting author when she introduces the author’s books. She’s
done some things with me with poetry. She’s shared different types of
poetry and children have brought poetry back to the class to share.

A teacher at Greenwood Middle School commented on Karen’s influence as a
teacher on her students and herself.

Karen has taught me a lot by teaching my kids. I always listen to her
because she is a master at doing book talks and poetry reading and using
drama and props and costumes. So I just get ideas from her a lot.

Teachers at Lincoln Elementary School praise Tere for her work with their
students and comment on her teaching activities.

She’s like another teacher. I think the children view her as a teacher. I
think that comes from her not just being here to say, “Here take your book
and check it out.” She’s doing more, she’s sitting on the floor with the kids,
she’s finding this and that with the kids. They do projects together.

Tere is always reading to them in the area we are studying. We were doing
mysteries for a while and she read a mystery to them. She’s done activities
where they take a character from the book and illustrate the character. She
did one book where the children had to predict the ending and draw what
they thought the monster would be like, they shared their ideas and then she
read the ending to them.

In most cases these women are not seen as teachers in the traditional sense,
having the instructional responsibility for a classroom of students, their progress, and
their evaluation. Nor do these school library media specialists want that role. They are
professional educators helping teachers and students learn.

The Information Specialist

All the school library media specialists in this study incorporate what needs to be
learned about information skills with the lessons that are taking place in the classroom.
This is where the roles of teacher and information specialist definitely overlap. They
are teaching the skills of information acquisition and analysis.
Integration of Information Skills and Literature Extensions

The school library media specialists try to make their lessons and activities in the center relevant to those going on in the classrooms. Tere, Thama, and Diane’s schools have formal course of study documents which address various library skills and activities. Karen’s district does not have a formal document, but library skills are incorporated in the language arts course of study. Karen was instrumental in this incorporation, being the chairperson of the language arts committee when the course of study was under development.

Integration of library skills and literature extensions into the curriculum is possible at all four schools. Three of the four, Henderson Elementary, King Middle, and Greenwood Middle, all emphasize an interdisciplinary program. Tere’s school, Lincoln Elementary, has a traditional program, but her new principal is trying to encourage all his staff to work on integration with the library curriculum. He believes some of the teachers at Lincoln Elementary School are beginning to work with the school library media specialist and views Tere as a leader in making this change. He stated,

I think Tere would like to see integration be even stronger and so would I. That’s the direction that education in general needs to move. Tere would like to do that, feels competent in doing it. Now it’s just changing the whole culture in this building and making the library a much more integrated part of the daily activities of the classroom. For too long things have been taught in isolation.

Although Karen’s course of study is incorporated in the language arts program, it is also covered informally in the other disciplines within the school curriculum. Her principal believes that “without an effective library media center, your instructional program is not going to be integrated or if it is, the teacher is going to have to work five times harder to have it happen.”
The library curriculum statements appear in each course of study document in Diane’s school. Statements within the library document suggest how library activities will be incorporated across the disciplines. Diane explains that there are six performance objectives and each objective describes how a particular library skill fits into the rest of the curriculum. Statements at the end of the course of study documents for each of the disciplines (math, science, social studies, language arts) suggest how library skills fit in with their objectives.

The library curriculum is integrated into each discipline’s goals and objectives in Thama’s middle school.

Thama’s principal is a strong advocate for the school library media program and believes the library curriculum must be integrated into the other disciplines in order for the global studies mission of the school to be realized. He stated,

Anything that goes on within the school has to somehow pass through the auspices of the library learning center. I don’t care what it is, when we try to run our integrated program, it has to be looking at the world through the classroom. And the library learning center is the link to the world.

Whether or not the course of study refers to integration of information skills within the curriculum, all the school library media specialists strive to integrate what they do in the library media center with what is happening in the classrooms. Integration takes place when the school library media specialist takes it upon herself to find out what each teacher is doing in his or her classroom. The school library media specialists are free to initiate units or projects which they think will benefit the students. Thera stated that she tries to integrate as much as possible. "I keep changing my
curriculum to match what is happening in the classroom. If I can do that and tie in skills and literature with what is in the classroom, then I do it all the time.”

This was evident when I observed Tere’s unit on explorers and her unit on the Civil War. Tere relates her lessons to the theme that is being presented in the classroom, but often extends the focus to cover information that may not be emphasized in the curriculum. Her unit on explorers, for example, focused on the native peoples of the lands being explored.

Tere also presented a unit on the Civil War to the fifth-grade students. She knew the teachers would not have time to cover the Civil War in detail in their classes, so she initiated a unit in which students examined reference books to find the issues leading to the war. After they had researched the issues, the students created poster presentations to report their findings to their classmates in the school library media center. Posters were then taken back to the fifth-grade classrooms and displayed there.

Karen makes it a point to know what each of her teachers is doing so she can suggest activities in the library media center which will coincide with what is happening in the classroom. One of the teachers at Greenwood Middle School commented on Karen’s willingness to integrate library activities with classroom lessons. In this teacher’s view, Karen is a support for the teacher, a resource for information that the teacher does not know about or have available in the classroom.

I think she is an extension of the classroom, and we are so lucky. Karen is so good. She will do presentations when we do Hatchet [by Gary Paulsen]. She’ll have a whole room in the library dedicated to Gary Paulsen books. She gives us background information on Gary Paulsen and talks about each of his books. She will extend what I don’t do in the classroom, what I can’t get done in the classroom.

These women are viewed and described in a multitude of ways. They are perceived as having specialties, as providing an extension of what the classroom teachers do. One teacher said that Diane was her “support,” another defined Diane’s
role as "the person in charge of the research." One of Diane's students said, "She is an actress, too." Diane's principal called her "a consummate professional." Karen's teachers see her as "a role model," a "master teacher," and an "extension of the classroom." Tere is a "facilitator," a "good resource." Thama's principal believes Thama is the "library and multicultural literature expert." One teacher said Thama was "the nucleus of the school."

**Orientation Toward Service**

These school library media specialists may teach, and work as instructional consultants with teachers, but they believe their most important responsibility is in helping all the students and all the teachers in their schools locate, access, and synthesize information, whether it be through literature, reference sources or audiovisual materials. Each specialist has a strong philosophy of service. They are the information specialists of the schools, and they make sure their patrons know that they are there to help them.

At times, Karen and Diane worry about doing too much for their patrons. They envision their roles as teachers and information specialists who enable others to help themselves. They both contend that there is a fine line between assisting patrons and doing their work for them. Karen and Diane willingly offer suggestions and recommend materials, but are concerned when teachers try to manipulate the situation and turn their work over to the specialists.

Karen I think [teachers] come to me for credibility in the use of new literature and the background buildup. When it gets tricky is when they want me to do it all. Then I sometimes think, "You need to take some ownership in this too." Many times I have written [their lessons] right down to the worksheets.

Diane Teachers ask me to do a lot of things that they don't feel like doing that are time consuming. I get a lot of requests for helping people do coursework at the university. Student teachers ask me this all the time. They ask me
what they should write a paper on and they want me to show them the books. I’m sure part of the assignment is to find the books, to see a whole lot of books, and then narrow it down. They want me to come and give them the narrowed down version of it and I just don’t do it. It’s a tightrope you have to walk, helping people, but not doing their homework for them.

Still, service is very important to all the school library media specialists and they try to honor the requests of their students and teachers. Thama stated, “I’m here to serve the school and the staff and the kids. That’s what I want them to understand about me.” Tere believes, “Because I provide for both children and teachers, I have to be available all the time.” This attitude is echoed in Karen’s comment, “I think being there and offering whatever needs to be offered is really critical.” Diane’s school library media program and center is one that “provides a service.” Her role is as a “support.”

All view the school library media center as a place where teachers and students can turn to somebody at any time and request assistance. It is a place where teachers and students should be able to find information easily and quickly, without frustration. Accessibility is extremely important for our job. We have to be here, we have to be accessible, it has to be easy for the teachers to use the center, another place where the children will be able to work and use materials and be safe.

The school library media specialists want their patrons to view the library media center and the library media program the way they do. Karen believes that in order for the school’s curriculum to be realized, the library media program and the overall school program must be engaged in a “critical partnership,” meshing together to form one cohesive plan for the education of the students in the district. Both Diane and Tere contend that the school library media program is at the center. It is a valuable resource that affects the way the entire curriculum functions. Thama sees the school library media program and the school library media center as one and believes it is a vital part of the school.
They could not operate the instructional program without the materials in this library and the space here. It’s almost like the heart of the program. I know there are very few hours, let alone [whole] days, when I could close this library.

**Development of the Collection**

To encourage inquiry and learning, all the school library media specialists try to develop the library media center’s collection to complement their school’s curriculum. Karen contends that “the curriculum is what drives my purchasing. That’s foremost in my mind all the time.” Thama’s collection development centers on the mission of the school. Most of her materials deal with some aspect of global and international studies. Tere knows her school’s curriculum and orders materials accordingly.

Diane’s job of balancing the collection to complement the curriculum is somewhat difficult, because there is a great deal of flexibility in the curriculum in the alternative, literature-based elementary school in which she works. The students often help develop the units and themes, always keeping in mind the course of study. Diane has found that if “I work on a basic collection some of the things [that the classes decide to study] are covered.”

**The Instructional Consultant**

School library media specialists serve as instructional consultants when they work with teachers in developing lessons or units for the classroom. The library media specialist possesses the knowledge about literature and other instructional materials which may be unknown to the teacher. Because of this knowledge and the expertise the teacher brings to the planning effort, the two educators can design and develop a richer unit of study. However, working together can, at times, prove to be difficult.
Collaboration with Teachers

All of the school library media specialists in this study integrate their lessons with those taking place in the classroom. As long as the school library media specialist knows the school curriculum and the individual classroom course schedules, she can integrate lessons with limited (if any) planning and interaction with the teachers. Collaboration, on the other hand, takes a joint effort at planning, designing, and implementation.

Two of the school library media specialists, Tere and Diane, find collaboration on lessons and units more difficult than integration. There are a number of roadblocks to collaboration between the school library media specialist and the classroom teacher. In this study, it appears that there are more deterrents to collaboration in the elementary schools where teachers have self-contained classrooms than in the middle school setting where the classes are departmentalized. Tere and Diane are willing and eager to work collaboratively with the teachers, and at times try to initiate the collaboration. They are frustrated that the teachers are not more receptive to the idea of working with them.

Diane You can’t collaborate unless someone is willing to collaborate back with you. And there has to be some incentive. There’s got to be some way to help it start happening, because I don’t think it’s happening now, not for my purposes. It’s not happening fast enough. It’s isolated people who are willing to do it.

How are we going to do it so this whole school is collaborating with the librarian? How is everybody being integrated into the library in a natural way? It’s a hard thing to do. What if you go to the teacher and they don’t want to work with you? Even though you go to them and offer these programs, that’s still not collaboration, it’s not working together on the curriculum. How are we going to do this?

Tere This is one of the most frustrating aspects of my job. In fact, I would love to really let them know that I’m a facilitator, and when they are planning I should be a part of that planning process. Well, when they are planning, I’m teaching their children. If they plan after school sometimes, I can suggest that I help them, but it is really hard to break through the groups that usually work together. They will come and ask me, “Tere, we are doing this unit, could you help us get materials?” and so forth, but that’s not collaboration.
Tere and Diane see a reluctance on the teacher’s part to include the school library media specialist in planning. Diane questions whether teachers really have a full understanding of the meaning of collaboration.

Diane I think oftentimes teachers think that collaboration means “I’ll tell you what I want you to do” but it doesn’t. I think we are still at that kind of level of collaborating. So often I do a lot of introducing. “I want to do a unit on storytelling, will you introduce my students to storytelling?” Then I have to find out what she really wants to do, and then I have to decide what I’m going to do. Then we set up several more sessions and then the teachers never show up. It’s almost like “Will you tell me how to do this? I want to do Native American literature. What’s the criteria for Native American literature?” So I set the framework and they zip off and I never know until the final projects are done what’s gone on. It’s more, “Let me tell you what I want you to do.”

Time constraints seem to be major obstacles to collaboration for all of the school library media specialists. Tere seldom finds the time to sit down and talk at length with the teachers. She is unable to join the teachers during their planning because Tere’s school allows the teachers to have planning time while their students are with her during the weekly scheduled library period. Tere cannot join the teachers during their planning periods because she does not have an assistant or aide to take over her professional responsibilities when she is out of the library media center.

Karen is finding it more difficult to collaborate because of time constraints at Greenwood Middle School, where teachers are now teaching extra classes due to the large enrollment size in each grade.

Diane thinks that time constraints may be one problem in trying to collaborate, but she also sees a lack of interest by teachers to open their classrooms to others.

Diane I have initiated suggestions for collaborative projects, and when a teacher writes me a note and says we are going to do such and such, I write back and say, “And I can do this and this and this.” And sometimes they just ignore it. I don’t want to push my services on anybody, so I don’t really push it after that. I put it in writing so it’s not a verbal thing in the hallway.

When they really don’t come and take you up on it then I think, “Well, they really don’t want to do that.” Some teachers don’t like sharing their class.
Some teachers are very possessive. I don’t know if they just want all the fun for themselves, or if they don’t want anyone else to know what’s going on.

Collaboration is in our curriculum, it’s in the guidelines that go out to the teachers from the library. It’s an expectation. Now the next step is how to make it happen.

In observing this school, it seems to me that the teachers isolate themselves more because of individualism than uncertainty. All school library media specialists have to contend with individual personalities and motives; and in a school where the former principal stated, “We have all leaders and no followers in this school,” collaboration may be even more difficult. One of the teachers at Henderson Elementary School sensed this problem and commented on the difficulty of Diane’s job.

I think the willingness of the teacher has a lot to do with collaboration. [Diane] is so willing to do a variety of things, she has never said, “No, I can’t help you on that.” She always has some way to input. I think teachers sometimes don’t take advantage of a colleague. I think there are a few people here who still say, “You know she’s the librarian and so she does library things.” I say library is an extension of what we are doing so she can come to our room and take part. I think if I were her, I’d at times get discouraged by not being recognized for all the things that I do for teachers. She does an incredible amount.

Even though some of Diane’s teachers are reluctant to collaborate, Diane has been involved in some collaborative activities with a few of the teachers in her district. She participated in a unit in which the students wrote their own picture books. Diane served as a consultant to the teacher and another sounding board for the students who read and discussed their stories with her. She also has worked with a teacher and her students as they researched and wrote independent reports. Diane said, “The reports were [presented] on posters so I actually worked with the kids and helped them plot out the reports and cut out the information to see what it would look like. I helped them with the research and I helped them with the design.” Her role and the teacher’s role were planned before the unit was initiated.
Tere and her teachers are also involved in some collaboration - however minimal. One of her teachers seemed appreciative of Tere's help in designing and developing a unit. She said,

The two of us sat down when I taught fourth grade and we really developed, that's when we first started putting literature in the curriculum, and really went through all the themes that we teach and tried to figure out what different literature there is out there that would plug into these themes and would meet the low and the high reader and the guy in between.

Karen's and Thama's middle school settings appear to be more conducive to collaboration. Both schools' philosophies encourage team teaching, which involves team planning. Often the school library media specialists plan with the teachers.

Thama occasionally collaborates with her teachers, but usually remains in the role of facilitator. Her teachers work in teams and she assists, making suggestions and bringing the teachers materials for their units. When Thama takes on a teaching role in a collaborative unit, she may "co-teach" one or two lessons, then serve as the information specialist in the library media center as the students work on their assignments.

Thama Sometimes I will just do a class lesson with another teacher, we'll kind of co-teach it and that might take a couple of days. We're looking at a talent show that is coming up, and the kids want to do some Black poetry. So I've pulled the materials, and I've rehearsed the kids and I've given them some pointers. Then I say, "I want you to do some more reading about this particular author so that you're not ignorant about who you're speaking about." After they've done that, we'll discuss it.

Karen is constantly collaborating, often with several teachers from several disciplines at a time. She asserted, "I recruit." Karen actually designs unit packages of books, activities, and audiovisual materials around the various themes within the middle school courses of study. Then she invites the teachers to join her in planning a unit in which the materials and ideas she has collected might fit.
Karen and her teachers have reported on several of their collaborative ventures in conference presentations and in professional journals. They share the responsibility for presenting information about what they have done together, just as they share the responsibility of working with the students.

Karen's work with one middle school teacher on a poetry extension project for the novel, *The Summer of My German Soldier* (by Bette Greene), resulted in an invited presentation at the National Middle School convention in San Antonio, Texas in 1992. Her colleague, an eighth-grade English teacher, described the unit as a collaborative effort.

This poetry unit could never have been put together without the both of us working on it. [Karen] had the resources of all the poetry books. We sat down together and brainstormed, and then she went through and picked out some poems to make our original handout to the kids.

We have to complement one another, and definitely she is there when I need something and I'm kind of lost or can't find something. She's there as a resource person, but also as someone who reinforces everything I do in the classroom.

For the poetry unit, Karen brought in tons of poetry books, and we isolated themes for the kids. The kids had to choose a poem that they felt said something to them about the particular novel. Karen presented some of the poems and gave the students an idea about how the poems work. It's something that the students can respond to. Karen then videotaped the kids when they read their own poetry.

All of the school library media specialists believe collaboration is a part of their role as instructional consultant, working with the classroom teachers and assisting them with the instructional experiences planned for their students. Their beliefs are in keeping with Vandergrift and Hannigan (1986) who proposed in one of twelve principles related to the duties of the school library media specialist: "The elementary school library media specialist must be an active partner on the instructional development team, working with classroom teachers on a variety of connections.
between learning styles, teaching strategies, and the resources of the school library media center” (p. 171).

**An Effective Professional**

These school library media specialists feel strongly about the value of their program and of their service to students and teachers. When asked what they think makes them “quality” library media specialists, they are all modest and are quick to give answers such as “the budget” or “I don’t know if I am because I still struggle.” But when pressed for more details, the women relate their answers to the service they offer their teachers and students.

Tere believes that it is her concern for staying up-to-date on literature and what is happening in the field of library media and her practice of going to conferences to find out what is new and different that make her valuable to her teachers. She stated, “You try to make yourself indispensable.” Tere also considers her “knowledge of books, the collection, and the subjects” an important factor in being credible and valued (by some teachers).

Karen credits her two full-time aides for helping make her a quality library media specialist. She acknowledges that they give her the freedom to meet with teachers, to go into classes, to teach classes in the center, to develop units, “while the life of the library goes right on without interruption.” She also believes that her knowledge of current materials and her visibility on a variety of committees strengthens her credibility.

Thama’s “rapport and trusting relationship” with students and teachers allow her to be effective and do her job the best way she knows how. She knows the collection and is “always available.” How Diane presents herself and her philosophy of service to the students and teachers make her a “quality” library media specialist.
Diane They know that I care about it [her job]. I work hard at trying to solve problems. I think I'm enthusiastic, but that's in whatever I do, not just the library. I'm interested in a lot of things.... I can network, I can put people together. I'm organized and I follow through and I follow up on things. If somebody needs to know something, I can make a phone call immediately. I have a really big service philosophy. I try to make their lives as easy as possible.

Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

"I try to make their lives as easy as possible" reflects the service philosophy of all four of these exemplary school library media specialists. They are professionals who are committed to assisting students and teachers in the learning process. These women view their jobs as service to their public - the school community.

The school library media specialists know that service not only means being accessible and open to inquiry, but also being knowledgeable about pedagogy, learning theories, and the existence and availability of literature and information resources. They believe that "knowing the scientific basis of teaching increases the teacher's repertoires; it provides a conceptual framework to draw upon in particular incidents" (Mertz, 1987, p. 8).

Student learning is important to these school library media specialists, and they demonstrate this belief by providing students with a variety of learning activities. They believe the library media center and program are important for developing learning strategies and promote it as a place for life-long learning. They want it to be a friendly and inviting place, and try to alleviate any fear about using the facility. To them, it is not another classroom but an embodiment of a program that conveys the importance of inquiry and discovery. It is a place where children become aware of the importance of books in influencing lives, and become comfortable with asking questions and searching out answers. Their open-door policy invites ease of use, accessibility for future learning. Their belief in providing resources allows children to see that there are many ways to obtain information. By presenting choices, they encourage students to
make their own decisions. They illustrate the importance of learning and model an inquisitiveness and excitement for finding new information by their activities with students and colleagues.

Although they do many of the things a classroom teacher does, the school library media specialists see themselves in a role apart from the traditional classroom teacher. The specialists know and support the curriculum and are teachers across the grades. They are not trying to replace the classroom teacher, rather they are trying to make connections with the curriculum so children can have more purposeful learning in the school library media center.

Individually, their beliefs vary as to how they can best serve in the over-all school library media specialist position. Tere stated, “The roles are very woven in,” but she and Thama appear to view the information specialist-facilitator as their strongest practice. Diane and Karen are more heavily involved in teaching.

Although all the school library media specialists view the role of instructional consultant (collaborator) as very important, Thama and Karen appear to work more easily in collaboration with their colleagues. Perhaps because the school library media specialist’s role is so diverse, some teachers appear to categorize the specialist more as a resource person than as a fellow educator capable of collaborating on classroom units.

All the school library media specialists know literature and view it as an important element in the learning process. Thama is the only specialist of the four who does not incorporate the traditional techniques for introducing literature and story (that is, read-alouds and storytelling) into her teaching repertoire. Both middle school library media specialists, Thama and Karen, have large collections of reference materials and encourage their use.

In general, these four exemplary school library media specialists are committed women who view their overlapping roles of teacher, information specialist and instructional consultant as important in encouraging and improving learning. Their
behavior is congruent with their beliefs, each working with both students and teachers in a variety of activities to promote inquiry, critical thinking, and literacy.

The specialists appear to be proud of their contribution to their schools, interested in the students' learning, and how they may encourage the students to stretch their capabilities for learning. The frustration of the two elementary school library media specialists is apparent when they relate their dissatisfaction with their efforts to collaborate with the teachers in their schools. Although these two specialists serve the teachers by alerting them to materials and complementing their classroom units with integrated lessons in the school library media center, they still feel that collaboration with teachers is not at strong as it should be.
Contextual Factors which Influence the School Library Media Specialist

Question 2: How do the contextual factors, namely the administration, the resources, and the collegial relationship among professionals enable or constrain these roles and responsibilities?

How the school organization in general values the school library media program and the school library media specialist influences effectiveness and practice. Rosenholtz’s (1991) contention that “teachers’ beliefs, dispositions, identities, and resolves... depend on the nature of contextual cues and communications they experience within the workplace itself” (p. 11), also holds true for school library media specialists. Adequate resources, administrative support, and collegial interaction are important for a successful program and effective practitioners.

Principal’s Support

A strong school library media program depends on several factors, one of the most important being the support of the principal (Haycock, 1985). If a principal does not understand the concept and importance of the school library media program, funding and other resources may be diverted to other curricular needs. On the other hand, a principal who supports the school library media specialist and becomes involved with the school library media program sees the program as an integral part of the school.

All four of the principals in these schools view the school library media program in much the same way as the specialists do — as the center of the curriculum. Interestingly, both Karen’s principal and Tere’s principal compare the location of the facility in their respective buildings to the way they see the library media program functioning in their schools. Tere’s, Karen’s and Thama’s principals refer to the
program as the “hub.” Karen’s principal stated, “I see it as the way it’s located in our building - as the central hub. It’s like the driving force and everything else goes out in spokes.”

Terje’s principal described the school library media program.

[It is] a critical part of the curriculum. As you look at any library I think the collection needs to support what is taking place in the curriculum. I think it’s a positive statement to see where the media center is physically located in this school. The media center is at the hub of activity.

Tharna’s principal explained the importance of the middle school library media center.

First of all, the library learning center is the hub of the school. It is the beginning point at which things evolve. All instructional materials, all technology, all of the different facets that can be supported through a broad sense of context to the library learning center, linkages and so forth, is what I perceive the library learning center to be.

Diane’s principal considers the library media program to be important to the overall mission of the school and that it is “a category in itself, a support service for classrooms and classroom teachers.” He views the school library media program as an “integral part of the curriculum,” and regards Diane as a valued colleague.

Her principal is quick to admit that he trusts Diane’s judgment in program and collection development and in working with teacher development. He states, “She’s a consummate professional. I think we trust her judgment. In fact, I seek it out.”

Thama’s principal perceives her to be a “master teacher.” He depends on her for keeping the collection up to date and balanced, and acting as a facilitator for teachers and students. Thama, in turn, praises her principal for his support for her own development and for his openness to purchasing new materials.

Thama I will say that out of all the administrators, out of all the bosses, I’ve ever had, [this principal] has definitely been my greatest asset. He encourages me to go out to do workshops, to go to conferences. His idea is the more I learn, the more I can bring back. The more I can bring back, the more I can share.

138
If we need materials and I go to him with a sound reason and say, "We need this to enhance this particular program," he’ll say, “OK.” I may not get everything I want, depending upon what I am asking for and the cost, but he’ll negotiate with me.

Karen believes if you want a principal’s support for the school library media program, the specialist has to work at understanding the principal’s priorities and cater to those priorities. When asked if her principal is supportive, Karen believed that her new principal was supportive, but laughed and said, “You’re talking to a lady who has had five principals in five years.” She added,

Karen

It’s been my experience, most principals come in to the building and give very little thought to the library media program. It’s probably close to their lowest priority. I think all of us have to change that principal’s mind and make it, not only a primary thought in his or her mind, but a core part of the curriculum. And, I guess I have to tell myself, each new principal, that’s a personal goal of mine, to put us on their map. It’s different with every principal. You have to discover what their priorities are and how we can tie in with their priorities and become an integral part.

Although Karen’s principal has been at Greenwood Middle School for only a year, she feels confident in leaving the management of the school library media center to Karen. She stated,

It’s really refreshing to see a library media specialist who can see the big picture and that’s really crucial if you are going to have an effective learning center. You have to see how everything integrates in together. She’s been very helpful as we’ve gone to teaming and interdisciplinary projects to help teachers bring the links together instead of always thinking of things in isolation.

Tere’s principal recognizes Tere as a professional who is well versed in program and collection development and works well with teachers. He also applauds her involvement with committees and programs throughout the district, her involvement in “things other than the library.” He doesn’t request her participation in other areas, but sees her interest as “part of her nature.”
However, when asked if she believes that she has been acknowledged for her special competencies, Tere said, “No,” as did Diane and Thama. One of the teachers in Tere’s school remarked,

Recognition is a hard thing around here. Sometimes you have to seek it out yourself. But I think people know that if they need to get any resources they can go to [Tere], so I guess that’s an indirect kind of recognition.

Still, if the principals and teachers appreciate the school library media specialists’ contributions, they have not formally demonstrated that appreciation.

Only Karen has received formal recognition for her performance as a school library media specialist, when she was nominated for an award at the yearly children’s literature conference and when she received her district’s Teacher of the Year award in 1990. She also admitted, “The school district has been kind, too, [by mentioning me] in publications that they put out.”

**Administration’s Support of Multicultural Education**

Because one focus of this study is on the inclusion of multicultural literature into the school curriculum, the administration’s support of multicultural education was examined. Every school district in this study has provided statements about respect for diversity in some type of official school-wide document.

Karen’s school district has been directed to incorporate multiculturalism into the curriculum. In 1991, the school district was sanctioned by the NAACP and was required to include in the curriculum “goals and activities to promote interracial and multicultural understanding” (Intercultural Affairs Advisory Committee report, 1991).

Karen’s principal stated, “Multiculturalism is one of our main goals to help nurture in students, staff, and community alike a sensitivity and awareness to the diversity in the world around us.” When asked if the administration encourages multicultural activities, Karen responded, “They require it.”
Karen Four years ago we (every teacher in this district) had to write down their plan of multicultural education and it had to be submitted as to what we would do in our classrooms, in our area, toward multicultural education. I had to do it for the library too. That came about as a result of a citation by the NAACP that our administration had handled several high school situations with discrimination. When they [the NAACP] came in and declared that they were handled with discrimination, then our superintendent worked with the community committee, the Intercultural Affairs committee, and at that time every teacher had to come up with a plan.... It's been really good, because I know that now anytime that I do anything, anything, whether it's a bibliography or a book display or a book talk, I really absolutely have that in mind.

One of my goals that we had to write up for this IAAC policy was that “at all times in the library, at least one book display and/or bulletin board would really reflect at a glance some element of multiculturalism.”

In contrast, Thama’s school was not mandated but was created to encourage multiculturalism. The mission statement is ever present on posters around the school and on the teachers’ business cards. The various aspects of multiculturalism blend in with everything the students and teachers do. It is visible, and at the same time invisible.

Diane confessed that she doesn’t know whether or not her district has a multicultural policy. Her principal knows that multicultural awareness has been one of the district’s annual goals for the last few years, but doesn’t believe there’s anything about multiculturalism in the mission statement. In fact, the district does address multiculturalism in their official mission policy. Although the term, “multiculturalism” is not used in the school’s official policy, statements pertaining to diversity do exist. The statements within the policy are as follows:

(a.) It is essential to prepare individuals to live in a rapidly changing society,...
(b.) Understanding of and respect for diversity are essential for the well-being of society,...
(c.) We are part of an increasingly interdependent global community..., and
(d.) It is essential that schools promote responsible citizens.
Diane believes that in her school multicultural issues and activities are presented whether or not the administration requests them.

Diane I know that teachers really think that [learning about diversity] is an important thing and they focus on people's nationalities. Parents come in or if parents travel they come in and share their experiences. I know the children are constantly shown that there is a big wide world out there, and that different people have different ideas. I know it is something that everyone who teaches here is concerned about.

Tere was on the committee that developed the multicultural policy for her school district. The district subscribes to the belief that,

in this diverse world, there is a need for education which is multicultural in nature. Students need to be aware of the elements that form diverse cultures and perspectives, including their own. At all levels, students should have on-going opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes concerning race, cultural-ethnic backgrounds, gender, age, religion, handicap and other human differences. ([School] Multicultural Plan for Cultural Diversity and Systematic Districtwide Development for the 21st Century, 1994)

Although the policy is in place, Tere does not refer to it when designing units. She stated, "I have my own philosophy that is just ingrained. I do not need to look at a policy to tell me what I should be doing with the children."

Tere's principal is unsure about whether or not his district has anything in their mission statement about multiculturalism, but added that one of the outcomes that guides the district is to develop "a culturally aware person and respect for diversity."

Resources

Additional resources to support the school library media program are needed at each of the schools in this study. Tere acknowledges the support of her principal but believes the district administration is uninterested in the library media program as evidenced by a recent cut of her support person position. She has volunteers who help with clerical duties, but cannot always depend on their reliability for attendance.
Teachers in several of the schools see evidence for the lack of administrative support either in limited budgets for materials or minimal staff. One of Karen’s teachers is convinced Karen has support for the program from teachers, but has observed various administrators as being less interested in the school library media program. She stated,

I think some of our administrators haven’t been real supportive as far as meeting what [Karen] considers the needs of this library. She’s a real advocate for this library, so I think she gets shot down once in awhile, but that’s only because she is real ambitious about it and she stands up for what she feels is necessary, she’s a real education advocate...

A teacher in Diane’s school viewed the lack of clerical help as an obstacle to Diane’s work with children. She stated,

One thing that is a stumbling block is that [Diane] always needs someone here checking out books. For half a day, if her volunteer doesn’t show up, she’s behind that desk, so that wipes out any time she can spend teaching and helping the students. Or if she is working with a class or a small group of students and there is nobody here to check out the books, then that discourages children from using the library. So I think they really need a full time person to do clerical things so it can free Diane to do the kind of stuff she needs to do with groups of children.

Diane is also concerned with the lack of adequate space for the library media program. Her presentations are often crowded into one corner of the library media center while other activities are going on in other areas within the same facility. Occasionally one activity spills over into another and confusion prevails.

All of the school library media specialists in this study remarked that they could always use more materials for their students and teachers. Karen was optimistic about the condition of her budget for the upcoming year. She attributed talking in person with the principal as a factor in her budget increase. Karen

There were a couple of years where [the budget] went down, one year it hit rock bottom and they cut off our funding, and now it’s crawling back up, and I’ve gotten an increase for next year. I was pleased that [the principal] went along with it. I think part of that is just keeping that line of communication open as to the needs.
Several teachers in both elementary schools were concerned with the lack of materials for the number of students in their buildings. They blamed the lack of funds allocated to the school library media program for this shortage.

A teacher at King Middle School expressed a similar concern regarding limitations on the effectiveness of the specialist and the program. She stated, “I think it’s [Thama’s] financial budget. She is very limited. I know she expresses frustration that she wishes she had more resources to offer to us. I think that’s about all that limits her.”

As for supporting the effort toward multicultural education, Tere doesn’t observe that her district administrative officers encourage multicultural activities nor does she believe they provide any resources for it. In contrast, her principal contends that there are funds available, but they are “not significant.” The funds he refers to are small amounts of money available through competitive grants submitted to the district’s multicultural office. Tere has never written a proposal for these grants. Instead she gets the multicultural materials for her school library media center through her annual budget.

Using the books and materials budget for multicultural materials is the practice of all the school library media specialists in this study. None of the four specialists have monies set aside specifically for multicultural materials but pull funds from their budgets when they have requests for multicultural materials or when they find items that they believe are valuable as additions to their collections.

Thama’s principal admitted that “the funding that comes through the schools is not state of the art and [Thama] has a restricted budget.” However, with this restricted budget, he expects Thama to purchase materials that are multicultural. Although her principal is commenting on the budget, he also is making a statement for the school’s selection policy. He stated,
One of our thrusts is to be aware of cultural differences as much as possible. Using every dollar that is spent with that concept in mind, all textbooks are to be reviewed with that in mind. The curricular components are looked at with this bigger picture in mind. If it doesn't meet the standards of being very much cultural, in terms of many cultures being represented there, then it is not chosen.

Even with this emphasis on multicultural materials and the support of the principal, the teachers at King Middle School are the most vocal of all the teachers interviewed in this study about their concern for the lack and condition of multicultural materials in the school library media center. One teacher stated, "I think you can always have more. She needs more books. I mentioned the contemporary authors and the author study I do, the books are not very recent. She needs more finances, but she does well with what she has."

Relationship with Teachers and Support of Peers

Wigginton (1985) reported that the great teachers he has known avoid teacher burn-out by being "deeply involved." He stated, "They build relationships among their peers, fighting isolation with as much strength as they can muster, knowing that such networks are their life-support systems as well as their sources for new ideas and input" (p. 283).

With only one library media specialist in a school building, only one individual performing the tasks particular to the job, the opportunity for the school library media specialist to "talk shop" with others in the school is limited if it exists at all. The school library media specialist position can easily be an isolated one.

The two library media specialists working in the elementary schools have built the strongest support relationships with the other library media specialists in their districts, because they often feel isolated in their school buildings and need contact with others in their position.
Diane: There's only one of me, and that's why I suspect the other librarians [and I] get together, because those are the people who know what you are struggling with. There's nobody in our school building who knows what I'm struggling with. We are little isolated pods and when you are trying to make changes, it isolates you more.

Tere: We librarians get together once a month to have a support. We get together as much as we can, and we try to do things for each other. We share books, we talk about books and policies. Maybe twice a month we get together, and we do things that are of importance and of concern to our jobs.

Diane has also joined in an alliance with the Music and Art specialists in her school. They often discuss their feelings about being suspect for having a different role in the school from that of the traditional classroom teacher. Diane suggested that the specialists are viewed as "second-class citizens."

Diane: I do a lot of talking about teaching with the Art person and the Music person because our rooms are close together, because we are the second-class citizens. I think there is still the stigma of that. I don't have a classroom so what could I possibly be doing all day long, because I'm not scheduled in the old-fashioned kind of way. We talk a lot about teaching, who's a good one, and things that we see. We're in a position of working with teachers and children from different classrooms and having a kind of handle or observations to make on teacher style and the result on the child.

Thama and Karen, the middle school library media specialists, don't seem to be as concerned with isolation. Karen believes that her involvement in team and department meetings in her school prevents the feeling of isolation. Her support group is made up of the teachers with whom she works. There is only one other certified school library media specialist in her district, and although they have a "very good working relationship," they are "very different from each other." She is friendly toward and has a "good rapport" with the non-certified library media specialists in her district, but she does not turn to this group for professional support.

Thama defined her support group as the individuals in her middle school building, singling out the curriculum coordinator who worked closely with her during the initial development of the library media center. Although the school library media specialists in Thama's large city school district meet once a month, she doesn't feel particularly
close to any of them except the library media specialist from the middle school where she previously taught French.

The relationship with teachers mirrors the findings on collaboration. All teachers interviewed commented on the helpfulness of their school library media specialists. The teachers appear to like the specialists and believe the specialists have a good rapport with the faculty. There does not appear to be any animosity between the teachers and the specialists. All the teachers are comfortable asking their school library media specialists for assistance. However, only Karen’s teachers admitted that they automatically turned to her when they were designing a unit or project.

Thama asserted that her relationship was stronger with her teachers several years ago when she did more for them, tasks that were not related to her position and things that they could have easily done for themselves. Still, they have a friendly relationship and do talk about educational issues which affect King Middle School.

Although Tere believes she and her teachers are good friends, she is concerned that they do not view her as an equal.

Tere I see myself as an equal to them. I have the same requirements. I have to have a certain background to be able to be in this position. They don’t see it that way. You will find, if you ask everybody, you will find that. It’s not that they don’t see me as a professional. We can share and we can talk, but they just don’t see it. It takes time. Some of them do. But we are all close friends and we have a good rapport and relationship.

Diane contends that she is, at times, perplexed by the professional relationship with her teachers. Asked whether she feels she has a pretty good relationship with the teachers, she stated,

Diane It depends on the teacher. I think I’m friendly with everybody, but I think it could be a lot better than it is. I don’t know what or how. [We’re working in] such a demanding school....

Regardless of how they perceive their acceptance by the teachers, the school library media specialists make it a point to remain open to teachers’ ideas and requests
and to present the center as "an inviting place." These actions encourage opportunities for teachers to work professionally with their school library media specialists and to come in to the center to browse and visit.

**Rewards**

Not surprisingly, each of these school library media specialists described the reward for their labors as the knowledge that they themselves have influenced the learning of the children with whom they work. Their rewards are intrinsic. Lortie (1975) describes psychic or intrinsic rewards as those which "consist entirely of subjective valuations made in the course of work engagement; their subjectivity means that they vary from person to person. But they are also constrained by the nature of the occupation and its tasks...." (p. 101). He contends that "cultural and structural aspects of the occupation influence teachers to emphasize psychic rewards in their work. The cultural influences stem from a long tradition of teaching as service...." (Lortie, 1975, p. 101). School library media specialists also have a strong service orientation. Therefore, it is not surprising that the rewards they mentioned are intrinsic.

Johnson (1990) concluded that teachers' rewards are realized when they can observe that they have influenced the learning of others. "The ultimate reward that teachers seek appears in fact to be quite simple: the opportunity to teach well and to know it matters" (p. 34).

The four specialists expressed the gratification they received from their jobs in very much the same way. It is important to them that what they do matters.

Thama and Tere considered their influence on their students to be their primary reward. Thama remarked, "The reward is watching [the students] grow and watching them feel comfortable using materials and feeling that they have a real strong handle on [knowing where to find information]." Thama believes that her strength as an
information specialist and facilitator is rewarded as she observes her students using the techniques that she has taught them for accessing information.

Tere takes pride in observing her students developing a love of books, an appreciation that she has tried to instill in even the youngest students. Tere exclaimed, "Oh, the children. The children are so wonderful, especially the younger children. After you show them the library they just love to come here and look at the books."

Diane and Karen include the teachers in their realm of influence. Karen’s goal is to interest others in the school library media center collection and the possibilities those materials hold. She encourages the teachers and students to use the center, again and again. When Karen reflected on her rewards she stated, "The kids come back.... Really and truly, the teachers and the kids coming back say a lot, I think."

Diane’s reward is knowing that she has influenced the growth and learning not only of the children but also of the teachers she serves.

Diane [My reward is in] putting people and materials and things together and watching learning take place. It’s thinking, ah-ha, because of this or this or this, I had an influence that this has happened. When I share books with children, when I watch them react, when they enjoy it or when they cry or when we have an incredible discussion about something, my reward is watching. My reward is knowing I was the reason why this happened. I’m the reason why they know this book. I’m the reason why they are thinking about it. My reward is seeing how something I know and have shared can affect someone else.

Summary of Contextual Factors

Support can be expressed in several ways, verbally and through actions. The principals in this study stated that they valued their library media specialists as professionals. However, all four specialists have not observed that support and appreciation to be overly apparent.

The two middle school library media specialists find overt support from the principals more frequently than do the elementary library media specialists. Thama
regards her principal’s support as contributing to her professionalism. She equates his encouraging her to represent their school as a statement of his support. Support to Karen is something that has to be won. She dutifully promotes her program and makes its successes visible to her principal in the hope that more resources will follow.

The principals occasionally interact with the school library media specialists on issues related to the program and the school as a whole, but the specialists do not perceive that the effectiveness of the school library media program is one of their principal’s primary concerns. Karen, again, explains that she tries to make her program visible so it will be one of her principal’s priorities.

Each school district has some type of multicultural policy statement in place. Whether the faculty and administration of Tere’s and Diane’s schools refer to those statements is questionable. Thama’s school revolves around their policy. The faculty and administration of Karen’s school is required to act according to the policy mandated for their district.

The library media specialists vie for resources much the same as anyone else in the school who is in charge of an instructional program. Tere sees a deficit in monies allocated for personnel. Diane finds that the size of her facility limits the effectiveness and efficiency of the program.

Although Thama does not voice great concern about lack of resources, and believes her principal will “negotiate” with her when she requests new materials, she does assert that new materials are needed. Of the library media center holdings in the four schools in this study, the collection in Thama’s school, seemed to me to be the one most in need of updating. Books are worn and many reference sets are incomplete with missing volumes.

All four of the school library media specialists use monies from their over-all operating budget to purchase multicultural materials. None of the districts have allocated special funds for this purpose.

150
The library media specialists and the teachers in all the schools in this study have a good working relationship, but some relationships are better than others.

The elementary school library media specialists have strong professional relationships with their peers, the other library media specialists in their district. They do not believe that they enjoy a similar relationship with all the teachers in their school. Even though everyone is friendly toward each other, the elementary school library media specialists do not sense that they are viewed as equals in the profession by many of the teachers.

On the other hand, the middle school library media specialists have a good professional and social relationship with the teachers in their buildings. They have not cultivated support from their peers in the library media profession in their districts, but have built relationships with the teachers in their middle schools.

All four specialists continue in their positions because they know that ultimately what they do will affect the learning of those they serve. Moral support may not be as frequently provided as these women would like, the resources for their programs may be limited, and the opportunity to collaborate may not be as available as often to some of them. But, as long as their labor manifests itself in the learning of others and some of the fruits of their labors are visible to the school library media specialists, they believe their work is worth their effort.
Professional Development

Question 3: How do these school library media specialists pursue their own continuing professional development to enable them in the above roles and responsibilities and how do they influence the professional development of others?

The professional development of the school library media specialist is in a state of flux. The profession is changing (Craver, 1994). Extensive amounts of information are rapidly becoming available through various delivery systems. The library media specialists are the information specialists in their schools and must stay informed. It is important that they are knowledgeable about the current trends and issues in education as well as in library media. They must be able to manage in the midst of an information explosion in a society whose population is becoming more and more diverse. These specialists have to be open to and accepting of change if they are to remain effective in their positions.

They also need to change and grow themselves. Personal and professional growth are connected, and the school library media specialists in this study take advantage of opportunities to develop and refine their professional skills as well as tailor who they are personally. These school library media specialists are excited about learning.

Thama enjoys learning and believes that when she can learn something on her own, when she can search out answers and discover solutions, learning becomes more valuable to her. Karen professed, “I love learning.... I’ve known it all my life. Every new book, every new topic is fun for me.” Tere has an eagerness to learn and has an excitement in her voice when she talks about how she has grown.

Tere  I feel I’m so much better than I was six years ago. I have better control of the classes, I know the curriculum so much better, and I have grown a tremendous amount. I’m always looking for something different to teach
and learn. I just cannot be stagnant. I just cannot be contented to be doing the same thing.

Diane seemed to project the same enthusiasm when she talked about her need to learn.

Diane I like to know things. When I was taking classes and learned something new, I'd think, "If I hadn't taken this class I wouldn't have known that. I'm sure a better person for this." I'm probably not a perpetual kind of student, but I'm interested in a lot of things. I say "yes" to more things just because they're interesting.

These school library media specialists stay informed by associating with peers, reading professional journals, participating in professional organizations, and serving on school and local committees. They attend conferences and inservice programs.

Thama, Karen and Tere enroll in university courses, Diane teaches university courses.

They present, preside, and make policy at professional organization conferences. Their professional and personal development is on-going, ever-evolving.

**Professional Growth**

Wigginton (1985) believes the best teachers are always engaged in professional growth.

The best teachers I know are always actively involved in the process of becoming better teachers. Knowing that they may never be as good as they should be; and knowing that despite all they do, there will always be those students who will fall between the cracks, never touched or influenced in a positive way by their efforts; and knowing that they are human and that there will always be some students they will like more than others, despite themselves; and knowing that they will continue to make mistakes they will regret — they persist, determined if not to become the best teachers around, then at least to become better, year after year, in the practice of their craft. They never stand still. They never stop dead in their tracks. They grow, and that growth is observable. (p. 275)

If the best teachers are always engaged in professional growth, so too are the best school library media specialists. These four specialists are self-renewing individuals.
who keep themselves informed on trends and issues in the field of library media and education, in general. They are involved in a variety of activities that influence their field and the teaching and learning in their schools. These women are consciously involved in their own professional development and in helping their teachers develop professionally.

**Participation in Courses and Inservice Activities**

Diane, Tere, Thama and Karen are always learning. If any professional development activities are offered in their districts, they often take advantage of the opportunity to learn and participate in them. They also take courses at the local university. Diane teaches courses at the local university and its regional campuses. Diane views her college teaching as professional development.

Diane: I teach at [the university] and that’s professional development for me because I have to get to know what I’m teaching. That keeps me going. I’ve taught reference and I’m teaching children’s literature now and I’ll be teaching children’s literature next fall.

When asked if they found the professional development activities for teachers offered by the district relevant to their work, all the library media specialists said that they believed such activities are relevant. All the programs related to dealing with students and understanding their actions are as relevant to the school library media specialists as library, audiovisual, and literature-related programs because, the library media specialists, too, have the students as their main concern.

Diane has attended district programs on gender equity. She believes this will make her more aware of who she calls on and directs her attention to when she is teaching.

Diane: Gender related issues will be an emphasis in our district this year. They’ve started doing gender-bias workshops and are sending people to various places and raising teachers’ consciousness on how we do discriminate
against the sexes. I think it will be eye-opening. How we call on boys more than girls. They are planning to have people come in and tally things while you are teaching to make you aware of your actions that might be bias. There are more boys proportionately in our school, so the outcome will be interesting to see.

The professional development activities at Thama's middle school relate to what is occurring at the middle school at present and are usually led by her colleagues. She contends the programs are valuable to her because they are connected to what is going on in her school.

Thama We're more inclined to put on our own [professional development programs] simply because of the nature of the school [alternative - international studies] and the expertise that is here. We often present various types of mini-lessons. The CBE [competency based education] teachers have led the programs on testing, other groups have presented portfolios. The expertise is here and we share that with one another.

Tere tries to take at least one course at the university level or attend a professional development program provided by the district each year.

Tere I feel to be able to keep up I have to do that. I don't take only literature courses. I have taken the alcohol and drug abuse courses. I have taken some classroom management classes, whatever is offered that I feel will be helpful. This spring I'll be taking Internet training through MECC [Minnesota Educational Computing Corporation]. I go after school, on my own, which is fine. I have no problem with that.

Karen attends professional development programs in her district and confides that she has seen both relevant and irrelevant programs offered in the name of professional development.

Karen We've had inservice directors who have planned things for everybody — for the good of the cause, whether you liked it or not — and there was an outcry over that. And then they would go back to letting teachers choose their own [programs]. Then we would have building level inservice for the good of the cause — middle school kinds of things. However, the years that they did for the good of the cause, they introduced TESA [Teacher Expectation - Student Achievement] to our district and I probably wouldn't have gotten involved — and I'm a strong believer in TESA. Then they provided TRIBES and there are some useful points in TRIBES. So some of the all-district programs are great. We took World of Difference. That was
offered to everybody. This year I took conflict mediation with students mediating with each other. So some of them have been very good.

State and National Professional Involvement

These school library media specialists are on various professional committees and hold offices on some of them. Most of these committees are formal, education-related groups.

All are members of the state library media association. All attend professional association conferences on the state and/or national levels.

Diane I'm going to go to AASL [American Association of School Librarians conference] in Indianapolis, and I went when it was in Baltimore. I think those national conferences are where you get so much so quickly. Even if you go to something that you don't like, you see what the world is talking about in your field.

Karen, Thama, and Diane have presented programs at professional conferences and have held positions on the governing boards of professional organizations.

Although she has never held office or presented programs, Tere has worked at state conferences, assisting at registration, and presiding over sessions. She meets people in the profession and builds a network of colleagues by volunteering her services at these conferences and regional meetings.

Diane realizes the importance of making choices in professional commitments.

Diane I usually go to ALA [American Library Association conference]. That's the best for my money. I'm on the International Relations Committee. I was asked to be the chair of it, but I declined. That committee did zipp-o. I felt like it was a waste of my time.

I'm on the board of [the state organization], and that is good because it lets me see what's going on in the state, and I get to talk to different people who are doing the same kind of thing.

Karen has expanded her involvement in professional organizations to include state and national memberships in reading (International Reading Association) and English (National Council of Teachers of English) educational organizations. She has
served on the governance boards of these organizations and has presented at their conferences.

Local Involvement

Attendance at faculty meetings helps the school library media specialists feel that they are contributing members of the school community. They take part in decision-making and offer their input into school policy. As they interact with teachers and staff, they become aware of what issues are important and have a forum to air their concerns. They learn how the library media program can benefit from decisions made at these meetings and how they can shape the program to benefit others.

As a professional, the school library media specialist can achieve credibility by being an interested and active member of the faculty, concerned with the school as a whole. When necessary, the library media specialists in this study report on library concerns and activities at faculty meetings, reminding the teaching faculty about programs and procedures. The specialists may not give reports at every meeting, but still, they are in attendance to stay informed about what is happening in their schools.

Thama uses faculty meetings to voice a variety of concerns. When asked how she participates in faculty meetings, she said,

Thama  It depends. If [the teachers] have screwed up machines, I get on my soapbox and I say, “Look guys...” Or if there are some new materials that I want the teachers to take a look at, I’ll share that with them. If I’m working on a committee for like, the United Negro College Fund, I’ll plug in to that.

All four school library media specialists have at times been in attendance at the faculty meetings to report on some of their other professional responsibilities. These women are members of committees in the district and keep their colleagues attuned to the committees’ agendas.
As chairperson of the language arts committee, Karen brings information to the teachers on the progress of the new state curriculum initiative. Tere may report on the completion of the author visit arrangements or on what has occurred at a multicultural committee meeting which she attended.

One of Tere’s teachers commented on her involvement on multicultural committees. She stated,

[Tere] serves on every multicultural committee that we’ve got here because she’s got more of a varied background than a lot of us do and I think it feels more at home to her. She lets us know what’s going on with the committees.

Diane doesn’t always have something urgent to report as the library media specialist, but she does have other roles and needs to keep the faculty updated on matters related to them. She said,

Diane I’m on the career ed. committee. I’m the local teacher’s association rep. for my building, and I do other things. So while there’s a lot of information that I impart, it is from the different things I do, not just the library.

As a pipeline to various committees in their districts, the school library media specialists are seen by others as those in-the-know, as professionals interested not only in the library media center, but also in the organizational process and in education in general. One of Diane’s teachers stated, “She’s very involved throughout the district, she’s on lots of committees, she’s on North Central, she’s involved with career ed. She comes back and shares the information with us.”

This committee work also helps the school library media specialists to understand the school infrastructure and to become aware of how district policies and actions may affect their position and program. They are active contributors to making school-wide decisions. Thama’s principal stated, “[Thama] has been on the administrative building council as an advisory member to make sure that she is actually engaged in things that are going on within the building.”
Diane’s principal turns to Diane for information about various committee proceedings and how these committees are affecting the school. He stated,

She is one of the people who turns up on every committee. She’s always on our [school] council which is the school governance group, she’s one of the three permanent members of that. She is somebody who I rely on for information about what is happening in the school. She is one of the people here who sees the whole picture, rather than just a piece of it.

All four library media specialists have a stake in the entire organization and are willing representatives of their schools.

Reading and Writing for Professional Growth

All of the school library media specialists stay current and develop professionally by reading professional journals. Each specialist mentioned at least five journals that she perused or read in detail each month. Many of these journals contain book reviews and reports on new products.


Diane, Karen, and Thama have written articles on the subject of school library media and/or children’s literature for professional journals. Tere does not write articles for the profession. She seems to be a bit apprehensive about writing and stated, “I’m writer-shy. I’m taking an English course and that’s what the teacher said. She said, ‘You’re just lacking confidence.’ My dream would be to be an excellent writer.”
Diane is a regular contributor of book reviews and case studies of children's experiences with children's literature to a nationally recognized publication of the College of Education of the local university. She has also written chapters on the libraries in literature-based schools in professional books.

Thama has written an article about multicultural libraries which has not yet been published. She was asked by the editor of the state library media organization publication to write this article after he attended a workshop she presented on the subject.

Karen's writing has been published numerous times. She seems more matter-of-fact than boastful as she rattles off the list of her publications. She sees writing as one part of her professional duties and one she likes to do.

Karen  I've had an article published in *The Book Report*. I just sent one last week to *The WEB*. I wrote an article on poetry for [the state reading journal.] I've had a couple articles published in [the state library media publication]. I had an article on bibliotherapy published in *Middle School Counselor's Handbook*. The science teacher just wrote a chapter for a textbook and I did the language arts tie-in for that and the bibliography and activities to extend it.

Reading, writing, attending conferences and meetings, taking courses, presenting programs: these women are constantly developing professionally and personally.

**Contributing to the Professional Growth of Others**

School library media specialists are in a position to influence the professional development of their faculty. Alerting teachers to new instructional materials, professional journal articles, and the latest developments in information technology, these specialists can provide a resource for inquiry and growth. The school library media specialist may introduce teachers to pedagogy and theory through the materials they suggest for perusal. They may pose questions and share ideas for discussion and reflection when they present new information to their teachers. This sharing of
resources can be an important part of the school library media specialist’s job and is considered within the roles of information specialist and instructional consultant.

**Resource and Information Sharing**

The school library media specialists are committed to creating and perpetuating a channel of communication between themselves and their colleagues. These women alert their teachers to new books and materials to broaden the teachers’ knowledge of children’s literature that has been well received by reviewers and other professionals. They make a point of encouraging teachers to come to them for assistance in finding out about materials, books, and techniques that have been successful with children. They alert teachers to a variety of items through word of mouth, memos, bibliographies, presentations at faculty meetings, and newsletters.

Each school library media specialist either has a newsletter devoted to the library media program or supplies a column to a school newsletter. These newsletters are printed and distributed at Greenwood Middle School and at King Middle School on a quarterly basis, and occasionally at the two elementary schools. More frequently distributed to the teachers are memos about new books and materials in the center.

The school library media specialists find out and keep in mind what individual teachers are doing in their classrooms and help them build their knowledge of good books and/or techniques appropriate for their activities. They place books in individual teacher’s mailboxes or inform teachers of articles in professional journals.

Tere’s teachers seem to appreciate her efforts in alerting them to professional publications and the individual attention she gives them when recommending items specific to the lessons they are teaching. One of the teachers commented,

She always alerts us to publications, like *Instructor* and *Mailbox*, and she brings [them] around, and she starts a routing slip, and she will hand different things to different people. A couple of years ago I was developing
a unit on the Rain Forest, and every time she found something on that she would bring it to me.

Another teacher commented,

She has a whole section in the library of professional resource books. We get a couple of professional magazines and a lot of books. She has The WEBS. She gives us issues of magazines that we might be interested in. She'll make sure we are aware of professional activities, too.

Diane makes sure the table of contents of each of the professional journals she receives at the school library media center is photocopied and sends copies to each teacher. The teachers can check the title of any article which they are interested in reading, and Diane will have the article copied for them. One of Diane's teachers describes Diane's efforts to assist the teacher's professional growth.

[She] has expertise and wonderful knowledge of children's literature and is continually keeping up on new books and presenting them to me in interesting ways. When that list comes around and I can look at that table of contents of the six journals and say, "I want this one and this one and this one." It forces me to think, "Yeah, I need to read these."

Thama gives her colleagues lists of new books at faculty meetings and invites them to visit the center to browse through the new additions. Karen brings new materials to every faculty meeting and committee meeting she attends. She sends bibliographies to teachers and displays new items in the library media center.

A teacher at Karen's school stated, "She sends me books that I might be interested in, or she helps me if I'm doing a unit. She just sends me neat articles. She's just kind of in there always stirring stuff up."

Tere makes it a point to get books into the hands of the teachers she knows might use them. She doesn't like to take up time at meetings with book introductions, but does take the time to present books to individual teachers.

Tere I can stand there [at the faculty meeting] for five minutes and talk to them about it, and yeah, that's great, but that's it. If I put the books in their hands and say, "Look, this is wonderful...," if they have the book in front of
them, they are going to look at it. And they make note, and they put it in their lesson plans for next time.

All of the school library media specialists in this study introduce their teachers to the works of specific authors which they believe will enrich the units the teachers are presenting. One of Karen’s teachers remarked,

She sends us books, makes us aware of different stories in books. She got me into Gary Soto this year. He’s a Hispanic author and it’s been a real asset to my class. It’s like she sows the seeds. She goes around and says, “You may like this author. Try this one, try this one.” She’s just so open about that stuff that you try it and all of a sudden the kids love them, and yeah, it was worthwhile. Gary Soto is probably not one I would have picked up on my own, but she made me aware of him.

At all the schools, books and new materials are introduced to students and teachers through displays created by the school library media specialists. One of Karen’s teachers commented,

She has these displays on the other side of the circulation desk that always have the new stuff, so every time I bring my class in that’s the first place I go. It’s just kind of nice that that is a permanent collection of new stuff. She sends people new stuff. She knew that I was really into Pablo Neruda and she got a biography on him and just sent it to me.

Besides supplying bibliographies and producing displays, Diane presents new materials to her teachers as a group at an occasional noon-time gathering in the library media center. This is where the teachers and library media specialist can carry on conversations about the content of the materials and how they might be used in the classroom. She refers to this event as “Literature and Lunch.” She explained, “The teachers will come down at lunch time and bring their lunch and serve dessert, and I’ll have book talks about the new things that [have arrived at the center].”

Building a Professional Development Materials Collection

Besides alerting teachers to professional development materials and routing information to them, all the school library media specialists have developed and
maintain a professional materials reading shelf in their centers. The collections have been developed in a variety of ways.

Thama's collection for her alternative international studies middle school is made up primarily of donated materials, free materials that she has gotten at conferences, and items that the district's library media central office has provided. When asked if the materials have a multicultural focus, she stated, "I think it comes down to that in the end. That may not be the focus, but there's always something multicultural about it."

Tere uses monies from her budget to buy materials for the permanent collection, usually depending on the information she has obtained at conferences and through reviews to select appropriate additions. Collection development is left up to her, with teachers seldom suggesting materials to purchase.

Karen personally selects a number of the items on her center's professional reading shelf. Often teachers request items. During the 1993-1994 school year Karen's superintendent committed $20,000 that would be divided among seven school buildings for language arts professional development materials (print and nonprint). These are housed in the library media centers at each school in the district. Karen was on the committee which was responsible for selecting the items for the over-all collection.

Diane's professional development collection is made up of donated materials and purchased materials that are requested by teachers or selected from reviews Diane has read. A recent addition is a set of science and math teaching guides which was donated by a group of teachers who had attended a workshop and received the materials as part of their participation. The teachers believed the materials would be useful for the entire school and regarded the library media center's professional collection area as the place where all teachers in the building would have the best access to them.

Diane has come to the conclusion from observing the use of the professional development collection over the years that the materials that are the most popular are
those that have practical classroom application, those which have ideas for student activities and pages that can be duplicated for classroom distribution.

**Providing Professional Development**

Along with their own development and the sharing of resources with other faculty in their schools, the library media specialists promote and provide more direct professional development for others. Lieberman, Saxl, and Miles (1988) contend that, “providing and facilitating for other people in the school offers opportunities for learning how to work with others, how to channel one’s time, how to develop one’s own abilities — to stretch both intellectually and personally” (p.152). These four women seem to enjoy supporting others in their professional growth.

Karen confessed that her favorite part of being involved with her colleagues’ professional development is “when they grab hold [of an idea I present] and I can see them take off with it.” Diane offered three reasons for being involved in the professional development process of others. She stated, “I like it because it’s interesting to me because I like learning. I like putting people in situations where they can learn new things. I like creating that learning environment and that’s what you can do with staff development.”

Not only does Diane work informally with teachers on their development, but she also holds a formal role in the [district’s] Educational Association’s professional development program. She is responsible for distributing money to teachers who wish to pursue professional development activities outside the district. Diane’s desire for organization was the ulterior motive for volunteering to be responsible for the individual staff development fund for the Association.

Diane They have $3000 that they give to teachers for staff development, up to $100 each. You can request $100 and they pay registration. Well, I’m going to be in charge of the $3000 next year. The reason I’m doing it is because the person who did it before annoyed me so much because he’d
never tell anyone whether they had been approved or not. He was very unorganized.

Thama also has a formal part in the professional development of her colleagues. She is a member of the instructional support team which meets monthly to recommend and develop professional development activities. The committee surveys their colleagues for desired topics for professional development. The committee discusses the topics, then attends a faculty meeting to present a list of professional development choices to the staff. When three of the choices are selected, the team then plans for the professional development programs and develops the curriculum for them.

Diane and Thama are involved in informal professional development activities, as are Tere and Karen. They all incorporate modeling, coaching, and supporting in their jobs. These professional development activities are considered “job-embedded” (Hite & Howey, 1977). They are not separated and singled out from the school library media specialists’ daily duties. Job-embedded professional development activities are “...those planned activities which can be reasonably incorporated within one’s normal instructional load to further professional development....” (Hite & Howey, 1977, p.48).

Diane, Karen and Tere meet with their teachers to prepare them for the author visits they arrange. A teacher in Tere’s school stated, “Tere is the heart of the author visits.... She gives us suggestions [for integrated activities] and then supports us as we implement them.” At these meetings Diane uses teaching techniques that she believes the teachers can transfer when they are teaching their own students.

Diane  When we have author visits, I do some kinds of things, some modeling kinds of activities that teachers can do in classrooms.... One of the interesting things that I do, I get something about the author because I have all these great quotes from authors and when it is an author study or whatever, I Xerox them and cut them up and put them on index cards. And I put them in numerical order, and I pass them out to teachers.

We then read them, so each teacher is reading one thing about this person, so it involves them and so they are listening to each other read. It’s getting the information out, it’s biographical, they are getting to know about this person. And when I talk about modeling, I know of several teachers
who have taken that technique and either done it with students or have done it in other workshops. I've done it because I want to involve the audience in participating in it.

One of Diane's teachers also commented on the modeling Diane does as she teaches the students. The teacher stated, "She's an excellent teacher. I learn so much from her when she's doing a lesson with the class or when she is working with small groups."

Modeling is something Thama also does. For example, she modeled the teaching techniques for developing listening skills through the use of video that she learned when she was a Fellow at Harvard University during the summer of 1992. She modeled the technique, then coached the teachers who were uncertain that the technique would work for them.

Because Karen is perceived as a "master teacher" by her colleagues, her teaching techniques are often observed as a model for the classroom. When asked, "How does the school library media specialist help you as a teacher?" one teacher replied,

In a lot of ways. One is modeling. When [Karen] works with a group, I can watch her and get some ideas. She does a lot with multi-genre kinds of things, very Whole Language kinds of things that help me to enrich what I do. For example, if she is wearing an outfit for the day related to the lesson, to jazz up the lesson, then that gives me the idea that I can do that in my classroom. There's a lot of role modeling.

Another teacher responded,

[Karen's] taught me a lot. I look at her as a real master teacher. She could teach anything and everything. She is a consummate teacher. She teaches my classes when I bring them in for book talks. She teaches a library science unit to my kids every week. That teaches me how to teach. It really is nice to have someone in your school that you can actually watch who is such a good teacher.

Of all the school library media specialists in this study, Karen is the one most involved in the direct professional development of her teachers. Her teachers realize she is acting to develop their knowledge and skills as she models lessons for them. The
teachers in the other schools comment on the fact that their library media specialists are good teachers. They believe they get ideas from watching their library media specialists teach. However, they view their library media specialists more as resources and not as instructional consultants or professional development specialists who are intentionally presenting these techniques for the teachers’ professional growth.

Karen’s teachers appreciate her knowledge of teaching and her willingness to share what she knows with them. One teacher credits Karen with introducing her to a different philosophy of teaching. She stated,

First thing she did when I came in as a new teacher and didn’t like the basals, she sort of got me into Whole Language by telling me to just read out loud to kids, and that it was OK to do that. I didn’t know that, and that has opened up a whole new world for me.

This teacher is now teaching other teachers about Whole Language and uses Karen’s expertise as part of the professional development experience she offers to her class. She said,

I teach a class for teachers in using Whole Language. It’s called Literature Lasts, and [Karen’s] in there all the time. She comes in and does presentations for me. She does book talks. She brings in the authors — she’s always on that committee. She’s been on our language arts curriculum committee forever. She knows what’s needed. She’s been a real asset in pushing us in a direction that is research-based and educationally sound. She knows her stuff.

What Karen, Tere, Thama, and Diane all do is to support their teachers, which in turn empowers the teachers to grow professionally. None of these specialists outwardly promotes herself as an expert in professional development. When asked to describe how Karen helps teachers in their own development, a teacher explained,

I would say that it [professional development] is gentle, that it is subtle. She likes to provide direction when she can. She doesn’t assume too much in doing that, but she does a lot of times encourage us to use things in certain ways, or to use certain materials, or to try something new... so then it’s not so hard and you’re not out on your own trying something. I would say she is helpful in professional development, particularly in the area of Whole
Language. People are nervous using Whole Language techniques. They haven’t done a lot of that. She can get the materials and give advice and help. Literally, she comes in the room with you.

A teacher in Tere’s school stated, “She is constantly encouraging us by her own awareness. She does it in a very unintimidating way. She guides us and it’s not threatening.”

School Library Media Specialists as Leaders

These four exemplary school library media specialists are learners and leaders. They are aware of their own knowledge and are able to make connections between what they know and how this knowledge can benefit the rest of the school, whether it be the students, the teachers, or the educational program.

Lieberman, Saxl, and Miles (1988) described the characteristics they perceive to be held by “teacher-leaders.” They reported that leaders have a broad range of skills, abilities, and experiences. They have experience in “administrative and organizational skills,” have been involved in curriculum development, are risk-takers, and possess interpersonal skills which allow them to be “strong, yet caring and compassionate” (p. 150). These characteristics can be compared to those characteristics which the four women in this study exhibit.

Lieberman, Saxl, and Miles (1988) continued their characterization by describing the teacher-leaders as learners.

Their enthusiasm for learning was made manifest by an impressive array of academic pursuits and accomplishments. They held many academic degrees, as well as having attended a broad spectrum of courses, conferences, and workshops on topics as diverse as conflict resolution, teacher effectiveness, and adult development. (p. 150)

All of these school library media specialists have advanced degrees and see themselves as life-long learners. Their participation on committees, at conferences, in workshops and courses have allowed them to develop personally and professionally.
The leaders Lieberman, Saxl, and Miles studied "shared the skill of being proactive, having a bias for action" (1988, p. 158). One of Diane’s teachers boasted about her propensity for bringing new ideas and materials to her teachers and students.

Just recently we did a big grant, and she read about this interesting camera she thought we could use in it, and she rented one for a few weeks. She’s always finding things like that. She learns about new things and brings them to us and the kids. She is right on top of things.

All of these school library media specialists are proactive in their work. Thama and Tere are the first to introduce their teachers to new books and references materials, often walking down to the teachers’ rooms with the item in hand. Diane exclaimed, “I initiate.” She is always suggesting ideas for programs and units. Karen stated, “I go to the team and department meetings and make a proactive statement in being involved.” In other words, she takes the first step. Each school library media specialist takes the first step. These four women are all initiators.

Summary of Professional Development

These school library media specialists are energetic, motivated, and interested individuals. They are enthusiastic about learning and about growing intellectually. To grow, they become involved in a variety of professional development activities offered by their school districts and seek out opportunities provided by other agencies. They take classes and teach classes. They plan professional development activities and participate in professional development activities.

Meetings fill the schedules of these school library media specialists. Whether they attend building-wide, district-wide, local or national professional meetings, they participate on a variety of levels in a variety of capacities.

Thama, Diane, and Karen write about their experiences as school library media specialists as well as read professional journals to keep informed about the experiences
of others in their field. Professional reading is considered by all the school library media specialists to be part of their job.

The four women in this study recognize the importance of sharing resources and information with their faculty. They encourage teacher inquiry as they introduce their colleagues to new materials.

These library media specialists have taken it upon themselves to build a professional collection of materials in their schools to have on hand for their colleagues’ use. Tere and Diane have built collections with funds from their total operating budget. Thama’s collection has grown from donations as well as from purchases. The collection at Karen’s school has recently expanded due to a large district grant.

All four school library media specialists participate in direct professional development activities as they model, support, or coach their teachers on techniques to use when presenting information to their students. Karen, Diane, and Tere have demonstrated techniques found useful in presenting literature, Thama has modeled teaching techniques related to the use of technology and has coached colleagues as they implement what she has presented and modeled.

These women are constantly learning. They like being involved in their own education. They want to grow and they want their teachers and students to grow as well.
The Library Media Specialist's Perception, Promotion, and Implementation of Multicultural Literature

Question 4: How do these school library media specialists define, justify, promote, and use multicultural literature in their schools?

A particular goal of many public schools in the last five to ten years has been to acquaint their students with a broader view of the people who inhabit the United States and the world. A number of schools have added multicultural education to their curriculum (Brown, 1992; Sleeter, 1992). In some schools, multicultural literature is being used as one vehicle for introducing students and teachers to a variety of cultures (Johnson & Smith, 1993; Shorey, 1990).

Definition of Multicultural Literature

The label “multicultural literature” means different things to different people. As stated previously in the literature review, Kruse (1992) considered multicultural literature as “books by and about people of color” (p. 30). Yokoto (1993) suggested it is “literature that represents any distinct cultural group through accurate portrayal and rich detail” (p. 157). Bishop (1992) stated that multicultural literature is “literature by and about people who are members of groups considered to be outside the socio-political mainstream of the United States” (p. 39).

When asked to define “multicultural literature,” Karen’s immediate definition focused on the people and the many aspects of various cultures. “Multicultural literature depicts people of many cultures and presents them in a way that the reader learns much about them - from religion to food and clothing to holidays to folklore.”

Tere believes that multicultural literature deals with a “wider cultural background than just the ethnicity [of a group].” She stated that multicultural literature is literature
that “brings to children the feelings and the knowledge and the beliefs of other groups of people within our own country or outside the United States.”

Diane views multicultural literature as that which presents the “diversification of our culture” in the United States as well as presenting people from different cultures in other countries around the world. She contends that multicultural literature “goes beyond describing the ethnicity of a particular culture to include people from various regions, what those cultures do, how they are different and alike.”

Thama considers books that present various cultures written by people of those cultures to be multicultural literature. She looks for books which will develop a reader’s sensitivity to differences, books that will help develop a multicultural perspective in an individual.

All four of the school library media specialists in this study consider literature about regional cultures such as Appalachia and religious persuasions such as Judaism to be within the realm of their definitions of multicultural literature. They do not include homosexuals or the handicapped within their definitions. Literature about the handicapped is presented by all the library media specialists in this study, but it is not considered by them to be multicultural in and of itself. Tere, Karen, and Thama categorize these two groups, homosexuals and the handicapped, as “subcultures.” Diane categorizes the handicapped as a subculture, but doesn’t consider homosexuality in that category, but rather in the category of “sexual preference.” Although all of the school library media specialists have introduced contemporary issues and concerns to their students, they have not dealt with homosexuality.

Use of Multicultural Literature

Using multicultural literature is not a new practice for these school library media specialists. Each believes that she has always used multicultural literature to some
degree in her lessons. Karen’s first job was in a Hispanic community where she was always looking for books to use that depicted positive images of Hispanics. When she moved to her present position, she began searching for and purchasing literature and materials which represented the African-American culture. Although Karen has “always” used multicultural literature she admitted that some of the materials available today are of much better quality than those she found twenty years ago.

Karen I think we, librarians, probably always have incorporated multicultural literature into our lessons. Now that it’s very much in the public eye, teachers are trying to be more tuned in to it. Looking for better things, I think that’s the library key. Not just to purchase blindly, but to really look for a literature standard. Maybe that sounds a little pompous, but I don’t want to buy stuff that’s out just because the cover or whatever is multicultural. I want to look for some quality writing because I think we owe it to kids to show them that’s what we’re trying to teach.

Tere sees her own culture as influencing her practice in using multicultural literature.

Tere I think I have always done it [incorporated multicultural literature into lessons], not as systematically as I do now in the last five or six years, but I have always looked for books that I can incorporate. I guess because I am from a different culture, so I think it has been important. It has always been important to me, so I have always tried to find — if I am doing a story in a particular area — I’m going to look and see what is there [for multicultural literature], what is available.

Thama began her library media career at the international alternative school in which she presently works. Her first task was to develop the collection and program for the library media center to reflect the mission of the school. She relied on her background in comparative literature and French to assist in her selection. She began incorporating multicultural literature into her work on “day one.”

Diane believes that she has never had to try to make a place in her lessons for a multicultural book simply because it’s considered a multicultural book. When she worked as a children’s librarian in a public library in the 1970s she used books with settings and characters that were unfamiliar to the children, Madeline (by Ludwig
Bemelmans), about a little French girl, *Crow Boy* (by Taro Yashima), about a Japanese boy. She believes her use of multicultural literature has been natural, not the result of a conscious decision.

Diane The books have just been there. I think it often happens very subtly. I choose good things with the children and then I end up showing diverse materials. I think that when I read say *Amazing Grace* [by Mary Hoffman] or other books with Black children in them, I don’t say “Oh, look at this Black child.” We just look at the book, at the story. It’s just there. It’s not called attention to. Children don’t mention it. It’s more of an accepted kind of thing.

**Inclusion and Importance of Multicultural Literature**

Each school library media specialist has noticed in the last five to ten years that more multicultural literature is appearing on the market and more teachers are becoming interested in incorporating it into their classroom units. When asked, “Why do you think there is so much of a focus on multicultural literature in the schools at this time,” each woman responded at length. Karen believes that the concern of teachers to promote students’ awareness of the world and what is happening in current events influences the use of multicultural literature.

Karen I would say a lot of things going on in current affairs around the world are making us more aware of what’s happening. When, a bit ago, I referred to the Boat People, I’m not sure how tuned in kids are, but sometimes through the literature, a kid is going to pick up a story and know who the Boat People are from that piece of literature. It may have been their first and only exposure to that term and to that situation. That exposure may motivate them to find out more.

Tere considers the abundance of new multicultural books to be a response to the concern for racial problems and inequities people in the United States have experienced. If children can read about the similarities and differences of others, they can begin to understand and accept those who are from different cultures.

Tere I think somehow in the United States we have come around to realizing that we are the largest multicultural country in the world and that maybe we
have had some problems, and maybe that might be one of the reasons why. We need to look at each other and ourselves and say, “We need to be more understanding of each other.” And I think we in the United States finally realize that it cannot always be a melting pot in which we all mesh. There are different cultures in this country and they are going to remain so.

In Diane’s opinion, there are three phenomena that have influenced the use of multicultural literature in the schools. One is that underrepresented peoples are demanding a voice. There is an increase in literature by authors from the cultures of which they write. Second, is a more widespread acceptance of differences. And third, is the advancement in technology which allows us to be more familiar with the world.

Diane I think it’s that people who have not been heard want to be heard.... There are more writers than there used to be representing [a variety of] cultural perspectives.... Still there are not enough.

And instead of melting, and being like everybody else, it’s more acceptable to be different and to keep your part that makes you unique. It’s becoming OK to be unique. Books are appearing that depict that uniqueness.

I suspect also that technology has had a lot to do [with the interest in other cultures], how much more we can know about people. We are seeing the world. Our world is becoming smaller because we can see, we can know our neighbors and we can know each other no matter how far we are from each other. There’s more knowledge about us and so it’s not as threatening.... And some of us want to find out more about the world we see.

Thama presents a historical perspective on the reason that multicultural literature, and multiculturalism, in general, is a focus in some schools today.

Thama I think it may have started basically with Black people when we would have to always study Eurocentric ideas. Always the great master writers, and it was always a White perspective on everything. It got to the point in the sixties when there was kind of a Black revolution. Blacks decided that we wanted our own literature. We wanted to know about who we were. We wanted to know what we were about. From that explosion developed other ethnic groups wanting that too. From that desire to know came writers writing about their own experiences and their own culture. I think Black Americans are ahead of the game because our needs were greater and we certainly pushed that issue forward in the sixties. The more ethnic groups that are coming over here and the more diversity you find in the educational system the more authentic they’re going to want the materials to be.

I think we all need to know about each other and you know, that feeling of superiority and inferiority, that’s not working anymore. We need to share
with each other, and to accept the fact that we all have things to share and to give each other. We’re finding out about those things in the literature. All the cultures are unique, but we are all human beings, we all have the same needs, basically. We just may have a different way of expressing it.

Each school library media specialist has observed that there is an effort to include aspects of multiculturalism into the curriculum of their school districts and that one way is through exposure to multicultural literature. Each specialist has attempted to scrutinize the underlying reasons for this focus. These women know they need to be knowledgeable about diverse cultures. Many in today’s society are demanding it. They know they need to be aware. And they know that one way to convey information of other cultures is through multicultural literature. These responses reflect what the school library media specialists consider the concerns of the present. They know good quality multicultural literature is being published. They believe that these concerns are being addressed through the multicultural literature that is becoming available. As Taxel (1994) stated, “Like other cultural artifacts, children’s literature is a product of convention that is rooted in, if not determined by, the dominant belief systems and ideologies of the times in which they are created” (p. 98).

**Becoming Multicultural**

Because of the nature of the school in which Thama is employed and because the mission of the school is reflected in all they do, and perhaps because of who Thama is, she volunteered her explanation for what she felt it was to “be” multicultural and what the program at King Middle School tries to encourage.

Thama: I think [being multicultural is] the ability to interact with other cultures, to develop a level of tolerance that allows you a sense of diversity. I guess what we’re looking at with the kids more and more, trying to educate them towards multiculturalism, we’re trying to expand their minds so they are not so narrow-minded and bring them out of themselves and out of their own culture, to experience other cultures. And we say, “it’s OK to be different. We can celebrate the difference.” We can interact with it and not be afraid of it. That’s what we’re looking at as a staff and as a student body, to diversify and to expand our lifestyle and our way of thinking.
Part of being multicultural is being able to look at yourself and say it’s OK. With all the faults and all the differences and all the things you’d like to be or know you won’t be, and then being able to take that kind of viewpoint and look at other people and say, “They are OK too.” With their faults and with their inadequacies and with their pride and with their education; everything that makes up that individual is OK.

**Selection of Materials/Development of Collection**

Knowing oneself also pertains to the way we analyze our views on issues and everyday situations and translate them into actions. We have a better idea of who we are when we reflect on our biases. These women can influence the development of attitudes by the books and materials they choose for their centers. They realize this and perform their responsibility thoughtfully and professionally. Each of the school library media specialists has confronted her biases. When explaining their actions related to the process of selection, they also expressed their beliefs about the phenomenon of bias. No one is bias free. The question of bias was asked specifically about materials selection.

Diane  I try to get in touch with my beliefs so I am very aware that this is where I am on the continuum. I don’t buy simply what I believe, just from my point of view. A person is not bias free. I have these biases, but by knowing what my biases are it enables me to buy a wider range or to pick things that are not just my personal interests.

Karen confronts her own beliefs when selecting materials and knows that she probably still has some biases she hasn’t yet confronted. She admits that much of the literature she chooses reflects what she considers important for students to know to be better informed about the world.

Karen I think we have to be careful that we are not imposing, yet I’m sure we are by the things that we say and do, by the very book selections we put in front of students. As educators, and wanting our kids to keep abreast of what is happening in the world, our choices of literature would reflect our beliefs of what we would want them to know about the world.
Tere believes that her own culture affects her selection of materials. She often wonders if she is purchasing too heavily in the areas where multicultural materials are more prevalent.

Sometimes I have to watch myself. I say, “Am I buying too much?” in the areas that are of so much interest to me. But I’m very fortunate that in this time in life, you know in the schools, that it is very important to get a good background in multicultural literature. I think we all do that one way or another if there are areas which we are very comfortable with. Except I’m also a lot more selective of those materials and more critical. For instance, the other day there was a good review of a folktale from Puerto Rico. I put a question mark around my order form and I’m going to go and look at it at the public library before I order it for my library.

Thama stresses that everyone has biases and that everyone who has the task of developing a collection, if they are honest with themselves, confronts their beliefs when they select materials. She, like Tere, also realizes that her own culture affects her selection decisions.

I carry that [my bias] with me, that’s part of who I am and if I’m looking at materials in a setting that has a lot of Black students, I’m going for that, part of it is because it’s my culture and I can relate to that better and I know what sensitive things might attract or repel. I don’t know if anyone could be so sterile as to be able to select materials and not have that creep in. That’s just part of who we are. I don’t mind that, I don’t make apologies for it. What I try to do, given that, is check with other teachers. So I might have a listing of materials and I’ll say, “well this would be good for the library,” and then I go and I ask, “do you think this is going to work with your students?”

Additional Selection Criteria

No matter how strongly the school library media specialists feel about incorporating multicultural literature into the curriculum, none of them compromise their selection criteria to accommodate a book simply because it is multicultural. Thama looks for, among other things, “good stories, good plots, good themes, and strong characterization” in all the materials she purchases for the school library media center’s collection. She added,
I look at the fact that there are always universal themes, something in every culture about death, marriage, birth, food, clothing. These things are just part of the human race. If it is about a culture other than my own, it doesn’t mean that those things shouldn’t be there and the kids couldn’t at least compare that to their own culture and see a difference or a similarity, so if it’s good literature then it’ll have that in it.

The plot, the story, the theme have to be good if the book is going to grab the kid’s attention. I don’t care how pretty the illustrations are or how accurate the author might write something, if it is not entertaining and if it’s not easily read and if they can’t identify with the characters, then they don’t read it.

Diane also first evaluates a potential multicultural addition to the collection by the criteria she uses for all materials. She stated, “What I tried to ask myself was would I get a book that was mediocre because it was about a Black child? No, of course not... I choose the books for themes, not because they are multicultural.” A good story is important.

Karen looks for books that she defines as good literature before she examines them for their multicultural relevance. However, she often divides her materials order to accommodate multicultural units that teachers have planned for the future. She stated, “Half of the picture books that I order are folklore with the intention that they be used in multicultural units.” With this in mind, she examines a large amount of folklore and chooses what she thinks is of the best quality literature of those books which are available.

Tere selects books with a good story in which she thinks the children have interest. She wants the children in her school to become familiar with authentic multicultural literature, but also believes that it’s important for children to read stories with which they can connect some experiences from their own lives.
**Author perspective.** When evaluating multicultural literature for inclusion into the collection, Tere considers the author’s cultural background and how he or she presents the culture of which he or she is writing. If the author is of a different culture than that which he or she is writing about, Tere looks at the author’s contribution to the area of multicultural literature and decides on the author’s credibility as a writer of accurate multicultural literature.

Tere I will look closely and often buy books if I know that they [the authors] have some background, like V. Aardema. She’s not African, but she has done so many African tales already that I think you can say if V. Aardema is writing an African tale then you know that it is very well researched.

Karen stated that considering an author’s perspective is “pretty important.” She believes that students are more apt to think critically about issues when they have the opportunity to read books presenting various perspectives.

Diane makes it a point to learn about authors and is able to draw on her knowledge as she selects books. Author’s perspective is also important to her. If she comes across an author unknown to her, she knows she won’t order the book until she finds out something about that author.

Diane I know what Walter Dean Myers is going to do. There are authors who I have a history of. That’s when I don’t think about being concerned with perspective. But if it’s someone new then I obviously must get the information.

Thama is the most adamant of the school library media specialists about the author’s background and credentials. As she selects multicultural literature, she looks for “native writers.”

Thama People who can write about their own culture are going to be the most authentic. There are others who have written about other cultures and have done accurate studies, but there is more involved, I think, in representing a culture than just an observance of it. You really would have to be immersed and live it and interact with it. I have done it as a Peace Corps person; I lived two years in Africa, and I was immersed in the culture. I brought away with me many parts of that culture. But still, I am American, a Black
American female, and I'm always going to be that first. But there are parts of that culture that are a part of me now and so I guess that's a nice blend. So, when I'm looking at multicultural literature, I look for authenticity. That's very important to me. I want to make sure that the illustrations are representative of the culture and are not stereotypic. The speech should be representative of the type of speech that would be in that culture. Dialogue is important. And we need accuracy in that.

**Stereotypes.** As Thama mentioned, stereotypic portrayal of characters may not be representative of a culture and may present inaccurate information to the reader. She is conscious of character portrayal when she is selecting books. Tere, Diane, and Karen also are concerned about stereotypes and explain that they depend heavily on reviews in professional review sources to inform them about questionable images and characterizations. Tere stated, "Those points [author bias and stereotype] come across very much in reviews."

Diane I do think about stereotype. That usually is gotten to through reviews. The people who write reviews for the profession comment on stereotype. When you read the reviews you know if there's anything stereotypic in the book and you can cross it off your list. I don't have to see it myself. I read reviews by professional people and if it says stereotyped view, then I wouldn't get it even if it's about something that I happen to want for the collection.

Stereotyped material is also of concern to Karen. She, too, depends on professional reviewers for her information. She believes that accurate illustrations are as important as accurate descriptions and dialogue.

Karen I think the reviewers are being much more sensitive to the way illustrators are depicting various cultures and elements of the culture. I think I'm finding too, and I think this is good, they [the illustrators] are trying much harder to be authentic.

Diane believes there is a place for stereotypical literature in the library media program. Books with negative stereotypes are not necessarily available for circulation, but they are accessible to the school library media specialist. Diane sometimes uses books with stereotypical illustrations or language to introduce children to controversy.
and to open up discussion about point of view. She admitted that she intentionally has used several multicultural books with negative stereotypes, particularly *The Story of Little Black Sambo* (by Helen Bannerman), to present an issue, to lead to a discussion on various viewpoints, to discuss changes in attitudes.

Diane: You know, I think those are interesting things to talk about with kids, about our changes, because I don’t believe we can change the history, we can only know it so we don’t repeat it. We can’t change what we did... I’ve always pointed it out. Some people don’t like that. That’s the negative part. But then, the positive part, I think children just pick up the positive.

Kids are so wonderful because they get very indignant about the inequality that has been done to people. It’s interesting to know what they really believe because when they’re with you they get so indignant, so it will be interesting to see what they grow up to be like, if they will be more open-minded or less prejudiced.

Diane’s motivation for presenting controversial books to her students is to help them become more “open-minded,” to guide them in thinking about the repercussions of their actions and the actions of others.

Diane: I’ve done things like take *Little Black Sambo* [by Helen Bannerman] into a 3rd and 4th grade class. It’s an Indian story, but it also has ramifications for the Black American culture. I read and show them that story and we talk about what’s wrong with the story and why people didn’t like it. I ask, “what does ‘Sambo’ mean?” I’ve been doing that for a very long time. I guess I like controversial things to be brought up... You bring in *Doctor Dolittle* [by Hugh Lofting], *Mary Poppins* [by P. L. Travers], *Sylvester and the Magic Pebble* [by William Steig] and talk about what people didn’t like. That is certainly broadening the view and presenting different points of view. But, I suspect I’ve been doing that since the 70s. They just didn’t have the same labels as they do now.

Diane believes as Byrne (1988) does, if students can “learn to identify overgeneralizations and stereotypes and attend to meaningful social behaviors,” they may become more aware and less prejudiced (p. 270).
Knowledge of Multicultural Literature

School library media specialists depend to a great extent on professional review sources for the materials they purchase. By reading favorable book reviews and purchasing the books for their center’s collection, the specialists often become familiar with specific authors that are considered high quality writers of multicultural literature. As multicultural literature has become more prevalent particularly in the last five years (1990-1995), library media specialists have had to make a concerted effort to keep attune to new authors and their books. When asked how well they felt they knew the body of multicultural literature which is presently available, all of the school library media specialists in this study answered that they could always know more.

Diane knows the work of particular authors that have been writing multicultural books for some period of time, but is not as familiar with new authors. Each of the authors she knows well is from the culture of which he or she writes: Nickolasa Mohr, Walter Dean Myers, Eloise Greenfield, Virginia Hamilton. She professed, “I probably could know more. I heard Gary Soto talk at a conference, but I don’t know a whole lot about him. But I’ve gone to workshops and I’ve heard panel discussions and authors who are considered multicultural authors.”

Tere responded to the question, “How well do you know the body of multicultural literature,” by sighing, “That’s a dream!” She tries to be aware of new materials and goes to the public library and bookstores to search out new titles. Once she finds new items of interest and examines them she makes note of her choices and refers to the review sources and the publishers’ catalogs back at her school before ordering. However, she admitted, “I don’t do that as often as I should. It takes so much time.” With her limited budget, she orders only the books which have been “highly recommended” in the review sources.

One of Tere’s teachers believed that Tere’s own cultural background is an asset to her knowledge of multicultural literature.
I think because of her personal background, she is almost an expert without having to develop it, in certain areas. And I don’t think she limits herself to where her background is, I think she goes into other cultures, other areas. I also think a key to her success is in her knowing the curriculum, of what’s going on because she is able to keep her eyes open for things that she knows will plug in to our units.

Tere agrees that knowing the curriculum is important and responded, “If you are going to be a school librarian you have to make each teacher’s curriculum the most important thing to know.”

Interestingly, Tere’s principal also commented on Tere’s culture being a contributor to her recognition as someone who is knowledgeable about multicultural literature and materials. When asked, “Is the school library media specialist recognized for her knowledge of multicultural literature and materials?” he answered, 

I would say in her case, absolutely. Having been here only a year, I don’t get a real good sense of her past history, but I mean just looking at her ethnicity lends to that and certainly her involvement with our author in the school visit this year. She’s clearly looked to as a strong resource and coordinator in those kinds of things. Her sensitivity to multicultural issues, she is clearly viewed in that capacity.

Tere agreed that her own culture and her awareness of the differences in cultures makes her sensitive to multicultural issues, but she contends that that sensitivity doesn’t make her an expert on multicultural literature. It doesn’t make her more knowledgeable. Like anyone else, she has to seek out good multicultural literature, read professional reviews, and examine the literature before she uses it.

Karen knows that she’ll never have the time to learn as much as she’d like about any one particular area of her center’s collection. In response to the questions about how well she knows the multicultural titles currently available, she stated, “Not well enough because so much has come out. I try to do a really good job of reviewing and staying on top of things, but there are 3,000 children’s books a year that are published.”
Thama admitted that she’s continually learning about new multicultural books, particularly those which have been written for the middle school-aged student, about cultures other than her own.

Thama Oh [in exasperation], I’m very far behind and I’ll be the first to admit it. I know of authors, I’ve read some materials, but this has exploded in the last decade and I know more about my own culture because I did a Master’s degree in Comparative Literature and the emphasis was African-American/African Lit., so I know a lot about that. But in reference to Native Americans, maybe Indians from India, and a host of other things, no, I’m just in the process of learning.

Within the body of multicultural books with which they are familiar, each school library media specialist perceives a weakness in a particular area of emphasis. Diane admits she doesn’t “have the feel” for gaps in multicultural fiction, but she is concerned with the lack of accurate, up-to-date informational books for children who are doing reports on various countries around the world. She understands that many publishers can’t keep up with the changes in the current events of various countries and she tries to compensate by going to the public library and looking through their vertical files for articles to supplement the materials that are available in the school library media center. She also reminds her students that some of the information they are finding may not be up-to-date. She stated, “Kids are such that they just want to do a report. They don’t care that it’s not true. I tell them that they shouldn’t take everything in the book as gospel when they are doing a report.”

Thama is concerned with the lack of materials for her middle school students. She stated, “There is more material geared for two levels, adults and elementary. Middle school is left out. It’s not nearly what it should be in comparison to the other two areas.”

Tere and Karen believe that there is more available in historical than contemporary multicultural fiction. Karen has noticed a shift away from multicultural books that emphasize simply geographical location to books that are concentrating on
issues. She has also found books that are dealing with current events and issues. She stated, “I’m seeing more from South Africa as apartheid is becoming a bigger issue.”

Both Karen and Tere contend that there are fewer books to choose from in the available body of multicultural literature which feature the Asian cultures, locations, and characters. Karen is trying to build her collection’s holding with books on Southeast Asia and the culture of that region. She has just recently found several books about Vietnam and the Boat People. Although books on contemporary Asian topics are beginning to appear, they are still few in number. Tere also has been trying to add Asian books to her collection and has been unable to find a wide variety in that area.

Tere  A lot more of the Spanish literature is being reissued, but I don’t find a lot of contemporary Chinese literature, Asian literature. There is some Japanese, which is good seeing as that is our largest minority population here, but there isn’t a lot in contemporary. It’s mostly historical and folktales.

These school library media specialists are aware of what they know and what they need to know in the area of multicultural literature. They are familiar enough with the body of literature to know where there are weaknesses and gaps both in the type of genre and in the cultures that are represented in the literature. Each library media specialist contended that she turns to the professional tools of librarianship, the professional reviews, to gain information about new or unfamiliar multicultural literature and materials.
Working with Students with Multicultural Literature

When the school library media specialists serve as teachers, they try to incorporate multicultural literature into their lessons when appropriate. Multicultural literature may be a springboard for introducing a variety of issues and concerns.

Diane often addresses controversial issues through the practice of book discussions. Diane involves her students in book discussions more than the other school library media specialists. She is the only school library media specialist among the four in this study who consciously focuses on perspective and incorporates the use of perspective in her discussions with her students in the library media center.

Diane I might say, “Why do you think they are saying this? And what is your point of view on this?” We talk about who is telling the story and we talk about point of view. *Number the Stars* [by Lois Lowry] is a wonderful book to do because you are looking at that story [the Holocaust] through the point of view of a Christian child. You could do “What’s the other side of the story?” “Where would you be? “Would your family pick up and leave?” “What if you were Jewish?” It’s easy to do that with kids. I ask, “What do you believe? Whose side are you on?” You are constantly looking at that question in good literature. You say, “Now, you are looking at this through his point of view.” I often do that when we talk about similarities and differences too.

When asked if she discusses cultural perspectives presented in the literature, Tere admitted that she does not emphasize various perspectives when working with her elementary school students but “tries to have literature which presents different perspectives available in the collection for the students.”

Karen and Thama also said they do not directly discuss perspective with students but suggest books with different perspectives to teachers they are working with in their middle schools. Thama added that when students come to her for book recommendations she often leads them to think about perspective. She encourages students to read books about and by people of other cultural groups.

Thama I suggest that they don’t always look at a story with their own ethnic group in it. There are some wonderful stories out there that they can expose
themselves to that don't necessarily have to be about African-Americans or Asians or white Americans.

Discussing cultural perspective and examining stories for similarities and differences often go hand-in-hand. Thama contended that she “sometimes” highlights similarities and differences. But because she does little with formal discussion groups and sees herself more as a facilitator she said, “I don’t press that too much. They discover it for themselves.”

Tere doesn’t purposefully highlight similarities and differences in the multicultural books she uses in her lessons. She stated, “Sometimes we look at this, but I don’t dwell on it.” She continued, “I try to do a very subtle comparison or I just ask the children questions. I think just presenting the book to the children is enough at this point. Especially, when I’m working with the younger children.”

Although Karen says she doesn’t do much to direct attention to cultural perspective, she believes that comparison is important. She described in detail one of the discussions she conducted.

Karen Comparison and contrasting elements would be a personal goal of mine in working with kids in any piece of literature to get them to stretch and extend and be able to discuss. I think it makes them think more about what they are reading, looking for those kinds of things, finding how sometimes the differences are more similar than they think they are. An example of that, we did the book, Shabanu [by Suzanne Staples]. It’s set in Pakistan, and one of my questions, we used a comparison of how their method of transportation is a camel, and though we can laugh and think that is really silly, that is very commonplace for them. I ask, “How would you compare that to a commonplace mode of transportation for you?” She [Shabanu] is a growing, emergent adolescent. “What is she feeling that you feel too?” So the cultural aspect maybe was set aside at that point to look at the human similarities, even though it was very, very definitely a nomadic Pakistani young woman.

Bishop (1992) stated that “multicultural literature is one of the most powerful components of a multicultural education curriculum, the underlying purpose of which is to help to make society a more equitable one” (p. 40). Diane and Tere have used
multicultural books in their book talks and discussion groups which have lent
themselves to the examination of some of the inequities among cultures, the history of
racism and prejudice, and the practice of stereotyping. Though Diane occasionally
presents books for their controversial value, she often finds herself unintentionally
dealing with issues that require discussion and explanation with her students.

Diane When the 5th grade class did their huge Native American unit and I read
Blue Jacket [by Allan W. Eckert] with a group of students and then we did
Ishi: Last of His Tribe [by Theodora Kroeber]. Certainly when we did that
we dealt with issues. With Blue Jacket you can’t not talk about prejudice.
But, it didn’t happen with someone saying, “I want to talk about this Native
American stuff and so we’ll choose this book.” It came about by my
choosing the book because it’s a good book and that happened.

Tere believes that she can easily address issues of prejudice and racism through
her unit on the Civil War. She stated, “When we are doing the Civil War unit we bring
the issues into the present. We talk about these feelings happening not just then, but
right now — atrocities against people and their civil rights.”

Karen has worked with her teachers to develop a unit to examine prejudice using
In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson (by Bette Lord), as the major novel of the
study. Although this novel addresses the Chinese immigration to the United States, it
was the catalyst for a larger unit on the racism which was occurring at the time the
novel was set. The unit focused attention on the prejudice extended toward Jackie
Robinson and incorporated books (Base Stealers by Renardo Barden, Teammates by
Peter Golenbock) on other sports figures from other cultures.

Karen and Thama usually take their cue from their teachers when they address
various issues with their middle schoolers. Thama stated, “I kind of enhance what they
[the teachers] have already spoken about in the classroom.”

Karen frequently asks her students to “get back to me on what you think about
this book” when she recommends to her class a book which presents a contemporary
issue. Whether the book is on a multicultural topic or on issues such as suicide, incest,
AIDS, etc., Karen said, "Kids want to read about these topics. It’s almost like [the kids are saying] finally someone is dealing with a contemporary topic that they aren’t afraid to react to. I often serve as a sounding board."

**Working with Teachers with Multicultural Literature**

All of the teachers interviewed about their school library media specialist’s practices were easily able to comment on the role the school library media specialist plays in the inclusion of lessons or in collaborative units using multicultural literature and materials. The number of comments about the school library media specialist’s effort to integrate units versus the comments on working on collaborative units reinforces the previous findings on the lack of collaboration. The teacher’s remarks were favorable about the school library media specialists’ interaction with them and with their students, and how they extend the classroom units. However, the teachers seem to view the school library media specialist as someone who integrates her lessons with theirs, not someone who is a partner with them in developing their classroom units.

**Collaborating with Others**

Occasionally a teacher will remark on a collaborative effort in which the school library media specialist was involved. One of Tere’s teachers remembered her contribution to the school-wide Days of Creation project which featured creation stories from world cultures. Tere worked on designing and developing this project in collaboration with other faculty members. This particular teacher was not a part of the collaborative partnership, but her students reaped the benefits from it.

[Tere] worked on the Days of Creation program we had. She was on the committee and once they developed the different places the children could go, Tere was plugging in books as to how that literature could connect with
the theme. They had the section on folk art and making quilts. I know she read some of the quilt books and the heritage of where quilting started.

Another teacher added that Tere did not simply introduce literature, but also taught the students games of one of the cultures included in the project.

A neat thing [Tere] did when she did the Days of Creation was she played Mankalla with them. She had enough sets on the table so everyone could play. She taught the 6th graders a strategy game where they use these colored marbles. So she was doing African literature with them and then showed them how to make the games. Some parents brought in some lovely, handmade ones. Tere took egg cartons and beans so each child could have a game in front of them. One morning she had them all set up in the library. I came in and said I had this game and wanted to know how to play it. She explained the springboard from the multicultural piece she was doing and how this fit in. That was great. It was a really neat extension.

Thama was praised for her collaboration with a colleague when that teacher wanted her students to learn more about author Walter Dean Myers. The teacher stated,

She helped me develop a unit. She even taught a class. Last year we did an author study of Walter Dean Myers and she made materials that I didn’t have available for us. We did a video and shared it with Edu-Cable TV. There are so many things she does. We work hand-in-hand, with me being a Chapter One reading teacher and she being a librarian.

Thama believes her working relationship with her teachers began as they developed their curriculum for the international school.

Originally when we started the school in 1987 we sat down, all the teachers in different groups, grade levels, and subject areas, and my task was to go from group to group and sit down and listen and get the feel for what they thought their subject area would need to teach: global [education], international studies, multicultural studies. The foreign language teachers, of course, wanted things written in their foreign language whenever possible and materials with lots of illustrations and hands-on things. The social studies people wanted a lot of things with culture and things that would explore customs and dress and monies. So, those were two different aspects. I started looking at folk dances for the [physical education] department because they teach that. Once I got hold of the curriculum then I began to understand what they were required to teach. Then I had to fit in materials with that slant in order to help them reach their goal. Math and Science and Unified Arts had trouble trying to figure out how to do this. For the Math department, for example, we looked at tracing back mathematicians from different countries, and different math systems and
that gave it a global slant. I started looking for materials that would represent that. Your basic core subjects like English, Social Studies, Foreign Languages, they really didn't have much trouble with it. Music wasn't a problem because they could do a lot of diverse things. The materials are there, you just have to seek them out. But for the other disciplines like Math and Science and [Physical Education], that was harder.

Karen has worked closely with her teachers, collaboratively developing a collection of books that can be used in classroom units on multicultural issues. In 1995 she developed an extensive materials list for teachers who were presenting the practice of Apartheid to their students. Karen wanted to have materials of both print and nonprint formats for all level readers.

Karen

Karen has worked closely with her teachers, collaboratively developing a collection of books that can be used in classroom units on multicultural issues. In 1995 she developed an extensive materials list for teachers who were presenting the practice of Apartheid to their students. Karen wanted to have materials of both print and nonprint formats for all level readers.

Karen

We just purchased copies of the book, *Waiting for the Rain* [by Sheila Gordon], which is about Apartheid in South Africa, to reach lower readers. We selected *Journey to Jo'berg* [by Beverly Naidoo] and it has a sequel, *Chain of Fire* [by Beverly Naidoo]. These are all about Apartheid. We tied in the movie, *Cry Freedom*, which visualizes it all. We've had several teachers do that unit now and it has proven to be a real eye-opener in some cases.

Integration of Lessons

The school library media specialists’ efforts in integrating instruction were much more frequently described by the teachers interviewed. When integrating a lesson, the school library media specialist is involved in designing a lesson and in instructing, but the effort is either to complement a classroom lesson or to relate an information skills lesson to what is being learned in the classroom. The design and instruction is for the teacher and students not with the teacher. Diane involves herself with various classroom projects, some of which have a multicultural theme. One teacher commented,

Most recently we’ve been working on an African study. We’ve read folktales from all over Africa and students have learned stories to tell. We’ve looked at beginnings, middles, and endings. When we’ve done story
telling and looked at different cultures, Diane has done some string stories and helped us to look at how to tell stories.

We put a show together, folktales from all over Africa that we've just finished. There was some poetry, songs, dancing, and the kids helped put the scripts together and decided what stories they wanted to do and then put it together. We used a book, *Masai and I* [by Virginia Kroll], for one which worked out in an interesting way. One side of the stage was Africa and African events happened. Then they would freeze a tableau. Narration on the other side would be American, sort of a contrasting piece. The children really wanted to do that one. Diane scripted that one for us.

When the children had chosen all the different stories they wanted to use, I brought a whole pile down to Diane and said, "Help me. Which ones are going to work for us, which might not be the best?" and she helped me organize the program.

Tere uses multicultural literature quite often and usually tries to tie in this literature with her information skills lessons and the units her teachers are presenting.

In the 4th grade we were doing a review of atlases. I found out that they were doing a unit on Africa for the music teacher. I thought, "How perfect!" We looked at the African continent and different countries. We looked at the countries and they read in the encyclopedia and atlas about their particular country and they wrote out information. Some of them made bookmarks that they kept because I had them laminated. In the front they decorated it and did their flag and the name of the country and something else that was special. On the back they wrote facts about their country, where it was located and the products and the currency they use, that type of thing.

In the 2nd grade they were studying Australia, so we did Australia. We didn't do so much research, although they did use encyclopedias. We also studied the animals of Australia. We went to non-fiction books and the children became more aware of non-fiction books and how to find them and so forth. I think we used non-fiction books on Japan too. The 3rd grade studied Japan and we read stories. We used folktales.

Diane also incorporates her information skills lessons into the projects the students are doing in the classroom. One teacher commented,

When my students were doing independent studies, some involved different cultures. [*Diane and I*] tried to think of ways for them to get different sources and topics. Diane was dealing with research skills. We went through the whole process: how do you know? how do you investigate? how do you find out? how do you organize? how do you put it in your own words? And she used, for that one, a book on Queen Elizabeth. It's a
picturebook, but it's got much more informational text and it brought up some of the English traditions.

Diane’s teachers recognize her use of multicultural literature, but indicate that it is an integral part of the school library media program. Multicultural literature is not something that is solely emphasized, but is “one of many things that stand out in Diane’s library program.”

Karen introduces multicultural literature into the curriculum in much the same way that Diane does, by including it in lessons that are not intended to be focusing on aspects of multiculturalism. When asked how Karen introduces multicultural materials, one teacher stated,

Through lots of different units besides multicultural. I like the way she does it. It’s not like, OK, we’re going to study multicultural literature this month. It’s really an integral part of lots of different units, and she is always bringing in folktales and the geography of the area. It’s an openness to lots of new things and experiences. I think she is a real master of that too. She does poetry. She’ll do a book talk on Arnold Adoff who’s married to Virginia Hamilton. He’s Jewish, she’s Black. Then she brings in the poetry and it describes the relationships between the races. But it’s not like, “OK, we’re going to study Black poets this month.” It’s just a part of his story, what makes him unique. That’s one way she does it. Folktales, she’s really into that. Poetry, she’s a master in both of those areas.

A teacher observed that Tere incorporates multicultural images and information into all of her lessons in the school library media center. The presence of the displays around the center struck the teacher as evidence of Tere’s commitment to encouraging and promoting multicultural awareness.

There are constant displays, and not just during the month of Black History or this or that. It seems to be that if she is doing books then there is a cultural thing behind her. A lot of times she takes the book jackets off and saves them for display... and a lot of times the books will be displayed too. That’s what draws the little ones. We always see books on top of the shelves.

The amount and quality of resources are important to the school library media specialist’s job. One teacher, in explaining how Karen assists her in teaching, focused
more on the materials the school library media specialist brought to her classroom than what Karen did instructionally. Karen had researched her collection and pulled together the books and materials that she knew would best fit the teacher's request. The teacher stated,

We do a study of the Afro-American protagonist, a historical perspective, starting about the Revolutionary War period. We use books — *Runaway to Freedom* [by B. C. Smucker], *To Be a Slave* [by Julius Lester], *Words By Heart* [by Ouida Sebestyen], *Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry* [by Mildred Taylor]. I give them a quick book talk about the book and they choose what they want to read. They zero in on the setting and when and where the action took place. Their project is to find an African-American who lived during the same time frame of their fictional characters and do some research and write a biographical sketch about the African-American. Karen brings in carts of books and anytime during that study they can find information. She has great books that isolate time periods, and then they can zero in on a number of different people and they have to come up with three, then choose one and write an essay about that person.

Karen comes in and introduces them to all kinds — I just can't tell you the number of books she has available for them — little biography books, reference books, encyclopedias, there's just a wealth of books with information about different African-Americans. She gives them a background of where they might start to look, how they might isolate a particular person in the time frame.

When Karen assists a teacher in developing a unit, she tries to provide a wide range of materials from which to choose. Another teacher commented,

The neat thing she does [focus on] is not just multicultural, but multi-genre. She'll bring poetry and biography and fiction and picture books and give you a wide range for you to choose from and it makes it a lot richer when you're covering a specific culture.

Thama has worked occasionally in collaboration with teachers during unit development, and has integrated her lessons with the classroom teachers' lessons, but most often she works as an information specialist for teachers who are in the process of designing units. Recently, Thama served as an information specialist providing her expertise on literature and materials for a unit on the Harlem Renaissance.
Teachers come to me with an idea and I work with them on that and give them ideas. The Harlem Renaissance was a project where the art teachers and I met several times in their classrooms and we sat down and figured out how they were going to tackle it. I knew I had books on literature and on poetry that would fit in and I had books on some of the artists and the entertainers, so I pulled all of that together. I took it down to them and said, “Now how do you want to do this? Here are the materials that I have. Are you prone to one aspect more than another? If so, then I’ll limit my research to this.” They said, “No, we really want it to be broad.” So that let me know that they wanted more materials on all aspects of the movement. From that they found a lot of pictures in the era and they put together a packet of literature from the materials I found and then they did artwork on the side and made booklets.

The knowledge of the availability of high quality resources and the ways in which those resources can be used for learning is important for the school library media specialist to share with her colleagues and to use for her own lessons with students. When asked “What is done differently by the school library media specialist than by the classroom teacher to introduce multicultural materials,” all of the specialists in this study admitted that their knowledge of reference materials was what set them apart from the classroom teachers. It isn’t necessarily what they do differently as much as it is what they know and how they can use what they know to suggest titles and materials for teaching and learning and incorporate those materials in their own teaching. They know of the resources - both fiction and nonfiction - and how specific resources can best be utilized. When they introduce multicultural materials they can incorporate a variety of resources into their presentations, whether they are classroom presentations for students or presentations to the individual teachers.

I guess my knowledge base is wider than that of the classroom teachers. I have the wherewithal and the skills to go after the materials in a broader sense. My collection is bigger. I have access to the public libraries through our modem. I have electronic encyclopedias. I know the resources. If teachers don’t know the books that can be used in the unit or whatever, they ask me. Teachers often ask me to do introductions of a unit. I find the materials and pull them and present them to the students.

I have a vast knowledge of the books that I have, that I have bought, so I know which books are available and so if I’m looking at a particular unit that I’m doing, I’m going to think, OK, if I’m doing exploration, then I’m
going to go and pull out all of those books. I'm going to go to folktales. So when the teachers ask me for materials on a certain unit, I will do the same thing for them.

Thana agrees that because she knows the various reference materials and other resources available she is able to present a "bigger package of information."

Karen believes that knowing fiction and nonfiction is important, but she also thinks her knowledge of the background of authors makes a difference in the way she introduces multicultural materials. By knowing additional information about the book she is introducing, for example the background of the author, she can produce a more complete "portfolio" for her presentations. She stated, "I have the advantage of knowing new books, new authors on the scene, and the background of those authors. I do a portfolio on the authors. It adds some credibility. The teachers have grown to count on that."

Comparing Practice to Curricular Approaches

The extent to which these school library media specialists and their teachers incorporate multicultural literature and materials into their programs can be compared with the levels of integration presented by Grant and Sleeter (1985) and Banks (1989). Grant and Sleeter's typology of approaches for multicultural education and Banks's framework for integrating "ethnic content" categorize the levels of implementation of multicultural content into the curriculum.

Grant and Sleeter Typology

Grant and Sleeter (1985) suggest that the first approach, "Education for the Culturally Different," is designed to provide the minority student access to the standard curriculum by using "culturally relevant curriculum, materials, and language as a bridge
into mainstream culture” (p. 100). Thama is the only library media specialist who believes that some of this type of integration happens in her school. Thama also is the only school library media specialist who works with a largely non-white student population.

“Ethnic Studies” is a second approach in which the ethnic group is isolated and explored as a distinct entity without relating the group’s accomplishments to society as a whole. None of the school library media specialists present ethnic groups in this way. Tere acknowledged that when she observes a teacher presenting a limited view of an ethnic group she integrates a lesson from the library media center into the curriculum to extend what the students are being taught.

“Human Relations” programs emphasize the “prevention of conflict between members of different ethnic groups, development of tolerance for different groups, and development of a positive self” (p. 100). This approach appears in multiracial schools. Thama and Karen believe this is an approach which is prevalent in their schools. Karen contends that the district’s commitment to human relations and the development of tolerance was the impetus in implementing the commercial program “The World of Difference” throughout the entire school system.

Thama stated that all the approaches mentioned are probably “plugged in here and there” depending on what students are studying, but the emphasis of all programs would be under Grant and Sleeter’s label of “Human Relations.”

The thrust would be Human Relations simply because you look at the age group for one thing and the kids are aware that there are racial imbalances and that there are prejudices. We show them some films on it and we discuss it, but the thrust is really a change of mind, a change of heart. We want them to understand the word “tolerance.” It’s OK to be different. It’s OK to have differences in culture and approach. Yours isn’t better, theirs isn’t worse. It’s just different, a difference in doing, in seeing, in perception.

So, in 6th through 8th grade we are really targeting. I think it’s more behavior change and we are trying to round them out a little more so that they are not so narrow in their scope. Kids are cliquish during this time
anyway. They are group-oriented. They are trying very much to fit in to a particular group or mode that says that they have some identity here and that they are comfortable in this. From these three years in middle school, we are getting them to open up a little more and to say, "Hey, if you want to be in this group, fine, but if this person wants to be in this other group, he’s still OK." Those small things begin to change them, and we make a dent, we really do. We see the difference in 9th and 10th grades when they come back to visit us they have a lot of it together.

Grant and Sleeter consider “Multicultural Education” as the approach which advocates the development of “ethnic self identities” and encourages learning about other cultures and building tolerance toward others. They suggest that this is done by integrating information into the entire curriculum and by “using teaching strategies that build on different students’ learning styles” (p. 101). All of the school library media specialists in this study consider this approach to be incorporated into the curriculum in their schools. Tere stated, “That’s the whole idea of including multicultural materials so all the children can have an awareness.”

“Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist” is the approach which encourages students to critically analyze situations in American society and take action to better the unequal relationships that exist. Tere and Karen do not believe there is any encouragement for this level of multicultural education in their schools.

Karen I can’t think of anything that we’ve ever done that would be the action angle. But I think the beauty in our program is that teachers feel, and I certainly do, that there’s a real open avenue of communications. That if students and teachers want to go in a direction they usually know that I will try to purchase to support that.

Diane views this approach in a broad sense and comments about her school’s view on being involved in issues outside the school environment.

Diane I think this is what we do with “activism” in it. Part of our philosophy is to become actively involved in changing things. The kids earned money and sent things to the flood victims. That’s just part of what they do here. Our school certainly does a lot of “taking actions” with its projects....
Thama described her school’s active participation for change to the environment and to conditions in countries other than the United States. Going along with the school’s international emphasis, the students often become involved in projects which aid underdeveloped countries.

What the students might do on a series of projects, maybe they will help a family in Guatemala, send them some money or shoes. They might do a project to help a particular cause in the school, like environmental concerns or like when we have these big cardboard boxes where they are looking for trash and they are recycling cans. We don’t really try to change minds to make them radical, to get out there and resolve problems aggressively. We just want them to understand that there is just another way of seeing things. As they get older, they will empower themselves with the knowledge, but I don’t think that is our task in the middle school.

Banks’s Levels of Integration

Banks (1985) has a similar framework for integration of “ethnic content” into the curriculum. The four levels of integration are plotted on a continuum beginning with early awareness and building to social action.

The first level, Contributions, introduces heroes, holidays, and discrete cultural elements (food, dress, etc.) of a group into the curriculum. Banks warns against studying these individuals and events in isolation, fearing that no connections will be made to the significance that the life or event had on society.

The Additive approach is at the second level of implementation. Here “content, concepts, themes and perspectives [are added] to the curriculum without changing its basic structure, purposes, and characteristics” (Banks, 1989, p. 195). A disadvantage of this approach is that the information may be added in a segmented way without addressing issues associated with the culture. At the next level on the continuum, the Transformation approach, this concern is addressed.

With the Transformation approach, the fundamental goals and the structure and perspective of the curriculum is reexamined. Influences, issues, concepts and points of
view of several cultures and their contributions to the development of the American society and culture are studied.

Banks’s fourth level of integration, the Social Action approach, encompasses the tenets of the Transformation approach, but also adds the elements of decision making and social criticism. This approach is very similar to the fourth approach described by Grant and Sleeter (1985).

Karen believes that there are times when teachers highlight the contributions of ethnic heroes and add lessons about various cultures to the curriculum without changing the basic structure of their curriculum. She described one teacher in particular who “very actively” implements the Transformation approach. She stated, “Some teachers are stronger at some aspects of this than others. I see myself in a position to supply the materials they need, whether it’s level one, two, three, or four.”

Diane again remarked that her school’s philosophy encourages students to view problems and concepts from various perspectives and make decisions to resolve problems. With this in mind, she believes her school practices Banks’s Transformation and Social Action levels of integration.

Tere purposefully practices the Transformation approach in all her lessons.

Tere Right now I’m dealing with mythology. There’s not just Greek and Roman mythology, but Norse and Native American and African. I say, “Hey, let’s look at the world. There are all of these going on at the same time!” I look at whatever it is from several perspectives.

Like Diane, Thama considers her school’s philosophy. Her response related more to the over-all school practice than to what she does individually as a school library media specialist.

Thama I’d say we do more of the first three [Contributions, Additive, and Transformation]. We do more infusion. We might take a topic like China. Under that topic we have an umbrella for themes: culture, change, choices, and interdependence. If we are studying China under that theme of “culture,” we are going to look at it differently if we were going to study it under the theme of “choices” because the thrust of what we are doing is
going to be different. They might go to the classroom, learn some specific language in regard to some social customs, take that in to the social studies classroom. From there into the music classroom. The teachers have already worked this out and they know that during this quarter these are the materials they want to teach. Certain groups of teachers will meet in the summer or over the holidays and they’ll do the team planning. They’ll do webbing strategies and they will say, “Well, in this area of music, I can teach this about China. In this area of unified arts (like gym) we can teach a folk dance.” That’s how they plug it in. They infuse those things over the core curriculum and they stick in and integrate the materials they need to make it fit that theme. They are getting better at it each year because they are finding new materials and they know what did and didn’t work last year. They will team teach it and they will go to each other to schedule extra time on specific projects. They have guest speakers and they work classes around that.

It must be remembered that the “core curriculum” in Thama’s school is a multicultural curriculum.

**Summary of integration levels.** In brief, the school library media specialists observe various levels of approaches being practiced to incorporate multicultural awareness into their schools’ curricula. Diane’s and Thama’s schools attempt to address the highest level of integration by encouraging social action. The school library media specialists are aware of each level and accommodate their teachers with materials according to their classroom needs.

**Changes in Teaching**

Each school library media specialist concludes that there are changes taking place in the classroom that reflect the growing knowledge about the value of multicultural literature and/or the concern about promoting an awareness of a diverse world. Diane referred to an upcoming schoolwide program which she believes demonstrates this concern for awareness.

Diane Our school is going to do this Peace School for two weeks. There is apparently a program from the [Metropolitan] Peace School. There is a curriculum that has all those kinds of issues, not just peace in the narrow
sense, but gender issues, and all the things we've been talking about today [prejudice, racism, etc.]. Our whole school is going to stop the regular schedule and do this. I think December would be a really great time to do it because we won't be focusing on Christmas or Chanukah anymore. It would be great to do a whole school thing which would revolve around the issues.

Thama also observes a school-wide change where her teachers are looking closely at themselves and the way they teach. They are examining how others learn.

Thama I think they are looking at different ways of teaching. Teachers are having to see that because they were taught a certain way does not necessarily mean that's the way that they should teach it. We have various learning styles. We are taking courses in this and we are sharing that with each other in the classrooms.

Tere and Karen are cautious in their appraisals of the change they see among their teachers.

Tere Slowly. Change is happening slowly. But, oh yes, they do try. They are more aware of differences and I think there are changes going on. But, you know they can change the literature in a unit, but they cannot change the unit (individually, I mean) because it is a district curriculum and that cannot be changed arbitrarily. By using the literature is the way they get around to introducing another unit and they can do that.

Karen I think I see [change] beginning. For one thing, more teachers are making an attempt to present multicultural literature. I think, even up until three years ago, in this building, there wasn't a very strong attempt made. If anything, it was to celebrate Black History Month, that kind of thing.

Student Interest

How does an increase in multicultural materials in the collection, the high awareness level of the school library media specialist and teachers, the addition of multicultural information into all areas of the curriculum, and the apparent concern for educating students about a diverse society translate into the reading practices of the students in these four schools? In particular, are the students eager to read books with multicultural characters, themes, or settings? When asked, "Do your students pick up
and read multicultural literature because it is multicultural literature,” all four of the specialists in this study said, “No.”

Diane doesn’t believe that children think about a book being multicultural. She stated, “I don’t think sometimes that students even notice depending on how old they are.” Diane came to that conclusion after an experience with several student groups with a book considered to be multicultural. While using the story, Bread, Bread, Bread (by Ann Morris) with six classes of kindergartners and first- and second-graders, Diane discovered that her students did not make distinctions among the people from the various cultures.

Diane The book shows people all over the world and the kinds of bread they eat, showing how alike we look and showing that we all have in common the fact that we all eat bread, but that our bread looks different. So, it’s very multicultural. What was so interesting to me were the responses. As we talked about the book and went through the photographs, I asked questions. “Well, where does this child live? Where does this child live?” They had no concept of people looking different or people being from different kinds of places. People were either African or Chinese and that’s because they know those words. It had nothing to do with features. There wasn’t a pattern. They’d say [of a little girl from England], “Oh she lives in Africa.” That’s when I wondered if this is developmental. I wonder if people see differences. If it’s developmental and also learned by children. I don’t know, but it was just so interesting to me to see this. Even in the group if we had a Korean child in the class, when we saw the picture in the book there wasn’t a connection made — “Oh, that looks just like so and so, ergo the child in the picture must be Korean.”

Diane believes if the story is interesting and the illustrations pleasing, that a child will pick up the book and read it whether or not it has multicultural content.

Tere is disturbed by the apparent lack of interest in multicultural books and says she’s sometimes discouraged when the older students don’t pick up a book when she introduces it to them during a book talk in the library media center.

Tere They pick it up to read if it’s given to them, if it is presented to them. If they know it’s multicultural they may not pick it up. Now what I find is that unless teachers use the materials, like the Native American or Afro-American literature in the classroom, the children do not gravitate to it. They will not check out those books, the older children. The younger children
will. They will look at folktales and fairytales from other cultures. And
even contemporary books. They are colorful, and that will attract them.
And the kids will read them. But the older kids won’t unless it is introduced
by the classroom teacher. I can introduce it to them and it still won’t be the
same as being introduced by the classroom teacher.

Karen believes that many of her middle school students choose books from
recommendations of their peers. Whether or not the book has multicultural content is
irrelevant.

Karen It’s just that they have heard of the book and want to read it. In fact, I’d say
that it is not a big self-selected area. I’ve experimented. If I put new books
out and do a quick book talk on lots of titles, they will pretty much choose
mainstream kind of stuff rather than some of the ones that may have a
foreign setting, that looks like it’s outside their culture.

Thama, serving a school with a 63% non-white student population, also said that
her students don’t read multicultural literature simply because it is multicultural. She
added, “They just like it.”

Thama What they’ll do, they are more inclined to look at authors. They ask for
authors like Walter Dean Myers, and they know by that that this is a Black
author or this is a Chinese author, or just whatever it is. They know it that
way, and they read it. If you were to say “multicultural literature” they
would just kind of blow that — that is nebulous to them. But, I think there
is a sense that they have about it because they know they are reading a book
about a Japanese or Chinese character or they know they are reading about
an African-American character. So, in that respect, they may not know that
term, but somewhere inside them it’s working.

Why Present Multicultural Literature?

Although some students are at times reluctant to read multicultural literature on
their own, the school library media specialists still believe that multicultural literature
should be presented to students and teachers. Answering the question, “Why present
multicultural literature?” also requires addressing the question of who your audience is
for the multicultural literature you present. Karen, Diane, and Tere work in schools
predominantly populated by white students. Thama’s school student population is
predominately non-white. Karen, Diane, and Tere promote multicultural literature primarily because they want to help children increase their knowledge of others.

Karen is most concerned with discouraging prejudice in her middle schoolers and avows that that is one of her "personal goals" in presenting multicultural literature. She also hopes that literature and discussion "will promote an open-mindedness and an appreciation for other cultures" in her students.

Diane offered two reasons why she encourages the use of multicultural literature in her school. One, because her school and community population is not very multicultural, and two, because children have such narrow views of the world.

Diane Children are egocentric and are in the here-and-now and that’s why I think we do introduce things about other places to help open up this world, that there is a world, that there were people before us and that there will be people after us and there are people in Russia who have the same - you know the universality of us all, who have the same fears and worries and happinesses and whatever.

Tere also considers the students’ limited experiences and believes it’s “necessary” to broaden a child’s view of the world.

Tere I feel that their world is so limited that unless we provide them with those materials, they cannot see any other views except their own or those of their parents.

I believe very strongly that the more experiences you provide for children the better off they are. And if those experiences include providing them with literature from other cultures for them to think a little bit more about people of other cultures then I strongly support that. Maybe it is too strong a belief, but I feel strongly that we have to provide the students with different experiences. We do have children from different backgrounds and we are in such a multicultural world, the United States is such a multicultural society. The children have to learn, to understand other cultures and be aware of those cultures.... My goal, my intention is to have them realize that it is OK to be different. That it is wonderful that we can be different in our own ways and still are able to share and understand each other.
Thama wants her students to realize that there are other cultures that exist and that “[people of those cultures] are OK doing what they do. It’s not a matter of better or worse. It’s just a matter of differences.”

Thama also wants her students to identify with their own culture through literature. She agrees with African-American author, Mildred Pitts Walter, that African-American children should have books about African-American experiences available to them to allow them to develop an understanding of themselves. Walter (1992) stated,

[In my books], they see, and hear themselves, their relatives, and their friends, and can form opinions about who they really are. But more than that I try to remind them that they have a viable history. Knowing this they just might begin to ask serious questions, to explore and discover that they come from a long line of people whose lives did not begin with slavery in the Western world. (p. 32)

Thama regards literature as a vehicle for passing culture from generation to generation, literature as a vehicle for discovering oneself.

I think that culture is probably passed through the arts more than anything. If you look at music and you look at literature, storytelling, dance, that is how it is going to be passed down. I think that it is a major part of who we are and if we lose it we kind of lose a sense of identity. Because everybody has culture, and the feeling of displacement is when you’re not sure what your culture is or what it does or how it defines you, because it is such a part of you even down to the clothing that you wear or the speech. It’s all apart of that background, that make-up....

It’s important to realize that you have neglected a lot of cultures, but realistically, how much can you know about other people. You should have an awareness of it, but you should really be concentrating on yourself, and who you are, and then taking that knowledge and using it in a way to being tolerant to other people. I can never say that I’m going to know more about a culture than I know about my own. If I do, then there is something wrong because I haven’t discovered who I am.

Summary of Implementation of Multicultural Literature

What is multicultural literature? Each school library media specialist in this study answered that question by asserting that it is literature that represented the cultures of
this country and cultures of the world. Multicultural literature for them goes beyond the simple depictions of people of different races, to convey deeper understanding of the people of the world, what they believe, what they do, how they communicate, who they are. Tere and Thama go one step further in their definitions to include what they feel. They state that multicultural literature should develop a reader's sensitivity.

All of the school library media specialists have used multicultural literature in their work for some time, but have observed that more good quality multicultural literature is available and in use today than when they entered their profession. They have “always” used multicultural literature. In their early careers, Karen chose multicultural literature because of the multicultural population she served, Tere because of her own culture and her sensitivity to multicultural issues, Thama because of her school's focus and her own interest in it, and Diane because of her desire to acquaint children with unfamiliar settings and characters, and to introduce them to good literature which “just happened to be multicultural.”

Inclusion of multicultural literature in the school curriculum of the 1990s stems in part from a perceived need to represent cultures that have been underrepresented and to inform and enlighten students about cultures, their own and other's, what culture is and how it affects us. Karen attributes the popularity of multicultural literature to current events in the global arena. Diane, too, believes that exposure to world events sparks an interest to know more about others. Diane also believes, as Tere does, that there is now more of an acceptance of differences and a realization that our society needs to know more about ourselves and others, our similarities and our differences. Diane, Tere, and Thama contend that the number of multicultural books being published is also a response to those who are demanding that their story be told, that their culture be accurately represented in literature.

Selection of multicultural materials or any materials for their school library media center collections is a responsibility that each school library media specialist considers
important. They confront their own biases in order to develop a balanced collection. Tere and Thama acknowledge that they are more critical in evaluating works depicting their own cultures because they are sensitive to the elements that make depiction authentic. All of the women evaluate by the standard criteria for good quality literature before they examine the material for multicultural content.

Each school library media specialist is alert to the author's perspective and stereotypical portrayal of characters and setting. Even though these women keep relatively up-to-date with new materials on the market, obviously they cannot read and evaluate each book they consider purchasing for the school library media center. Therefore, they depend to a large extent on professional reviews to uncover inappropriate content. Tere and Diane research the background of unfamiliar authors if they are unsure of the perspective from which he or she writes. Karen, Tere, and Diane look for books written by authors from the culture of which they write, but also choose multicultural books by writers from other cultures from those from which they write. Thama, on the other hand, scrutinizes books in order to have books authored by writers of the same culture from which they write available to her students. She believes that "native writers" can more authentically portray their own culture.

Each school library media specialist sees gaps and weaknesses in different areas within the body of multicultural literature. Diane wants more up-to-date non-fiction. Thama believes not enough books are directed to the adolescent reader. Diane and Tere want more contemporary fiction and fiction featuring Asian cultures.

Prejudice and racism are issues that these school library media specialists examine with their students. Diane, Tere, and Karen have brought issues into the present by looking at literature about the past - through studying the treatment of the Native Americans, the causes of the Civil War, the acts of the Holocaust.

Diane engages her students in book discussions on point of view while the other school library media specialists do not focus as heavily on point of view but make sure
literature representing various perspectives is available to students. Comparisons of similarities and differences in cultures are sometimes made when examining a book for discussion. Karen and Tere occasionally invite students to compare cultures, Thama seldom does. She explains that teachers do comparisons in the classroom setting.

The teachers and school library media specialists work together to some degree, but more in the integration of themes into lessons than in the collaborative development of lessons. Thama believes her collaborative working relationship with her teachers began as they were developing the original curriculum for the school. Karen contends that she enters into the unit and lesson development stage with her teachers. Still, integration is more prevalent. The school library media specialists design their information skills lessons around what the students are doing in the classroom. Often they extend those lessons to introduce information about other cultures. For example, during a library media center visit, Tere adds information to a unit on mythology by introducing the mythology of other cultures besides that of the Greek and Roman being studied in the unit presented by the classroom teacher.

The teachers recognize that each school library media specialist promotes multicultural literature to students. Books are also suggested to teachers for classroom use. One of Tere’s teachers and her principal believe that she is sensitive to the importance of using multicultural literature because of her own culture. Diane’s and Karen’s teachers contend that incorporating multicultural literature into the curriculum is only one of the many things these school library media specialists do well. All of the school library media specialists credit their broad knowledge of literature for their ability to promote, recommend, and use good quality multicultural literature and materials.

Just how much influence the school library media specialists have on promoting multicultural literature can’t be known for certain, but all observe that teachers are using more multicultural literature and addressing issues of diversity in their teaching.

211
Various levels of integration of "ethnic content" (Banks's framework) are practiced by the teachers in each school. The transformation approach is used at times as are the lower levels of the framework. Thama and Diane affirm that the social action approach is encouraged in their schools. Most often a combination of approaches is practiced. Various levels of the Grant and Sleeter typology are also practiced. Thama believes that her school encourages the "Human Relations" approach throughout the curriculum.

With all of this effort to implement multicultural literature and to develop multicultural perspectives, students still are not voluntarily rushing to read literature about cultures other than their own. Diane and Tere believe that with young children presentation of the story attracts them to it, with older children a connection with what is being taught in the classroom attracts them to it. Karen is convinced that with her middle-schoolers, peer recommendation is more influential than her presentation of literature and materials. Thama observes that her students do like multicultural literature and choose it by favorite author. These school library media specialists continue to encourage their teachers and students to use and read multicultural literature because they believe it is important to broaden a child's view of the world and to celebrate similarities and differences. Thama also asserts that it's important too to know ourselves and our own culture and history.

Revisiting the Research Questions

The intention of this study was to describe the attitudes and actions of four exemplary school library media specialists. I addressed four areas of concern, posed in the four research questions which guided the study.

1. How do these school library media specialists describe their attitudes and responsibilities in relation to the roles of (a) teacher, (b) information specialist, and (c) instructional consultant?
Each of these exemplary school library media specialists is a dedicated professional who views her position as one of service to the students and faculty of her school. They all are interested in learning and encourage and promote student learning through their roles as teacher and information specialist. They are proactive in their practice and often assist teachers in the act of teaching through their role as instructional consultant. The school library media specialists see their professional roles as overlapping and find it difficult to separate their daily tasks into categories representing the specific duties of teacher, information specialist, and instructional consultant. These women are knowledgeable in the theory and practice of their professional roles and use their knowledge to enthusiastically serve their school community.

2. How do the contextual factors, namely the administration, the resources, and the collegial relationship among professionals enable or constrain these roles and responsibilities?

The school library media specialists know how important a supportive administration is to the success of their library media programs. Each specialist has good rapport with her principal, but some of the principals promote (both philosophically and financially) their school library media program more than others. Even when funding is not adequate to purchase up-to-date materials, these women are resourceful in finding sources of information that are needed by their teachers and students. Lack of materials and resources do not prevent these women from offering exemplary service. They use the available materials effectively and are able to sustain successful programs in spite of the lack of financial support. Creativity and enthusiasm sustain the programs and activities they design and carry-out for their students and teachers.

Collaboration occurs sporadically among the teachers and school library media specialists in the elementary schools, but more often with the middle school teachers.
and specialists. Still, the teachers state that they hold the school library media specialists in high esteem. The school library media specialists are readily available to work with their teachers on classroom or school library media center-related activities. They are there to help teachers teach.

3. How do these school library media specialists pursue their own continuing professional development to enable them in the above roles and responsibilities?

Diane, Tere, Thama, and Karen subscribe to the notion of life-long learning for themselves, for their students, and for their teachers. They assist their teachers in teaching and learn from their involvement. They enjoy being active on school-related committees. They grow professionally through their membership in local, state, and national organizations. They write for the profession and they stay informed through wide professional reading. Each school library media specialist knows that her profession is rapidly changing and that she must stay informed of new developments through taking courses and workshops, as well as through reading professional journals and membership in professional organizations. This continuing professional development allows the school library media specialist to become knowledgeable about new information and learn how to best present this information to her students and faculty.

4. How do these school library media specialists define, justify, promote, and use multicultural literature in their schools?

Each school library media specialist defines multicultural literature as that which encompasses all aspects of life of the many peoples of the world. Multicultural literature and activities are integrated throughout the curriculum and are presented within themes and units. They are not presented separately to accentuate differences, but along with a variety of books as a natural part of the lesson. The school library media specialists justify using multicultural literature as a way of showing children that they live in a world of many colors.
Summary of Chapter

This chapter introduced the four participants and presented their beliefs about their roles and responsibilities as school library media specialists, how the contextual elements influenced their work, how they pursued their own continuing professional development and influenced the professional development of others, and how they incorporated multicultural literature into their school curricula. Chapter 5 outlines several implications of the study and suggests areas for further research.

Epilogue

This section is included to report the school library media specialists’ responses to the findings of this study. As a final member check, I presented the findings and analysis chapter to the four women in the study and asked them to check the document for accuracy. I was also interested in their reactions to what they read. I asked them to articulate their reactions and to cite changes they observed in their positions or in their programs which were evident from reading these findings from observations and interviews conducted from Spring 1993 through early Spring 1995 and reflecting on their present practice. These responses suggest that the school library media profession truly is a dynamic one.

Diane’s first comment about the findings was to respond to the way she sounded when expressing her views. She asked if I was going to state that I knew her. I assured her I was. This was stated in the Methodology of the study. She stated, “I certainly wasn’t guarded in my conversations with you. I’ve said some outrageous things that I probably wouldn’t have said to someone else.” I found this close rapport to be an advantage in obtaining honest and authentic opinions.
Similarities and Differences

Each of the school library media specialists found it interesting to read about herself in conjunction with other school library media specialists. Each focused on the similarities and differences among the study's participants before she commented on her own part in the study.

Karen I think it's interesting to see yourself reflected and I thought it was interesting too for me to be able to look at the four different scenarios and see the similarities for one thing, I thought the similarities were amazing. They came out loud and clear...unique differences too and there have to be those differences because of your student population and the community of teachers who you are working with. There are major differences in elementary and middle schools. The scheduling is so different.

What I found that was also different about [Greenwood Middle School] was the amount of help. If I had to do without my two aides, boy the difference in program offering would be great.

And, of course, this also shows how important it is to have adequate funding for library media programs.

Thama I guess I looked at some of the things the other media specialists were doing — things like storytelling — which was interesting, and I wondered if that was something that I wasn't giving to the kids. My intuition is that the storytelling is done primarily with elementary librarians. Middle school librarians might do that in part but not a lot.

Tere It was kinda nice because it brought some things up to a sharper focus. It made me think about — I said, this is something that will be important to continue. Reading about what the others do made me think about what I do and what I could do.

Diane I think one thing that [this study] shows is that the structure between elementary school and middle school is very different. In one setting collaboration is a very normal thing and in another setting it is almost an impossible thing. In schools now everybody wants to collaborate with the classroom teacher. The classroom teacher is feeling overwhelmed...not only does the librarian want to collaborate, but the gifted teacher, the art teacher, the music teacher, teachers at their own grade level. It all comes down to time. The elementary schools haven't figured out how to fit everything into their schedule yet.
Reflection on Practice

Thama, Karen, and Tere commented on how being a part of the study and then reading the findings and analysis prompted them to think about their roles and their attitudes and actions.

Thama  
By asking the questions it makes me think more about what I'm doing. In the type of position I'm in I'm so bombarded by needs that I'm trying to meet all these needs at once and sometimes it's hard to focus and get things done the way I want them to get done. So when I look at [the transcripts] I kind of hope that, in fact, that's what I'm doing and that's where I'm going for [the teachers]. And I think for the most part it is.

Karen  
It's nice to see what you do in print. We often act, but don't think about our reasoning behind it. I had to think about what I do. I think it's important to confront your biases, but it wasn't until you asked about it did I really think about how I confront mine.

Tere  
I think [participating in the study] brought more things in focus. There are different roles I have to perform. Sometimes I'm in contradiction with other librarians because I see my role as the facilitator over the teacher. Within my facilitator role I teach children, I teach teachers, but it's because the role of teacher has changed so much. We are no longer in front of a group spewing out information. We are working together, sharing ideas. The ideas that the children have, that I have, we sort of put them together and we go from there. I think in my role I'm a facilitator and from within that I teach and then I have to provide resources to the teachers. But I have always been a librarian first.

Additional Information for the Study

The school library media specialists were generally pleased with the findings and analysis, but there were several points presented in the document that needed to be clarified or changed. The school library media specialists' comments add more information to the study and also change the impact of some findings. In particular, after Thama read the document, she wanted me to inspect the reference section of her library media center when I stopped in to audiotape the comments she had in response to the findings. Previously, I had stated, "... the collection in Thama's school seemed to me to be the one most in need of updating. Books are worn and many reference sets
are incomplete with missing volumes" (p. 150). Thama showed me five sets of new encyclopedias and three sets of special interest encyclopedias on science and technology and on careers. She also told me that her center had received World Book and Grolier multimedia encyclopedias on CD-ROM. It was obvious that much needed reference replacement and new acquisition funds had been available to Thama in the last year for support of the library media program.

Another addition to the findings was that Thama had been voted as King Middle School’s teacher of the year for 1995 by the teachers and was honored at the end of the school year banquet. Previously, only Karen had been formally recognized for her contribution to her school by her teachers.

Even though Thama received this honor, she still was not sure about how her work was perceived by the principal and the teachers. Thama believed that the findings of this study helped reinforce her practice.

Actually, I felt really good about [what I read]. What I didn’t realize (which was a nice plus) was that [the principal] said some very positive things. It’s not that I felt that he was negative towards me. It’s just that that’s not something that he’s ever shared with me. And some of the comments the teachers made — they don’t tell me that either. You just have assumptions and you hope that you’re doing OK, but you don’t know - so it’s nice to have that kind of confirmation. I would still suggest to you that it’s certainly far from perfect in that I’m sure some teachers have their misgivings.

In the last year, Tere has been able to implement flexible scheduling into the school library media program. She has found that she is working much more with some classes than with others. She has changed her information skills curriculum and does more with research skills incorporating the computers and CD-ROMs and less with literature extension projects. The technical support position which was cut from the budget two years ago has been restored. The individual in this position is assigned once a week to Tere’s library media center to troubleshoot and repair computers if the need arises.
Diane responded in-depth to her comments on collaboration in the findings and analysis. She believed her comments about the lack of collaboration and the way she felt the teachers viewed her were indicative of the newness of Henderson Elementary School and the atmosphere of her school throughout the year (1994) when the school had a change of principals.

Diane's comments suggest how the school and the school librarian works has to do with the fact of how long the school has been there...because you know this was our 4th year and we were still finding out how we all work together. You know that "newness" makes a difference. We were all new, we had just lost our principal that had started the school, we had a new principal and so the dynamics that were going on...teachers not having time for collaboration...I think it was because so many people were new and there were so many changes.

Teachers do collaborate now. I think that's an interesting thing - working together is something that you have to learn to do. You can't do it automatically. Now teachers are working more together and I'm working more with them. And I also think people were incredibly depressed that year because [the original principal of the school] had left. There was truly a depression and it manifested itself in all different kinds of ways. It was a very difficult year.

Diane believes the teachers now see her "as an equal," and perhaps they always did. It may have been that the atmosphere in the school was not conducive to collaboration at the time Diane felt removed from the other teaching faculty. Now the lack of time in the school day is the biggest roadblock to collaboration. Even with time constraints, Diane and her teachers regularly collaborate with one another. This addition to the study softens the impact of the findings on the lack of collaboration between the elementary school library media specialists and their teachers. But it also clarifies the reasons behind the lack of collaboration in Diane's school. The staff did not know each other well and they were unsure of the expectations held by the new principal.

Diane suggests that the atmosphere and the uncomfortable interactions among the faculty have to do not only with the newness of a school, but also with the support of
the principal or the lack of it. Diane stated, "The new principal makes an enormous
difference. [The former principal] really promoted the library and encouraged teachers
to use it." Still, now that the teachers are used to the present principal, they work
together despite his difference in philosophy from the former principal.

Tere informed me that collaboration is still not happening between her and her
teachers at Lincoln Elementary School. No additional reasons for this lack of
collaboration were given.

Response to Multicultural Section

After reading the section of the findings on Administration’s Support of
Multicultural Education, Tere commented that she does not believe that the
administration can “mandate” a positive presentation of materials that reflect a different
culture. She suggests that one has to be open to the perspectives of others and ready to
accept differences before he or she can effectively present multicultural materials.

Tere, Karen, and Diane believe that aspects of multiculturalism are blending into
the curriculum as society is accepting the world as a world of many colors. Each of
them commented that they do not celebrate a specific month for any particular cultural
group. Tere stated, "I don’t believe in having an African American month. It just
defeats the purpose. I think everyday you need to present information and materials on
African Americans and people of other cultures.” Diane stated, “We don’t do a Black
History display in February, we don’t single out the culture [during a specific month]. I
don’t think we do multicultural activities because we think, “Oh we are all white, so we
have to study black people. That’s so condescending.” Karen also believes that
elements of multiculturalism should be integrated into the curriculum. She stated, “I
don’t think there should be a month set aside for a particular group of people any more
than I think we should have a month set aside to teach poetry. The curriculum should
be presented in a holistic way.”
When Diane and her teachers are designing a program, they don’t decide to “do something multicultural.” They decide on a theme and multicultural elements find their way into the program. Diane contends that inclusion of multicultural elements in a lesson or program happens in a natural, not an artificial, way because there are good materials that they want to use, and those happen to be multicultural.

Diane: I just don’t make [multicultural materials] a separate thing. We looked at Patricia Polacco’s books not because they are multicultural, but because they are good stories. One of the top books that’s going around right now is The Watsons Go To Birmingham 1963, but it’s a good story. It’s a wonderful family, it’s humorous, kids can relate to it, and it also portrays a Black family. I don’t think anybody who picked it up to read aloud — (well, maybe they did) — they picked it up because it’s a good story. Kids like it because it’s a good story. It’s very less didactic than to say, “we’re going to study multiculturalism and show how bad we’ve been.”

Diane also stated that her school’s participation in the Peace School (p. 203) never materialized. Instead, they participated in an Arts program, which is being repeated again this year. This week-long field trip, organized by the art and music teachers and school library media specialist, is called “A Global Look at the Arts.” Each class in the school takes a full day learning about the arts in two locations in the city — the public library and the newly restored music hall. Students study the artwork and create their own art while involved in organized activities at the library. The activities at the music hall center on the theme of the book, It Takes a Village (by Jane Cowen-Fletcher). Two African artists, a musician and a dancer, teach students about the traditional arts of the culture and also involve them in making their own instruments and in learning a modern African dance. They also study the work of an African-American artist whose work has appeared in several children’s books. After examining and learning about the artist’s work, the children produce their own artwork in the style of the artist. This artwork is then exhibited at the school during the school’s Spring Celebration. Diane contends that this program is taking place not to make a point about cultural differences, but because it is a worthwhile learning experience for the students.
After reading the findings, both Karen and Tere commented on Thama’s view of selection of multicultural materials. Thama looks for materials by authors from the culture about which they write. Karen and Tere do not believe that books must be written by someone of that culture in order to be a good book with multicultural content.

Tere: I have been seeing alot about being “authentic” in presenting a culture. I don’t feel that you have to be from that culture. You just have to know and understand the culture. I think about my husband. He is not Latin, but he knows about my culture and he understands the same way that I understand the American culture.

**Changes in their Responsibilities**

Diane cited collaboration and the atmosphere of her school as a major change from the time this study was initiated. The other school library media specialists focused on something that is affecting all of them, including Diane. This change is the rapid advance of technology. School library media specialists have been involved in the promotion and integration of technology into the curriculum for some time, but it has been just recently with the advent of the CD-ROM as a reference tool and with the addition of Internet resources that the school library media specialist has had to dedicate so much of her time to technology. In just one year, from Spring 1995 to Spring 1996, the configuration of Tere’s library media facility has changed to accommodate six computers. She is spending more time learning about software and teaching children how to access and use the programs that are offered. Each of the school library media specialists has spent the year contributing to her district’s technology plan required by the state. Thama has been the chief architect of her school’s plan. Each school library media specialist sees her role as changing to accommodate more technology, which means giving up some other part of her duties.
Karen contends that she is unable to spend as much time on other areas, but is excited about some of the materials that are appearing through technology. Some of these materials present information on other cultures.

Karen I would have to say that technology is the biggest change in the time this study started to present. How dramatically different the influx of computer everything — from trouble-shooting, to teaching, to purchasing software (with the same criteria in mind). In the Fall I did an Egyptian book talk and story program where I added a CD-ROM and I told the kids what it contained and made it available to them and they've used it all year long. I can walk by a computer several times a week and I see that in use, *The Secret of the Pyramids*. I've used CD-ROMs with a teacher group. I talked a teacher into using the book, *Loch*, by Paul Zindel, which is a contemporary story about a dinosaur that has been found in Lake Champlain. Anyway, we looked up information about the dinosaur in *Prehistoria*, the CD-ROM from Groliers, and found that this dinosaur could have everything that this author wrote into his novel. Everything could have happened. That particular CD-ROM not only has the correct pronunciations but the sound the dinosaur would have made.

These additional comments allowed me to better understand the school library media specialist role and to become privy to how the school library media specialists in this study reacted to the way their actions and opinions were interpreted by me, the researcher. This additional information assisted me in formulating my ideas for implications and recommendations.
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This study has investigated four school library media specialists and has reported on their attitudes about their profession and their actions in their practice. The four women studied are exemplary school library media specialists.

What Makes a School Library Media Specialist Exemplary?

The interviews and observations that I conducted for this study allowed me to see the four school library media specialists in action, how they viewed their roles, how they acted upon their beliefs. From this experience, I was able to better define what I consider exemplary practice. It should be noted that there is more than one model for exemplary practice. A school library media specialist may have a specialty in one area, for example, children’s literature or technology, and be recognized as an exemplar in that specialty. This area of expertise may be incorporated into the model. However, the school library media specialist must be well-versed in the other areas of the profession and be an effective practitioner. Implications about and recommendations for exemplary practice generated from this study follow.

To be exemplary, one must be effective in his or her job. The individuals with whom these women worked considered them as such. Just what did these women do to be exemplary? They each possess an enthusiasm for the job and a keen interest in
children and in learning. They all seem to understand their motivations and reflect on what they do and why they do it. They look at issues from a variety of perspectives and are concerned about how information and actions can affect others. They are flexible in their thought and are open to new ideas and challenges. They introduce new ideas. They are knowledgeable about the learning process and are comfortable in working with students and teachers to assist them in their intellectual development.

Cleaver and Taylor (1989) suggested that to effectively perform the role of instructional consultant, the school library media specialist must possess:

1. Expertise on the conceptual implications of information and how these relate to higher order thinking skills and metacognition.
2. Expertise in cognitive theories such as information processing, schema theory, learning styles, teaching styles, and so forth.
3. Expertise in instructional design.
4. Expertise in literature, reading, and human development.
5. Expertise with instructional materials, inquiry and resource-based teaching, and learning. (p. 4)

The school library media specialists in this study possess expertise in these and other areas. I've found these exemplary school library media specialists to have a strong sense of service to others, to enjoy sharing ideas and information. They are accomplished promoters of the school library media program. They know their school's curriculum by serving on curriculum committees, by working collaboratively with teachers on various lessons, and by asking teachers about the units and lessons they present. They are effective in designing units and in conducting discussions, storytelling and read-aloud sessions. They are effective teachers, administrators, information specialists, and instructional consultants. They have a presence throughout the school and are known by the students and the faculty as members of the school community. These women have the support of the administration and have reasonable conditions in which to work. They are professionals and are involved in professional organizations. They are leaders.
Kullesuild (1980) described school library media specialists who have become informal leaders.

They converse with students, teachers, administrators, and parents on matters of concern to them. They often take on responsibility for activities which are not in their job description, but which put them in touch with the rest of the school community in ways which increase communication, build trust, and draw clients into their program frame of reference. They identify projects which will allow them to initiate, adapt to, or resist changes in their working environments, and to preserve or expand programs already in place. The best managed library media programs have a clear focus of leadership, a visible leader willing to accept responsibilities and a ‘presence’ throughout the school — not just in the library media center. (p. 312)

This description rings true of the school library media specialists in this study as does McGiffin’s (1990) description. She states,

[The school library media specialist] is someone who connects people and ideas to curriculum and instruction; a person who is in the unique position to network with community, educational and cultural institutions and the school to provide valuable resources and professional development programs for oneself and classroom colleagues; someone who can see the “big picture” of a school and coordinate people, programs and materials to benefit students. (p. 215)

There are undoubtedly many school library media specialists who possess a number of the same attributes as the school library media specialists in the study. I found that the most apparent attributes of these successful school library media specialists were enthusiasm, desire to serve, and intelligence. These women are thinkers. They possess knowledge of their collection and knowledge of the teaching/learning process and can apply what they know to a variety of situations.

How Can These Findings Affect Practice?

School library media specialists sometimes are underprepared for one or more of the roles of the profession, whether it is as a teacher, information specialist, or instructional consultant. They may be unfamiliar with learning theory and the school
curriculum or unsure of the latest tools of the profession. The school library media specialists in this study were well-versed in all roles, having advanced degrees and certificates in a variety of areas. The school library media specialist's training is ongoing and never-ending.

Grooming someone to be exemplary may come during the preparation for the profession. The individual who is choosing a career as a school library media specialist should know at the outset of their preparation program that the position is one which involves a variety of talents and covers a variety of roles. The expectations of the roles of the school library media specialist should be adequately explained to prospective specialists and any misconception of the position as being strictly administrative should be corrected.

Coursework should reflect the expectations of the roles of the school library media specialist and include a broad range of Education courses (curriculum development, school and community relations, various areas in children's literature, and technology) as well as the traditional courses in collection development and administration. School library media specialists will be working in a diverse society and should be introduced to concepts in multiculturalism. They need to become familiar with and conversant about changes in our global society and how these changes are affecting us. Apprenticeships and mentorships in a variety of school library media centers should be, and in many cases are, offered with exemplary school library media specialists.

As for the individual already in the position of school library media specialist, a continuing education program should be available for him or her to improve skills which are necessary for this dynamic profession. Various strategies can be emphasized in each of the roles and presented to the specialists to build their repertoires. Techniques to balance the various demands of the position could be offered to those specialists who are overwhelmed (and those who are not overwhelmed) by the many
responsibilities of the profession. Courses on the school community, learning theory, public relations, diversity, curriculum integration, technology, and dealing with change are just a few of the courses that could be offered.

The profession is ever-changing and the school library media specialist has to stay informed to be effective. Released time from their school day to visit exemplary school library media specialists should be available to all specialists. More school library media specialist support groups of individuals from a variety of school districts should be organized by the state library media association. The specialists can be encouraged by their administrations to become active members of state and national professional organizations and receive recognition for their involvement. By having a broad choice of professional development opportunities, the school library media specialists can develop in various directions of interest to them.

Some school library media specialists may be uncomfortable in “over-stepping” their perceived role to work with teachers. If a school library media specialist is reserved about promoting his or her services, then the program suffers. The school library media specialists in this study make a point to acquaint teachers with their services. By being proactive and ever-present, the school library media specialist educates the teacher in what can be expected.

Many individuals resist change. They are unsure about how change will affect them. As a result, individuals may turn inward, hoping that if they do not address a change, it will go away. Those school library media specialists who adhere to their job descriptions and are not interested in addressing innovations and added duties which are not in these descriptions run the risk of alienating the school community and being viewed as ineffective. The school library media specialists in this study knew that change was inevitable. Some grasped it more readily than others, but each considered the positive effects of change and how it could assist them in offering a better program.
In some cases, these women served as change agents. They knew about an innovation and promoted it, or encouraged others to try new ideas and materials.

School library media specialists may be unable to get to know the school community due to their work schedule. In many places, school library media specialists are responsible for services in a number of buildings in their district. Contextual factors, such as little support from the administration and the lack of funding, often make the job difficult for the typical school library media specialist. It is apparent from this study that the administration has a role to play in setting the stage for the development of the exemplary school library media specialist. Support for the program by the principal is important. The principal will be the primary source for adequate funding for proper staffing and purchasing of materials. Adequate staffing is necessary for a successful program. Each school building should have a school library media specialist who spends all of his or her time working with one school community. This will allow the specialist to become better acquainted with the community, the curriculum, and the needs of that school.

Still, none of these suggestions guarantee an exemplary school library media specialist. Someone has to come to the profession with an interest and an enthusiasm for learning and for sharing knowledge. Although the school library media specialist profession is primarily a self-selected one where very little recruiting occurs, the administration should encourage the individual who views the school library media position as one of challenge. Occasionally individuals enter the profession because they are teachers who are tired of classroom teaching and want a change. They do not realize how complex the school library media specialist job is and how much of their time is involved in dealing with the students. Teachers who want new challenges, who want to work with the entire school population and collaborate with other professionals on programs across the curriculum should be encouraged to enter the profession. A school library media specialist must want to be involved in the heart of the teaching/
learning process. If the school library media specialist is familiar with the center’s collection but does not see how the collection and services integrate with the school curriculum, he or she is not adequately serving the school community. This narrow view affects student learning particularly when school library media programs are presented in isolation, having little or nothing to do with what students are learning in their classrooms. Those individuals who are able to expertly connect literature and materials and technology to the curriculum should be encouraged to become school library media specialists. Individuals who work well with others, who have a variety of interests, who are eager to learn new information should be considered as potential school library media specialists.

Problems Exist Even for the Exemplary

Even exemplary school library media specialists have problems in their positions. It was apparent from this study that collaboration between the school library media specialist and the teachers could have been more widely practiced. It was also apparent that even though funding and support were good, they could always be better.

Collaboration is a process that needs to be encouraged by the administration, and discussed and understood by the members of the school community. Even though the structure of the middle school class schedule is more conducive to collaboration than the elementary school structure, the interest to collaborate needs to be present for all involved. There is ready to collaborate, but her teachers are not interested. Teachers need to know that the school library media specialist is eager to collaborate, time needs to be set aside for teacher-school library media specialist collaboration, additional personnel needs to be available to take over duties while the school library media specialist is working with the teachers (as in Karen’s case), and the principal needs to promote the concept of collaboration.
Collaboration or the lack of it is a symptom of the school environment. If the school environment is healthy with a principal who is supportive, then the faculty is more apt to work together. By reflecting on her school’s problems with collaboration, Diane was able to address two issues that blocked interest in the process. Philosophical support from the principal was not forthcoming and, because the school was newly established, the teachers did not know each other well and were not comfortable working with one another. Building relationships where individuals are comfortable in sharing and working together takes time, as evidenced by Diane’s present relationship with her teachers, her partners in collaborative projects. This suggests that the dynamics of building trust and rapport with others in the school community has to be considered if collaboration is to begin to occur naturally. It would be valuable to school library media specialists of the future to examine and understand the process of teacher planning and the dynamics of collaboration before they enter the profession. Examination of these phenomena would also be useful for the prospective teacher and the prospective principal.

As mentioned above, the support of the principal is important. If the principal does not consider the school library media program integral to the school’s curriculum, funding will be channeled elsewhere and the program will not be as effective. Philosophical support is as important as financial support. Although each believed in the importance of the program, the principals in this study gave varying levels of support to their school library media programs. These school library media specialists were accomplished at promoting their programs to the administration and to the school community, but still principals needed to be pressed for support.

The administration may be supportive of various philosophies, but support by mandate may or may not be effective. For example, multicultural policies within three of the four districts studied didn’t necessarily ensure the inclusion of multicultural materials and activities into the curriculum. Karen’s district was required by sanction
to integrate multicultural materials into the curriculum and she and her teachers did so. The other schools were much freer with their multicultural curriculum mandates. Tere “didn’t need” a policy to include multicultural materials in her lessons. Diane wasn’t sure whether or not her district had a policy, but none the less incorporated multicultural materials into her lessons. It appeared that if the individual was interested in the area of multicultural literature then it would be included in their part of the curriculum, policy or not. As Tere said, “You can’t mandate the positive presentation of multicultural literature.”

Examining Specific Aspects of the Profession

It is apparent from this study that an individual has many responsibilities to effectively serve as a school library media specialist. All of these women function successfully in each role of the profession, often doing similar tasks very much the same. Although it was not my intention to compare them as I was observing and interviewing, I found that there were different aspects of their work that stood out. Diane encourages critical thinking skills in her students whenever possible. She takes great joy in hearing children’s ideas and opinions as they reflect on what they have read or experienced. Although all the school library media specialists do this to some degree, Tere purposefully adds other perspectives to classroom lessons whenever possible. She believes that encouraging multiple perspectives is imperative. Thama serves as a facilitator in the acquisition of information skills. She believes this is an area of importance for the development of independent learners and is pleased when she witnesses the students using the skills she has taught them. Karen stands out as a partner in collaboration with her teachers. She involves them in projects and units that she initiates and readily accepts invitations by teachers to join them in lesson planning.
Many of the responsibilities of the school library media specialist can be investigated at length. One that the school library media specialists in this study have taken upon themselves is the incorporation of multicultural literature into the school curriculum.

**Multicultural Literature**

The four school library media specialists consider multicultural literature as an integral part of the curriculum - not something that should be included as an afterthought but a natural component of all lessons. Multicultural materials were being used in the school library media centers and to some degree in the classrooms. Students were selecting multicultural literature that was required for their classroom assignments. Although there was much effort on the part of the school library media specialist to promote and introduce multicultural literature, students were not choosing to read the literature when they chose books for pleasure reading. The specialists contended that if their students self-selected multicultural literature it was not because the book contained multicultural content, but because a particular work was recommended by a peer, because the illustrations were attractive, or because the student was familiar with the author. Students did not readily pick up and read books because of their unfamiliar settings and characters. This practice is not uncommon. We are often uncomfortable with the unfamiliar. Books with multicultural content are best promoted through universal themes and not as something unique and different. It is plausible that with the passage of time, as more multicultural literature is available and is incorporated into the curriculum in a natural way, and as students view the society as more pluralistic, the unfamiliar will become familiar and the need for special guidance toward multicultural books will no longer be necessary.
Each school library media specialist in this study believes that multicultural literature is no longer an add-on but now blends in with the other literature. This has become the case since this study began.

Although each school library media specialist believes that incorporating multicultural materials into the curriculum is important to allow students to become aware of the world, and each is enthusiastic about it, the levels of enthusiasm in introducing materials differed somewhat among the individual specialists. Tere and Thama address the inclusion of multicultural literature with a passion. They are adamant about including it in the curriculum. When talking with them about aspects of multiculturalism, I observed animation and a pronounced interest in the subject. This passion is apparent in their words and in their actions. It is a part of them. This passion may be because they are from cultures other than the dominant culture and are more sensitive to the issues of multiculturalism.

Each school library media specialist has confronted her own biases and has realized how this understanding affects her actions and the school library media program. This is important for any area of a program, knowing how one's own opinions affect practice. These women believe that knowing the importance of addressing their own biases comes from their knowledge of censorship issues which are emphasized in school library media education. Library media specialist preparation programs should introduce students to aspects of prejudice and bias in the same way that they introduce issues of censorship in materials selection courses, examining the motivation behind the action. This may also be the place in the curriculum to encourage the examination and development of multiple perspectives.

The school library media specialists in this study easily incorporated multicultural literature and materials into the curriculum. Some thought about inclusion more than others. Cultures were presented through programs and projects as well as literature and materials, in lessons that did not specifically focus on multiculturalism. These school
library media specialists knew the materials and their availability. This placed the
individual in a position as a leader in the incorporation of multicultural literature and as
a valuable resource for classroom teachers. In a broader sense, the school library media
specialist is an expert on literature, in general, and serves the school community in that
position. To prepare school library media specialists for the needs of a multicultural
society, preparation programs should have courses in multicultural education and
internships in areas with diverse populations should be a part of the requirements.
Future and practicing school library media specialists also should be versed in the
frameworks of integration of multiculturalism which explain the levels of inclusion so
students can progress in their knowledge and understanding of multicultural education.

Additional Thoughts

Although there are a great number of things one can do in the training of
individuals to produce a qualified school library media specialist, becoming an
exemplary school library media specialist may be more from a desire and interest than
from a set schedule of courses. This motivation to excel comes from within. I
witnessed the products of this motivation in these four exemplary school library media
specialists.

I found it particularly informative to conduct this study over an extended period
of time. The length of the study and the reflection on the findings by the participants of
the study brought three issues into clearer focus: the principal definitely affects the
environment of the school, developing an atmosphere conducive to collaboration takes
a great deal of time, and budgets for resources are not constant. The extended period of
time of this study has also allowed for the observation of the change in use of
multicultural literature in the curriculum. It has gone from a conscious inclusion in
1993 to a more natural blending with other literature in 1995.
How Could I Have Learned More?

I formally observed the school library media specialists in their schools eight times over a two year period. I could have increased the number of times of observation and extended the length of the study to obtain more data for analysis.

By more extensively interviewing and observing students and teachers in the four schools, I perhaps could have obtained information on how these individuals were affected by the work of the school library media specialists and what differences the school library media specialist made in their teaching/learning process. To gain additional information about the participants, surveys could have been developed and administered to the specialists, teachers, and students. I could have observed at length in the classrooms to record the actual usage by teachers of multicultural literature.

The number of cases in this study could have been increased and schools with more diverse student populations could have been examined. The elements of race, gender, location of schools, and the school library media specialists' education could also have been examined at length.

This also could have been a study that examined controversial issues in including multicultural literature into the curriculum. It did not become such because the school library media specialists that I investigated did not see inclusion of multicultural literature as controversial.

Questions for Further Research

This study investigated the roles and responsibilities of the school library media specialist and how the school library media specialist incorporates multicultural literature into the curriculum. A variety of questions were asked to examine those
concerns. However, additional questions remain. Questions that emerged from this study also could be posed at a later time. Possible research questions include:

1. What type of professional training will be most useful for the school library media specialist in the 21st century?
2. How different is the practice of the novice compared to the experienced school library media specialist?
3. Will the incorporation of multicultural literature be more natural as more multicultural literature is published and available?
4. How will multicultural policies of the future affect the practices of the school library media specialist?
5. How do other exemplary school library media specialists promote the various levels of ethnic content integration (Banks’s framework) in their schools’ curriculum?
6. Has student choice of books with multicultural content increased since more multicultural literature has been included in the body of available literature?
7. What type of professional development program most benefits the school library media specialist?
8. Is there an effect on the performance of other school library media specialists who attend conference presentations by exemplary school library media specialists?
9. How will the proliferation of technology affect the school library media specialist roles of teacher, information specialist, and instructional consultant?
10. Will technology expand the tasks of the school library media specialists as a professional development provider?
LIST OF REFERENCES


Bias, L. V. (1979). The role and function of the media specialist as perceived by principals, teachers, and media specialists in elementary schools in Montgomery County, Maryland. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Maryland). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 40, 5300A.


240


Erickson, F. (1986). Qualitative methods in research on teaching. In M. C. Whitteck (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teaching* (3rd ed.) (pp. 119-161). New York: Macmillan.

Ervin, D. S. (1989). The effect of experience, educational level, and subject area on the philosophical acceptance, the perceived assumption, and the perceived barriers to implementation of the instructional and curricular role of the school library media specialist. (Doctoral dissertation, University of South Carolina). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 50, 2767A.


Cultural substance in literature for children and young adults (pp. 1-13). Fort Atkinson, WI: Highsmith Press.


247


LIST OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS


253


APPENDIX

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
QUESTIONS FOR LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALISTS

1. What is your definition of “multicultural?”
2. How does that differ from “global?”
3. What do you consider as multicultural literature (and materials)?
4. How have you incorporated multicultural literature into the curriculum? Other multicultural materials?
5. Can you remember when you began incorporating multicultural literature into your lessons?
6. How do you feel your beliefs affect your teaching? Your selection of materials?
7. How well do you feel you know the body of multicultural literature which is presently available?
8. How do you present multicultural literature to your teachers?
9. Do you work with teachers on multicultural activities?
10. When you present multicultural literature to your students, who is your audience?
11. How do you hope it will affect them?
12. How do teachers in your school find out about new books and materials?
13. Do you ever do a presentation on new materials in the library/media center? In general, and then do you incorporate the multicultural materials?
14. Do you see any gaps in the multicultural literature that is available? (too much historic, not enough contemporary, etc.)
15. When presenting multicultural materials to students, do you highlight the similarities as well as the differences in the various cultures presented?
16. Do you ever discuss the various cultural perspectives presented in the literature?
17. Do you ever talk about multicultural issues that the literature may introduce?

18. Why do you think multicultural literature is such an issue right now?

19. Do you see changes taking place in the classroom that reflect our continuing knowledge about the value of multicultural literature? If you do, how do you account for these changes, and will they continue in some form in the future?

20. How do you select multicultural literature and materials for the library/media center?

21. What criteria do you use? How is this different from criteria for other books and materials?

22. How does your philosophy for learning affect how you work with teachers and children?

23. Who is your role model?

24. How did you become a library media specialist? What was your motivation behind the decision?

25. How do you see the role of the library media center in conjunction with the overall function of the school?

26. How do you present yourself to the school community?
   - librarian (information specialist)?
   - teacher?
   - consultant?
   - collaborator?
   - administrator?

27. What are your rewards in your position?

28. What encourages or discourages the role of the library media specialist as a leader in professional development?

29. In what way do you participate in faculty meetings?

30. Do you consider yourself a teacher and how do you serve in that role?

31. Are the activities that take place in the library media center planned in conjunction with what is happening in the individual classrooms?
32. What types of collaborative activities take place between the teachers and the library media specialist? Has collaboration been taking place for some time? Do teachers collaborate with one another in your school?

33. Do you ever initiate conversations about teaching?

34. Have you ever initiated suggestions for collaborative projects? For example?

35. Do you teach only skills?

36. Do you feel the principal trusts his staff to perform their tasks as classroom teachers?

37. Is the principal supportive and rewarding? If so, in what ways?

38. How do you encourage teachers and students to use the library media center?

39. What makes you a quality library media specialist and teacher? How?

40. How free are you to initiate units or projects which you think would benefit the students?

41. How free are you to initiate units or projects which you think would benefit the teachers?

42. Do you play a role in setting the curriculum for your school? If yes, how?

Additional Questions Initiated by Previous Interviews

1. When selecting materials do you look at the author’s perspective? Do you take into consideration who the author is and if he or she is from the particular cultural group he or she is writing about?

2. Have you influenced the professional development reading shelf collection in your school? Does the school have one? Where is it housed? Do you select the materials on your own or are the materials purchased mostly from teachers’ requests?

3. Does your school district have a multicultural policy? Did you help develop it? Do you refer to it at all when designing units? When ordering? Is there anything about multiculturalism/diversity in the library’s mission statement?
4. Do you ever talk about current multicultural issues with your students in library classes or in the projects you initiate? Do you introduce them through multicultural literature or materials? (Apartheid, racism, prejudice)

5. Do you do anything with the state curriculum, “Prejudice Unleashed?”

6. Does the administration encourage multicultural activities? Actually request it?

7. Do you have a library newsletter? Do you have a column in the school newsletter?

8. Is there a budget available from the multicultural committee for the purchase of multicultural materials?

9. Do you see your support staff helpful in giving you freedom to work on other aspects of the job other than on administrative tasks, check out, etc.? How many on staff? Paid? Volunteer?

Additional Questions for All Library Media Specialists

1. Do you have anything to add to your definition of “Multicultural”?

2. Do you feel that it is important to integrate multicultural content into the whole curriculum?

3. Grant and Sleeter (1985) suggest four approaches for multicultural education, which of these do you feel comes closest to your practice of implementation of multicultural literature and materials? (read what they are)
   Culturally different?
   Ethnic studies?
   Human relations?
   Multicultural education?
   Multicultural and social reconstructionist?

4. Banks (1989) has four curricular models for integrating multicultural content into regular curricula. Which of these do you follow and how?
   1. Contributions - focuses on the highlights, heroes, and holidays of a particular culture. Usually singular lessons.
   2. Additive - basic structure of curriculum is unchanged. However, content, concepts, and themes that reflect other cultures are added to set curriculum, but not woven in.
   3. Transformation - students are encouraged to view problems, themes, concerns, and concepts from the perspective of different cultural groups.
4. Social action - students are asked to use decision-making skills, identify social problems and concerns, take actions to help resolve the problems they have identified.

5. Do students pick up and read multicultural literature because it is multicultural?

6. Is the library curriculum (course of study) separate from each discipline or part of it?

7. Is there anything in the school policy or guidelines to teachers about collaboration?

8. When is the library accessible to students and teachers?

9. Does your school use basals? textbooks?

10. How much audiovisual materials on multicultural do you use?


12. Are you ever acknowledged for your special competencies?

13. Do you read in the professional journals? Such as? Write for them?

14. Do you have a peer support group?

15. Does your school encourage you to take classes, attend conferences, etc.

16. Do you feel you have a pretty good relationship with the students? With the teachers?

QUESTIONS FOR PRINCIPALS

1. What do you see as the role of the library/media specialist?

2. Does she assist you in your work in any way?

3. Do you look to the media specialist for inservice leadership? assistance?

4. How do you see the media specialist as a librarian? (information specialist)
a teacher?
an instructional consultant?
a collaborator?
a professional developer?
an administrator?

5. Does she know the school curriculum? What the teachers and students are doing?

6. Is the media specialist encouraged to work directly with teachers? Students? How?

7. What do you consider characteristics of a leader?

8. Do you see the media specialist as a leader? in program development? in professional development for teachers?

9. Do you encourage the library media specialist to be a professional developer? Is time allowed?

10. How is the media specialist encouraged to develop herself professionally?

11. Do you trust the library media specialist’s judgment in program development? Working with teacher development? Collection development?

12. Does the library media specialist have an integrated program with the curriculum of the school?

13. Is the library media specialist recognized for her knowledge of multicultural lit. and materials?

14. Are you aware of multicultural books, materials, and displays when you enter the school library media center?

15. Is there anything about multiculturalism in the district’s mission statement? About collaboration?

16. Is there budget support specifically for multicultural materials?

17. How do you see the library media program in relation to the entire curriculum/school?

18. Is the library media specialist a valuable contributor to the overall school program? In what way?

19. How does the library/media program fit into the school’s philosophy?
QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

1. What do you see as the role of the library/media specialist?

2. How does the library/media specialist help you as a teacher?

3. Does she encourage students to use the media center? How?

4. Does she encourage teachers to use the media center? How?

5. Does she alert you to new materials that have come to the media center? How? New multicultural materials?

6. How do you see the library/media specialist as:
   • librarian (information specialist)?
   • teacher?
   • instructional consultant?
   • collaborator?
   • professional developer?
   • administrator?

7. Does the library/media specialist assist you with your lesson development? How?

8. Does she know the school’s curriculum?

9. Have any programs been cooperatively designed by you and the library/media specialist?

10. What do you think encourages or discourages the library/media specialist working more directly with teachers?

11. What do library/media specialists do to help your professional development?

12. How does this ultimately help your students?

13. What kinds of lessons and activities does the library/media specialist engage in when your students are in the library media center?

14. How does this ultimately help you? Or does it?

15. How does she introduce multicultural materials into the curriculum for your class?
16. Is the library/media specialist recognized for her knowledge of multicultural literature and materials?

17. Is she recognized for integrating multicultural literature and materials into the curriculum?

18. Do you see the multicultural collection in the media center as a valuable resource for your teaching?

19. Do you feel that the center has a well developed collection of multicultural books and materials?

20. Are you aware of multicultural books, materials, and displays when you enter the media center?

21. How do you see the library/media program in relation to the entire curriculum?

QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

1. What does she do in her job?

2. What do you like that she does for you or your class?

3. What does she do when she helps you?

4. Do you ever see her helping your teacher?

5. What kind of things does she do for your teacher?

6. What do you think she has to know for her job?

7. What do you think she should know for her job so she can help you? So she can help your teacher?

8. What do you like about the library media center?

9. What do you like about the library media specialist?

10. How often do you come to the library media center?

11. Does she ever show you literature or materials on people from other countries or people from cultures different from your own?