

---

# Editorial: Teacher Librarians as Central Figures, Heroes, and Key Players

**Rebecca D. Hunt**

*Northern Illinois University, USA*

**Marcia A. Mardis**

*Florida State University, USA*

---

This theme of this issue of *School Libraries Worldwide* is “Celebrity: Teacher Librarians as Central Figures, Heroes, and Key Players.” Celebrities captivate our attention through the media and according to Gabler (1994), “Celebrity is a learning process toward self-actualization and realization...celebrity is about gaining attention and acknowledgment—about not being like everyone else (pp. 10, 13).” As the sole information practitioner in a school, teacher librarians uniquely exhibit their celebrity status through the work they do to help students and stakeholders expand their knowledge, refine their skills, and locate the “right” information among the vast amount of materials that are available.

Throughout the history of librarianship, we have many famous librarians, many of whom were politicians, authors and historical celebrities in their own right: Ben Franklin, Golda Meir, J. Edgar Hoover, Lewis Carroll, Beverly Cleary, Madeleine L’Engle, Marcel Proust, Joanna Cole and Jacob Grimm. Celebrity librarians Melvil Dewey and Nancy Pearl earned their status through their excellent professional service. While exemplary librarians can be found in every aspect of history, thousands of school and public librarians that have gained recognition for their inspiring educators and learners. In this issue, we celebrate school librarians and their contributions to their communities.

## ***Becoming a Celebrity in Your School Library***

School librarians are central figures in their schools; their reputations precede them when students, teachers, administrators, parents and staff enter the school library. According to Gabler (1994, p.14), “The celebrity narrative and the celebrity’s tangibility are about identification”; indeed, while a school librarian can be considered an effective educator outside of the school library, rarely is a school library considered effective without a strong school library. The school librarian’s narrative is one that includes supporting, inspiring, and guiding students’ development with expertise, resources, and ingenuity. The school librarians’ celebrity narrative is defined by excellence and when this narrative is one of exemplary service, everyone knows the school librarian’s name and capabilities: this person is in the spotlight.

---

Copyright of works published in *School Libraries Worldwide* is jointly held by the author(s) and by the International Association of School Librarianship. The author(s) retain copyright of their works, but give permission to the International Association of School Librarianship to reprint their works in collections or other such documents published by or on behalf of the International Association of School Librarianship. Author(s) who give permission for their works to be reprinted elsewhere should inform the Editors of *School Libraries Worldwide* and should ensure that the following appears with the article: Reprinted, with permission, from *School Libraries Worldwide*, Volume 22, Number 1, January 2016, pp. i-iii, doi: 10.14265.22.1.000

The selflessness of this celebrity can be seen in so many ways. Almost all school librarians have those special students who seek refuge in the library and build a rapport around the enjoyable library atmosphere. This environment of information sharing, friendly debate, and a supportive adult is often not accessible elsewhere during the school day. The celebrity school librarian provides a safe haven for difficult questions and away from judgment or retaliation. A school librarian's narrative that includes open communication, trust, honesty, and availability is a legacy that forever influences how everyone in the school community views the library.

### ***In This Issue***

In this issue, researchers from all over the world provided us with a range of papers that explore librarians in leadership roles; librarians and their use of technology; librarians marketing and promoting programs and materials; and librarians as agents of change and innovation.

We lead this issue of 10 exciting papers with a thought provoking contribution to our "Researcher's Perspective" column by renowned researcher and writer Stephen Krashen. In "The Purpose of Education, Free Voluntary Reading, and Dealing with the Impact of Poverty," Dr. Krashen implores school-based information professionals to promote, implement, and reinforce children's love of reading in the face of sweeping international educational reforms that often affect available time to read.

In "Enhancing Quality Learning: The Impact of School Library Services to Students in Nigeria," Ebikabowei Emmanuel Baro and Monica Ederechukwu Eze report on the impact of services provided to students in Nigeria. In another Nigerian perspective, Kolawole Akinjide Aramide and Sunday Olusola Ladipo present "Training for School Librarianship Development in Nigeria: How Has Nigerian School Library Association Conference Programmes Fared?" in which they explore the relationship between professional development and librarianship development.

The issue includes four researchers from Asia and Oceania. Peng Han Lim (Singapore) provides a historical look at leadership and advocacy in a Singapore multilingual school system post-colonial Singapore, 1960 – 1985. Mandy Lupton (Australia) examines principal's perceptions of teacher librarians and reported the personal qualities principals valued in Australia in "Adding Value: Principals' Perceptions of the Role of the Teacher-librarian." Robin Spruce and Kasey Garrison (Australia) compare the perceptions and practices of self-regulated learning between National Board Certified teacher librarians and non-certified teacher librarians in the United States.

Turning to contributions from North America, Jennifer Branch-Mueller and Joanne de Groot (Canada) studied how teacher librarians in Canada viewed themselves as they transitioned from as novice to expert school librarian; their research provides a lens to examine pre-service and in-service teacher-librarianship education. Janice Newsum (USA) reviews the impact of technology on the evolution of materials and collection development for primary and secondary education in an urban school district. Mary Ann Harlan (USA) explores "Connected Learning," a framework to access, evaluate, construct, and share information in an online environment. Ken Haycock and Cheryl Stenstrom (USA) provide an agenda for advocacy in "Reviewing the Research and Evidence: Towards Best Practices for Garnering Support for

School Libraries.” Finally, Sheila Baker (USA) develops a model for practice, research, and evaluation based in her proposed “Six Ts of Transformation in Technology Integration” framework.

We hope that you will enjoy these papers as much as we have enjoyed assembling them for you. Let this fine work lead you to reflect on your own “star” status and the way your celebrity impacts your learning community.

### **References**

Gabler, N. (1994). *Toward a new definition of celebrity*. Retrieved from <http://learcenter.org/pdf/Gabler.pdf>

### **Author Notes**

Rebecca Hunt is an Assistant Professor in the Library and Information Science Program at Northern Illinois University. Her research interests include diversity, leadership development, urban education, and international and multicultural children’s literature.

Marcia A. Mardis co-edits *School Libraries Worldwide* and is an Associate Professor, Director of the School Library Media Program, and the Coordinator of Educational Informatics at the Florida State University School of Information in USA. Her research interests include digital learning resources, broadband, and science education.

### **Acknowledgement**

The editors would like to thank Florida State University graduate student Ms Danielle Cram for her invaluable assistance with the preparation of this issue.