The school librarian and the elementary social studies curriculum

Gerald Richard Eberle
University of Northern Iowa
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Abstract
The social studies curriculum is in an era of transition. It is a complex, multidimensional, often confusing, but tremendously challenging subject. Because research and study in this area double and redouble in very short periods of time, educators face the problem of remaining informed of new developments.

As the school librarian participates in all areas of curriculum planning, a knowledge of theory and practical application is necessary. In the social studies curriculum a review of its evolution in American education is helpful. This includes general aims and objectives, its history in American education, present criticism of its relevance to today's society, emerging trends, and the manner in which teachers organize content for use in learning experiences. Chapter two of this paper deals with these topics.

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THE SCHOOL LIBRARIAN AND THE ELEMENTARY SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM

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of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Gerald Richard Eberle
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The social studies curriculum is in an era of transition.\(^1\) It is a complex, multidimensional, often confusing, but tremendously challenging subject. Because research and study in this area double and redouble in very short periods of time, educators face the problem of remaining informed of new developments.

As the school librarian participates in all areas of curriculum planning, a knowledge of theory and practical application is necessary. In the social studies curriculum a review of its evolution in American education is helpful. This includes general aims and objectives, its history in American education, present criticism of its relevance to today's society, emerging trends, and the manner in which teachers organize content for use in learning experiences. Chapter two of this paper deals with these topics.

Chapter three establishes the role of the librarian in curriculum planning and indicates how to involve not only himself but other teachers in this task. Included are recently published guidelines for the social studies curriculum, K-12. In addition are suggestions for the use of innovations in the social studies area.

Chapter four relates the role of the library as a domain for the

generation of social concern regarding the issues of the day.

Chapter five summarizes the discussion on all topics.

What follows in this paper is an overview of the social studies curriculum. Although it is written especially for elementary librarians new to their field, much of the information applies equally to the secondary level. By reading its content, hopefully, one will acquire a general idea of the present social studies curriculum and its relation to the librarian's responsibilities.
Chapter 2

THE EVOLUTION OF SOCIAL STUDIES IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

Aims and Objectives of the Social Studies

Thousands of paragraphs esteem the value of social studies education for American children. Relating aims and objectives in broad, eloquent hopes, most ask that youth will mature to become good American citizens. Typical of many is the following:

The role of the social studies in elementary and secondary schools is to prepare boys and girls to live effectively in the foreseeable future, drawing upon the long and varied experiences of the human race for illumination in that complex and multidimensional task.\(^1\)

Defining aims and objectives of social education has never been easy:

This is true because the school is considered to be a society within a larger society of which it is part. Therefore, all the complexities which are included in the larger society would also need be considered in planning the aims and objectives of the social education program. In addition, the field of social education has been a continually changing one. A statement of aims and objectives is also dependent upon the defined functions of the school. If the school were to be regarded as an agency of social engineering, the objectives would take on an entirely different approach than they would if the school were to be considered an agency which maintains and transmits the present culture.\(^2\)

Aims and objectives parallel notable changes in American society.


The History of Social Studies in American Education

Social studies education began with the settlement of early America. Social education centered around the study of the Bible. Reading scripture provided the basis for training children to become moral, uprighteous individuals. The result was a hard-working, God-fearing person worthy of eternal salvation.³

With the birth of the new nation in the late eighteenth century, the eternal world was no longer most important. Geography and history were added to the curriculum. The study of national and state constitutions was begun in schools in 1804. Textbooks appeared for the study of government in the 1830's. However, the development of social studies remained sporadic during most of the nineteenth century.⁴

By the 1890's Americans were changing from an agrarian to an urban based economy. The United States, young compared to other nations but enlightened to its success in international politics, was emerging as a world power. Thanks to special committees of the National Education Association and the American Historical Association, this era generated profound curriculum development. The next twenty years witnessed significant recommendations regarding social studies curriculum in the elementary school.⁵

World War I was a turning point in social studies curriculum development. With little national leadership, it developed in a confused

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⁵Ibid., pp. 16-17.
and sporadic manner. The few accomplishments were greatly attributed to state and local leadership. At this time Americans had their first taste of the so-called "knowledge explosion." With man's information doubling every ten years, educating children for a rapidly changing society became an awesome reality. 

In the four decades following the war, social studies education did, however, have a unique characteristic: curriculum patterns in schools across the nation were quite homogeneous. Although theory and practice were usually far apart, the overall goal of social studies was to prepare citizens to participate in American democracy. The classroom was to define and attack social problems in a democratic manner. Ironically, the method often failed for lack of teacher insight. The classroom remained a structured, teacher-centered atmosphere, lacking in the very elements of democracy it was trying to relate.

Steered by a new age of aviation and space exploration, a revival of concern for social studies education brought many changes in the 1960's. A large number of curriculum projects were begun. Although many related to the elementary and secondary levels separately, some were concerned with both levels. A notable characteristic of the projects was their funding by government and private sources.

With the revival of concern for the social studies came a great deal of criticism regarding its relevance in today's public schools.

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6 Ibid., p. 17.
8 Wesley, op. cit., pp. 20-21.
Criticism of Today's Social Studies

Criticism of the social studies is often rash. Critics say that the curriculum has remained static for the last twenty years;\(^9\) that programs in the primary grades are so watered down they are bland in an era of television, aviation, and space flight;\(^10\) that in the last decade only slight attention to issues of racism, war, poverty and pollution has appeared in social studies curriculum materials.\(^11\) One educator writes:

"We cannot go on teaching 'social science education' on a more or less business-as-usual basis as though there is no black-white conflict, no conflict over participation in decision making in our institutions, no self-destruction problems through narcotics and alcohol use, no environmental pollution. . . . Student involvement in social action based on the social studies curriculum and growing out of it are practically nonexistent.\(^12\)

There is need to "humanize" social studies in the elementary school indicates another:

"Generally, schools do not foster man's most creative traits, nor do they grapple with his great ideas, nor relate these ideas and talents to the contemporary environment where man's dramas are reenacted continually. Instead, most schools are bogged down with routine, trivialities, and the lesser-literacies.\(^13\)

Part of the problem may extend from the total school curriculum. Regarding the large amount of study and experimentation that has taken

\(^9\)Kenworthy, op. cit., p. 12.


place in recent years, Walker writes:

What has resulted from this historical evolution is an elementary school curriculum that is a hodgepodge; a conglomeration of dichotomized, disjointed, and unrelated assumptions pertaining to the nature of content, learner, society or culture as well as to the purposes for which curriculum exist. Our present elementary curriculum has no label or name because it is really unclassifiable. There is no apparent, consistent set of assumptions operating, thus no particular theory of curriculum which acts as an organizing center and provides rationale and frame of reference for decision-making. Further, many people in decision-making roles today were educated during various stages of curriculum evolution and were not prepared for today's fluid society and rapidly changing culture, nor given an eclectic orientation.\(^{14}\)

The social studies curriculum remains in a state of flux. Nevertheless, notable trends are emerging.

**Present Trends in the Social Studies**

Despite the inconsistencies in the social studies curriculum, tremendous experimentation and innovation resulted in notable trends. The direction of today's elementary curriculum is summarized in the following:

1. Organization and structure are receiving greater emphasis.
2. Areas formerly not included in the social studies such as sociology, economics, and anthropology are now being integrated.
3. Less emphasis is on rote memorization of facts and more on inquiry and concept development, thinking, as well as problem solving and research.
4. Help from scholars in various disciplines is being enlisted due to the increasing complexity of knowledge in the social sciences.
5. The development of increasing breadth and depth of under-

standings in the field is being given attention.

6. Developing area understandings of other cultures is being stressed.

7. Children are being taught topics generally reserved for older students.

8. Sequence is being stressed less than in earlier years.  

Organization of Content for Learning Experiences

Regardless of what content is incorporated into the curriculum, organization is of prime importance to its effectiveness. Today's organization requires (1) repetition: the dealing with an important topic, attitude, skill, or generalization in a number of ways; (2) flexibility: the ability to adjust to new situations, providing for addition and deletion; (3) organizing materials for pupils of varying abilities: providing minimum essentials and enrichment materials; (4) a proper balance of direct and indirect experience: the use of both activity and study; (5) providing for the utilization of the resources of the community: field trips, realia, and local speakers; and (6) meeting the demands of logical and psychological appeal, remembering that the two do not conflict.

After preliminary organization of content, it must be broken down into manageable portions. Over the years many schemes have been employed for this purpose. The problem method, the project method, the content plan, the Dalton Plan, the Winnetka Plan and the Morrison Plan name but


16 Wesley, op. cit., pp. 132-34.
a few of the more prominent. However, the "unit" plan became the most popular and today is common everywhere.17

The unit method is one of the outstanding contributions resulting from educational experimentation of a previous generation. Its success is the result of the following:

1. It is flexible, allowing teachers to develop fully their own teaching style.
2. It conforms to the psychology of childhood, permitting the teacher to work with the child, rather than engage in a kind of tug-of-war with him.
3. The unit method yields superior learning.18

A unit of instruction is a calculated plan to achieve specific objectives related to a chosen topic. It utilizes both content and learning activities chosen to develop attitudes, appreciations, concepts and generalizations, thinking processes and basic skills. To facilitate systematic evaluation, techniques of appraisal are included. Bibliographies of books and other instructional materials are supplied for both teacher and student reference.19

A unit is structured both horizontally and vertically. The horizontal parts are the "what," "what with," and "how," or listings of content, of materials, and of procedures, respectively. The vertical structure indicates procedures to deeply involve students in study and learning activities.20

17Ibid., p. 146.
20Servy, op. cit., p. 102.
The characteristics of a unit are the following:

1. It possesses cohesion and wholeness.
2. It is based upon the personal-social needs of children.
3. It cuts across subject lines.
4. It is based upon the modern concept of how learning takes place.
5. It requires a large block of time.
6. It is life centered.
7. It utilizes the normal drives of children.
8. It takes into account the maturational level of the pupils.
10. It provides opportunity for the social development of the child.
11. It is planned cooperatively by teachers and pupils. 21

The outline of a particular teaching unit should contain the following labels:

1. Title of Unit
2. Overview
3. Statement of Objectives
4. Indication of Content
5. Activities for Learning
6. Teaching and Learning Materials
7. Procedures for Evaluation 22

Perhaps the social studies area enjoys the greatest use of the unit method. 23

22 Wesley, op. cit., p. 149.
Chapter 3

THE SCHOOL LIBRARIAN AND THE SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM

Recent trends in the social studies curriculum indicate that more emphasis is being placed upon the learner and less upon the teacher. School librarians share these concepts:

The media program is indispensible in the educational programs that now stress individualization, inquiry, and independent learning for students. The extent to which content curricula emphasizes self-directed learning is generally a matter of degree rather than direction. In some schools, two fifths or more of the student's time may be devoted to this form of learning. In programs that provide systematically, through modular and flexible scheduling or in other ways, for the time the student spends in individual exploration and independent learning, the media specialist, the classroom teacher or teachers involved, and the student form a team that plans and guides the student's work. Throughout, the media specialist remains in close contact with the teachers. The move away from the text-book dominated teaching and from teacher-dominated teaching has made the school media center a primary instructional area that supports, complements, and expands the work of the classroom.¹

Teacher, librarian, and student cooperation in curriculum planning is a trend in modern education.

Working with Teachers on Curriculum

Elementary libraries which are well-stocked with instructional materials and manned by professionally trained librarians can be a creative force in the instructional program. Frankowiak lists four steps in providing a workable program for teacher-librarian planning. They

are (1) orienting teachers to the library, (2) developing cooperative planning, (3) teacher planning in library development, and (4) extending library services.  

The first step introduces new teachers to the school library. It may consist of a tour showing location of specific materials and information on loaning procedures.

Step two delegates more responsibility to the librarian to involve himself in the curriculum. A prerequisite is to become familiar with the curriculum; secondly, to share time in planning a particular unit.

Step three invites the teacher to share a greater role in selecting material to be put on permanent circulation in the library. To assist in this, the librarian provides standard selection aids for general and specific areas.

The last item directs the librarian to step out of his immediate area into the classroom. This permits himself to learn, to stimulate the learning of others, and to complement the efforts of the classroom teacher. Item four also implies an open library in which not only materials of instruction flow back and forth, but individuals and small and large groups doing the same.

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3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.
Guidelines for the Social Studies Curriculum, K-12

Working on any area of curriculum is aided by information provided by its parent organization. In the social studies, the most recent guidelines published by the National Council for the Social Studies indicate significant direction for planning now and in the future:

1. The social studies program should be directly related to the concerns of students.
2. The social studies program should deal with the real social world.
3. The social studies program should draw from currently valid knowledge representative of man's experience, culture, and beliefs.
4. Objectives should be thoughtfully selected and clearly stated in such form as to furnish direction to the program.
5. Learning activities should engage the student directly and actively in the learning process.
6. Strategies of instruction and learning activities should rely on a broad range of learning resources.
7. The social studies program must facilitate the organization of experience.
8. Evaluation should be useful, systematic, comprehensive, and valid for the objectives of the program.
9. Social studies education should receive vigorous support as a vital and responsible part of the school program.7

The above are for the most part self-explanatory, however, elaboration of the last guideline will indicate its implications more fully. It involves: (1) providing ample time and supplying appropriate facilities and instructional materials for social studies education; (2) trying new innovations such as simulation, discovery, and actual social participation; (3) relating basic purposes of the curriculum to the immediate needs of the community as well as to those of society at large; (4) involving teachers in decision-making and advisory roles on special committees; (5) furthering teachers' professional competencies through inservice workshops, community affairs and travel; (6) having

professional consultants available for help; and, (7) permitting teachers
to rely upon a district-wide policy statement on academic freedom and
professional responsibility. 8

The School Librarian and the Elementary Social Studies Curriculum

Because the social studies curriculum requires constant attention
to remain abreast of new developments, it would appear to be an insur-
mountable task for the school librarian who must deal in all areas of
curriculum. Consider recent developments alone:

Mathematics
1. More stress on the function concept
2. Algebra and geometry move closer together
3. Probability and statistics start earlier
4. Teachers try for computer formulation

Physical Sciences
1. Emphasis on inquiry continues
2. Lab work increases
3. Elementary science kits mushroom

English
1. More concern about talking
2. Correctness approach weakens
3. New media intervenes
4. Teachers try contemporary literature
5. Humanities lap over into English

Reading
1. Four innovations predominate
2. New materials break basal reader pattern
3. USOE develops master plan for research

Foreign Language
1. Increased enrollment forces rethinking
2. FLES pauses to consolidate, strengthen programs
3. Approach shifts from pure audio-lingual
4. Further computerization will be the trend

8 Ibid.
And:

Social Studies
1. Importance of history declines
2. Economic emphasis accelerates
3. U.S gives way to world view
4. Instructional materials turn multimedia
5. Process approach gains momentum

Then consider the diversity of information published for elementary social studies:
1. "Abandon Eternal Thunder of Lecture"
2. "Cognitive Power through Social Studies: Upper Grades"
3. "Cultural Lag in Elementary Social Studies"
4. "Elementary Social Studies and their Relevance to the Negro Child"
5. "Humanizing the Social Studies in the Elementary School"
6. "Teaching Law in the Elementary School"

Each article may constitute a new adventure worthy of exploration and implementation into the curriculum. The librarian shares responsibility in this task for at his command are sufficient information and tools to make planning successful. However, the integration of any trend or innovation into the school program may require large amounts of time. Like others in the school, the librarian's time is also limited. He has other responsibilities in continuing a library program.

Although the librarian's role is that of a curriculum innovator in methods and materials, his task is not to promote all that are available, but to provide advice and guidance to encourage use of those that will be effective and strengthen those already in practice. In

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doing this he must understand their pros and cons, their strengths and weaknesses. He must acquire materials for methods and methods for materials.

Suggestions for Librarians Working with Elementary Social Studies

Regardless of his orientation to the curriculum, the librarian is not the only innovator in the school system. Here are principals, teachers, curriculum specialists and students who share in the planning. Thus, the librarian should understand the scope of his services. Part of his responsibility is not only to extend them but to limit them.

Expanding and limiting the librarian's services can be better illustrated using a typical resource unit on Japan. In addition to bibliographies of library books and audio-visual materials, the resource unit lists (1) real objects: handicraft, flower arrangements, scrolls, kimonos, Japanese books, shoji screens and bonzai; (2) study trips: a Japanese nursery, a market, a tea garden, and a Japanese art museum; (3) interviews with Japanese citizens; (4) construction projects: cricket cage, shoji screen, gela, waraji, kakemono, kimonos, happi coats, fans, shoulder baskets, clay tea bowls, and a Japanese table; (5) dramatic play: fishing with nets, village organization, washing clothes, cooking rice, gathering wood, making rope, and plowing and weeding.

The above content indicates the use of a large number of materials, activities, and resources related to an area or topic and organized in a functional way, which a teacher uses in planning and developing a 'teaching' unit.

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12The complete content of this unit appears in Hanna, pp. 456-57.
materials. Many of these can be borrowed free locally, but others may acquired elsewhere for a charge. Regardless, many of the materials selected for the teaching unit are not the responsibility of the librarian. His understanding of his own duties is helpful in delegating these tasks to others.

Inquiry and discovery learning and the wide use of multimedia materials are two major emphases that run through most of the innovative programs in the social studies today.\textsuperscript{13} However, their misuse is little better than their use. Librarians can work with teachers to insure better utilization of any innovation. The resource unit on Japan provides another example.

The unit on Japan indicates a great deal of learning activity, some which may be done under the supervision of the librarian, if desired. For example, dramatic play in either actual or puppet form become projects for many persons involved in media on the elementary level. Such learning activities can provide for deep interest and develop sound values in children. Students not only find them fun, but their attention is maintained for long periods of time.

A great deal of learning activity goes on in elementary schools today. The bulk probably results in teacher-planned outcomes. Nevertheless, some does not result in sound learning experiences. A few years ago, the so-called activity program became quite popular in elementary schools. Great contributions to education resulted from it. However, some schools not only went activity-mad, many of the activities included in their programs approached the ridiculous. "Activity for activity's

\textsuperscript{13}"What's New in the Curriculum," op. cit., p. 31.
sake is no better than knowledge for knowledge’s sake." \(^{14}\)

As an innovator, the librarian may promote more activity in his own instructional area, as well as the classroom. He may encourage the use of such learning experiences in every way if they promise expected learning outcomes. On the other hand he should not support activity that is little more than play. The following are general criteria for the selection of those which have significance and worth. Activities and projects should:

1. Have content of social importance.
2. Provide opportunities for children to gain deeper and more accurate understandings of the community in which they live.
3. Build sound attitudes toward people in differing groups.
4. Help boys and girls develop increased understanding of democratic values and traditions.
5. Provide opportunities for children to learn how to solve problems through critical thinking.
6. Provide opportunities for children to develop and retain social interests.
7. Help children learn to accept the fact that the world in which we live is changing rapidly and that change can be directed and controlled as intelligent people work together cooperatively.
8. Help children learn essential social studies skills, such as interpreting maps and globes and developing a sense of time and chronology. \(^{15}\)

For the person working in social studies finding new and varied methods and materials is not the problem—there are hundreds of them. Many are not new at all; they only refine what has appeared before. The difficulty is to determine what can be used to its best advantage using fewer methods and materials well rather than a multitude inadequately.

One of the newest innovations in the social studies area is the


\(^{15}\) Harrold D. Drummond, "Projects and Activities in the Primary Grades," *Social Education*, XXI (February, 1957), 60-62.
simulation game. Simulation games resemble Monopoly in format, but do combine material and method to produce learning outcomes. Their usage, however, has both advantages and disadvantages.

Simulation games can provide for high interest learning experiences. For example, in Atlantis, upper elementary students act as archaeologists in discovering an ancient civilization. Fifth graders simulate Eskimo strategies in Seal Hunting. In Sunshine, children become members of a mythical city and face various urban problems.16 There are many advantages in their use: (1) Children have a natural love for games; (2) in simulation, the judging aspect is removed from the teachers role; (3) games provide a method of approaching problems before students encounter them in real life; (4) the role of students in social studies games permits students to "solve" world problems, participate in world history, and experiment with different social and economic structures; and, (5) there is a variety of learning possibilities in simulation games.17

Used properly, simulation games become concrete methods of learning. However, because of their appeal, disadvantages may be overlooked: (1) Commercial simulation games may be costly, ranging from ten to one hundred dollars; (2) games are time-consuming, requiring large amounts for their use; (3) the game element may be emphasized to the neglect of concepts and skills; and, (4) presently, too few guidelines exist for their use.18


18 Ibid., p. 95.
Aside from their high interest and motivation, recent research indicates simulation games are no more effective than other aids and devices in achieving learning outcomes.\textsuperscript{19}

In directing teachers and students to new methods of learning, librarians often find their advice unheeded, or at best, used improperly. Reasons vary from personality to practical matters. Likely a method remains untried because information alone does not suffice to show a teacher its practical applications. The unit approach is an example of this. After its use became common in elementary and secondary schools, many teachers admitted its vagueness to them.\textsuperscript{20} Often no model or demonstration exists to convince others of an innovation's value.

In many cases a librarian can introduce a method in the library instructional program for promotional purposes. It may be new—or an old one that has fallen out of use for lack of proper application. In either case refinements can go a long-ways in encouraging their use or reuse by teachers.

If the librarian were to choose a particular method of learning for demonstration in the library, it may well be that of discussion. Perhaps many reasons indicate this: Discussion techniques, if they exist at all, are failures in the classrooms of his school; the librarian knows a group of students who would be prime participants for such an activity; the librarian is interested in current events; or, the current periodicals section of his library is seldom used by students for lack of interest.

\textsuperscript{19}Ibid.

All of these constitute enough evidence for the go-ahead.

Discussion like any other learning activity succeeds or fails on its planning. In organizing a discussion on whatever topic this involves (1) determining what can and what cannot be discussed. Since discussion involves exploring, discovering, questioning and opinion-expressing, the problem should have no clear-cut answers. (2) Determining the style of the discussion is important. Although questions of fact are unlikely candidates, the answers to questions can deal in the realm of facts, figures, and data versus the area of opinion, feeling, and expressing of ideas. (3) Finally, determining when discussion is appropriate and when it is not is necessary. Not all learning experiences lend themselves to the discussion method. 21

The effectiveness of the discussion leader, whether teacher or student, is increased by (1) choosing questions which are close to the experiences of the participants; (2) remaining neutral on issues, but expediting an orderly flow of ideas; (3) doing everything possible to help a participant express himself more clearly; (4) seeing that each person has sufficient opportunity to speak; (5) bringing in supplementary material that relates to the parts discussed. These may be quotations, information, or visual materials; (6) shifting the focus of the group when the discussion is losing momentum; and, (7) helping to bring out something interesting about everyone involved. 22

Methods and materials for the social studies are so numerous

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22 Ibid.
that suggestions for their exploration might continue indefinitely. For example, conventional nonprint media including transparencies, films, filmstrips, slides, tape and disc recordings, kits of models and artifacts, sets of pictures, special purpose maps and charts and other graphics provide a wealth of learning possibilities. Used singly or in combination with others each can provide a creative means of acquiring important concepts. In addition, relatively new media such as educational television and the video tape recorder are providing a broad field for social studies education. Time and financing combined with enthusiasm to explore and plan will promote these media to first-class importance in the near future.

As new methods and materials appear, hopefully, the emphasis will remain upon the learner and not upon the innovation for innovation's sake. Necessary to this will be guidelines for their evaluation based upon the learning outcomes of the students involved. Such will not be an easy task because each innovation likely shares a unique character in the learning process. Whoever shares in this responsibility, whether it be teacher, librarian or student, will need an allocation of sufficient time to accomplish this effort.

Concerning evaluation, perhaps the librarian will always be involved on a day-to-day basis with the learner, the individual who comes to the library to utilize its facilities and services. Hopefully, in getting to know the student well, he will acquire a sense of honor for the child's learning abilities. In wishing to help, the librarian may
keep in mind the following practical guidelines when the student comes to the library to complete an assignment:

1. Does the student know where and how to find information he seeks? It may be in books, periodicals, filmstrips or films, sources or direct evidence.

2. Does he check the reliability and validity of his information before using it--how recently a book was written, agreement with other sources, the qualifications of the author?

3. Is a variety of media being used? Substantiation and comparison are possible when more than one source is used.

4. Is critical reading taking place? Does the student accept everything he reads or does he scrutinize it with care?

5. Does the pupil succeed in drawing more and more valid conclusions? Do his judgments indicate that he is considering an assortment of evidence?

6. Does he show increasing skill in carrying on a discussion and asking though-provoking questions?

7. Is the pupil making wise choices and more intelligent decisions? Behavior gains are measured in improved attitudes, better action patterns, and growth in interpersonal relationships.

8. Is the pupil increasing in self-control and self-discipline, so that he is better to utilize his abilities to achieve desired goals?

9. Is he gaining in self-respect in understanding himself and others?

10. Is he becoming a more intelligent thinker?²³

Chapter 4

THE SCHOOL LIBRARY AND LIBRARIAN IN A SOCIAL ROLE

Libraries are unliving entities without organization. Librarians hopefully bring the "breath of life" to develop materials and methods into suitable programs. An admirable program not only provides free acquisition to materials by all, but it influences their use to the best of the patron's ability. Its chief concern is that the process of education may build

... on a base of critical communication and information skills which man can use to gather facts on which to form his opinion and his value judgments.\(^1\)

It recognizes that

... the school library is the place where this learning must be acquired--and it must be acquired soon by all Americans if the democratic process is to survive. The mechanics of the library and the skills of the librarian are the best tools for teaching this hard core of information.\(^2\)

Today's librarian must be observant of the problems affecting himself, his society, and the world. The appearance of radicals or other persons confirmed to extraneous political or social activity are not necessary to the profession. However, needed are men and women interested in the issues of the day, with compassion to help young people solve their personal problems and to direct their attention to matters that may affect them in the future. To accomplish this tremendously

\(^2\)Ibid.
huge but wholesome task, the good school librarian

... is committed by vocational choice to the exploration of ideas, of questioning concepts, and providing information on all sides of a question or issue. The good school librarian is involved constantly in social issues not from necessity, but as his right and professional heritage.3

Chapter 5

SUMMARY

The aims and objectives of social education focus upon the individual, to educate a citizen capable of living in a changing society. Throughout American history the schools have assumed this responsibility in trying to reflect the needs of an informed citizenry. Recently, however, they have suffered heavy criticism for not relating more closely to the drastic issues confronting Americans living in an era of rapid change. As a result notable trends have emerged, bringing with them innovations in methods and materials organized to provide wholesome learning experiences for students.

The librarian of today shares responsibility in curriculum improvement by working with teachers and students in planning. In doing so, the library becomes the focal point from which learning experiences emanate. For the social studies curriculum recent guidelines have been established to make this task more effective. As one who is aware of new methods and materials, the librarian can help provide many practical learning experiences for students and teachers alike, keeping in mind that the use of each has both advantages and disadvantages. In addition, he must also remember that techniques of evaluation not only establish the effectiveness of new materials and methods, but also measure the progress of individuals who come to the library.
Finally, the librarian, heir by profession to academic freedom, helps maintain an environment compatible to social concern and social action regarding the issues of the day.
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