Two hundred years of young adult library services: A chronology

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I would also have in every library a friend of the young, whom they can consult freely when in want of assistance, and who, in addition to the power of gaining their confidence, has knowledge and tact enough to render them real aid in making selections.

—SAMUEL S. GREEN.

(from Sensational Fiction in Public Libraries, Library Journal 4, no. 9 (1879): 345-355, 352.)

WHY WE COMPILED THIS CHRONOLOGY

The early scholars of women's history knew that women were a significant presence throughout the past—the task was not so much to ferret out an obscure history but to make the invisible visible. The same holds true for library scholars who strive to place young people—and the women (and some men) who worked with them—in the mainstream rather than the margins.

Historically children have been viewed as peripheral to history, and those who work with them have often been dismissed as inconsequential. But the library record tells a different story. Throughout the history of American public libraries, photos of young people using libraries have adorned annual reports from coast to coast. We know they were there. Now it is time to find them.—CAJ.

Interest in compiling this chronology grew out of frustration with several recently published books on YA services that, although otherwise commendable, seem either badly researched or ignorant of YA services history. It also emerged from the need to have a tool to use in teaching so that our students can get a better idea of where YA services came from, and to enhance the poor documentation for the few historical accounts that exist. We hope that such a chronology will inspire state-level counterparts that might be added to the national record. In terms of scope, the chronology attempts to consolidate the history of the two teen-serving divisions of the American Library Association (ALA): the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) and the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) with several other accounts of library history. This chronology is in no way comprehensive in terms of either all possible existing documented sources or in terms of parallel world, national, or local events affecting youth and their library services. Ideally it should be that comprehensive, and our hope is that future authors and scholars will fill in relevant gaps.—MKC.
Given what I feel is a culture ever hardening to its young people, the untold story of the struggle to legitimize our work with them remains a damaging omission in librarians' professional legacy. On the other hand, this first substantial step toward documenting that legacy offers us the opportunity to take back some of what is truly ours, as well as to advance what we contribute to our institutions and to our society. It will also help us to call forward tomorrow's leaders, strengthened by learning about the works of yesterday's leaders. We did not create the values that our professional world exhibits toward service to young adults. But we can choose how to thrive in this world if we recognize it for what it is—and we can't do that without knowing its history. I also hope we do not wait too long for writers and scholars in the future to pursue the many questions still only incubating in this time line. —AB.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This chronology has been edited for length in this print edition. The complete chronology, with entries for every year from 1920 onward, appears on VOYA's Web site at http://www.voya.com. It is a work in progress. Submissions are welcome from anyone in the library profession who wishes to suggest additional items to round out this first attempt to integrate the history of young adult library services in one place. The chronology will be updated annually on the Web site. It will also be accessible through a link on the Young Adult Library Services Association's (YALSA) site at http://www.ala.org/ylsla. Compiler Anthony Bernier will manage additions and updates. If you wish to contribute, please word your submission briefly in the format of this chronology. Include a complete citation of your source as well as your own contact information with street address, phone, and e-mail. Send your submission by e-mail to voya@voya.com, with "Chronology Submission" in the subject line.

CHRONOLOGY

1803 Caleb Bingham donates 150 books for the use of children 9 to 16 years of age in Salisbury, Connecticut (Stone, 140).

1823 Brooklyn Youth Library opens in Brooklyn, New York (Stone, 145).

1835 New York is first state to pass legislation permitting voters in any school district to levy a tax for libraries (Department of the Interior, 39).

1852 First compulsory school attendance laws passed in Massachusetts—established by all states by 1918 (Alexander and Jordan, 10).

1862 ALA appoints Committee on Cooperation with the National Education Association (NEA), and NEA appoints NEA Library Department (Pond, 110-113). [These appointments occurred simultaneously—this initial push was from ALA president John Cotton Dana, with some assistance from Melvil Dewey (Jenkins)].

1876 Samuel S. Green's address at American Library Association (ALA) conference, "Personal Relations Between Librarian and Readers," includes directions for assisting youth patrons (Cannons, 137).

1879 ALA Annual Conference in Boston emphasizes fiction and reading for the young (McDowell, Pierce).

1892 Landmark model legislation for development of school libraries passed in New York (Ramsey).

1896 ALA appoints Committee on Cooperation with the National Education Association (NEA), and NEA appoints NEA Library Department (Pond, 110-113). [These appointments occurred simultaneously—this initial push was from ALA president John Cotton Dana, with some assistance from Melvil Dewey (Jenkins)].

1905 G. Stanley Hall presents "What Children Read and What They Ought to Read" to the NEA (Pierce). Hall's Adolescence published by Appleton in New York (Pierce).

1912 High School Department established under jurisdiction of Smaller Branches and High School Libraries Department in Cleveland Public Library (Braverman, 177).

1914 "Blowing Out a Boy's Brains" by Franklin K. Mathiews, chief librarian of the Boy Scouts of America, is published—leading the call for good books for boys that culminates in the founding of Children's Book Week in 1918 (Mathiews).

1915 ALA School Libraries Section is approved (Pond, 756-37).


1917 Kansas City Public Library in Missouri sets up separate service for young people (Johnson, 2).

1920 Mabel Williams is appointed Superintendent of Work with Schools at New York Public Library (Braverman, 114).

1921 Kansas City Public Library in Missouri sets up separate service for young people (Johnson, 5).
1924 The Horn Book begins publication in Boston (Ramsey).
Albany Public Library sets up separate service for young people (Johnson, 5).

1929 First edition of Books for Young People, subsequently to become Books for the Teenage, is published in New York Public Library (Campbell, 17).
Public libraries in Brooklyn, New York; East Cleveland, Ohio; Newark, New Jersey; South Bend, Indiana; and Springfield, Illinois, set up separate service for young people (Johnson, 5).
Mary Ware Dennett arrested for distributing her book, The Sex Side of Life: An Explanation for Young People—decision overturned 1930 (Jenkins, 137).

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1930 Formation of Young People's Reading Roundtable (YPRRT) as part of ALAs Children's Library Association—“young people” referring to those later called “young adults” (Jenkins).
First youth services textbook, Effie L. Power's Library Work with Children, includes a chapter on “library service to adolescents” (Jenkins, 84).
First school and reference assistant is appointed in a New York Public Library branch, Chatham Square (Braverman, 114).
The Library in the School by Lucile Fargo is published (Ramsey).
Evanston Public Library in Illinois sets up separate service for young people (Johnson, 5).

1937 Margaret Edwards appointed full-time young people's librarian at Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore (Braverman, 240).
Publication of first YA professional book, The Public Library and the Adolescent by E. Leyland (Jenkins).
Public libraries in Lakewood, Ohio, and San Diego, California, set up separate service for young people (Johnson, 5).

1941 Dedication of Nathan Strauss Branch for Children and Young People in New York Public Library (Braverman, 114).
Office for Service to Youth is established under Jean C. Roos in Cleveland Public Library (Braverman, 178).
Division of Library Service to Children and Young People (DLCYP) formed within ALA, comprised of a School Libraries Section and a Public Libraries Section, which in turn is comprised of a Children’s Library Association (CLA) and a Young People's Reading Round Table (YPRRT) (Jenkins, 128-129).

1944 Office of Work with Young People at Pratt becomes separate department headed by Margaret Edwards (Braverman, 240).
Margaret Scoggin first uses term “young adult” in title of bibliographies published in Library Journal (Campbell, 21-22).
American Association of School Librarians (AASL) name used for the first time (AASL History).

1947 YPRRT granted separate section status within DLCYP at ALAs annual conference (Jenkins).
YPRRT and General Federation of Women's Clubs join publicity and fund-raising for project, "A Youth Library in Every Community” (Jenkins, 288-289).
Mabel Williams's department is named Office of Work with Schools and Young People in the New York Public Library (Braverman, 114).
Youth, Communication, and Libraries presented before the Library Institute at the University of Chicago (Bernier).

1948 Public Library Plans for the Teenage published (Hannigan, 855).
DLCYP/YPRRT sponsors preconference, “Youth and Libraries” (Jenkins, 288-289).
YPRRT program, “Youth and Their Interests,” attracts 1,500 attendees (twice the number at Newbery-Caldecott Banquet) to hear Tops with Teens columnist Sheila John Daly and marketing consultant Eugene Gilbert (Jenkins, 308).
Booklist carries first annotated list of “Adult Books for Young Adults” (Jenkins, 313-318).
Margaret Scoggin's Outlook Tower column on books of interest to teens starts in The Horn Book, running until 1987 shortly before her death (Jenkins, 318).

1950 Fiftieth anniversary of organization of youth services librarians (Jenkins, 395).
Last meeting of DLCYP as united group of both school and public youth librarians (Jenkins, 395).
Margaret Edwards is appointed Coordinator of Work with Young People with an assistant coordinator and a head of the Central Y Collection in Baltimore (Braverman, 240).
An Ample Field by Amelia Munson published (Campbell, 20).

1942 Top of the News debuts in October as DLCYP's journal.

1945 Margaret Edwards takes horse-drawn book wagon service to youth in poor neighborhoods in Baltimore (Kelly, 68-9).
1951 AASL becomes separate ALA division (Jenkins, 662).

1957 Young Adult Services Division (YASD) established as a separate division within ALA, splitting from Children’s Library Association (CLA); Mildred Batchelder is first Executive Secretary serving both divisions (Starr).

1960 Young Adult Services in the Public Library published by ALA’s Committee on Standards for Work with Young Adults (Jones et al.).


1969 The Fair Garden and the Swarm of Beasts: The Library and the Young Adult by Margaret A. Edwards published by Hawthorn Books (Jones et al.).


1973 ’73 Young Adult Alternative Newsletter begun by Carol Starr (Starr, Nov. 2).

1975 ’75 At YASD’s “Book You” preconference at ALA Annual Conference, fifteen years of Best Books for Young Adults (BBYA) selections are analyzed to produce “Best of the Best: Still Alive in ’75,” the first of many such exercises (Starr).

1976 YASD establishes their own office and part-time staff as well as their own division’s Intellectual Freedom Committee (Fine, YALSA Web site).

1977 YASD produces Directions for Library Service to Young Adults (Starr).

1978 Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA) begins publication (Chelton).

1979 First Frances Henne/YASD/VOYA Research Grant awarded to fund research in the areas of young adult services and/or materials (Fine).

1980 ’80 First Frances Henne/YASD/VOYA Research Grant awarded to fund research in the areas of young adult services and/or materials (Fine).

1982 ’82 ’82 First Frances Henne/YASD/VOYA Research Grant awarded to fund research in the areas of young adult services and/or materials (Fine).

1983 ’83 ’83 First Frances Henne/YASD/VOYA Research Grant awarded to fund research in the areas of young adult services and/or materials (Fine).

1985 ’85 First Frances Henne/YASD/VOYA Research Grant awarded to fund research in the areas of young adult services and/or materials (Fine).

1986 ’86 First Frances Henne/YASD/VOYA Research Grant awarded to fund research in the areas of young adult services and/or materials (Fine).

1987 ’87 ’87 Top of the News renamed Journal of Youth Services in Libraries (JOYS) (Fine).

1988 First National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) national survey of YA services in public libraries published (Fine).

1989 Evelyn Shaevel leaves YASD as Executive Director; YASD and AASL then share Executive Director Ann Carlson Weeks, with Susan Horiuchi as YASD Deputy Director.
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1999 DeWitt Wallace Reader's Digest Fund supports Public Libraries
1998 YALSA establishes Alex Awards for adult books for teens, and
1995 YALSA publishes
1994 Los Angeles Public Library opens TeenS'cape, the first public
1993
1992 YASD changes name to Young Adult Library Services
1991 SLJ/YASD Author Achievement Award becomes annual
Margaret A. Edwards Award (Fine).
"Genrecon" is YASD preconference at ALA Annual Conference.
Susan Horiuchi resigns and Linda Waddle is hired as Deputy
Director of YASD (Fine).
Dorothy M. Broderick wins Grolier Award (ALA Web site).
1992 YASD changes name to Young Adult Library Services
Association (YALSA) (Gottschalk).
First edition of Connecting Young Adults and Libraries by Patrick
Jones published by Neal-Schuman (Jones et al).
YALSA wins ALA–World Book Goal Award for seminars on
"Serving the Undererved: Customer Services for Young Adults
in Public Libraries" (Gottschalk).
1993 Impact of School Library Media Centers on Academic
Achievement by Keith Curry Lance, Lynda Welborn, and
Christian Hamilton Pemell published (Ramsey).
Revised edition of Directions for Library Service to Young Adults
published by YALSA (Gottschalk).
Bare Bones: Young Adult Services Tips for Public Library
Generalists published by the Public Library Association (PLA)
ynd YALSA (Chelton).
Excellence in Library Services to Young Adults project to recognize
outstanding YA library programs is begun by ALA President
Hardy Franklin (Chelton).
Mike Pintz wins Grolier Award (ALA Web site).
1994 Los Angeles Public Library opens TeenS'cape, the first public
library space incorporating teen-specific design features
(Bernier).
1995 YALSA publishes Youth Participation in Schools and Public
Libraries: It Works (Bernier).
YALSA co-publishes Output Measures and More: Planning and
Evaluating Young Adult Services by Virginia Walter with PLA
and presents related "Implementing Output Measures for
Library Service to Young Adults" preconference at ALA Annual
Conference (Gottschalk).
1998 YALSA establishes Alex Awards for adult books for teens, and
also Teen Read Week every October (Jones et al. 50).
YALSA revises 1981 "Young Adults Deserve the Best:
Competencies for Librarians Serving Young Adults" (YALSA
Web site).
Patty Campbell's Two Pioneers of Young Adult Library Services,
 profiling Mabel Williams and Margaret Edwards, published by
Scarecrow Press in VOYA Occasional Papers series.
Emergency Librarian changes name to Teacher Librarian
(Teacher Librarian Web site).
1999 DeWitt Wallace Reader's Digest Fund supports Public Libraries
as Partners in Youth Development (Bernier).
YALSA establishes Michael L. Printz Award for Excellence in
Young Adult Literature (YALSA Web site).
2001 Los Angeles Public Library reinstates YA Coordinator
position and converts most part-time YA librarians to full-
time (Bernier).
YALSA's quarterly electronic newsletter YAttitudes begins with Fall
2001 issue.
2002 First Lady Laura Bush hosts White House Conference on school
libraries (Ramsey).
YALSA and ALSC's Journal of Youth Services ceases publication
with Summer issue and YALSA's own Young Adult Library
Services (YALS) begins publication (Murphy).
YALSA's "Getting Graphic @ Your Library" preconference about
graphic novels draws a crowd at ALA Annual Conference
(VOYA April 2002).
Linda Waddle retires as YALSA Deputy Director and Cindy Welch
takes her place (YALSA Web site).
2003 YALSA's first annual list of Teens' Top Ten Books is chosen
by teens online during Teen Read Week (VOYA December
2003).

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Christine A. Jenkins, an associate professor in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, received her Ph. D. at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, with her dissertation, Strength of the Inconspicuous: Youth Services Librarians, the American Library Association, and Intellectual Freedom for the Young, 1939-1955. Her research focuses on the history of school and public library service to children and young adults; youth services librarians as canon-shapers and intellectual freedom advocates; U.S. librarians and Cold War censorship; and gay/lesbian content in young adult literature.

Jennifer Burek Pierce is an assistant professor at the Indiana University (IU) School of Library and Information Science’s Indianapolis program. She earned her doctorate at IU’s Department of Communication and Culture in rhetorical studies, with her dissertation focusing on maternal and child health issues during the Progressive Era. Among her recent publications is What’s Harry Potter Doing in the Library? Depictions of Young Adult Information Seeking Behavior in Contemporary Fantasy Fiction, Selected Papers of From Aesop to E-Book: The Story Goes On ..., June 2004, 73-82.

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