

**A Concise Annotated Bibliography of
Library Services to Children and Young Adults:
1930-1939**

Alexander, Margaret [later Edwards]. "Introducing Books to Young Readers." *Bulletin of the American Library Association* 32.10 (Oct 1938): 685-90, 734.

Offers pointers for getting to know individual teen readers and their tastes, encouraging librarians to be flexible in their approach and to respect teen's frank opinions and intelligence about their own needs. Firm proponent of necessity for wide variety in reading material (both for teens and librarians), with no censorship.

Batchelder, Mildred. "The Leadership Network in Children's Librarianship: A Remembrance." *Stepping Away from Tradition: Children's Books of the Twenties and Thirties*. Ed. Sybille A. Jagusch. Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1988. 70-120. History of children's librarianship in first half of twentieth century, with detailed recollections of prominent librarians and children's book editors from 1920's through 1940's.

Brainard, Jessie F. "The Use of Pictures in the School Library." *Library Journal* 55 (Sep 15, 1930): 728-29.

Describes experiment at Horace Mann School for Boys in New York. Corridor-length bulletin board in hallway serves as rotating display of art prints, tourism posters (colorful and easy and cheap to get), objects such as pottery and stained glass, and even an exhibition by a local artist. Great success in presenting art and stimulating interest in art, lacking space for a proper art room; also stimulated organization of art library for use in classrooms.

Dickson, Paul. "The Thirties—Bread Lines of the Spirit." *The Library in America: A Celebration in Words and Pictures*. New York: Facts on File, 1986. 99-126.

Detailed captions and concise text accompany invaluable contemporary photographs, putting libraries and the efforts of librarians into humanized sociohistorical context. Text includes excerpts both from contemporary writings and from later studies on the period.

Draper, Aimee F. "Extra-Curricular Work with Youth Via the Library." *Library Journal* 60 (Nov 1, 1935): 833-36.

Colleague of Mary R. Lucas at Providence, RI Public Library (see Lucas article below). Describes efforts of Providence library to cultivate late teens-early twenties with "Young People's Alcove", clubs, radio program experiments, and poetry discussion and writing groups.

Eells, Walter Crosby. "Measurement of the Adequacy of a Secondary School Library: A Report on One Phase of the Cooperative Study of

- Secondary School Standards.” *Bulletin of the American Library Association* 32.2 (Mar 1938): 156-163.
Initial project surveys libraries on holdings, presenting five factors of adequacy: number of volumes, distribution, appropriateness, recency, and periodicals. These material resources weighted together by respondents as 29% of total work done by libraries, leaving majority of service outputs yet to be measured. Utilizes thermometer-style graphs to display results.
- Goodykoontz, Bess. “Relation of Books and Libraries to Education: From the Standpoint of Elementary and Secondary Schools.” *Bulletin of the American Library Association* 32.8 (August 1938): 501-507.
Uses fictional children to illustrate different reading levels, interests, and styles. Emphasizes combined contributions of teachers, school librarians, and public librarians to a child’s total lifelong book experience.
- Hoppe, David. “Paradise Lost?” *Wilson Library Bulletin* 68.7 (March 1994): 26-32.
Historical analysis of public libraries’ responses to popularity of film and the development of audio/visual collections, 1920’s-1990’s. From the 1930’s, cites studies of children’s entertainment preferences (movies came first) and librarians’ articles about films. Librarians generally failed to see the enduring potency of cinema as its own storytelling genre, considering films as ephemeral opportunities first to “hook” readers by promoting related books, and then to provide new selection services to parents.
- Jenkins, Christine. “Women of ALA Youth Services and Professional Jurisdiction: Of Nightingales, Newberies, Realism, and the Right Books, 1937-1945.” *Library Trends* 44.4 (Spring 1996): 813-839.
Discusses controversy over women’s dominance of the Newbery medal selection committees of the ALA. As publishing industry and authors became cognizant of children’s librarians’ (i.e., women’s) controlling influence over editing, reviewing, selection, and promotion of children’s literature, acrimonious gender-based debate sprang up, centered in part around the fact that ALA members (children’s librarians, women) choose Newbery Medal winners. Librarians were accused of feminizing literature for children, with emphasis on sentiment, feeling and fantasy over real, “true” experience and adventure (“girls’ books vs. boys’ books”). This argument was coupled with conflicts between librarians and educational trends emphasizing realism (see Sayers 1937, below). Librarians retained control of Newberies by stressing importance of balanced view of children’s literature, and by building relationships across the lines of conflict.
- Jordan, Alice M. “The Making of Book Lists for Boys and Girls.” *Library Journal* 56 (Oct 15, 1931): 844-46.
Provides examples of types of book lists (some intended for parents, others for children), ways to appeal to different kinds of readers, tips for building lists, and tried-and-true ideas for presentation (bookmarks are handy; colored paper is good; older kids enjoy annotations and quotes). Discourages application of age or grade levels, since these can discourage readers and box them in.

Lapides, Linda F. "Celebrating the Centennial of Margaret Alexander Edwards's Birth." *Journal of Youth Services in Libraries* 15.4 (Summer 2002): 44-54.

Chronicles Edwards' life and work as a pioneering young adult librarian at the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore from 1932-1962. Lapides succeeded Edwards at Enoch Pratt, and recalls her strict training program, her staunch liberalism and commitment to intellectual freedom, her relentless work to forge ties with schools, and determination to successfully connect teens not only with books they would enjoy but with a love of good reading.

Lewerenz, Alfred S. "Children and the Public Library." *Library Quarterly* 1.2 (Apr 1931): 152-74.

Presents 1930 study of recreational reading of children in California, led by Jasmine Britton of the Los Angeles City School Library (Lewerenz was the statistician for the project). Names of child library users collected from branches of the Los Angeles Public Library were correlated with assessment records from the schools to build statistics relating public library usage to IQ level, reading comprehension and arithmetic reasoning scores, etc. Sample also analyzed by grade level, gender, and race. Grades 3-6 had highest number of library users, with 6th grade the highest (and severe drop-off after 6th grade); boys outnumbered girls slightly until grades 4-6, and outnumbered them again at grades 7 and higher. 86% of child users were white, with 4.9% Japanese, 4.9% Mexican, 2.7% Negro, 0.2% Chinese, and 1.3% "Other". Average IQ level for all grades was 108.

Lucas, Mary R. "Library Service for Youth: The Primary Activities." *Library Journal* 60 (Nov 1, 1935): 831-33.

Promotes an activist approach, especially as new government funds and programs become available. Cites statistic of 8 million youth both out of school and out of work. Late teens/early teens often treated as annoyance. Should instead have personalized selection; practical, vocational information; special areas and special displays; and attention of librarians who are aware of their needs. See also Aimee F. Draper's accompanying article, above.

McElderry, Margaret K. "Remarkable Women: Remembering Anne Carroll Moore and Company." *School Library Journal* 38.3 (March 1992): 156-162.

Author remembers her tenure in children's services in the New York Public Library in the 1930's, focusing on department head Anne Carroll Moore and her successor Frances Clark Sayers. McElderry began in the New York Public Library system in 1934. In addition to acting as Moore's assistant, she also worked for Priscilla Edie in the 135th Street branch in Harlem, and worked with singer and storyteller Maria Cimino as well as Mary Gould Davis, Supervisor of Storytelling. She later became Vice President and Publisher of Margaret K. McElderry Books of the Macmillan Children's Book Group.

Miller, Bertha Mahony, and Elinor Whitney Field, eds. *Newbery Medal Books 1922-1955*. Horn Book Papers 1. Boston: Horn Book, 1955.

Synopsis of the book, biographical sketch of the author, author's acceptance speech, and an excerpt from the book included for each medalist. Two

introductory chapters profile Frederic G. Melcher, who established the Newbery medal awards, and John Newbery himself. A concluding essay by Elizabeth Nesbitt, prominent storyteller, offers additional appraisal of the Newbery winners. Index of titles and index of authors.

---. *Caldecott Medal Books: 1938-1957*. Horn Book Papers 2. Boston: Horn Book, 1957.

Format note and book note, author's acceptance speech, and biographical note on author included for each book. Sadly, no reprints of the illustrations. Introductory chapter on Randolph Caldecott and the awards; concluding essay, "What Is a Picture Book?" by Esther Averill. Index of titles and index of authors.

Morris, Sharon. "'Dear Mrs. Watson...': Letters to a Children's Librarian." *School Library Journal* 44.7 (July 1998): 28-31.

Profiles children's librarian Katherine Watson of the Denver Public Library, who initiated a project in 1929 that fueled children and youth programming at the library for years afterward. In 1929, anticipating National Book Week in November, Watson prepared a list of 40 classic children's books and sent letters to 40 prominent men, asking them to mark the books that they had read and if possible include some personal remarks. Repeated process in 1930 with female figures. The resulting book lists and personal essays from people such as Thomas Edison and Hellen Keller were used for many years in book talks and touring collections. See Watson 1931 for Watson's published report.

Plummer, Julia. "A Children's Librarian Views the Future." *Library Journal* 60 (November 1, 1935): 837-38.

Librarians can no longer expect the modern child to come to them: "their world is composed of activities which tend to distract rather than encourage library patronage and reading." Emphasizes using radio for outreach, promotion, and education. Collections must respond to children's interests and keep up with the times; the children's room can be an intellectual center. Reaching geographically diffuse populations is another challenge, as are attenuated budgets. New opportunities lie in developing schools as branch libraries; offering services and training for parents; and raising the library's profile as a potential "force in the community."

Roos, Jean C. "Training for Library Service with Young People." *Library Journal* 55 (Sep 15, 1930): 721-22.

Paper originally presented at inception of Young People's Reading Round Table in Los Angeles on June 25, 1930. Emphasizes needs of teens not in school. Cites need for specialized training for youth service. Provides partial survey of ten strategies already in use, from dedicated young adult areas to dedicated staff to reader's advisory work and clubs. Contacts with teens, with adults who work with them, and groups they are already a part of, are essential, as well as development of specialized lists, book talks, and discussion sessions. Promotes understanding of the psychological makeup of adolescents, to make them better adult readers.

Sayers, Frances Clarke. "Lose Not the Nightingale." *The Horn Book* 13.4 (July, 1937): 222-235.

Paper read at Section for Library Work with Children at ALA Annual Conference in New York on June 22, 1937. Became instant rallying cry for librarians,

influential for years afterward. Sayers protests the mechanical reading material current in “progressive” educational trends that emphasize the “here and now” of immediate experience. She passionately proclaims the value and even necessity of the power of the written word to stir the imagination and the spirit of the reader—not merely to inform or to function as a communication tool. Hans Christian Andersen’s tale of the Emperor and the Nightingale used as central metaphor, in which a bejeweled mechanical bird captures the attention of the court, and when it “sings” the real nightingale flies away, never to return. Fueled a burgeoning debate on the issue, which was eventually resolved with recognition that children need both imagination and reality.

Shortess, Lois F. “Cooperation between Public and School Libraries.” *Library Journal* 64 (Jan 15, 1939): 45-47.

Proposes cultivation of school libraries as branches of public library systems, presenting potential advantages and disadvantages. To work well, such a structure would require unequivocal joint financial support between school board and public library; clear understanding of duties and jurisdictions for both public and school librarians; development of school libraries as genuine, full-service branches; and full knowledge of and sympathy with school librarians’ needs and expertise on the part of public librarians in the system.

Smith, Lillian H. “Relation Between Book Arrangement and Reading Interests.” *Library Journal* 56 (Oct 15, 1931): 847-48.

The head of the Boys and Girls Division of the Toronto Public Library describes success of dispensing with Dewey and organizing books to better suit children’s browsing styles.

Townes, Mary E. “The Popularity of Newbery Medal Books.” *Library Journal* 60 (November 1, 1935): 839-41.

Townes surveyed 30 libraries and 62 children, asking about popularity and perceived quality of Newbery medalists. Librarians tended to consider most of the books unpopular, with a narrow appeal primarily for advanced readers. However, Newbery books that were introduced through promotion or reading aloud did well with children, and children liked the Newbery books they read. Townes concludes that Newbery books are worth the effort of librarian cultivation (despite their apparent distaste for doing so).

Watson, Katherine. “Boyhood Favorites of Famous Men.” *Library Journal* 56 (Apr 15, 1931): 356-58, 373.

Watson describes responses she received to her book list letter campaign sent to prominent male figures such as Richard Byrd and Hugh Lofting (see Morris, above).

Wright, Zoe. “Bibliotherapy in a Children’s Hospital.” *Library Journal* 62 (Dec 1, 1937): 898-900.

Describes success of hospital convalescent library in Iowa City, initiated in 1932. Program a model for the nation, sending book lists to other hospitals across the U.S. Serves diverse ages and reading levels via carts of books and picture cards, and provides individualized reader’s advisory for patients (many of whom had not had prior access to books for pleasure). Originally an experiment, by 1937 viewed as integral part of hospital operations, contributing essentially to convalescence.

Timeline:

- 1919: Launch of Children's Book Week
1922: Newbery Award established
1924: Bertha Mahony establishes *Horn Book*
1925: First young adult room established in Cleveland
- 1930: ALA Young People's Reading Roundtable established;
Saint Nicholas magazine bought by Scholastic Publishing company of Pittsburgh; discontinued in 1940, supplanted by lower-brow *Youth's Companion*
- 1931: *Library Quarterly* established;
Providence, RI Public Library opens "Young People's Alcove"
- 1932: Margaret Alexander [later Edwards] hired by Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore;
Charlemae Rollins hired by Hall Branch of Chicago Public Library, agitates for better representation of Negroes in literature;
Chicago Children's Reading Round Table established with Van Cleve as president
- 1933: ALA Board on Library Service to Children and Young People established
- 1934: WPA established, instigating many library innovations;
Margaret K. McElderry hired by New York Public Library
- 1935: ALA School and Children's Library Division established;
First circulating toy library established in Los Angeles;
"Children's Librarian's Notebook" section of *Library Journal* regularized with adult book lists in new column of "Recommended Books for Children"
- 1936: *Horn Book* begins publishing Newbery medal acceptance speeches;
Horn Book begins publishing Anne Carroll Moore's reviews (through 1960)
- 1937: Frances Clarke Sayers' "Nightingale" speech at Newbery Award program of ALA National Conference;
Augusta Baker, eminent African American storyteller and librarian, hired by New York Public Library 135th St. branch in Harlem
- 1938: Caldecott Medal established
- 1939: ALA Library Bill of Rights established;
ALA Pre-Conference Institute on Library Work with Children, sponsored by ALA Section on Library Work with Children, led by Frances Clarke Sayers and held at UC-Berkeley
- 1941: Anne Carroll Moore (New York Public Library) and Alice Jordan (Boston Public Library) both retire but remain active as reviewers, lecturers and authors

Newbery Medal Winners, 1930-1940

- 1930: *Hitty, Her First Hundred Years*, by Rachel Field (Dorothy P. Lathrop, ill.). Adventures of a doll made from mountain ash wood. Criticized by some as being beyond the reading level of target audience; girls who can read it aren't interested in dolls any longer.
- 1931: *The Cat Who Went to Heaven*, by Elizabeth Coatsworth (Lynd Ward, ill.). A poor artist commissioned to make a drawing of the last days of the Buddha risks rejection of his work by including a portrait of his own beloved cat in the picture, despite traditional reputation of cats as unreliable, and is rewarded with a miracle.
- 1932: *Waterless Mountain*, by Laura Adams Armer (Sidney and Laura Armer, ill.). A Navajo boy of mystic inclination learns the passwords to Nature. Armer a folklorist who had studied Navajo and Hopi oral and visual art.
- 1933: *Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze*, by Elizabeth Foreman Lewis (Kurt Wiese, ill.). A coppersmith apprentice comes of age.
- 1934: *Invincible Louisa*, by Cornelia Meigs, with photographs. Biography of Louisa May Alcott.
- 1935: *Dobry*, by Monica Shannon (Atanas Katchanakoff, ill.). Dobry, a sensitive and imaginative boy in a small Bulgarian village, is encouraged by his grandfather to study art.
- 1936: *Caddie Woodlawn*, by Carol Ryrie Brink (Kate Seredy, ill.). Tomboy Caddie Woodlawn grows up in frontier Wisconsin.
- 1937: *Roller Skates*, by Ruth Sawyer (Valenti Angelo, ill.). 10-year-old Lucinda Wyman explores New York City on roller skates in the 1890's. Famous storyteller Ruth Sawyer incorporates diary entries in this lively semi-autobiographical tale.
- 1938: *The White Stag*, written and illustrated by Kate Seredy. Weaves together Hun-Magyar legends about the White Stag, sent by the god Hadur to lead Attila and his people to conquer their promised land of Europe.
- 1939: *Thimble Summer*, written and illustrated by Elizabeth Enright. Tomboy Garnet enjoys a magical season with a silver thimble and adventures at the Fair. Singled out as emblem of evils of "feminine influence" in children's literature by Howard Pease (author of adventure stories) and C. C. Certain (editor of *Elementary English Review*).
- 1940: *Daniel Boone*, written and illustrated by James Daugherty. Redblooded biography of American hero. Chosen in part in response to previous year's attacks.

Caldecott Medal Winners, 1938-1940

- 1938: *Animals of the Bible, A Picture Book*, Dorothy P. Lathrop (text selected by Helen Dean Fish). Quotes from King James version of Old and New Testaments accompany realistic illustrations of flora and fauna of Bible lands. Black and white lithograph illustrations.
- 1939: *Mei Li*, written and illustrated by Thomas Handford. Mei Li goes with her brother to the New Year's Day Fair in Peking, riding out of the city gates on camels in time to greet the Kitchen God at midnight. Brush and lithograph pencil illustrations.
- 1940: *Abraham Lincoln*, written and illustrated by Ingri and Edgar D'Aulaire. Brief text and generous pictures depict Lincoln's life from log cabin to the White House (no assassination). Interestingly enough, another "realist" biography of a male American hero given a medal in 1940 after the controversies raging in 1939. Lithographic pencil on stone.