

Encouraging Scholarship: Courses, Conferences and Exhibits

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THE GROWING INTEREST in the historical study of children's books is a relatively recent phenomenon. It is a welcome development, much overdue, and worthy of encouragement from all who have long cared about this rather neglected aspect of children's literature. This paper looks at three activities that both reflect today's scholarly interest in historical children's books and foster it in important ways: (1) academic courses in the history of children's literature which may serve as a starting point for future scholars, (2) conferences which bring together researchers in the field and provide a forum for their research results, and (3) exhibits of historical children's books which call attention to the rich resources for further scholarship.¹

It should be said at the outset that systematic data on all three of these topics are simply unavailable. The discussion that follows is based on information drawn from a variety of sources which were often scanty as well as scattered. No claims, therefore, are made for completeness; indeed, it would require a major (and well-financed) effort to produce a thorough state-of-the-art report of this expanding field. What is possible, even with admittedly unsatisfactory data, is to give a sampling of what is happening in courses, conferences and exhibits, to indicate trends and directions, and to raise some questions which may be useful in planning for future efforts in these areas.

COURSES

Courses in the history of children's literature, like survey courses in

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children's literature, are given in a variety of departments and schools at the college and university level, but most often in departments of education, English and library science. Since neither time nor resources permitted a survey of all of these, this commentary concerns mainly those courses currently offered by ALA-accredited library schools. Information has been gathered from catalogs, course outlines and bibliographies, and from replies to a brief questionnaire sent last spring to all accredited library schools in the United States.

Of the fifty-eight library schools queried, thirty-three replied. Sixteen of these offer a course in the history of children's literature in addition to a more general course in children's literature. Where a separate course in history is not given, instructors usually noted that some portion of the survey course is allotted to history, normally 10 percent or less. Only three instructors assigned more than 10 percent of the general course in children's literature to historical aspects. Three schools that do not list a history course offer a seminar in children's literature which is sometimes organized around a historical topic. Four instructors supervise independent study in historical topics for interested students. Twelve instructors say that their students have access to collections of historical children's books sufficient to support some original research; however, four of the twelve characterize these resources as "limited."

Since the historical study of children's books may be approached in a number of ways, one might expect a good deal of variety in the content of courses on the subject. A history of children's literature course may be primarily literary in its emphasis, or it may be oriented strongly toward social history. It may center on children's books as artifacts, or as examples of the art of book illustration, or it may be presented as part of the history of book publishing. A substantial folklore component is a possible and logical part of a course in the history of children's literature, as are the problems and practices of collecting historical children's books. Any and all of these, alone or in various combinations, are legitimate elements of the history of children's books — and these by no means exhaust the list of possibilities. Theoretically, then, courses on this subject should differ substantially from one another.

In fact, there is a remarkable similarity among these courses offered in library schools. Judged by course outlines and bibliographies, most history of children's literature courses taught in library schools are predominantly literary history, with attention given to those social and cultural factors which are seen as important influences in the development of literature for children. Only a few courses seem to emphasize the history

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of illustration or of publishing. Fewer still devote a large proportion of the course to folklore, though almost all give some attention to the importance of folk and fairy tales in the growth of a literature for children. Consideration of bookmaking and collecting, if included, is generally handled in a few lectures, often by a visiting lecturer such as the curator of a special collection of historical children's books.

This general configuration of subject matter seems to reflect, at least in part, the academic backgrounds of those who teach the courses in library schools. Most of the instructors hold their highest degrees — predictably enough — in library science; some hold graduate degrees in education as well. Five instructors listed an academic specialty in English literature at the undergraduate and/or master's degree level. None of those who replied to the questionnaire holds a graduate degree in history, and only one mentioned an undergraduate concentration in history. One instructor holds an M.A. in literary history. In general, the instructors' predisposition to shape their courses along the lines of literary history seems a logical extension of their interests and training.

Course outlines suggest that the intellectual framework for the majority of courses in the history of children's literature has been supplied in large measure by two books: *A Critical History of Children's Literature* by Cornelia Meigs et al., and Elva S. Smith's *The History of Children's Literature*.² Eight instructors use Meigs's book as the text for their courses. Both books provide broadly conceived models for the study of children's literature from the aspects of history and literary content. In both, the term *children's literature* includes all material that can be presumed to have been heard or read by children, whether or not it was consciously intended for children by its authors. Using this definition, the majority of courses in library school curricula begin treatment of the history of children's books with a very early date, with folklore (as in Meigs) or with the Anglo-Saxon period (as in Smith). They include units on the medieval period and often on early forms of books for children (horn-books, battledores, chapbooks and courtesy books), and touch upon the seventeenth century, covering Perrault and d'Aulnoy as well as Puritan works like Janeway's and Mather's. Major topics for the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries are the effect of new educational theories (Locke's and Rousseau's), the rise of the middle class, and the didactic movement. Later nineteenth-century literature and its illustration are usually given fairly complete treatment. Most courses end either near the turn of the century, as the Smith outline does, or, as in the Meigs outline, at about 1920. Except for treatment of the French influence in the eigh-

teenth century, most courses trace the development of children's books almost entirely as it occurred in England and America.

Although similar in content and coverage, courses in the history of children's literature show some important variations in pedagogic methods and objectives. In this regard, they may be roughly divided into two groups. The first and larger group aims at giving the student a very broad survey knowledge of the development of children's literature and the historical influences on that development. These courses are not designed to prepare or inspire the student to do research in the field; rather, they are meant primarily to provide a historical background for the understanding of contemporary children's literature. In these courses, secondary sources make up the bulk of the required reading. Students may also be expected to read minimally some key primary sources, but they are not required to research primary sources as part of the coursework.

A smaller number of courses provide students with a more focused course of reading in secondary sources, and somewhat greater experience in researching historical children's books firsthand. These courses require a student to complete at least one project based on primary sources. Some courses minimize the use of secondary sources, except as optional background reading, and instead require students to read a highly selected group of seminal works on children's literature. Exposure to the problems and possibilities of original research in historical children's books is an explicit goal of these courses.

At the present time, the number of course offerings in the history of children's literature is increasing rapidly in colleges and universities. Many of the courses now given in library schools are new—less than three years old, in most cases. Outside library schools, in English and education departments in particular, programs offering a specialty in children's literature are increasingly available. Such programs normally include at least one course in the historical aspects of the literature, and sometimes more.

As interest grows, so may variety and specialization. The broadly gauged courses now offered in many library schools provide excellent background for students of contemporary children's literature, and surely give many students a first look at the extensiveness of this literature as a field of study. As developing programs and interest warrant it, curricula may expand to include additional, more specialized and research-oriented courses for students who wish to pursue the historical study of children's literature in depth. Some programs already offer more than a single course in the subject. Simmons College's master of arts program in children's

in general increases each year, few focus specifically on historical aspects of the field. For the last decade, on the other hand, research papers on various historical topics in children's literature have found an audience when presented at broader scholarly gatherings. Since 1969, for example, the Modern Language Association (MLA) has regularly included a seminar on children's literature as part of its annual meeting. Papers presented have usually centered on literary history, which reflect the organization's composition of university and college teachers of literature. The Popular Culture Association, which has held annual meetings since 1971, has also sponsored studies on historical children's books both in its conferences and in its publication, *Journal of Popular Culture*.³

The Children's Literature Association, founded in 1973 by members of the MLA Group on Children's Literature, was established for the specific purpose of promoting scholarship in the field of children's literature. It is an interdisciplinary organization, the majority of whose membership consists of university professors of English, library science and education who share a professional interest in children's literature. The association's annual meeting provides a regular forum for scholarly papers on children's literature, including (but not limited to) historical studies. Of the five conferences held to date, the first (held in 1974 at the University of Connecticut at Storrs) was the most strongly oriented toward history, with five of the eight formal papers devoted to historical topics. Subsequent conferences, held at the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Va., in 1975; Temple University, Chestnut Hill, Pa., in 1976; Eastern Michigan University in 1977; and Cambridge, Mass., in 1978, have also included papers on historical aspects of children's books, with emphasis generally falling on studies in literary history.

Children's Literature, published by the MLA Group on Children's Literature and the Children's Literature Association, appears annually and carries both critical and historical articles on various aspects of children's literature.⁴ Some, though not necessarily all, of the papers presented at the annual conference appear in the journal.

A landmark conference, and to date the only gathering wholly devoted to historical aspects of children's books, took place in Boston in May 1976. "Research, Social History and Children's Literature: A Symposium" was the first of what has become an annual meeting focused on research in children's literature and on the implications of this research for collection development and organization. The symposium is sponsored jointly by the ALA Committee on National Planning for Special Collections of the Association for Library Service to Children, and the host li-

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brary education institution. The first symposium, held at Simmons College School of Library Science, featured papers by researchers who had used children's books as a source for social history, as well as a series of talks by the curators of several important collections of historical children's books. Most of the approximately 100 participants were professional librarians and library educators. It is difficult to overstate the importance of this 2-day conference to a field of study just beginning to come into its own. The symposium highlighted the importance and richness of special collections of children's books, and suggested some possibilities for research in a hitherto neglected area. It brought together researchers and librarians for an occasion enlightening to both, and provided them with an opportunity to explore their mutual interests and needs. Perhaps even more important, this pioneering effort, through careful planning and sound professionalism, set a high standard for subsequent efforts in the field. A dozen papers from the Boston symposium have been published under the title *Society and Children's Literature*.⁵

Two more symposia have taken place since then, one in 1977 hosted by the School of Librarianship at the University of Washington in Seattle, and one in 1978 held by the School of Library Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Although neither of these conferences concentrated on historical studies, both were concerned with research in children's books and with the special collections of children's materials available for such research. The Seattle symposium was titled "Research, the Creative Process and Children's Literature," and the North Carolina conference, "Research in Folkloristic Materials for Children." No plans have yet been announced for publication of papers from the 1977 and 1978 symposia.

The symposia offer an important forum for historical studies in children's literature. While not every symposium can — or should — be devoted entirely to historical topics, historical research often fits comfortably into the broader themes chosen for these conferences. In 1979, the symposium will be hosted by the University of Illinois Graduate School of Library Science, and will consider the topic "Portrait Studies: Research About Nineteenth-Century Children and Books."

In general, the pattern of a broadly based conference which can accommodate historical studies in children's literature seems likely to prevail, at least for now. In the wake of a successful conference centered on historical scholarship, like the 1976 symposium, it is natural to hope for more of the same. However, the success of such a conference ultimately depends on the quality of research presented and presently the field is still too new

and the number of serious scholars working in it too small to enable similar successes with any frequency. Scholarly conferences have a function beyond that of simply bringing together people with common interests or providing an audience for speakers. At best, scholarly gatherings serve the field by (1) stimulating discussion and constructive criticism of research presentations, (2) suggesting new research or fresh approaches to research in progress, and (3) providing for the intellectual exchange and critique that inspires and invigorates scholarship. To dilute this function with mere entertainment or mediocre presentations to fill out the program or to substitute one-way communication for critical exchange is to diminish the effectiveness of a conference as a contribution to scholarship. High standards of selection, careful review, and responsible, informed criticism are indispensable to serious scholarly production. Conferences can and do play an important role in promoting scholarship, but only insofar as they extend these astringent forms of affection to scholars and their audiences.

EXHIBITS

Exhibits of children's books of historical interest have been mounted by a variety of institutions in the United States since the 1920s. Unfortunately, no systematic record of exhibits has been kept, nor has a catalog been published for every exhibit. The following compilation, arranged chronologically from the earliest found in the literature to the present, is therefore representative rather than exhaustive. The annotations reflect the uneven information available, ranging from fairly full descriptions to titles and dates only for some exhibits. If a catalog was published, that fact is noted, as are journal reviews of the exhibits and catalogs.

Incomplete as it undoubtedly is, the list demonstrates quite clearly the growth of interest in historical children's books over more than fifty years. It also suggests that, in addition to increasing in number, exhibits have become less generalized and more often organized to illuminate some particular aspect of historical children's books, e.g., one genre, a single author's work, or the progress of an important change in the direction of children's literature.

Continued expansion in this area can probably be expected as universities and special libraries respond to (and thus foster) the increased interest in children's books. At the same time, it must be noted that some of the oldest and most versatile exhibitors, such as the Central Children's Room of the New York Public Library, are being forced to curtail efforts in the face of increased costs, dwindling funds and the expense and difficulty of insurance coverage.

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1927-1950

"Exhibit of Hornbooks." Exhibition Room, New York Public Library, 1927. Thirteen hornbooks from the collection of James C. McGuire were shown along with examples of later developments, such as primers and alphabet books. A complete, descriptive list of items exhibited was printed in the *New York Public Library Bulletin*, Nov. 1927.

"Early American Children's Books, 1682-1840: The Private Collection of Dr. A.S.W. Rosenbach." Exhibition Room, New York Public Library, 1927. The Rosenbach collection contains over 800 volumes. The earliest dated work was *The Rule of the New Creature* (Boston, 1682). Also in the collection was *Spiritual Milk for Boston Babes* by John Cotton (1684). The collection includes primers, moral tales, poetry, books on sports and pastimes, miniature volumes, and "shockers" from the early nineteenth century. A catalog/essay was published and the exhibit was reviewed by Frederick M. Hopkins in *Publishers Weekly* (116:2395-98, Nov. 16, 1929). The Rosenbach collection was also exhibited at the Free Library of Philadelphia in 1928.

"Four Centuries of Children's Books." The Public Library, Newark, N.J., 1928. The Wilbur Macey Stone collection of hornbooks, primers, Bibles, hymnals, and other children's books was shown. A catalog was published and the exhibit was reviewed by Frederick M. Hopkins in *Publishers Weekly* (116:2395-98, Nov. 16, 1929).

"Exhibit of American Children's Books Printed Before 1800." American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass., 1928. Selected were 120 examples of amusement books, catechisms, miniature Bibles, primers, Mother Goose books, and other children's books. The exhibit was reviewed by Frederick M. Hopkins in *Publishers Weekly* (116:2395-98, Nov. 16, 1929).

"Exhibit on the History of Children's Books." Grolier Club, New York, 1928. The exhibit included a variety of children's books ranging from early editions of Aesop, *Pilgrim's Progress* and *Gulliver's Travels* through books intended for spiritual instruction, books of morals, early school books, and illustrated books of the nineteenth century. A catalog was published and the exhibit was reviewed by Frederick M. Hopkins in *Publishers Weekly* (116:2395-98, Nov. 16, 1929).

"Children's Books of Yesterday: An Exhibition from Many Countries." Central Children's Room, New York Public Library, 1933. The exhibit consisted of children's materials ranging from the fifteenth to the early twentieth century, and was cosponsored by the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the New York Public Library. Books, broadsides, manuscripts, and drawings were displayed.

"Exhibit on the History of Children's Book Illustration." Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, Calif., ca. 1938. The theme of the exhibit was the history of the illustration of children's books from 1840 to 1900.

"Children's Books, 1670-1940." Library Company of Philadelphia, 1940. Most of the books shown in this exhibit were printed in the United States; a few examples of early children's books from France and Great Britain were also included.

"Children's Books of Yesterday: The Good Housekeeping Collection." This traveling exhibit was divided into eight categories: (1) The ABC's and the Three R's; (2) Instruction on Various Subjects; (3) Nursery Rhymes and Other Verses; (4) Fairy Tales, Fables and Folk Tales; (5) Moral Tales; (6) Gulliver, Crusoe, and Other Stories; (7) Original Drawings for Children's Books; and (8) Children's Games. An annotated catalog was printed.

1950-1960

"Children's Books and Manuscripts." Pierpont Morgan Library, New York City, Nov. 19, 1954-Feb. 28, 1955. Materials were borrowed from institutions and individuals, and this exhibit of historical children's literature was acclaimed as the most imaginatively conceived in this century. The exhibit included such items as a 1695 manuscript of Perrault's fairy tales and Dickens's manuscript of *A Christmas Carol*. An annotated catalog, with bibliography, was printed.

"L. Frank Baum: An Exhibit." Columbia University Library, 1956. Exhibited were 112 items from Baum's published writings. A bibliography (Joan Baum and Roland Baughman, eds.) was printed.

The New York Public Library Central Children's Room exhibited the works of individual authors and illustrators throughout this period, including Bruno Munari (1953), Hans Christian Andersen (1955), Elizabeth MacKinstry (1957), Helen Sewell (1959), and Hans Fischer (1960). Of these, only the Andersen exhibit can properly be considered as historical; however, the retrospective reach of the others gave them some historical value.

1960-1970

"The History of Children's Book Illustration." Free Library of Philadelphia, April 1961. The works of more than seventy illustrators were shown. The early development of American literature for children was represented by displays of illustrations found in hornbooks and other items

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dating from 1777 to 1853 from the Rosenbach collection. Works of early illustrators, such as Walter Crane, Arthur Rackham, Kate Greenaway, Howard Pyle, and Beatrix Potter, were emphasized. The exhibit included material published through 1960.

"Children's Alphabet Books from the Seventeenth Century to the Present." Library of Congress, Aug.-Dec. 1963. Included in the show were "Vocale Alphabetum" from Comenius's *Orbis Pictus* published in Germany in 1658. Also shown were alphabet books by Andersen, Lear, Greenaway, Thackeray, and editions by contemporary authors.

"The Night Before Christmas: An Exhibit." Pittsburgh, 1964. Primarily devoted to American printings of Clement Moore's work, the collection exhibited was not definitive, omitting such forms as translations and popular journal versions. An illustrated catalog was published by Pittsburgh Bibliophiles.

"Treasures from the Central Children's Room." Central Children's Room, New York Public Library, Dec. 1963-Feb. 1964. Materials were drawn from several divisions of the Research Library. Early editions shown included *Adventures of the Beautiful Little Maid Cinderella* (J. Kendrew, ca. 1820); *Cries of London* (New York, S. Wood and Sons, ca. 1815); *The New York Primer* (New York, Samuel Wood, 1807); *The New England Primer* (Worcester, Mass., S.A. Howland, ca. 1843); and *The Newtonian System of Philosophy* (London, J. Newbery, 1766). In all, there were 136 items, almost one-half of which dated from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Recent editions included *ABC* by Bruno Munari (Cleveland, World Publishing Co., 1960), and *The House that Jack Built; La Maison que Jacques a bâtie; A Picture Book in Two Languages* (New York, Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1958).

"Fables from Incunabula to Modern Picture Books." Library of Congress. Opened April 17, 1966. The exhibit covered Indian fables (the Panchatantra, the Hitopadesa, the Jatakas, and Bidapi), Aesop, La Fontaine, and Krylov. The earliest English edition of Aesop designed for children exhibited was *The Fables of Aesop, Paraphras'd in Verse* by John Ogilby, printed in London, 1668. Other seventeenth-century editions included *Aesop's Fables, With His Life: In English, French and Latin* by Francis Barlow (London, 1687), and *Fables of Aesop, and Other Eminent Mythologists*, edited and translated by Sir Roger L'Estrange (London, 1692). Eighteenth-century editions were also included. The earliest edition published in the United States shown was *Aesop's Fables* by Thomas James (New York, R.B. Collins, 1848). Early children's editions included *The Baby's Own Aesop* by Walter Crane (London and New York, G.

Routledge, 1887), and *Some of Aesop's Fables*, translated by Alfred Caldecott and illustrated by Randolph Caldecott (New York, Macmillan, 1883). A selected bibliography compiled by Barbara Quinnam was published.

"Beatrix Potter: A Centenary Exhibition." Central Children's Room, New York Public Library, June 15-Oct. 15, 1966. Materials exhibited included some borrowed from other institutions and individuals, as well as the library's own holdings. Its aim was to present a representative selection of Potter's work including drawings done as a child, preliminary drawings for her publications, letters, and rare editions of her books. Twenty drawings were displayed; covering a period of approximately forty years of her life.

"Centenary Exhibition of the Works of Beatrix Potter." Free Library of Philadelphia, 1966.

"Science in Nineteenth-Century Children's Books: An Exhibition Based on the Encyclopaedia Britannica Historical Collection of Books for Children." University of Chicago Library, Aug.-Oct. 1966. The major emphasis was on English and American works. The 100 items on exhibit were divided into three groups: (1) the Beginnings of Science Books for Children, (2) Science as a Source of Salvation and Moral Behavior, and (3) Science as a Source of Conflict. Authors featured included Pliny, Johan Comenius, Sarah Trimmer, John Newbery, Thomas Day, Jacob Abbott, and Charles Darwin, among others. An illustrated, annotated catalog was published.

"Nick Carter Detective Library: An Exhibit." University of Minnesota Library, April 1-15, 1968. A catalog, edited by J. Randolph Cox, was printed.

"The Genius of Arthur Rackham." Columbia University Library, 1968. The Low Memorial Library displayed selected works from their collection of Rackham's drawings, watercolors, paintings, and sketchbooks. The exhibit was reviewed in the *New York Library Association Bulletin* (16:10-12, Jan.-Feb. 1968).

"Louisa May Alcott: A Retrospective View." Central Children's Room, New York Public Library, June-Sept. 1968. First editions, an original manuscript and photographs were included in this exhibit commemorating the one-hundredth anniversary of the publication of *Little Women*.

"Louisa May Alcott: A Centennial for *Little Women*." Library of Congress, 1968. Materials exhibited were grouped by series or type. First editions and later editions from the Library of Congress collection which

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had significance in illustration or design were shown. A selected bibliography, annotated and illustrated, with Judith C. Ullom as editor, was published.

"Created for Children." Free Library of Philadelphia, Oct. 23-Dec. 10, 1969. The exhibit celebrated the publication of *Subject Collections in Children's Literature* (New York, Bowker, 1969) edited by Carolyn Field, Coordinator of Work with Children at the Free Library of Philadelphia. Items were borrowed from the twelve major research collections for the show. Original watercolors and first editions from the Kate Greenaway collection were exhibited, as were volumes published by the American Sunday-School Union in the nineteenth century.

1970-1978

"The Brandywine Heritage: Howard Pyle, N.C. Wyeth, Andrew Wyeth, James Wyeth." Brandywine River Museum, Chadds Ford, Pa., 1971. Thirty-six reproductions of Pyle's work, including some of his illustrations for children's books, were displayed.

"Victorian Popular Fiction: An Exhibit." University of Minnesota Library, Sept.-Oct. 1974. Thirty-four items from the Hess Collection of the University Library were displayed. Represented series included "Boys of England," "Boys of the Empire," "Boy's Own Paper," and "Union Jack." A catalog was published which included an essay entitled "Popular Fiction: Penny Dreadfuls, Boys' Weeklies, and Halfpenny Parts" by Laura Quinn.

"Americana in Children's Books: Rarities from the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries." Library of Congress, Nov. 1974-Jan. 1975. Items were chosen to illustrate the early ties to English publishing, the growing independence of American publishers, and the contribution of the nineteenth-century American magazines for children to the development of an American culture. The exhibit included sections on Instructive and Improving Works, Early Rhymes and Curiosities, Later Songs and Verses, Famous Fiction in First Editions, and The Magazines. Among the items displayed were *New England Primer Improved* (Boston, 1773), a Mother Goose book in hieroglyphics published in 1855, and the first book publication of "Mary's Lamb" by Sarah J.B. Hale in *The School Song Book* (Boston, Allen & Ticknor, 1834). An illustrated catalog was published and the exhibit was reviewed in *Bookbird* (12:57-58, Dec. 15, 1974).

"Early Children's Books and Their Illustrators." Pierpont Morgan Library, New York City, winter 1975-76. Most of the approximately 325 items exhibited were from the library's own collection, although a few

were borrowed from individuals. Adult editions and source material were shown together with children's editions. For example, the section on Aesop's fables included papyrus fragments from the third and fourth centuries, several Latin and Greek editions, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century editions in several languages, and children's editions from the eighteenth through twentieth centuries. A theme of the show was the evolution of literature for children from the heritage of the medieval and Renaissance periods. Included were natural histories, courtesy books, fiction, alphabet books, religious books, proverbs, grammars and textbooks, moral tales, cautionary tales, nursery rhymes and poetry, and many more. Certain classics had sections to themselves, such as *Robinson Crusoe*, *Gulliver's Travels*, and *A Christmas Carol*. A catalog was printed. The exhibit was reviewed by M. Gardner in *New York Times Book Review* (Jan. 18, 1976), by C.B. Grannis in *Publishers Weekly* (208:48, Nov. 3, 1975), by W.E. Machan in *School Library Journal* (22:28, Feb. 1976), by J. St. John in *The Horn Book Magazine* (52:145-46, April 1976), and by J.G. Schiller in *AB Bookman's Weekly* (56:2267-72, Nov. 17, 1975) and in *American Book Collector* (26:7-34, July/Aug. 1976) and the catalog was reviewed by D.M. Broderick and J.R.T. Ettlinger in *Library Quarterly* (46:317-18, July 1976).

"Children's Books." Kent State University Library, April-June 1976. Topics covered by the exhibit were children's books from England, *Alice in Wonderland*, illustrated books, Kate Greenaway, Randolph Caldecott, "From Peter Parley to Penrod," popular literature, the dime novel, the "Big Little Book," comic books, and author Jacqueline Jackson (who lived in Kent, Ohio). Many first editions were displayed. The earliest dated item was an 1807 edition of Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare*. The show concentrated on the Victorian era, but included materials published through 1966.

"Samuel Langhorne Clemens: A Centennial for *Tom Sawyer*." Library of Congress, 1976. Items chosen for the exhibit were valuable as first editions or as examples of illustrations or book design. Included in the show was the first American edition of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (Hartford, Conn., American Publishing Co., 1876), illustrated by True W. Williams. Also displayed were numerous other editions with a variety of illustrators, and first editions of other Clemens works. A selected annotated and illustrated bibliography compiled by Virginia Haviland and Margaret N. Coughlan was published.

"Two Hundred Years of Publishing in Philadelphia." Free Library of Philadelphia, May 28-July 29, 1976. Approximately 200 items representing

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the efforts of 120 different publishers were shown in this Bicentennial exhibit. Children's books shown included such items as *A First Book for Children* by Anthony Benezet (Joseph Cruikshank, 1778), *The New England Primer* (Charles Cist, 1782), Parson Weems's *The Life of George Washington* (Mathew Carey, 1810) and an 1842 broadside edition of "The Night Before Christmas."

"To Edify, Educate and Entertain: American Children's Books, 1820-1860." Watkinson Library and Trinity College Library, Hartford, Conn., Dec. 1977-Feb. 1978. This major exhibition on the art of illustration of children's books showed more than sixty examples of original artwork and early editions drawn from the library's collections. Instructional books as well as works of fantasy and other entertainment literature were included. Original drawings by Greenaway, Caldecott, Rackham, Millet and Denslow, and first editions of *Alice in Wonderland* (1866) and *The Prince and the Pauper* (1882) were among the works displayed.

"Lewis Carroll: An Exhibit." Rosenbach Museum, Philadelphia, April-July 1978. While this exhibit was not confined to children's works, some items of interest were displayed: John Tenniel's original drawings for *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*, Carroll's own suggestions for illustrations, and his personal copy of the first issue of *Alice in Wonderland*.

CONCLUSIONS

Scholarship in the field of historical children's books is in a period of unprecedented expansion as the increased number of courses, conferences and exhibits, as well as publication in the field attest. Expansion, of course, brings with it both opportunity and problems; having reviewed some of the promising activities in the field, discussion will turn briefly here to needs.

Research completed on material discussed in this paper points out two needs with particular clarity. The first is the pressing need, encountered at every turn in this survey, for a more comprehensive and reliable reporting system for activities in the field. At present, information about courses, conferences and exhibits, when it exists at all, is scattered in a variety of publications and rarely gathered in a single place. There is no cumulative source of information, selective or comprehensive, that is even reasonably current for any of these activities. *Children's Literature: A Guide to Reference Sources* is a helpful but highly selective retrospective source on exhibits, and even with the publication of the 1977 supplement, is current only through 1974.⁶ Moreover, the guide covers only interna-

tional conferences. *Phaedrus: An International Journal of Children's Literature Research*, published biannually since 1973, provides the most consistent information available in the United States on foreign exhibition catalogs and is a current source of information on exhibits and catalogs of special interest produced in the United States.⁷ *Phaedrus* does not attempt to be comprehensive, however, and covers only those events and catalogs judged unlikely to be reviewed elsewhere. The journal's first 5-year cumulative index is now in process. *Library Literature* indexes notices of exhibits which appear in journals, but rarely includes historical exhibits, even when they have been reviewed in standard journals.⁸

At a time when courses and programs in children's literature proliferate, it is frustrating to lack a central source of information about them. Fortunately, improvement is being made in this area. Stephen D. Roxburgh, a doctoral student in the English department at SUNY-Stony Brook, is compiling a list of graduate courses in children's literature for the Children's Literature Association (ChLA). While this effort excludes undergraduate courses, and inevitably will rely on the association's membership for information, it will be a welcome resource. It is to be hoped that the ChLA, as the most interdisciplinary organization in the field, will undertake the task of updating this list in the future, and will perhaps in time expand it to include undergraduate offerings.

The second need concerns quality and a caution to temper enthusiasm. It is gratifying indeed to see historical scholarship in children's books flourish as it now does, and there is the temptation to call for more of everything that encourages interest in the field. Yet it is the quality of research and its presentation, rather than its quantity, that will determine how durable interest will be, and how much respect the historical study of children's books will command as a scholarly endeavor. All fields of study are subject to faddism, but one lacking scholarly tradition is perhaps especially vulnerable. The historical study of children's books is in an early, and therefore sensitive, stage in its development; it is as apt to be destroyed as perpetuated by uncritical enthusiasm. If genuine scholarship in historical children's literature is to continue to develop, it must be wary of forced growth. A clear commitment to high standards of quality, fostered in courses and exemplified in conferences, exhibits and their published results, is the best support that can be given to a new and promising field of scholarship.

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