
Female Advocacy and Harmonious Voices: A History of Public Library Services and Publishing for Children in the United States

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ABSTRACT

THIS ARTICLE USES A FEMINIST STANDPOINT TO EXAMINE THE BEGINNINGS OF LIBRARY SERVICE TO CHILDREN IN THIS COUNTRY AND THE WOMEN INSTRUMENTAL IN DESIGNING THAT SERVICE. IT ALSO EXAMINES THE COMPLEX INSTITUTIONAL AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AMONG THESE FEMALE LIBRARIANS AND THE WOMEN WHO FOUNDED CHILDREN'S PUBLISHING. TOGETHER THESE TWO GROUPS OF WOMEN, AS ADVOCATES BOTH FOR CHILDREN AND FOR BOOKS, SET FORTH A VISION OF SERVICE BRINGING THE TWO TOGETHER.

INTRODUCTION

During the last quarter of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries, a number of factors converged to create the patterns of children's services in libraries still evident in the United States. New thinking about the nature of childhood and of public education, social and economic changes in an era of immigration, the closing of the frontier, two world wars, and the gradual tolerance of women in the workplace provided a context and a catalyst for women eager to respond to societal issues. In a parallel pattern of development, the professionalization of, and specialization within, librarianship, the concern for libraries as physical spaces, the availability of Carnegie monies for library buildings,¹ and the development of materials for children within the publishing industry converged to establish what has become one of the most visible and most popular aspects of public library service today.

Men still dominated scholarly and professional communities in most of these arenas, but it was the leadership of a dedicated group of female

librarians and publishers championing books, magazines, and libraries for young people who built and shaped the future of library service to America's youth. They were unquestionably strong, dedicated, often highly opinionated women who fought to establish and to preserve service to children in libraries, while developing a national and international presence for their philosophy and practices.² These women had in common an intense drive to improve and inspire young people by exposing them to what they considered the very best literature. The complex interplay of institutional and interpersonal relationships among women librarians and women in children's publishing helped to establish a body of quality materials for children. This article argues, from a feminist standpoint, the role of these two groups of women as advocates for the young and for the book and for a vision of service bringing the two together.

WOMEN IN CHILDREN'S LIBRARIANSHIP

As the number and types of libraries expanded during the late nineteenth century, educated women, denied entrance into more established and prestigious professions, entered librarianship in droves. Male librarians welcomed women because their low pay kept library costs down, and women were no threat to the male-dominated positions of authority.³ Further, female characteristics were considered to be especially appropriate to the work of librarians. Although men produced almost all of the valued artifacts of culture, women were thought to be better suited to preserve and pass on that culture. The library provided a genteel environment in which the natural feminine traits of hospitality, altruism, idealism, and reverence for culture were channeled into what we would now call public services. The other side of female nature—i.e., industriousness, attention to detail, ability to sustain effort on even the most boring tasks—led to their work in the clerical and technical functions of librarianship. The social concerns of women in librarianship and the emphasis on their roles as nurturers contributed to their leadership in developing library service to children.

Many women, throughout the history of libraries in the United States, have contributed to the emergence and growth of library service to children and young people. Although these were women of strength and vision who accomplished a great deal, one cannot claim that they were feminists. They did, however, have a concern for social and professional issues, recognize a problem, become driven by a mission, and certainly made lasting changes to librarianship. Their accomplishments, along with those of other women who worked in undervalued public services, need to be reexamined and revalued in light of modern feminist studies. "One of the purposes of women's history is to awaken in people living today an expanded sense of what women can be and do" (Lebsock, 1990, p. xiv).

Those who originated children's library services and children's publishing are a very important part of a more inclusive feminist perspective on social history. The obvious question that emerges is Who were these women and why did they act as they did? The facts tell us that they were from the more cultured and wealthier middle class, quite at home in a milieu of books and literary figures. Some of these women were members of clubs and organizations that offered opportunities to band together to achieve their goals. They also formed new collegial relationships among themselves as a result of their work. We know that their voices were articulate and persistent enough to accomplish their mission as advocates for the establishment of library service to children in the United States.

THE EMERGENCE OF LIBRARIES FOR CHILDREN

From the beginning of public library work with children, it was clear that the women involved in this work shared a common mission—they were committed to bringing good books to children. Effie L. Power (1930) stated:

The immediate purpose of a children's library is to provide children with good books supplemented by an inviting library environment and intelligent sympathetic service, and by these means to inspire and cultivate in children love of reading, discriminating taste in literature, and judgment and skill in the use of books as tools. Its ultimate aim is higher thinking, better living, and active citizenship.⁴ (p. 10)

The priority of books in the mission of children's services was basically unchallenged well into the second half of the twentieth century. Elizabeth Henry Gross (1963) reported:

Outwardly, at least, there is unquestioned unanimity about the objectives of public library work with children. As synthesized by Elizabeth Nesbitt [1954] from published papers and reports prepared by leaders in public library service to children, these goals are threefold: 1) introduction of good books to the children of any community; 2) reinforcement and enrichment of classwork in the schools; and 3) full cooperation with agencies for civic and social improvement. (p. 7)

As indicated in these passages, aesthetic and cultural goals were primary, but social and educational goals were also important. One wonders, however, if these were separate goals for the women who pioneered library service to children. As women of culture, their sense of self must have been that of those who, because of their educational, aesthetic, and cultural advantages, felt a responsibility to improve the social situation and the taste of others by introducing them to the richness available in great literature. It is also true that, in the early development of the public

school system in the United States, there was little distinction between school and public library service to young people. Public libraries were often responsible for whatever school libraries existed, or they made loans of materials to classrooms and teachers. Those interested in children's work in libraries came together in the Children's Librarians Club of ALA in 1900, which then became the Section for Library Work with Children. It was not until 1951 when the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) separated from what was then the Division of Libraries for Children and Young People that the missions of the two types of institutions became distinctly different.

In fact, the first children's "libraries" were not physical spaces at all; they were collections of books. Both this book mission and the belief in cooperation between school and public libraries have been in evidence from the very beginning of the library profession in the United States. In 1876, the American Library Association (ALA) was founded, *Library Journal* began publication, and the U. S. Bureau of Education produced a report entitled *Public Libraries in the United States*. One segment of the bureau's report on "Public Libraries and the Young" by William I. Fletcher (1876) emphasized the importance both of the public libraries' provision of good books to children and of cooperation between school and public libraries. It is interesting to note that, during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, far more public libraries were willing to send books to schools than to remove age restrictions in their own facilities. Of course this cooperation existed at the upper levels of the public school system, and library books were not available to those below the seventh grade. In an effort to provide good books to younger children, Emily Hanaway of the New York City schools enlisted private support for the Children's Library Association incorporated in 1890. This association opened a library in a small room outside of which were frequently long lines of children waiting to enter. Seeing this, Melvil Dewey urged the New York Free Circulating Library to house this library in one of its branches. The move to a third floor room was made, but children going up and down the stairs disturbed adult readers, and their little library was removed (Long, 1969, pp. 85-86).

Children's services are such a vital force in public libraries today that it is difficult to imagine a time when young people were not welcome within library doors. It is certainly true, however, that early public libraries in the United States were intended for adults and children were admitted reluctantly, if at all. From the perspective of historians, it was a very short time from no service for children to children's services as a prominent component of the American public library movement. Explanations of why this happened are not easy to identify, but if one examines the events, a pattern of womanly activity is clearly identifiable. What these women accomplished is a measure of the power of their beliefs in their

ability to communicate with, and to influence, those who held both power and money.

There were libraries for young people in the early nineteenth century, many of which were the result of male benefactors. The Bingham Library for Youth, established in 1803 in Salisbury, Connecticut, by Caleb Bingham, served ages nine to sixteen and is generally considered to be the first library for children in this country. During most of the first half of the 1800s, Puritan views of childhood prevailed, but after 1850 there was a growing interest in the social, intellectual, and aesthetic needs of children as well as in their morality. Throughout most of the nineteenth century, there were many social and economic changes as a result of industrialization and of a shift from an agricultural to an urban society with its increased use of child labor. While wealthy young men attended private schools, apprentice libraries for boys twelve and over, settlement house libraries, and Sunday school libraries provided whatever educational opportunities were available to the poor. It is difficult to discern the availability of libraries to girls in the early years. For instance, Sophy H. Powell (1917) reports that girls were admitted to the Youth's Library in Brooklyn for one hour a week. By 1870, however, New York City had established a YWCA library "for the exclusive use of self-supporting women and girls, or those preparing for self-support, and [it] is entirely free" (Cattell, 1892, p. 91). Brooklyn, Albany, Philadelphia, and other cities also had YWCA libraries available to girls by the latter part of the nineteenth century.

The entrepreneurial spirit of those who brought libraries to needy children was often combined with persistence and a cool calculation that enabled them to succeed in the most unlikely situations. This is delightfully recorded by Sarah B. Askew,⁵ founder of the New Jersey commission, whose account of her research about, and subtle manipulation of, key townspeople and other "ruses" used to get support for a library was reported at the 1909 ALA meeting⁶ (Askew, 1909, pp. 352-54).

Child labor laws were not passed until the late 1800s and, even then, the minimum working age varied from twelve to fourteen. Much of the young work force was comprised of the children of immigrants, and these youngsters were especially in need of the resources and services of public libraries. In fact, the integration of immigrants into American culture was a primary mission of most public libraries of the time. What role did these children's librarians play in addressing the need for cultural identity while, at the same time, fostering their goal of Americanization of the children? A key question that emerges concerning immigration and Americanization has to do with the alternative standpoints of those involved. On the one hand, we have women presenting a grand gift of library treasures, perhaps seen from their standpoint as enabling young people to enter their world of culture. On the other hand, the standpoint

of immigrant mothers might have been based on their vision of economic security as a result of access to the library and thus education for their children. Substantive exploration of this issue remains to be done. Another question worthy of investigation is how foreign language juvenile materials were selected; librarians worked aggressively to acquire children's books in original languages from countries around the world, and copious lists were circulated.⁷

Gwendolen Rees, a British librarian writing of the early history of children's services in the United States, suggests that children's librarians in this country were more concerned with education, social issues, and what we would now call outreach than their counterparts in Great Britain.

And the motive spirit behind the campaign? The cultivation of the love of reading, the training of the young mind in right ideals of life, the educating of the budding "masses"? Yes, but not only this. Anyone studying American literature on this subject will notice how often the word "Americanization" occurs in it. There is a large and varied foreign element in America, an element which we in Britain only come across in one or two districts of our largest towns. The American Public Library, then, becomes a potent factor in the welding together of this heterogeneous mass into a solid whole, that whole being the American Republic, and America knows that, if this is to be done successfully, it must begin with the children. (Rees, 1924, p. 137)

Americanization of immigrant children was undoubtedly an important consideration in the history of library service to children, but most of the early pioneers in children's library work (discussed later) saw themselves as partners in the upbringing of all the nation's youth. Concerned with a sound mind in a sound body, they built collections and concentrated on bringing books and children together. For many librarians, an emphasis on morality, manners, and culture led them to concentrate as much on the elimination of the popular series books and dime novels thought to be polluting young minds as on the substitution of more cultured or classic literature. Thus, the continuing question of when selection becomes censorship in seeking to provide the best possible literature for young people is as old as children's librarianship itself.

It would be impossible to mention all those early women who laid the groundwork for the rich and varied library services available to children and young people today. What follows are glimpses of some of the key women and their contributions. Some of these women exerted their influence through work with children in public libraries while others worked in children's publishing; often the two groups worked in concert with one another.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

With the increased availability of books and periodicals for young people and the expansion of libraries in the mid-nineteenth century, the time was ripe for the development of library service designed uniquely

for children. One of the first women to have the vision to create such service was Minerva A. Sanders (1837-1912) who became the director of the Pawtucket Rhode Island Public Library in 1876. Under her direction, this library, which had its origin in an early subscription library, was one of the first to provide services to children. She is quoted as saying: "There wasn't a library where a child under fourteen was allowed, and I thought it ridiculous to keep out children at an age when the influence of such an institution could not fail to be of inestimable value" (Danton, 1953, p. 159).

Minerva Sanders was proud of her work for children and was pleased that small children called her "Auntie Sanders" and adults "Mawtucket" (Peacock, 1915, pp. 792-95). Elva S. Smith (1953) wrote of her as follows, "she believed in reading that would awaken imagination, sharpen observation, and develop a taste for real literature—myths and legends with their beauty and richness, well-written fiction, factual books, especially if enlivened with an occasional scintillation of wit and imagination" (p. 159). Sanders was also an outspoken advocate of open shelves, a practice contested by librarians of the time. In her vigorous fight for these practices, she broke with tradition and established a progressive role for herself in the history of American librarianship. It is amusing for contemporary librarians to read Sidney Rider's article in which he:

describes the large room, brilliant with electric lights, and his amazement at seeing boys and girls seated at tables reading or looking at pictures, or, still more surprising, ranging at will in the alcoves where the books were shelved, even taking some of them down to examine.⁸ (cited in Smith, 1953, pp. 159-60)

There is no question that Sanders (1887) was disturbed by children she saw wandering in the textile manufacturing town of Pawtucket. She asked the library trustees for additional help so she would be free to "mingle with the people, to learn their habits and tastes, and to direct their reading (especially the young)" (p. 398). It is not clear how much time she devoted to this mingling, the nature of it, or what she derived from this experience. What is clear is that she believed that understanding the community was critical to doing a good job, a belief that informs public library work today. In 1889 she wrote, "that from childhood to youth, and on to middle life and old age, the public library may be their amusement, instructor, companion and friend" (1889, p. 85).

Sanders was a vocal spokesperson for school and public library cooperation. She advocated class visits and sent collections of books to teachers who circulated them to their classes. At the time of her retirement in 1910, the trustees named her Librarian Emeritus, the first time in the history of the state of Rhode Island that a woman was so honored. Sanders is deservedly considered the pioneer of both open stacks and access for children. Although opposition did exist to her approach, she persisted and determined that children would have access to the resources of the library.

While Sanders and other librarians were working to establish children's collections and services in eastern libraries, nonprofessional women's groups in other parts of the country took up the cause of providing good books for young people. Nancy Woloch (1994), in *Women and the American Experience*, comments on the power of women's associations:

The late nineteenth century saw a proliferation of women's associations, which splintered, multiplied, federated, and expanded at an energetic pace. The basic units of this outburst, the temperance society and the women's club, arose spontaneously and won adherents rapidly.

They enabled thousands of conventional middle-class women to learn from others, share female values, and work toward common goals. Combining self-help and social mission, they created an avenue to civic affairs or what temperance leader Frances Willard called "the home going forth into the world." Not only did they give wide exposure to female "influence," but they invigorated their members and politicized their leaders. And they created a separate space for women in public life. (p. 287)

In the 1870s, the Ladies Library Association of the State of Michigan, previously a Christian association campaigning against drinking, card playing, and dancing, changed both name and mission to establish library collections (cited in Weibel & Heim, 1979, p. 3). In 1898, tax-supported libraries in Texas were approved by the legislature. The Texas Federation of Women's Clubs adopted a resolution that placed the establishment of libraries as their special charge. Sherry Hiller (1993) writes of the establishment of children's services in Texas as follows:

Historically, the Carnegie gifts had come at a crucial time, and the grant monies provided impetus for library construction. However, it is apparent that women were the prime movers in children's library services. In a labor of love, Texas club women, housewives, teachers, mothers, and librarians—women interested in the welfare of children—promoted children's library services in many ways.... The "back East" information such as the bibliographies from the New York Public Library children's department were passed along. The philosophy and dedication of early pioneers in children's services gave women throughout the state the spirited voice with which to extend their love of books and reading to the children of Texas. (p. 15)

As women's groups were exercising their considerable influence to establish libraries in less populated areas, individual forceful female librarians in the eastern United States were making names for themselves by spearheading efforts to get good books to children. Caroline Maria Hewins (1846-1926) was an avid reader from early childhood. She took real pleasure in good books and was surrounded by them in her own

early life (see Hewins, 1926, for an account of this role in her life). Later she was described as “a typical New England schoolteacher in figure, speech and manner. Everything she said or did was highly charged. She was understanding and warmly sympathetic but scornful of those who took the lesser roads in reading” (quoted in Root, 1953, p. 105). Is this indicative of the elitism that some have argued imbued these women? She, like other librarians of her time, sought out the best literature and was aggressive in her determination to eradicate lesser forms of literature. The concept of popular culture as an important aspect of society was not yet present in the belief systems of these women.

Like many librarians working with children at this time, Hewins felt as strong a desire to remove what she considered unacceptable reading material as to introduce fine literature. In her efforts to help children enter the world of great books, she was among the first to develop selection lists of quality literature for children, placing the classics in a prominent position on these lists. Hewins (1926) wrote:

The influence of books that I read over and over between the ages of five and fifteen has been so great upon my later life, its tastes and pursuits, that in the last twenty years I have collected copies of as many of them as possible for a standard of comparison with what children read now. (p. 117)

Reading lists were, from the early years of children’s librarianship, seen as an important means of getting good books into the hands of young people. One of the earliest such lists was Hewins’s *Books for the Young: A Guide for Parents and Children* published in 1883 while she was librarian at the Young Men’s Institute, a subscription library in Hartford, Connecticut. The 1904 *ALA Catalog* included a section of books recommended for children, and in 1905 the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh issued a *Children’s Catalog* followed in 1909 by H. W. Wilson’s first *Children’s Catalog*.

Hewins went to Hartford as librarian in 1875 after training with William F. Poole at the Boston Athenaeum. Although personally committed to children’s services, it took her over twenty-five years to convince the trustees of the Hartford Public Library to establish a children’s room. What remains unanswered is why it took so long? Did this reflect a male approach to the handling of children and their exclusion from reading rooms?

Hewins was a frequent contributor to the professional literature but also wrote for popular newspapers, stressing the values of good literature in the lives of young people. Because she was concerned for disadvantaged youth, she chose to live for twelve years at the North Street Settlement House. Here we see a repetition of a pattern of personal involvement used by Sanders. It is not certain what was gained from this participation in others’ lives. Later a number of authors of early multicultural

stories for young people, such as Florence Crannell Means, Ann Nolan Clark, and Marguerite De Angeli, sought out and shared others' lives before writing of them (see the earlier article in *Library Trends* by Vandergrift, 1993). Hewins (1923) wrote letters to young people that were published in the *Hartford Courant* and later as *A Traveler's Letters to Boys and Girls* (1923). From the start, she was a firm believer in cooperation between school and public libraries, again mirroring Sanders's beliefs.

Hewins was a member of the American Library Association Council and became an articulate spokesperson for services to youth. It is reported that she was the first woman to speak on the floor of an American Library Association meeting when that prerogative was normally reserved for men (Fairchild, 1904, p. 157). Certainly, she is one of the women in the field who has received recognition for her contributions to children's librarianship. At the seventy-fifth anniversary of the American Library Association, she was named to the Library Hall of Fame; and The Caroline M. Hewins Lectureship, an annual presentation at the New England Library Association Meeting, was established by Frederic Melcher in her honor in 1946.

One of the strongest pioneers in the children's library movement was far removed from the eastern community of women best known for this work. Lutie E. Stearns (1866-1943) was a Milwaukee librarian whose "Report on Reading for the Young," presented at the 1894 ALA meeting, summarized a survey of service to children in 145 libraries. This report served as a kind of standard against which those establishing libraries for young people could measure their work. At the 1901 ALA conference, the first meeting of the Section for Children's Librarians was held with Stearns as honorary chair. Wisconsin women worked closely with their eastern counterparts through national professional associations, but they also had their own network within the state, resulting in some of the strongest children's library systems in the country. The Cooperative Children's Book Center, now at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, opened in 1963 and is representative of the continuing emphasis placed by children's librarians on the examination and criticism of youth literature.

Effie Louise Power (1873-1969) began her long career of devotion to children's services at the Cleveland Public Library.⁹ She studied at the Carnegie Library at Pittsburgh and received her diploma in 1904, going on to receive a teaching certificate from Columbia University. Subsequently she worked as a librarian in Pittsburgh and in 1911 was appointed a supervisor of Children's Work in the St. Louis Public Library. In the interim, she spent some time teaching children's work in the Cleveland Normal School, a practice she was to continue throughout her career. She returned to the Cleveland Public Library in 1920 as the director of work with children. Power not only sought good books for children and fostered strict principles for selection, but also used children's responses

to determine which books should be purchased in multiple copies. Listening to children's views and respecting them as a legitimate source for a decision was indeed revolutionary. She later taught at Western Reserve University, stressing cooperation between school and public libraries in her work there. The American Library Association asked Power to write *Library Service for Children* in 1930 under the curriculum studies project. The work was revised in 1943 as *Work with Children in Public Libraries* and continued as a classic textbook for the education of children's librarians in the United States for many years. In it Power (1943) writes:

Children's librarianship is the application of the ideals to the educational needs and the varied interests of children. It is a vocation for those who care for books and children and for the task of bringing them together during children's formative years. It seeks to make books vital factors in child life, and through service and books to prepare children for adult life. (p. 176)

Power was at least as much educator as librarian. She used her teaching and her professional writing as a means to reach out and extend her mission "to make books vital factors in child life" (p. 176). The enormous power of her ALA texts kept them in print for many years.

Mary Frances Isom (1865-1920) was appointed director of the Portland, Oregon, Public Library in 1901. Joanne Passet (1994) writes of Isom's work as:

Viewing the public library as "the people's library," Isom devoted much time and energy to work with children and immigrants. She worked to establish closer cooperation with public schools, and by 1920 the Central Library and its branches served nearly 150 schools. Eager to see immigrant families use the library, she nonetheless acknowledged their customs and invited them to share their cultural traditions at library programs. (p. 141)

As Kingsbury (1975) quotes, her concern was: "Not how to Americanize the foreigners by forcing them to abandon their language and their old customs, but by teaching the Americans to respect the so-called foreigners" (p. 26). Isom had strong views about the importance of the library to the upbringing of children and did all in her power to bring children and books together. In 1902, she was able to obtain a position for a librarian with sole responsibility for work with children (Passet, 1994, p. 112). In a report at the Pasadena Conference in 1911, Isom reports a children's department in the central library and "juvenile libraries placed in the country schools. There were over 60 of these libraries sent out last fall and placed in 89 class rooms" (p. 145).

Anne Carroll Moore (1871-1961) was undoubtedly one of the most influential women in children's library work, partially because her reach extended into the publishing industry and exerted a sizable impact on the publication of books for children. *My Roads to Childhood*¹⁰ (Moore,

1939) explores her growth as the youngest in a family with seven older brothers and her devotion to, and dependence on, her father. She was well educated for her day and indicated that books were an essential part in her upbringing. In 1906, she went to work at the New York Public Library where she was to stay for the remainder of her career. She was responsible for the training of all the staff who worked with children, fostering storytelling and reading aloud as well as for the training in sound administrative practices. This provision of in-service education for the professional staff was a significant contribution and continues in children's services today, especially at the New York Public Library. Moore had her own ideas about how to do things, raised her methods to the level of ritual, and did not encourage alternative approaches.

Moore was very much impressed with the storytelling of Marie Shedlock (1854-1935) and, over the years, they became fast friends. It was probably Shedlock's influence that led to the establishment of the well-known storytelling program at New York Public Library. According to Ruth Hill (1940):

Marie Shedlock's coming to America in 1900 to give monologues and to tell Andersen's fairy tales had a far reaching effect. Libraries were ready for just the inspiration Miss Shedlock had to give, and for her practical instruction in the art of storytelling to students in training to become children's librarians. (p. 285)

One of Moore's contributions was to develop the reading room, which served as a permanent noncirculating collection. Probably many children's books in the collection were preserved because of this decision, and other libraries began to develop read-aloud and storytelling collections to meet staff needs (Augusta Baker, personal communication, September 12, 1991).

Moore delivered a number of lectures to the publishing community and continued to make her voice heard in children's publishing throughout her lifetime. It is not clear how she came to have this acceptance in publishing, although her friendship with Louise Seaman Bechtel was certainly a factor. Among her friends from the literary world were Beatrix Potter, Leslie Brooke, Padraic Colum, and Walter de la Mare. From 1918 to 1926, Moore wrote critical reviews for *The Bookman*. In 1924, she began a weekly page of criticism of children's books for the *New York Herald Tribune* with the famous logo *The Three Owls*. This logo also became the title of a later book and, between 1936 and 1960, she wrote *The Three Owls Notebook* for *Horn Book*. This sustained criticism of children's books was an outstanding contribution. She held power as a critic, and many in professional circles, as well as in publishing, heard her voice. What is not evident is the degree of her power; Moore herself obviously felt her own importance and exercised that self-importance in many of her absolutist views about books. She was not too timid to criticize authors of substantial reputation such as E. B. White. In 1945 she wrote to him: "Published under the name of E. B. White at this time it matters a great deal to

children's books that the book should have inherent qualities which seem to be left out of this one" (cited in Sayers, 1972, p. 244). This criticism was in response to the manuscript of *Stuart Little* (1945).

Many of the memories or stories of Moore also have to do with the persona of Nicholas, a small Dutch doll she was given by Leonore Power as a holiday gift. Nicholas, who had been purchased in Bloomingdale, took Moore's fancy and became her almost constant companion. She seemed to use the doll as a means to share events and stories with the children she visited. Augusta Baker tells of Moore taking Nicholas out of her rather large reticule and placing it on the table before beginning to talk with the children at the 135th Street Branch (Augusta Baker to author, personal communication, September 12, 1991). There were those who thought this attachment to, and personification of, a doll was unseemly, perhaps even ridiculous. Nevertheless, Moore persisted, and Nicholas became the subject of two books, *Nicholas: A Manhattan Christmas Story* (1924) and *Nicholas and the Golden Goose* (1932). Perhaps Nicholas permitted the shy Moore to reach out and convey her feelings to children. It was Walter de la Mare who said: "Give Anne Moore my deep and warmest regards,....And to her alter ego—Nicholas" (cited in Sayers, 1972, p. 187). Was the visibility accorded Nicholas a metaphor for Moore's own visibility or, more revealing still, might it have been a genuine act, a performance that she rather enjoyed?

Frances Clarke Sayers (1972) writes of Moore: "She went where the children were: to the schools, the settlement houses, and the streets—New York as well as Brooklyn, the area of her investigation" (p. 65). Certainly Moore was concerned with children from all levels of society. Thus, she too followed the pattern of previous women in reaching out to clientele to determine their needs. She was passionately devoted to getting books into the hands of children, and she made much of ritual in the process. Each child signed the following formal pledge in a large black book when she or he joined the library: "When I write my name in this book I promise to take good care of the books I use at home and in the library, and to obey the rules of the library" (Sayers, 1972, p. 68). Moore saw this pledge as an act of good citizenship.

As the years went by, Moore exercised an increasingly powerful role both within the professional community and in international areas as well. Lillian Smith, who was to lead children's services at Boys and Girls House at the Toronto Public Library, worked with Moore and credited her with many of the principles she employed. There is a need to examine the influence in the international library field of Moore and others. Her influence did reach other countries, but the extent and/or nature of that influence has not yet been measured. Moore was the first chairperson of the American Library Association's newly formed Children's Services Section. In many ways, as Ruth Sawyer quoted Walter de la Mare: "The children of this world will never be able to repay the debt they owe to Moore" (cited in Sawyer, 1960, p. 199 at the time Moore was awarded the Regina Medal on April 18, 1960).

Mary Elizabeth S. Root (1868[?]-1954) organized the children's department at the Providence, Rhode Island, Public Library in 1900 and stayed there until 1923. She then held a number of positions in children's work during the remainder of her career. She wrote and lectured on library work with children at Simmons College and Brown University. Root (1946), looking back over her years in the profession, discussed the revisions of booklists that were a major part of children's librarianship at that time. She recalls a number of important questions that were raised: "Weren't children's librarians taking themselves too seriously? Was a list needed at all" (p. 548)? Is this an indication of battles to come over the importance of the book and of booklists in children's work? Root (1946a) further indicates that by 1906, the Children's Section of ALA had changed direction in its discussions, "not so much how to do things and what books to buy, but standards of work" (p. 548). Certainly Root herself was one of the standard bearers, but did she set the tone for a greater emphasis on managerial competence over concerns for literature?

Frances Clarke Sayers's (1897-1989) first vision of children's librarianship came from a *St. Nicholas Magazine* article. She was, after completing her work at Carnegie Library School in Pittsburgh, asked by Moore to join the staff of the New York Public Library. In 1923, after five years, she left New York and, in 1925, married Alfred H. Sayers and began to write children's books. She taught courses in children's literature at the library school at Berkeley, and in 1941 she was named to succeed Moore at the New York Public Library where she stayed until her retirement in 1952. One of her major publications was the biography of Moore. In 1965, Sayers was awarded the American Library Association's prestigious Joseph W. Lippincott Award for distinguished service to the profession and her collection of essays and speeches was published as *Summoned by Books* (1965).

Sayers was an ardent storyteller, a crusader for quality in both literature and service to children. Perhaps she best embodies the spirit of the women who preceded her; she was the articulate spokesperson and the consummate professional writer. Sayers (1965) felt strongly about authors of excellence like Eleanor Farjeon and Eleanor Estes of whom she wrote:

The humor of Eleanor Estes is shot through with an exhilarating absurdity almost akin to Edward Lear. The pompous are made ridiculous, and the inefficient and ill-equipped are inventive and triumphant. . . . Here is a writer who is not afraid of sorrow in relation to children. . . . *The Hundred Dresses* is a revelation of a child's suffering. The book transcends all of the labels which have been applied to it in the name of brotherhood, tolerance, and intercultural understanding. It is an enduring story of compassion. (p. 120)

She continued to write novels for children and spoke out in public lectures and in classrooms against didacticism in children's literature. She was not afraid to take on Walt Disney for his commercial use of children's

stories and became the subject of controversy on this topic. Was this just an elitist standpoint she held in opposition to this form of popular culture? What prompted her vigorous attack on Disney? Sayers wrote:

Walt Disney is another big book promoter, and it is quite without conscience as to how he waters down, distorts, and vulgarizes such books of high originality and depths of feeling as *Pinocchio*, *The Wind in the Willows*, [and] *Peter Pan*. . . Muchness acclaims Mr. Disney. It is a matter which should disturb us greatly, this debasement of the taste of the young. I dream of a time when libraries and reading men and women will fight Muchness and the mass brainwashing to which we are subjected in our time. I hope to walk into a children's room one day where good editions of *Pinocchio* are on exhibition beneath a sign which asks: "Have you really read *Pinocchio*, or only Disney's version?" (cited in Gerhardt, 1989, p. 136)

Sayers felt strongly that quality was essential in the selection of books:

Somewhere, somehow, there has got to be an institution which belligerently attacks the mediocre, the slick, the sentimental, the commercial, that is typical of the mass culture of our day. Not that it came from the masses. It is proscribed for them and is poured upon them by money-ridden, power-ridden, advertising-ridden radio, moving pictures, press, television. . . . All of these forces are aimed more or less to make us all think, vote, buy, read, listen to, and look at the same thing. I am convinced that the mass mind is capable of much greater distinction in its thought. (cited in Gerhardt, 1989, p. 136)

Although Disney's work remains a staple of child culture, Sayers's legacy of concern about mass media also remains with us. She also challenged Ralph Munn's speech at the 1940 ALA Convention in which he suggested the elimination of children's services in public libraries because schools are responsible for such services. Sayers (1940) wrote:

The institution which gives them a place of their own, and makes accessible to them, with dignity and sympathy, the materials from which they may draw succor, hope, and a sense to stability in a world which has lost control of its wisdom—that institution must continue and increase its service to the children of this democracy. (p. 83)

Lillian Helena Smith (1887-1983), probably the best-known Canadian children's librarian, became interested in the profession by reading a magazine article about the Training School for Children's Librarians at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh (cited by Johnson, 1990, p. 3). After graduating in 1910 from Victoria College, University of Toronto, she went to Pittsburgh where she studied under Power and, in 1911, went to work for Moore in the Central Children's Room of the New York Public Library. After only three weeks there, she became head of a children's room in a branch library and the following year went to the Toronto Public Library where she spent the remainder of her career. She organized a children's department that, for ten years, was in an alcove of the adult department before moving to a Victorian house that became the

famous Boys and Girls House of the Toronto Public Library. This was another example of space not mattering as much as the collection. With the move to the main floor of a three-story house entirely for the use of children, however, the space was designed to be inviting to them.

They entered the library through the sun porch where their books were returned. The two front rooms held the circulating collection. Behind these were the reading and reference room. Here, as well as reference books, were special editions of illustrated books which the children could pore over as long as they wished. The Little children's room was next. It was called the Fairy Tale Room and had a fine collection of picture books, illustrated fairy tales and simple stories. On the walls were large Lisl Hummel pictures, and spreading over the long table was a map of Fairyland. To this day people remember that map with its fascinating locations and characters. (Johnson, 1990, p. 6)

With Smith's leadership: "By 1952 the Toronto Public Library had established children's rooms in sixteen branch libraries as well as children's libraries in thirty elementary schools, two settlement houses, the School for Crippled Children, and the Hospital for Sick Children" (Johnson, 1990, p. 6). Thus, she reached out to children through as many channels and agencies as possible to carry good books to children, just as other librarians before her had done. Smith also recognized, however, that she could ultimately reach a greater number of children through her work with adults. She, like Moore, held in-service professional sessions; perhaps encouraging a bit more freedom of view than had Moore. Her staff training sessions were lively and popular, and she encouraged her librarians to attend town meetings, plan book exhibits and displays, and find new ways to make parents and community agencies aware of the importance of reading in the lives of young people. She also lectured at the University of Toronto's library school from 1913 to 1952.

One of Smith's most important—certainly her most far-reaching—contributions to librarianship is her classic text *The Unreluctant Years: A Critical Approach to Children's Literature* (1953, 1991). This was one of the first books to put forth a literary approach to the criticism of children's books. Along with Matthew Arnold, Smith believed in the identification of great books which could then serve as touchstones in the evaluation of other works. In 1962, she received the Clarence Day Award for this book which is "a distinctive production which has promoted a love of books and reading," the first time this award was given to a children's librarian or to a Canadian (quoted from the ALA press release on the Clarence Day Award to Smith in 1962).

Other lasting tributes to Smith's work are the Osborne Collection and the Lillian H. Smith Collection of children's books in the Toronto Public Library. Near the end of her years of service to children in that

library, Edgar Osborne gave his collection of early children's books to the library in recognition of the quality of children's services developed there under the leadership of Smith. Osborne's gift is a testimony to Smith's achievements. The Smith Collection includes children's books published since 1910 which both meet the high literary standards set forth in *The Unreluctant Years* and are also enjoyed by young readers. These two collections together form one of the primary resources for the study of children's literature in the northern hemisphere.

Smith was not content to influence children's librarianship only in Toronto, nor was she content to focus her attention solely in the children's field. She was active in professional associations in both Canada and the United States, serving on the Executive Board of the American Library Association from 1932 to 1936. She also chaired the American Library Association's Division of Libraries for Children and Young People (now ALSC) twice—in 1923-24 and again in 1942-43. Between these two terms of office, in 1939, she helped to form the Canadian Association of Children's Librarians, a forerunner of the Canadian Library Association. Her influence in other countries came about largely through the translation of *The Unreluctant Years* into many other languages and as a result of international visitors to Boys and Girls House. Through these means she made many friends who carried on her work throughout the world. Thus, she too is an exemplar of extending children's work beyond one's national reach.

Augusta Baker (1911-) began her career under Moore's reign at New York Public Library and in 1961 was appointed Coordinator of Children's Services there. In many ways she serves as a bridge between these early creators of children's library services and contemporary librarians. Baker is an extraordinary pioneer in work with African-American children, not only as a folklorist, storyteller, and writer but also as an administrator of children's services and as a leader in the American Library Association. She increased the children's collections at New York Public Library and made media, other than books, available to children. In 1971, she initiated *The World of Children's Literature*, a weekly radio series on WNYC; she also moderated a television program entitled *It's Fun to Read*. She later worked in South Carolina in the production of educational programs for television. She is a gifted and demanding storyteller, and her voice enchants both children and adults. She taught in library schools throughout her career, and in 1980, was appointed storyteller-in-residence at the University of South Carolina. Anyone who has heard her tell one of the Anansi stories will never forget that joyous experience. Augusta Baker was elected to Honorary Membership in the American Library Association.

One of Baker's primary missions was to bring the African-American cultural experience to all children but particularly to the children of New

York. She worked very closely with Arthur Schomberg and others in Harlem to establish the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection for children. The importance of this collection merits detailed research into the circumstances of its founding which, in turn, might assist others to establish similar collections for other ethnic groups.

There is no doubt that segregation, bias, and discrimination in libraries were obvious to Baker from an early age. She tells of her upbringing in Baltimore and her inaccessibility to the local branch of the Enoch Pratt Library:

[The library] didn't play a very important role for the black population because they had this one branch; it was called the Pitcher Street branch. I think it was the oldest branch, and remember, this was in the 1920s, but it was dark and it wasn't very attractive, and it was such an old, dingy building in a very run-down area of the city. I lived a number of blocks away in another section of the city, and my parents would not let me go through the Pennsylvania Avenue neighborhood to get to this section. On the other hand, within walking distance was a branch which I believe was called the North Avenue branch. It was a newer branch, but we were discouraged from going there because all Negroes were to go to this Pitcher Street branch, *the black branch*. And if you went to other branches of the library, you were certainly not made very welcome, and you could be met at the door and turned away. (cited in Braverman, 1979, pp. 226-27)

Undoubtedly, these early experiences increased her resolve to make the best possible library materials and services available to all children. One of the ways she did this was by the initiation of the publication of *The Black Experience for Children* (1971) (first published in 1963 as *Books About Negro Life for Children*). She also gently challenged other children's librarians to be proactive in inviting all young people into their libraries and to inform themselves about prejudice, human relations, and intercultural activities as steps toward library integration (Baker, 1955, pp. 40-41).

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AND PUBLISHING

With children's librarians' emphasis on getting good books to children, it was natural that they would form strong alliances with the newly appointed editors establishing children's departments in major publishing firms. The 1927-28 report from the ALA Children's Librarians Association's Committee on Production of Children's Books reveals some of the closeness with which publishers and librarians worked. Under "General Relations with Publishers" are included the decisions of publishers in response to what were apparently requests from the committee to re-print specific books along with notices of new editions being considered by publishers. This segment of the report closes with a promise from a publisher "to substitute a tougher grade of paper and to reinforce the binding of the book with an extra super" (Smith, 1929, p. 69). The children's librarians then report on nine questions (or requests) asked of publishers and the responses received ending with the statement:

The publishers deeply appreciate the devotion of children's librarians to the cause of children's literature, and desire to cooperate with them and forward in every way practicable and possible the suggestions librarians offer for the betterment of the spiritual and physical makeup of children's books. The cause which both groups have at heart is a common one. (Smith, 1929, p. 72)

In the early years of the twentieth century, this reciprocal relationship between librarianship and children's publishing, which continues today, was especially strong.

Over the years, perhaps starting in 1919 when children's book publishing in the United States "achieved an identity of its own" with the appointment of an editor "concentrating exclusively" on children's books in a large publishing house, the relationship between librarians working with children in public and school libraries and children's book editors and other members of their staff has been characterized by rapport, friendliness, close communication, and working together in many professional projects concerned with children's books and libraries. I suspect this bond may be unique in the annals of publishing. (Henne, 1976, p. 9)

Along with the growth of publishing for children, newly organized children's rooms in public libraries created a demand for books and for better means to evaluate and select those books. These demands were also fueled by an increased interest in reading, child psychology, and a more progressive education in the 1920s.

Earlier, advantaged, cultured women of the mid-nineteenth century channeled their creative and altruistic energies into writing and publishing for young people. At a time when few pursuits were open to them, they carved out a place for themselves and often worked together to further a shared vision. Immediately following the Civil War, there was both an expansion and a diversification of publishing for young people that was a foreshadowing of the continuing conflicts between literary and popular reading. Both *Little Women* and *Elsie Dinsmore* were published in 1867. The *Elsie* series and male counterparts by Oliver Optic and Horatio Alger appealed to young readers but were not highly respected by critics. In the sixth Caroline M. Hewins-Frederic G. Melcher Lecture in 1968 on Boston publishers of children's books, Helen Jones (1969) wrote:

Stories with credible realism, true-to-life stories, if you will, were published before *Little Women*, and incredible, unlikelike stories have been published since. Yet surely *Little Women* marked the turning point, the diminishing of the flood of moral, sentimental, or sensational tales by which children were swamped, and the increasing acceptance of credibility, whether in realism or fantasy, as an essential criterion of a good children's book. (p. 332)

Much of the best writing of the time, however, was published in children's periodicals. Although there were at least twenty magazines for children published in this country prior to 1827, it was the publication of *Youth's*

Companion in that year that marked the beginning of an era of outstanding periodicals for young people. While many of its predecessors were drearily didactic, *Youth's Companion's* first editor established a policy based on bringing happiness to children. Death, tobacco, and alcohol were forbidden topics in the clean happy lives portrayed in this longest-lived of any children's magazine in the United States. It survived from 1827 to 1929 when it merged with *American Boy* and continued publication as such until 1941. The primary reason for this success was undoubtedly the high quality of its contents contributed by these "best" writers of the time (of course, the enticement of attractive premiums for children who sold enough subscriptions was also a factor). Although the first editor and most of the best writers were male, some women—e.g., Harriet Beecher Stowe and Sarah Orne Jewitt—also were contributors.

The best known, most popular, and most influential of all children's magazines, however, was primarily the result of the work of one woman, Mary Mapes Dodge (1831-1905). She was the author of a number of stories, poems, articles, and books one of which, *Hans Brinker; or the Silver Skates* (1865), is considered a classic. Nonetheless, her greatest contribution to children's literature was as the editor of *St. Nicholas*. In 1872, she was asked by the Scribner company to plan a new magazine for children, and her design for that periodical, detailed in the July 1873 issue of *Scribners' Magazine*, stands as a model for editors and publishers. This magazine was designed for young people, but very often whole families looked forward to its arrival each month. At a time when there were few really good books for children, *St. Nicholas* was instrumental in developing young people's, and their parents', tastes for quality literature. Through her work at *St. Nicholas*, Dodge not only created a market for fine literature, she found, encouraged, and developed a number of talented authors and artists who were to be the foundation of the new field of children's publishing which followed. The first issue¹¹ of *The St. Nicholas Magazine: For Girls and Boys* was published in 1873, and at least half a dozen other children's periodicals were merged into *St. Nicholas* by 1874. From its beginning, the writings of women such as Louisa May Alcott, Frances Hodgson Burnett, Sarah Orne Jewitt, Christina Rossetti, Lucretia Hale, Susan Coolidge, Kate Douglas Wiggin, Helen Hunt Jackson, and Dorothy Canfield Fisher were highlighted. "The League of Young Contributors," established at the turn of the century, also encouraged female writers by publishing the youthful works of Edna St. Vincent Millay, Rachel Field, Anne L. Parrish, and Cornelia Otis Skinner, among others.

Louise Seaman Bechtel (1894-1985) was the first editor of a separate children's department in American publishing. In 1919, the Macmillan Company appointed Louise Seaman (later Mrs. Edwin Bechtel) to head this new department. She brought with her an understanding of children from three year's teaching experience and of publishing from a year's

work in various departments at Macmillan. The children's books Seaman produced for Macmillan from 1919 to 1934 set a standard for the many children's departments established during those years. While at Macmillan, her booklists combined titles from England, the Macmillan Children's Classics, the Little Library editions of lesser classics, and exciting new works by her friend and classmate Elizabeth Coatsworth as well as titles by Rachel Field, Dorothy Lathrop, Margery Bianco, Cornelia Meigs, and others. Little is known about how the choices were made to publish these specific works. We do know the editor had a marvelous appreciation of her authors and illustrators. About Rachel Field she wrote:

I wonder if I know why she was a very good writer for children. In the years when I knew her, she did not see much of children, she had few theories about them, she never tried things out on them. But her kind of acute attention to the visual details of the outer world was like that of an alert child. (Bechtel, 1942, p. 42)

In addition to discovering and encouraging authors of children's books, Seaman took an active interest in the graphics of book production, demanding the highest quality in both illustration and book design. This may have been the beginning of what later characterized children's book publishing in the United States, namely, a deep concern for graphics and book design. This same sense of design became a trademark of the catalogs she produced as children's book editor because she saw these catalogs as opportunities to introduce good books to others. The tenth anniversary catalog from Macmillan's children's department began with a brief retrospective on children's publishing, including the following statement which might be humorous if not for the power engendered from such beliefs.

We do not mean to depreciate or minimize the splendid publishing of books which men have done but we do believe that men (with few exceptions) have been baffled and groping where children's books are concerned and that they have not had the vision to shape their organization so that the right people have had the necessary time for these books. There seems every natural reason why women, properly qualified, should be particularly successful in the selection of children's books to publish and their publishing. When it comes to deciding upon the format of a book, it is more like dressing a little girl than anything else. One chooses every detail of her wardrobe in harmony with herself. So with a book, its size, type, style of printing, cover material and color of cover, book paper and jacket, manner of illustration—all should be selected to express the book itself. To this delightful task women would seem to bring particular interest and ability. (Seaman, 1928, p. 5)

Although she wrote two of her own children's books, *Brave Bantam* (1946) illustrated by Helen Sewell and *Mr. Peck's Pets* (1947) illustrated by Berta and Elmer Hader, which received generally favorable reviews,

Bechtel was quoted as saying that "her *best books* are the bound copies of her Macmillan Children's Book Catalog" (cited in Haviland, 1969, p. 17). During her years at Macmillan, she was the "story lady" on the first weekly radio program devoted to children's books and traveled the country speaking to different groups and selling her books. Was this the beginning of a pattern of marketing that continues today? In the tenth annual Bowker Lecture in 1946, Bechtel set forth a series of questions for book publishers. She indicated that these questions addressed the same problems as at the close of 1929 and, one might add, at the end of 1995.

1. Are you really working, outside of libraries, to see that the good book reaches its widest audience?
2. Are you neglecting the real writer, the good writer, in favor of the stunt book? Do you lose sight of the author in making up the package?
3. Do you expect the good book to pay for itself in one year? Or do you realize that only the good book will live, and make you money for many years?
4. Have you considered the average quality of your list and of the total new titles for 1945? Do you think it reached an all-time low, since 1920, or was there a worse year?
5. How many books have you published recently cut to a pattern because you knew the pattern would sell? This happens to career books, biographies, picture books, and, alas, to the so-called "classics." (1946, pp. 43-44)

In the same paper, Bechtel asks editors the following key questions:

1. Is there any reason why they [children's book editors] should all be women? Would it not be better for the children if more were men?
2. Do you hesitate to put a man in this department because you would have to pay him more and let him be a director of your firm? (1946, p. 44)

These two questions reveal more than they ask. The concept of pay equity seems to have been alien to Bechtel's thinking. She placed more significance on getting men in editorial positions than on fighting for equal treatment. Did she place what was "better for children" above what was better for her and other women in children's publishing?

Before starting her second career, following May Lamberton Becker as children's book reviewer for the *New York Herald Tribune Book Review*, a position she held from 1949 to 1956, Bechtel moved to rural New York where she continued her interest in books by speaking, teaching, writing, reviewing, and serving as a trustee of the local library. She was associate editor of *Horn Book* from 1939 to 1957 when she was given the title of director. *Horn Book* devoted an issue to Bechtel's achievements in August 1928. On the fiftieth anniversary of the Macmillan Children's Book Department, a collection of Bechtel's papers was brought together in *Books*

in Search of Children (1969) compiled and edited by Virginia Haviland, who in 1963 became the first specialist in children's literature at the Library of Congress.

May Masee (1883-1966) worked for five years in the children's room of the Buffalo Public Library where she listened carefully to children's responses to books. She possessed the wonderful ability to talk about a book so that most listeners, whether adult or child, would immediately want to read it. Several of these women shared this gift. Masee left Buffalo to go to Chicago and edit the *ALA Booklist*. During this time she was noted for bringing a selection of books to bookstores to show and discuss, thus establishing connections with the book-selling community. She made trips to New York to discuss forthcoming books with publishers, and finally, in 1922, she was asked to create a department for boys and girls at Doubleday, Page and Company. This department was originally called "juvenile," a term Masee despised and soon changed to "junior books." Bechtel, although a rival at Macmillan, valued her friendship with Masee and wrote of the qualities which characterized the lists she published, "originality, balance of interest, humor, good taste, daring in production and book patterns" (cited in Vining, 1979, p. vi).

Maud and Miska Petersham illustrated *Poppy Seed Cakes* by Margery Clark (1924), one of the first books she edited, but it was the beautiful *ABC Book* by Charles B. Falls (1923) that characterized her brilliant decisions about books and may have been the beginning of a new era of color printing in children's books in America. In 1932, Masee left Doubleday and was quickly snatched up by Viking Press. Her office was personally designed by her friend Eric Gugler. Around the top of the walls was carved her motto: *Ne quid nimium, etiam moderatio* (Nothing too much, not even moderation). Her first catalog for Viking stated the philosophy of the new junior book department:

We believe that when children's books reflect the best influences from all the peoples who make this country what it is, they will be most truly American books. We hope to publish such books. We want them to be clearminded and beautiful, books that will make young Americans think and feel more vividly, make them more aware of the world around them and more at home in the world within, more able to give something to their generation and thoroughly to enjoy the giving. (cited in Vining, 1979, p. ix)

In the next twenty-five years, Masee published many wonderful books, including four that won the Caldecott Medal and nine that received the Newbery Medal. The July-August 1936 issue of *Horn Book* was devoted to her and her work.

Martin Glick, a book designer, spoke of her ability in sensing the rightness of a book and of encouraging every artist/author to give the best to each creative effort. Masee was the first woman member of the

American Institute of Graphic Arts and in 1959 was awarded the gold medal by that institute, the first woman to be so honored. She left many legacies, but her willingness to take a risk on quality was the most notable. She published books for and about African-American children and her *The Story of a Baby* by Marie Hall Ets (1939) was considered quite brave (Ets explains the development of a human embryo from month to month, birth through the first months of life in a large picture book). Among the great writers and illustrators she published were Munro Leaf, Robert Lawson, Ann Nolan Clark, Rumer Godden, Howard Pease, Rachel Field, Robert McCloskey, Kate Seredy, Ludwig Bemelmans, Don Freeman, William Pene DuBois, Elizabeth Gray Vining, Charles Joseph Finger, Astrid Lindgren, Maud and Miska Petersham, and Ingri and Edgar d'Aulaire.

When Sayers (1936) was asked "What does an editor do?" she replied:

I think of May Masee, and I despair of my ability to describe what it is she does, for to the complex task of the ordinary editor she brings, in addition, a unique, critical mind, and a quick response to any bit of originality, or color, or drama. She not only responds to creative work when it is completed, but she senses the hidden possibilities in the artists and writers themselves. She goes about, like the water diviner with a hazel stick, touching first one, then another, saying: "Here is the place from which the spring will surge." And like as not, the book is written and the picture drawn, the result of her divining power. (p. 228)

Bechtel and Masee may be among the best known editors, but they are also representative of many other women who established children's books as a significant aspect of American publishing. These women and those who followed them were able to survive in the male-dominated world of publishing. In fact, they created children's departments that were often the major contributors of the monies earned by their companies. They possessed an enormous business acumen and managed to meet financial expectations while securing for children a substantive body of quality literature. Further research into the life and work of other editors is sorely needed. It is hoped that research will focus on how these women built a vital component of publishing while maintaining their integrity and their belief in excellence in literature for children and on their relationships with children's librarians.

Bertha L. Gunterman, formerly a librarian in Louisville and Los Angeles, was placed in charge of the new editorial department for children's books of Longmans, Green in 1925. She established a prize contest for the best manuscript for a children's book. The second winner was *Waterless Mountain* (Armer, 1931), the Newbery Medal winner for 1932. She was willing to stand up for her principles; defending keeping a title in print and, when challenged, simply responded to the administration that:

"It should have a better grade of paper and more advertising" (Bertha Gunterman, Editor. . ., 1962, p. 85). In 1926, Virginia Kirkus became children's book editor at Harper. She was followed by Louise Raymond in the 1930s and Ursula Nordstrom in 1941. In December 1928, Knopf announced the appointment of Marion Fiery as children's book editor. Fiery was later editor at Putnam. In 1926, Lucile Gulliver was appointed head of the children's department of Little Brown. When she left in 1933, in the midst of the Depression, children's books again became part of the general trade department where they remained until 1950 when a children's department was reestablished under the leadership of Helen Jones. Jones was among those editors who looked primarily at child need and interest saying: "I am inclined to think there has been just a little too much emphasis on the beautiful, literary book at the expense of those closer to the child's interests and abilities" (Fuller, 1955, p. 1806).

A number of children's editors have also been very successful authors of children's books. Among them were Helen Dean Fish, editor at Frederick A. Stokes, and Alice Dalgliesh, a prolific author for youth who became children's editor at Scribner's in 1934, a position which she held for twenty-six years. She also published among the earliest of science fiction with Robert Heinlein's books for children. In 1969, Sophy Silverberg and John Donovan talked with Dalgliesh about publishing during the Depression years. She responded as follows:

Those of us who were editors as the Depression receded may remember thinking twice before taking a book, but having faith that if it was a good book it would sell. I have a few sad memories, as others must have, of anxious, would-be authors and artists coming in with a pathetic little manuscript—a last hope—so that, as one of them told me, "I can eat." I asked her to put her address on the manuscript. "Park Bench" "The Squirrels, Central Park," she said. (1969, p. 706)

One of the most talented women in children's publishing, both as author and editor, is Charlotte Zolotow (1915-). Zolotow went to Harper & Row as an editor in 1938 and continues to this day to work as publisher emerita and editorial advisor for Harper. During these years, she wrote more than sixty books which delightfully capture the spirit and the language of young children. She also edited many award-winning books by others and, even after her official retirement, seeks out and encourages talented new authors for children and young adults.

Until 1935, when Holiday House, the first American publishing company dedicated solely to children's books was created under the leadership of Vernon Ives, Ted Johnson, and Helen Gentry, the work of creating children's books was firmly in the hands of women. These women left a definite mark on the books they published. As Dalgliesh wrote as editor of Books for Boys and Girls in *Parents' Magazine*, prior to her own appointment as children's book editor:

When you are choosing a book look to see who publishes it. The name of the publisher should mean something quite definite to those who select books for children. A number of publishing houses have a special editor of children's books whose business it is, in addition to supervising bookmaking, to find out the things in which present-day children are interested. There is real personality behind the books that are published by reliable houses, and the names of certain publishers have come to stand for definite things. We expect attractive colorful books from Miss Massee of Doubleday Doran. Miss Seaman of the Macmillan Company has made a special contribution in her books which present interesting phases of modern life in a dramatic and artistic manner. One of the interests of Miss Kirkus of Harper and Brothers is publishing classics in a form that will make them attractive to the boys and girls of today. Other beautiful editions of classics come from publishing houses such as Little Brown and Company, Houghton Mifflin, Scribners, and Lippincott's. And so it goes with publishers too numerous to mention. (cited in Lynch, 1930, p. 23)

The recognition of the importance of children's reading by publishers resulted in the establishment of Book Week by the National Association of Book Publishers (NABP) in 1919, the same year that the first children's book editor was appointed. In 1938, when NABP went out of existence, Frederic Melcher provided space at the Bowker company for a Book Week committee, and children's book editors took on the responsibilities associated with the celebration of this week each year. Meeting for this purpose, these editors soon found that they had many common concerns, and in 1943 they formed the Association of Children's Book Editors and elected Alice Dalglish their first president. Helen Dean Fish, the 1946 president of the association, reported that: "We got along so well that male leaders in the book business looked on us with wonder as a group of women in competitive jobs who could actually trust each other and work together successfully!" (1946, p. 545).

The Children's Book Council (CBC) was established by this group in 1944 to work on the increasing number of projects related to Book Week, and the following year CBC was expanded and a half-time executive secretary was hired. CBC is still the organization which brings children's editors and publishers together, and it still works closely with children's librarians through the joint ALA/CBC Committee. As Helen Dean Fish (1946) said, echoing the cooperative spirit of earlier librarians and publishers: "And indeed, who will deny that the children's book editors and the children's librarians, in their aims and ideals, are one?" (p. 546).

CONCLUSION

Although the lives of these women who provided the foundations for the vast array of library materials and services currently available to young people span more than a century and a half, there are numerous connec-

tions between and among them. Jane Anne Hannigan (1994) wrote about these kinds of connections from a feminist standpoint: "Research tells us that women seek connections and tend to value situational opportunities. Many, but not all, women prefer the relational or webbing approach rather than the linear approach to dealing with information and ideas" (p. 305).

Many of these women actually worked together in service to youth, either as librarian or publisher, committed to providing the best possible literature for children, as did Moore and Bechtel, or as colleagues within their respective professions, often in a mentor relationship. Sadly, however, we have not done enough to keep the names and the legacies of our foremothers alive. Many other pioneers of youth services were establishing collections and programs for children and young people during the same years. For some of them, it was the physical location in which they worked, away from the Eastern publishing centers or far from a major library, that prohibited them from joining the network of women represented here.

There is a special need to study the work of African-American and other groups outside of the privileged white classes now emphasized in our history and in this article. How did women, such as Augusta Baker, enter library service when libraries were unwelcoming to them during their youth? At least some of Baker's contributions are acknowledged, but more substantial research into her life and work is certainly merited, and we have not even begun to investigate the work of other minority women in librarianship and publishing. If female professionals serving young people already felt the double discrimination against women and children, what was it like for those who also experienced racial or class discrimination? Who were the women who overcame all of these obstacles to make a place for themselves in our professional history? What did they accomplish and how was their work received by others? Clearly, the knowledge of our past has many gaps; only when we include the stories, both formal and informal, of all those who contributed will our history be complete (the Association for Library Service to Children has established a task force for the preservation of ALSC history).

More than the actual concurrence of events, however, is a concurrence of spirit among these women. They created specializations in librarianship and in publishing that have changed the face of library services every bit as much as has the development of library technologies. In spite of the "womanly virtues" that got these early leaders their jobs, they exhibited commitment and quiet determination in efforts to break through entrenched male bastions and thus acquired staff, space, money, and materials for the disenfranchised populations of young people. They were, as we all are, in some ways victims of their times, but they refused to be victimized or to allow young people to suffer from prevailing views of

society in general and of librarianship in particular. They had a vision of what might be a sense of mission, the strength of character, and the qualities of leadership to make those visions realities. Passet (1994) notes: "The most successful library organizers forged a collaboration with club women, both at the local and state levels, and this powerful feminine alliance lobbied successfully for the passage of library legislation in several western states" (p. 153).

Early children's librarians went beyond the doors of their own libraries to convince others of the rightness of their mission, whether through active involvement in professional associations, professional writing, or teaching. They seem to have had a respect for, and a commitment to, library education as lecturers in professional schools as well as through the development of in-service education programs. Children's publishers also reached out to others who would confirm the importance of quality literature in the lives of children. Noting the similarity of these women to those described by Susan Armitage (1987), one wonders at the gulf between the official story and the informal story:

The women I have found in my historical research were never that passive. They played an active role in building their communities. They selected community projects, lobbied for them, and raised money for them. But when the moment of formal organization came, the women stepped back. Men were elected as officials and were often given credit for the entire enterprise. The official story and the informal story are not the same. (p. 13)

What is recorded here is a portion of the official story; my comments and questions may be the beginning of the telling of the informal story. In a study of female hospital workers, Patricia Sexton (1982) wrote:

generalizations can be misleading, inadequate, and lacking in any flesh and blood reality, they can also fail to take account of the astonishing variations among women and the work they do. Women have not one but many voices. . . . Both the themes and the variations, the individual and the collective voices need to be heard. (p. 4)

This article explores the collective voices of librarians and publishers rather than any one individual voice. It remains for additional research to record individual voices and thus contribute to the continuance of our professional history.

Both the contributions and the concerns of these early leaders remain with us today. Their social consciousness and the interest in Americanization, typical of the time, later evolved into an emphasis on identifying and preserving the materials and values of the various subcultures in our society through collections and a broad range of programs. Chief among those programs is storytelling, still probably the best way to bring children and books together. Although traditional storytelling, as practiced by Shedlock, Moore, and Baker, was almost lost among reading aloud,

flannel board stories, puppet shows, and the like, there has been a resurgence of interest in the traditional art of storytelling among librarians. The belief in the importance of collection development and an emphasis on the best books for young people led to the kind of booklists and standardized catalogs used for selection today. And the battles between the best books and popular literature that pitted the classics against dime novels also continue today. The unwillingness to accept series books, and to some extent realistic fiction, was unfortunate. Perhaps it was this absolutist standpoint insisting on only the finest literature that contributed to later criticism of sentimentalism and even sentimentality.

One of the things that becomes clear in reexamining this history is that it was the relationship between child and book that held preeminence over the library per se, and it was this emphasis on children's literature that fostered the strong relationship with the publishing community. In fact, the first children's libraries in the United States were not physical spaces at all but merely collections of books. The women who were leaders of the children's library movement also exemplified this position by their emphasis on reading lists as a means of getting the best possible books to young people. The first physical spaces set aside for children in public libraries were just that—"set aside" in alcoves, basements, or other spaces with cut-down adult furniture far enough away from the rest of the library so as not to disturb adult users. As beautifully designed children's rooms or children's libraries came into being, they were seen as entrees into a magical storybook world or a fairyland representative of the books they contained.

This concern for libraries as metaphoric homes both for real children and for the characters of outstanding literary works seems somewhat quaint today. In 1914, Clara Whitehill Hunt (1914) wrote of the new children's branch opened in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn as follows:

On the exterior of the building are carvings, of Alice's rabbit, of King Arthur's sword in the anvil, of Mercury's staff, of Aesop's crow and other designs suggesting famous tales upon the shelves within. As the children enter the building they will find in the door handle a jolly little face grinning up at them. On the arms of the specially designed oak settles are delightful little rabbits' heads. The Rookwood fireplace tiles picture a castle beyond a forest. (p. 762)

From those beginnings we have come to beautifully designed and equipped spaces, such as the Dallas Children's Center, which are the show-cases of modern public libraries. Let us not forget, however, that many young adult librarians or, in their absence, those who truly care and feel responsible for young adult services, are still fighting so that this group of library users may have a room of their own.

Is it possible that an overemphasis on books and quality or classic literature by these early cultured women led to a backlash as the

professionalization of librarianship opened the field to less advantaged women who improved their lives by moving into one of the few female professions? Simultaneously, the increased numbers of children's books being published, the acceptance of popular literature, and a more indulgent approach to childrearing shifted the focus from what young people ought to read to what they could and would read.¹² This shift may also have been responsible, at least in part, for that crucial turning point in the early 1970s when management theory was emphasized in both the education and practice of children's librarians. More recently, the omnipresence of technology and multimedia materials has again shifted our attention to new ways of thinking about what and how all these media communicate to children and how librarians can and should help them sift through, sort out, and make their own meanings from the constant bombardment of stimuli. Of course, in this new mass communication multimedia environment, library professionals are once again in the position of having to justify children's services in a world in which support for libraries is dwindling.

In the female-dominated professions discussed in this article, it is natural to question the influence of feminist standpoints in librarianship and publishing. An article on "Women in Publishing" by Anne Geracimos (1974) drew a testy response from Dorothy Briley, then vice-president and editor-in-chief of Books for Young Readers of the J. B. Lippincott Company. Although Elizabeth Gordon, associate editor, Harper & Row Junior Books, was among the eight women interviewed for the article, Briley (1974) writes that once again a discussion of women in publishing "either explicitly or implicitly exclude[d] juvenile trade books from the mainstream of publishing" (pp. 7-9). She indicates that editors-in-chief of children's books were not counted as executive heads and asks why. In doing so, she raises a question that has persisted over time for female professionals who serve children—"whether the discrimination is against women or children or a mixture of both" (p. 9).

During the development of library programs for youth in the early part of the twentieth century, Freud and Piaget were changing the way we think about the children those libraries were attempting to serve.

As Freud and Piaget call our attention to the differences in children's feelings and thought, enabling us to respond to children with greater care and respect, so a recognition of the differences in women's experience and understanding expands our vision of maturity and points to the contextual nature of developmental truths. (Gilligan, 1982, p. 174)

Gilligan (1982) goes on to speak of women's experience and the truth of an ethic of care that we have seen epitomized by these pioneer leaders of children's library services.

As we have listened for centuries to the voices of men and the theories of development that their experience informs, so we have come more recently to notice not only the silence of women but the difficulty in hearing what they say when they speak. Yet in the different voice of women lies the truth of an ethic of care, the tie between relationship and responsibility, and the origins of aggression in the failure of connection. (p. 173)

In retrospect, these women seem to have been less dependent upon, and less involved in, the mainstreams of librarianship and publishing. Perhaps this distancing was both a blessing and a curse. It was the ability to be off on their own, doing their own thing, that enabled these dedicated, strong-willed, and mission-driven women to found children's services and thus change the face of American librarianship and children's publishing. That very success, however, led to increased numbers, a dispersal of leadership, and the breakdown of the small but strong community that held them together and gave them strength. New children's specialists, building on the accomplishments of their foremothers but lacking their unity, saw gaining respect in the larger professional communities as the path to success. Respect within was not easily achieved, however, and the competition for limited resources and power often further weakened the positions of youth professionals.

Nonetheless, that sense of connection so evident among the women discussed here is just the beginning of an unbroken circle of caring obvious even now in children's and young adult librarianship in this country. New library leaders are speaking loudly and clearly, if in a different voice, and are continuing to serve all the children of our society. They are standard bearers not only for youth services but are exercising their sense of responsibility and caring through library administration, literacy programs, and the development of technological systems that include rather than exclude even the most disenfranchised members of our society. Those of us working today owe a great debt to our historical counterparts whose lives and contributions are reported here. It should be clear, however, that while their successes were many, they were accomplished in spite of both public and more subtle discrimination against them and their ideas, both within and without the institutions in which they worked. That they succeeded at all is admirable; that they achieved such outstanding success is truly awe inspiring.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to express her gratitude to Suzanne Hildenbrand for her critical reading of an earlier version of this paper and to Jane Anne Hannigan whose continued dialogue about feminism and about libraries informs my work.

NOTES

¹ George Bobinski, in his study of Carnegie libraries, writes: "By 1898, when Carnegie began his full-scale programs of giving libraries to communities, the public library was

- already an established, although young and struggling, institution" (p. 4). The concept of children's library rooms is not developed here, but there is some indication that the importance of this aspect of public library buildings was influential.
- 2 Dee Garrison has argued that these women were weak "tender technicians" but Suzanne Hildenbrand, Laurel Grotzinger, and others argue from a different standpoint. My own research supports the latter position.
 - 3 Mary S. Cutler, at a May 1892 meeting of ALA, reported: "Women rarely receive the same pay for the same work as men" (p. 90). A comparable attitude is documented for education by Phyllis Stock as follows: "As local education costs rose in the 1870s and 1880s committees that had previously preferred male teachers discovered that women, who earned about 60% of male salaries at best, were appropriate teachers of children. They were gentler, more patient, tender and motherly than men. Teaching was now recognized as women's natural profession" (p. 189).
 - 4 An earlier and virtually identical statement by Power appeared in the 1929 American Library Association's *Children's Library Yearbook*, p. 15.
 - 5 *The New Jersey Star Ledger* for October 29, 1995, reports the completion of a \$10.4 million renovation of the Sarah Byrd Askew Library at William Paterson College in Wayne, NJ. It bears the name of the founder of the New Jersey Library Commission.
 - 6 She reports: "There is one ruse we used that I am proud of. To each child was dictated a little paragraph showing how little the library would cost the small property owners. They were asked to take it home and show it to father and mother. It is a well known fact that whatever a child brings home from school to show, you've got to look at before you can live in peace; so these papers were read" (p. 354).
 - 7 James Fraser (1978) comments on our later carelessness in handling these primary resources: "Public libraries in the major cities with a long history of foreign-language publishing have as well all but ignored their role as preservers of locally-produced juvenile books, periodicals, and related materials. Notable exceptions are the Cleveland Public Library, the Research Division of the New York Public Library, and the Central Children's Room of the New York Public Library in recent years. To be sure, scattered items exist in many of the reference collections of the children's rooms in the large public libraries, but a systematic plan to have materials once owned for serving language minorities transferred to the local imprint collection or some other appropriate division is rare indeed" (p. 81).
 - 8 It is also useful to read Mary E. S. Root (1946, p. 48) for her account of the "thrill" of using the Pawtucket Public Library as a child.
 - 9 There had been work for children at the Cleveland Public Library from about 1888 as reported by Linda Eastman (1898, pp. 142-44).
 - 10 The contents of this book were first published separately under the titles, *Roads to Childhood* in 1920, *New Roads to Childhood* in 1923, and *Cross Roads to Childhood* in 1926.
 - 11 Although commonly referred to as *St. Nicholas* magazine, the original title is *St. Nicholas: For Girls and Boys*; the title page of the first bound edition also indicates "Scribner's Illustrated Magazine" and on the same title page "conducted by Mary Mapes Dodge," clearly establishing her role in this publication.
 - 12 Helen Jones, in commenting on early children's publishing in Boston, writes: "Boston publishers of the 1860s multiplied children's books industriously. No less than twenty of them were busily bringing out new books that, characteristically though with notable exceptions, lagged slightly behind changing public tastes. There was a continuing profusion of terribly written-down tales for 'the little ones' and moral, vocational, or religious tracts disguised as fiction for the bigger ones. Then in the middle of the decade the war stories began to appear, thick with one-sided patriotism, yet perhaps heralding the first great breakthrough of realism in children's books. Then, as now, an occasional publisher, dared to lead rather than follow" (pp. 20-21). It would be interesting to compare this trend to children's publishing a century later as the 1960s also saw increased numbers of books published and a move toward realistic fiction.

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