
A Feminist Analysis of the Voices for Advocacy in Young Adult Services

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ABSTRACT

THIS ARTICLE IS A STUDY OF SIX WOMEN and their contributions to young adult services in public libraries. The feminist perspective employed focuses on the voices of these women as advocates for young people.

INTRODUCTION

Although it is clear that, in the late nineteenth century, public library service to "children" really referred to service to those we would now call "young adults," over time, the emphasis altered and the focus shifted to young children.¹ Consequently, young adults received less and less attention in public libraries. There were, however, women in libraries who consistently supported service to this age group, some seeing it as a part of their mission for the development of good citizens with moral consciences. These were women who spoke out, argued, demonstrated, and led the professional community in the recognition of young adults as a valid and important audience for public library service. Although children's librarians have consistently emphasized the provision of quality literature for children, it will be argued here that young adult librarians gradually diverged from this emphasis on appropriate literature to focus on young adults as persons with identifiable personal and social needs to which the public library could and should respond.

This article focuses on the contributions of some of the key women responsible for the development of young adult services in public libraries. It will offer proof of women's leadership of this development and demonstrate, through the words and lives of particular women, the

inspiration they brought to bear on the profession of librarianship. It is important to note, however, that their work must be seen against the backdrop of a number of other developments that converged in mid-twentieth-century America. Psychological studies of adolescents, a new field of young adult literature, and the combination of sociological issues and new forms of technology, communication, and mass media changed both young people themselves and the ways others perceived them.

MALE PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERPRETATIONS OF ADOLESCENCE

It was during the mid-twentieth century that new interpretations of Freudian research on adolescence emerged and dominated our understanding of young people. The work of Eric Erikson (1968), Anna Freud (1958), and Peter Blos (1962, 1967), rooted in concepts identified by Sigmund Freud, enunciated a male narrative of adolescent development. This narrative informed our perceptions of young people and the development of their identity, separation, and individualization. As a result of this work, adults came to expect rebelliousness from this newly identified group. This expectation, along with their size and the activity and noise levels emanating from groups of young adults, led to attitudes of antagonism and fearfulness from many adults, including library personnel.

INFLUENCES OF TECHNOLOGY, COMMUNICATIONS, AND THE MASS MEDIA

Simultaneously, technology, communications, and the mass media opened the world to young people in new ways. Those who had been confined by home, family, and community expectations were now exposed to alternative lifestyles, disillusionment, and failed or corrupt authority figures through the mass media. Through these media also, young adults had access to an expanded youth culture and to role models who encouraged defiance rather than conformance to adult expectations. New technological and communications systems also brought the social and sexual revolutions of the 1960s into the homes and the lives of young people everywhere. This increased awareness, often without a depth of understanding, along with the threat of an unwanted war, encouraged antagonistic behavior—or at least the outward symbols of that rebellion. It also tempered the typical adolescent feelings of invincibility with a sense of hopelessness, resulting in behavior that almost courted death rather than challenging it. That courting of death unfortunately became a reality for too many young people as the sexual revolution was followed by the AIDS epidemic.

All of these societal changes broke down traditional authority systems and gave young people greater independence, mobility, market power, and control over their own lives. They also increased that divisiveness between young adults and adult institutions and authority. Thus, many public libraries backed away from their responsibilities for young adult services, and new library leaders with a stronger voice for youth advocacy emerged.

CREATION OF YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

It is important to keep in mind the evolution of the adolescent novel in this country and how this new body of literature provided additional opportunities for these women librarians to suggest relevant titles that specifically met adolescent needs and interests. Mary Lystad (1980) describes this evolution as follows:

Over a 200-year period, then, there have been definite changes in characterizations of and for adolescents. In the earliest period, until about 1850, the adolescent was seen as a person with one overriding duty: to cast off evil ways and engage in that religious and social activity which would merit him eternal life. The youth was born not to live but to die, and it was important to die in a befitting manner. After 1850, the adolescent was encouraged to expand his horizons and to think not only about life after death but also about life after childhood. Ways of achieving in the world, especially for boys, were highlighted, and the adolescent was urged to think seriously about and to plan for adult roles, especially as they related to work.

In the books of the twentieth century there has been considerably less stress on future roles, either in this life or beyond. Rather, the adolescent's present feelings and values are explored. Negative feelings are seen as sometimes appropriate and certainly normal. Values are seen as relative rather than absolute. And the world presented offers choice—choice of lifestyle, career, family structure, artistic expression. Also at this time, adolescence as a legitimate growth period is acknowledged. Youth are no longer treated as potential celestial bodies, or as little adults, but as persons in transition from childhood to adulthood, with a need for adventure, for love, and for self-discovery. (pp. 32-33)

Although there were dime novels and formula series fiction popular with young adults in the second half of the nineteenth century, it was not until the 1940s that the young adult novel, as we know it today, was born. Thus, the history of this literature develops parallel to the history of public library service to young adults. Maureen Daly's *Seventeenth Summer* (1942) has been considered the first modern realistic female coming-of-age novel. Another writer popular in the 1940s was John R. Tunis whose first book, *The Iron Duke*, is now recognized as the beginning of the modern sports story. High school romances by Betty Cavanna, Rosamond Du Jardin, and Anne Emory were white, middle-class, and pure, but the characters were at least somewhat more realistic than earlier series books.

It was during the 1960s, however, that a new realism emerged in young adult literature with characters, topics, and language previously absent now included. In fact, S. E. Hinton's *The Outsiders* (1967) was the first book marketed as a young adult, rather than as a children's or a general interest, novel. This new publisher's category and corresponding marketing strategy was a recognition of something young adult librarians had long known, that is, that young adults have a need and a desire for books unrelated to school curricula. These books were as likely to be purchased by individuals as by libraries.

In the 1980s, educational reformers rejected earlier reforms that had given more authority to individual learners, provided options, and emphasized process rather than just product. New studies, albeit based on traditional content and instruction, exposed what their authors considered the failures of newer options in schooling and called for a return to a general educational excellence rather than a focus on individual needs. In literature, this was interpreted as a move back to the classics and away from young adult books. Publishing mergers, the Thor Power Tool (1979) decision (which forced publishers to reduce their inventories and allowed many books to go out of print) (in Loe, 1986), along with the end of federal funding for school library materials, also marked a reduction of quality literature for young adults.

In recognition of the increased purchasing power of young adults and the corresponding decrease of federal funding for school library purchases, publishers concentrated on books that would sell directly to the intended audience rather than to those who select materials for them. The teenage "problem novel" and, more recently, formula fiction, new series, media tie-ins, horror, and other fast reads predominated as a result. Although many of these books are not of the highest literary quality, fine literature does exist within the genre of the problem novel, and innovative new literary works for young adults continue to be published.

A FEMINIST VIEW OF ADOLESCENT PSYCHOLOGY

Carol Gilligan (1981) was the first to strike out in a new direction in examining adolescence, speaking in a different voice and establishing an alternative feminist view of adolescent development that acknowledged a defining of self in relationship/connection, not in separation (pp. 38-39). Although her work was published in the early 1980s and has received a great deal of attention in the professional literature, it has not as yet had a major influence on our perceptions of young adults, either in the literature or the library services created for them. Male patriarchal views prevail, and a new wave of political, social, and educational conservatism again is having both positive and negative results for young adults. In discussing Sara Ruddick's maternal thinking concepts as well as Gilligan's ethics of care, in a previous paper, this author wrote:

Gilligan's understanding of gender differences, as revealed in her modifications of Kohlberg's work on moral development, has become part of the mainstream study of child and adolescent development theories. Unfortunately, however, this theory and the ethics of care it represents is often just studied without any real effort to translate it into practice. (Hannigan, 1994, p. 303)

It remains for young adult librarians to examine such theories and consider ways to make them work in service to young adults. Adults must help young adults retain the positive benefits gained from the last three and a half, often tumultuous, decades and build on those gains as they create a new world for themselves and for us all. Young adult advocates in public libraries are more essential than ever in helping them attain this goal.

PUBLIC LIBRARY PLANS FOR TEENAGERS

In the early years of library service to young adults, the response to their needs was enacted primarily through cooperation with schools and support of instructional needs in the curriculum. Gradually, youth librarians recognized the importance of access to the public library for young people for entertainment and for social encounters as well as for information. During World War II, a postwar planning committee, chaired by Carleton Joeckel, worked on a multifaceted approach to public library service which resulted in a series of general and specific publications. The final stage for an overall postwar program for the American public library resulted in the development of *A National Plan for Public Library Service* published by the American Library Association (1948a). Simultaneously, a powerful group of professionals, all of whom were women, chaired by Mabel Williams, came together to work on *The Public Library Plans for the Teen Age* also published by ALA (1948b). In this proposed plan, a call for reading guidance in an aggressive and carefully studied fashion was issued:

Youth's need for reading guidance is one of the major reasons for the establishment of special service for young people. Reading guidance calls for the active process of assisting the individual to choose first, the materials that are keyed to his needs and interests, and second, those that will open up new interests (p. 5).

In many respects this document set forth a preliminary set of guidelines or standards² for service to young people that helped to form quality service in subsequent years.³ It identified group activities such as career programs, writing groups, drama groups, and hobby groups as desirable. "Part of the library's function is to relate special interests and activities to books and to give young people a chance to meet other young people and adults with like interests" (p. 6). The authors of this plan included a statement of personal traits of the youth librarian that might well be emulated by youth specialists today:

The young people's librarian must first of all be able to establish friendly relations with the teen age. Young people should feel free to approach her⁴ voluntarily, since the role of the adult in relation to the adolescent is that of a consultant rather than a leader. A sense of humor is an aid to this approach. She must have enough understanding of adolescent psychology to be able to give advice and guidance when the opportunity arises.

Although a specialist in work with the teen age, the young people's librarian should be broad enough in her concepts of library service to win the support of both the children's librarian and the adult staff. She must be genuinely interested in world affairs and social problems and approach them with an open mind.

Book knowledge and a love of reading are essential, and in addition she must be able to present books and library services dynamically to other youth agencies. The young people's librarian should know how to relate the varied and changing interests of the teen age to books and other library resources. Finally, she must be constantly aware of her own obligation in making the young person a good adult reader of tomorrow. (ALA, 1948b, p. 18)

Reading the above statement, it is obvious that these women understood their mission and could articulate the dimensions of their work and the characteristics of the personnel they wanted to see in library service to youth.

ADVOCACY AS A DRIVING FORCE

In studying the history of young adult services, one detects a shining thread of advocacy in service to this audience. As women librarians in leadership positions recognized a need to justify service for young adults, advocacy became a consistent pattern in youth services, although the specifics of that advocacy have varied over time. Earlier, young adult advocates accepted the prominence of literature, perhaps assuming that they knew what teenagers wanted and needed. Later there was a greater effort to listen to the voices of young people as they articulated their own interests and needs.⁵ In December 1978, Dorothy Broderick presented a rationale for adult involvement in youth advocacy:

The reason adults have to be involved in youth advocacy is not because we do not trust the young people to be eloquent in defense of their own needs; but the hard fact of life is that young people are politically disenfranchised. Lacking political power, they need adult allies who do have political power and who are willing to use it on behalf of youth. Young people know better than any adult, however wise, what their needs are. Helping them obtain the right to act upon their self-knowledge of needs is what it is all about. (Broderick, 1978, p. 20)

In addition, in the second half of this century, strong support for principles of intellectual freedom emerged among some young adult librarians to accompany an increased acceptance of advocacy as the primary role of those who served young adults.

Joan W. Scott (1989), a woman's historian, writes:

Histories of the progress of democracy, of the expanding participation of individuals and groups in the social and political life of the United States, are often based on the notion of access. Emphasis usually goes to the physical connotation of this term. Thus, we metaphorically represent the gaining of access to resources, spaces, and institutions as passages through doors and gates, over obstacles, and around barriers and blockages; we measure accessibility quantitatively by noting the number of people or members of groups who gain entry.

While this emphasis has been useful for detecting discrimination or democratization, it has drawn attention away from important qualitative issues. How are those who cross the thresholds received? If they belong to a group different from the one already "inside," what are the terms of their incorporation? How do the new arrivals understand their relationship to the place they have entered? What are the terms of identity they establish? (p. 93)

This article will explore some of the answers to these and the following, more specific, questions through examination of the lives and contributions of a number of women directly involved in public library service to young adults. As young adults entered libraries, how were they treated? Were young adults welcomed by library staffs? What, if any, special services were provided for young adults? Who were the voices that spoke out for young people in libraries?

A VOICE OF RECOGNITION: MABEL WILLIAMS

Mabel Williams's (1887-1985) concerns for young adults are revealed in this 1934 statement:

What does "Seventeen" bring to the public library? He does not leave his interests, his questions, his aspirations and dreams behind. They come with him, but what does the library do with this eager, still unformed young spirit? Perhaps we find that he needs to talk to a good lawyer rather than read a book on vocations. . . . After all, do we really care where he finds what he is seeking so long as it is found? (p. 821)

Williams clearly recognized the need to value personal identity in the young people she labeled "Seventeen," her term for the adolescent. Clearly, she wanted young people to be received into the public library with warmth and interest. Examining this woman's career may provide us with tangible evidence of how such warmth and interest might be provided. It may also offer clues to the impact of such quality service.

Williams began library service for young adults at the New York Public Library in 1919 and continued as the administrator of that program until 1951. Her actual title was Supervisor of Work with Schools, and most of her early work was with schools. The class visit program to junior high schools helped to ready children for their move to high school and simultaneously for the use of the adult collections in public libraries. Williams (1934) firmly believed in the importance of meeting a wide range of adolescent needs and wrote: "The public library must become a social institution, interpreting, selecting and writing, if need be, books to meet the needs of this surging, changing group of young people with interests unending, whether their reading skill be that of a child or a mature adult" (p. 823).

She participated in the hiring of Amelia Munson (1950), who went on to work with the so-called continuation schools, forerunners of vocational schools, and to write *An Ample Field*, one of the classic books on young adult literature. Williams was a firm believer in the need for personal contact with young people and was unwavering in her efforts to have librarians available to help reach young adult audiences. She promoted clubs for teenagers and established browsing rooms for them. These clubs reached beyond a discussion of reading to examine hobbies, plays, and current events. Williams demonstrated her commitment to

young people in encouraging them, through the clubs, as obvious connections to her vision of the library as a social institution. *Books for the Teen Age* (New York Public Library, 1929) begun in 1929, makes clear that Williams drew distinctions between curriculum-related lists of high school reading and public library lists. She placed emphasis on the responses of young people to the books.

This list is primarily for use in the adult sections of the Library, . . . High School lists are naturally affected by the curriculum. . . . Furthermore, their use is dependent not only on inclination but also on compulsion. . . . This list, on the other hand, includes only those books which boys and girls are known to have enjoyed either through their own discovery or the suggestion of a friend, a teacher, a librarian, or through the impetus received from book talks or reading clubs. (quoted in Morrison, 1979, pp. 44-45)

This was a demonstration of Williams's recognition of teenagers' personal selection of, and transactions with, books. She placed an emphasis on enjoyment more than on completing the requirements of class assignments. She had a special gift of understanding how young people just "look around." She talked about a young girl who asked about a poem she had heard on the radio. "It was something about a mother weaving on a harp." Williams had the answer, *The Ballad of the Harp Weaver* by Edna St. Vincent Millay, and the young woman left with a copy and was quite pleased. Providing opportunities for young people to discuss books relating to hobbies and interests was a major change in young adult services. Williams was characterized by Lillian Morrison as a woman of great humor and deep understanding of the young, a flexible administrator who had incredible ability to discover hidden talents among her staff.⁶ She received the Grolier Award of ALA in 1980 and it read: "She envisioned programs and activities that recognized children and young adults as citizens of the community regardless of age, grade, intelligence quotient, race, or creed. Her philosophy was ahead of its time, and remains timeless in its application to meet the needs of youth throughout the country" (ALA, 1981, p. 79).

A FOCUSING VOICE: MARGARET SCOGGIN

Margaret Scoggin (1905-1968) listened to young people and worked diligently to ensure that they would have an appropriate and positive environment in which to pursue their interests. Mary K. Chelton (1980) wrote: "She created this environment at that time in two ways—through library-based clubs in which young adults discussed books and produced plays and puppet shows, and through skilled one-to-one guidance" (p. 517).

Was Scoggin's intense concern with establishing a positive and receptive environment a critical contribution to our understanding of focused young adult services? Scoggin was appointed to the New York Public Library staff by Mabel Williams and was strongly influenced by Williams's

qualities and direction. They worked together for twenty-five years and, at Williams's retirement in 1951, Scoggin succeeded her in her work with schools and young people. She successfully designed a building on East 32nd Street, acquired through the estate of Nathan Straus, which was to become the first public library dedicated exclusively for the use of young people. Scoggin believed that this facility should be a model or laboratory focused on service to young people. She was also determined that the Nathan Straus Library should serve as a place for research into the reading interests of young people. The Nathan Straus Library was to last from 1941 until 1951, attracting visitors from all over the world. Scoggin (1949) defined work with young adults in her presentation "The Library as a Center for Young People in the Community": "The need of this group [young people] for guidance in recreational and informational reading, for aid in school work, for introduction to adult literature and to public library resources is the basis for specialized work with them in public libraries" (p. 147).

One of our great misfortunes was the lack of substantive research on the Nathan Straus Library.⁷ Why, when it was conceived as a laboratory, were no studies done that might have yielded important data? Was it the lack of research competence? Were the resources unavailable for research? To what extent did the Public Library Inquiry discourage such endeavors? Was the emphasis that Scoggin placed on the analysis of literature with young people an important contribution that might profitably be examined in contemporary library work?

Braverman (1979) recounts that, in her work at the Nathan Straus Library, Scoggin reported to Williams that the newly formed high school reference collection was being used by students from all over the city (p. 55). It appears that Scoggin, unlike some of her professional colleagues such as Margaret Edwards, clearly supported quality professional help for students in completing their school assignments. One wonders why Scoggin saw this as a valid mission when many others did not.

Scoggin was also an author of materials for young people. Her selections for *Chucklebait* (Scoggin, 1945), an anthology of humorous stories, reflected her knowledge of young people and literature that appeals to them as well as her own sense of humor. In 1946, Scoggin focused her work through an award-winning weekly radio program, *Young Book Reviewers*, that was taped and later aired on stations across the country. She encouraged teenage book reviewers at the Nathan Straus Library who developed a sophisticated approach to literature and often explored literary qualities and ideas in providing an assessment of a book.

Scoggin was an active participant in the American Library Association, serving on committees in the youth division and as an ALA Councilor, and, when the Young Adult Services Division of the New York Library Association was formed in 1951, Margaret Scoggin was the first chair. Scoggin was also the advisor for the organization of the International Youth Library in Munich after World War II and spent months working

on developing an outstanding collection while creating programs to attract young people. Her contribution as an advocate for youth in a Europe that was rebuilding after a terrible war was outstanding. She received the ALA Grolier Award and the National Book Association's Constance Lindsay Skinner Award. Throughout her career she focused her voice on the needs of young adults, at times argumentatively but always with the needs of adolescents in the forefront. In writing about the keynotes of a successful program of service for young people, Scoggin (1949) was as farsighted as she was targeted to the time in which she worked.

No public library can base a claim to young people's service upon delegated space and books alone or upon an occasional program. Young people's work exists only when it is in charge of a trained young people's librarian who knows books and young people (and is acceptable to them), who has both responsibility and money for book selection, who is free to spend time both on the floor of the library and outside with school and other agencies. Young people's work depends upon day-by-day helpfulness to individual boys and girls, informal book talks, helpful discussions of problems with a group around the desk, and patient clarification of reference needs and school assignments. Of course, clubs, programs, and activities may lead to excellent reading and publicity, but they are not the beginning of work with young people. If you look behind the programs which are truly successful, you will see how firmly rooted they are in the specific library's recognition of its responsibility to young people and in an adequate groundwork of trained personnel, books, space, money, time, and understanding (Scoggin, 1949, pp. 162-63).

A COOPERATIVE VOICE: JEAN CAROLYN ROOS

Jean Carolyn Roos (1891-1982) worked in youth services for thirty-seven years in the Cleveland Public Library. She was concerned with social issues and believed strongly that the library must cooperate with other youth-serving agencies in the community. In Roos's mind, the dominance of work with alternative youth agencies was clear from the start and later led to accusations of "social work librarianship"—i.e., an emphasis on social work rather than librarianship. Roos (1947) wrote of her joint project with the Cleveland Press World Friends' Club and the Junior Council on World Affairs, to establish "Roads to World Understanding": "The objectives of the program are to develop world citizenship and greater international understanding among young people, to stimulate constructive and logical thinking upon world problems; to stimulate discussion. The emphasis of each program is understanding, the way people live, think and act—not political ideologies" (p. 280). She went on to indicate that the success of the project and of the individual programs was heavily dependent upon the active cooperation of Cleveland's youth-serving agencies. Roos (1947) wrote:

Leading Cleveland citizens were sufficiently interested to act as moderators. Success is due also to the recognition of each sponsor of the values and contributions of their respective organizations with resulting understanding and cooperation. The program, too, could not have been successful without the intra-library cooperation which was necessary for a uniform approach. (p. 282)

By 1955, the Cleveland Art Museum had added its sponsorship to the project. Young people were involved as planners from the very beginning of the project.

Because of the administrative structure of the branch libraries in Cleveland, programs for young people were highly individualized from branch to branch. Roos was not an aggressive leader where the branch staffs were concerned, often leaving them to fend for themselves. She centered most of her activities around the main library where she felt free to carry out her mission. She tried repeatedly to reach those young people leaving school for the workplace, however, no solid evidence exists to indicate which approach, if any, was successful. In Cleveland, the school library service was under the public library until 1968.

For seventeen years (1945-1962) Roos (1947) conducted a popular program, "Roads to World Understanding." This was cosponsored by four community groups and probably was successful, at least in part, due to many family members being with the armed services overseas. The Stevenson Room Poetry Group (1928, 1942) was another productive experience for young people. This group fostered the writing of poetry and met to critique each other's work. Two publications came out of this endeavor: *Preludes to Poetry* (1928) and *More Preludes to Poetry* (1942). It is clear that Roos saw in such activities an avenue to define a larger role for the youth librarian in helping young people express their ideas and views. Thus, the special services she provided opened the doors warmly to young adults' thoughts and expressions as well as to their physical presence.

Roos also produced two editions of her well-known work *Patterns in Reading* (1954, 1961), which is probably one of the earliest works that approaches the webbing concepts, linking related books, implicit in the work of whole language programs in education today. Between 1941 and 1955, the Alta Branch was assigned to the youth department and was almost exclusively for young people. The arguments in opposition to this branch were primarily over what appeared to some to be a strong focus on social work rather than on library work. These types of experiments were tried a number of times but without success. Like many of the other women in prominent positions in work with children and youth, Roos wrote, taught, and participated actively in the work of the American Library Association. Perhaps her strongest characteristic was her determination to

cooperate with all agencies and persons who would better the lives of young people. Roos was indeed an advocate for youth. It was from her experiences that we gained an understanding of the nature of cooperative ventures as well as the pitfalls. Roos (1955) summarized her cooperative philosophy of young adult librarianship as follows:

The young people's librarian is the key person to develop a good public relations program with all agencies and organizations serving youth in the community in order to tie in library services and resources to agency programs as such, and also to better serve the individuals who are part of those organizations. Representing the library on youth councils, serving on agency committees, working with service organizations, and taking active part in the planning of community youth projects are important in library services. Book talks, preparation of special book lists, help in program planning are part of the work; a file of speakers, a file of information about youth organizations and activities are indispensable. Cooperation with organizations like the Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A., Catholic Youth Organization, the Jewish youth groups, the 4-H clubs, the local vocational groups, the recreation and hobby groups in social agencies—they are manifold in number—offer many opportunities for service, and the results are rewarding in growth and development of individual members. (p. 138)

Although Roos pushed the cooperative concept to the fullest, one might question whether the work she began continued. Is an emphasis on cooperative activities an essential aspect of youth services? Should it be? Was the focus on international understanding a foreshadowing of what might be useful in our current discussions of library service to youth?

A READER'S VOICE: MARGARET A. EDWARDS

Margaret A. Edwards (1902-1988) worked for thirty years (1932-1962) at the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore. At first, her work with young people was limited to three hours a day in an alcove set aside for them, but, in 1937, the position became full time. Edwards went to see Mabel Williams at New York Public Library to observe the program in operation there. By 1940, Edwards had established young adult sections with collections and staff in the branches. She believed in reaching the reader emotionally through books, and this was much more important to her than a literary experience. Promotion of world citizenship through reading and understanding the implications of U. S. citizenship were also important objectives. Edwards tried very early to reach out to the African-American community of Baltimore. She recalled:

At one time Pratt Library did not send vacation reading lists to Negro schools, and when I began to have anything to do with it, Dr. Wheeler backed me in sending the list to the Negro schools, too. Then we had a book week party in the days of intense segregation,

and it was understood that the Negro students would be invited too, and there was a great tension and great worry. . . . We have always in our school visits, assumed that everyone was liberal and unprejudiced. In all the schools, we gave book talks on *Black Like Me* and other books of social significance; as if all the audiences were concerned for all Americans. (cited in Braverman, 1979, p. 234)

Edwards was a member of the American Civil Liberties Union, the League of Women Voters, and the Americans for Democratic Action, considering herself a principled liberal. Edwards established a training program for staff that was both rigorous and practical. She would assign a staff member a set of ten titles to read and discuss with her. This was neither easy nor without reward. She used her monthly staff meetings for idea generation rather than book reviewing. She required multiple copies of booktalks to be submitted by staff and believed firmly in the use of the voice as a means of communication, expecting memorization of these talks. She followed a similar, somewhat rigid, pattern in her approach to the school visits that began in 1947. Each visit was to include one lengthy booktalk, followed by several short talks, and then by another longer talk. This lack of flexibility annoyed some staff, but the Edwards style and approach was uniformly followed. She was eager to draw out the best from every member of her staff and often was able to evoke much more than even the individual might know was possible. She taught at several library schools and wrote a number of professional articles. Edwards's (1974) book *The Fair Garden and the Swarm of Beasts* provides insight into what she believed to be the purpose and intent of service to young people. In it she wrote: "In my preliminary thinking I realized that work with young adults is as simple as ABC. All there is to it is: (A) a sympathetic understanding of all adolescents; (B) firsthand knowledge of all the books that would interest them; and (C) mastery of the technique of getting these books into the hands of the adolescents. Simple" (p. 16).

Her grasp of the mission of young adult service and the importance of the collections is enunciated clearly in the following passage:

The problem in the library world is not teen-age novels but the librarian who allows them to become ends in themselves and fails to make use of them as simple, effective tools in the development of readers. . . . The librarian should know his readers and books well enough to be able to introduce readable, appealing adult titles at the propitious time and see that the young reader gradually moves into adult reading with all the enthusiasm he once had for teen-age stories. (p. 83)

Patty Campbell (1994), in her analysis, suggests that Edwards was unable to accept young adult literature as viable and useful to young audiences and that this position was tied, in part at least, to her earlier determination that junior novels were no more than sugar puff stories (p. 36).

Campbell also indicates that Edwards did not truly grasp the importance of reference work and often sacrificed it to her concept of reading guidance (p. 36). Campbell (1994) wrote:

As the information function came to be regarded more and more the center of library service, Edwards's writings, in an effort to restore the balance, moved further toward a definition of YA work as solely readers' advisory. In her eyes, reference work became the enemy of time and energy and eventually even threatened the very existence of the job. (p. 36)

This kind of distinction continued a view that separated school and public library book collections as well as services. Interestingly enough, Frances Henne (1949) had forcefully opposed this type of dichotomy in her paper presented before the Library Institute at the University of Chicago in August 1947 and subsequently published in *Youth, Communication and Libraries*: "Too many librarians of this country have never admitted that a good school program provides for all kinds of reading that a normal child should have. Too many librarians, both in schools and public libraries, have established that strange dichotomy of reading—reading for school work and reading for pleasure" (p. 219).

Margaret Edwards received the American Library Association's Grolier Award in 1957 and the citation read in part:

the enrichment she has given to the lives of young people [and] her contagious enthusiasm for books and reading, which has been felt not only by the young people in Baltimore, but indirectly by young people all across this country; her success in the skillful training of young adult librarians; her fine cooperation with library groups, especially the school librarians of Maryland; . . .and her creative genius and integrity of purpose. (cited in "Margaret A. Edwards, 1902-1988," 1988, p. 24)

The annual Margaret Edwards Award is administered by the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) and is funded by *School Library Journal*. The award is given to a young adult author in recognition of lifetime achievement and is an appropriate honor for this woman who cared so strongly about youth and their literature.

A VOICE FOR INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM: DOROTHY M. BRODERICK

In the early part of her career, Dorothy M. Broderick (1929-) spoke forcefully for children's library services but more recently has been recognized as one of the strongest, sometimes necessarily strident, voices for young adults. After completing her post in the New York State Library Extension, she published *An Introduction to Children's Work in Public Libraries* (1965), a book that came out of her work with staff-development training in New York State. She later completely rewrote that work as *Library Work with Children* (1977). Broderick completed her doctoral work

at Columbia University and published her dissertation as *Image of the Black in Children's Fiction* (1973). Her professional career has been primarily as a library educator, where she invariably challenged graduate students to test their beliefs and validate abstract principles in specific practices. She is known for her fearlessness and her determination to evoke response and intellectual commitment.

In April 1978, Dorothy Broderick and Mary K. Chelton, using personal monies to underwrite a new journal, published the first issue of *Voice of Youth Advocates* (VOYA). In their first editorial, they wrote:

We will use our voice to change the traditional linking of young adult services with children's librarianship and shift the focus to its connection with adult services. The growing group of under 15 year olds who are becoming pregnant each year has more in common with adults than with primary age children, even though the span in years between the two may be exactly the same. As long as we allow society—and librarianship—to see teenagers as simply older children, we will never be able to develop the materials collections and service programs so necessary to meet the pressing needs of this group. Those needs go far beyond answering school assignment requests or providing a good book for reading or creating an interesting series of film programs. (Broderick & Chelton, 1978a, p. 1)

What is obvious in reading this editorial in the first issue of VOYA is the intense commitment to sharing information that might help both youth services personnel and adult librarians in their work with young adults in school and public libraries:

We cannot leave the field to the ultra-conservative groups who operate on the assumption that it is access to information that causes social ills. We must identify the social myths that keep us from serving young people and replace them with knowledge, for it is only through knowledge that any of us can make decisions wisely. The alternative is to remain victims of myths and social conditioning.

Through VOYA we hope to give you ideas and skills that will enable you to create a service network of adults; parents, librarians, and allied professionals, which will work toward increased life options for young adults. (p. 2)

Since 1978, VOYA has consistently provided informative articles from authors in a wide range of disciplines to help readers to do exactly what the editors envisioned. Throughout its history, the journal has alerted readers to issues of importance to professional practice and served as a source of personal and professional development. The emphases on pertinent information from other disciplines and on youth participation in libraries have been continuing threads in the articles published in VOYA over the years. Both editors review books and often use reviews to teach as well as to evaluate materials.

Clearly, Broderick has intensely studied first amendment issues and has held consistent views and has been a strong anti-censorship voice for young people throughout her career. It is her audacious voice for intellectual freedom, particularly as it applies to materials for young people, that has been her most outstanding contribution. She has an incomparable ability to get to the heart of an issue, sometimes employing brazen words that attract attention but also definitely capture meaning and evoke response. Broderick's (1963) discussion of the "shaky concepts" librarians adhere to in making book selection and intellectual freedom decisions is as current today as when she presented it more than thirty years ago (pp. 507-10). Nowhere is her strength of commitment on these issues more clearly spelled out than in a book review editorial discussing Beatrice Sparks's *Voices* in the August 1978 issue of VOYA:

Voices poses the perfect dilemma for those of us who like to think we are youth advocates. It is true we want to create the conditions under which young people can learn to become decision makers and in control of their own lives; yet, the traces of years of conditioning to be adult authority figures creep out of the closet and the temptation to keep *Voices* from young people is strong. We want to have faith that young people will recognize crap when it is given to them, but the popularity of *Go Ask Alice* makes that nothing more than wishful thinking. Because the values in *Voices* are so abhorrent to us, we pray few young people will take them on face value. With our fears firmly in hand, we reluctantly conclude that they must be given the opportunity to make up their own minds.

And we remind librarians that if we are to fight censors by telling them libraries must contain items they find offensive, occasionally we have to add items we find offensive. (Broderick & Chelton, 1978b, p. 48)

Part of the spirit as well as the accomplishments of this woman are captured in the citation for the 1991 Grolier Award:

Dorothy M. Broderick began her career as children's librarian in New York City "where she learned judo as a necessary job skill to back up her natural compassion and empathy for kids." A forthright, honest, witty, and vigorous "warrior" for intellectual freedom, Dorothy M. Broderick is now one of the most prolific professional writers in the field of librarianship. As professor and lecturer on children's literature and librarianship, Dorothy M. Broderick has encouraged a generation of professionals to adopt her uncompromising commitment to full, quality service to young readers. . . . As founder editor of "Voice of Youth Advocates," she has provided librarians working with young adults, a forum and a communications medium unduplicated in the library literature. (D. M. Broderick, personal communication, January 5, 1996)

A VOICE FOR PERSONAL CARING: MARY K. CHELTON

Mary K. Chelton (1942-) shares the commitment to young adults of her co-editor, Dorothy Broderick. Chelton has worked as a young adult

librarian, a library supervisor, a library consultant, and a library educator and, in all of these positions, has fought valiantly for the rights of young people. In 1977, she served as President of the Young Adult Services Division (YASD) of ALA and, while president-elect, chaired a committee to reconcile the priorities of YASD with those of ALA.

Her understanding of, and caring for, young adults has been evident in Chelton's work throughout her career. In a review of Fran Arrick's *Steffie Can't Come Out to Play*, she articulated her position as follows:

While this is not great literature and falls squarely within the conventions of junior novel formula fiction, the groundbreaking subject matter (for juvenile fiction if not juvenile lives!) is handled well in its 180 pages without either four-letter words or graphic sexual descriptions. Nothing, however, is left to the imagination, and the book has a gut-level emotional accessibility which will make it enormously popular with young YA readers, both good and poor. It picks up beautifully on the unreal romantic adolescent fantasies which can land kids on the street in situations like Steffie's. If anything, it is tame compared to the histories of sexual abuse most female runaways carry with them. Since it is pitched squarely at a junior high readership, it will no doubt arouse fear in adult selectors who feel that their role is to reinforce the fantasy that life is full of happy endings, sex only in marriage, etc.; or worse, that sexuality information for kids should only be handled in nonfiction; or that junior high youth are really children and should be protected from realities many of them are living. Bradbury Press and Fran Arrick are to be commended for taking the juvenile justice and runaway statistics and giving them flesh and blood so that the kids themselves, whether they've been there or not, can care about them. (Chelton, 1978, pp. 41-42)

Chelton's work in libraries has not been confined to youth services, although she is certainly well known as an outspoken advocate for young adults. As a library administrator, she was concerned with other library personnel's responses to young people. This concern is reflected in Chelton and Rosinia's (1993) *Bare Bones*. In this work, the authors remind readers that:

Since few libraries are set up with young adults primarily in mind, their normal behavior can often lead frustrated or frightened librarians to consider them troublemakers. A disruptive teenager can be unnerving, but most perceptions of young adults as troublemakers in libraries stem from unrealistic library regulations, frightened staff, or community attitudes toward youth. (p. 44)

In recognition of her service to, and advocacy for, this age group, Chelton was asked to edit *Excellence in Library Services to Young Adults* (1994) published by ALA. This publication identified the nation's top programs of library service to young adults. In her introduction, Chelton identifies a critical element of participation and intellectual conceptualization on the part of young adults. She writes:

It has always been part of the young adult services concept (as well as the view of the larger youth-work community of which YA services are a part) that the young adults themselves must participate in the conceptualization and service-delivery process if the service is going to work. In recent years, librarians serving young adults have come to realize that this participation by youth is an experiential learning service in and of itself, regardless of the use of library materials. Youth participation gives young adults role rehearsal experiences, uses their intense developmental need for social experience with peers, offers opportunities to employ their fledgling hypothetical thinking abilities, and channels their enormous emotional and physical energies into helping other people through helping the library. (p. xii)

Also in recognition of her contributions to young people, Chelton received the Grolier Award in 1985. The citation for this award reads, in part:

Her career as librarian, teacher, lecturer, and young adult consultant reflects her active role on behalf of youth. Articulately and intelligently, she has defended intellectual freedom and access to library services for this under-represented segment of the library's clientele. Her concern has earned her national recognition in young adult services and the Grolier Award Jury commends her unique contribution to library services for youth. (M. K. Chelton, personal communication, January 5, 1996)

In a recent letter of concern to Elizabeth Martinez, executive director of ALA, Chelton writes of her concern with the *ALA Graphics* catalog (1995) dropping all YALSA materials:

Since the obvious fact that ALA/YALSA member-librarians have spent hundreds of hours reading and working with local kids to produce these lists is meaningless to whomever decided to cut these products, perhaps the concerns of publishers and kids might at least be recognized as a potential public relations problem for ALA. The absence of materials for adolescents in an ALA catalog in the face of the fact that 23% of the users of public libraries are in this age group, as reported by librarians themselves (NCES, 1995), might also pose a small PR problem, I would imagine. (M. K. Chelton, personal communication, December 6, 1995)

This is an example of advocacy for youth where a managerial decision at ALA is challenged by an active member.

Currently Chelton is completing a dissertation at Rutgers University on "Adult-Adolescent Service Encounters: The Library Context," in which she is examining critical questions on interactions between professionals and adolescents in library situations. Thus, she is providing a research base and her knowledge of communication theory to a concern she has long voiced in service to youth. She is now a leader of a new generation of youth librarians who are building upon the work of previous generations and inventing new forms of service to young adults.

CONCLUSION

All of these women, and the others who have provided leadership for young adult services in public libraries, have been advocates, change agents, and caring human beings, and all recognized the need to work with other organizations that serve youth. The specific nature of these characteristics and their enactments in professional service, however, have changed over time. Early leaders focused their attention both on cooperation with schools and on providing the kinds of information and recreational reading not provided by those schools. As women of their time, their work was rooted in the belief that great literature has the power to change young lives and that young people who are treated with respect as responsible human beings will respond in kind. While contemporary women might like to be able to accept these beliefs, they recognize that the world in which today's young people are coming of age is a very different and, in many respects, a much more dangerous one.

One might question whether the women discussed here could have responded more quickly to the background factors identified in the introduction to this article. Of course, although changes did occur earlier, the most powerful and influential developments in adolescent psychology, young adult literature, technology, communication, and the mass media did not take place until the late 1960s and after, along with major social upheavals of the times. Thus, with the exception of Broderick and Chelton, these women had essentially completed their careers prior to this period of tumultuous change. As subsequent historians and students of library history look back on young adult services in public libraries, this author suspects that they may identify Broderick and Chelton as marking the beginning of a new view of such services. This new view emphasized the individual and the perception of young adult literature as representative of, or a validation of, youth lifestyles, interests, and needs rather than emphasizing literary value and the social, moral, and educational benefits for those who encounter great literature. Broderick and Chelton, especially in VOYA, also emphasized the need to be knowledgeable about other disciplines and agencies that impact on youth rather than just encouraging cooperative ventures with them.

One of the things that seems to have been lost in young adult services over the years is an emphasis on internationalism with its corresponding recognition of a global society. Scoggin and Roos both were very active internationally, but, in recent years, the focus on individuals has probably drawn the profession away from such involvement. Contemporary society, including the library profession, with its focus on multiculturalism within the United States, may gradually, in the process of gaining more accurate cultural representations, return to an interest in international activities.

Throughout this history, there is evidence that youth professionals have been playing "catch-up," trying to keep pace with a generation that seems to be in perpetual "fast-forward." Probably this is inevitable as adult service providers attempt to maintain currency with youth culture and with all the information and agencies that impact on that culture and individuals within it, while simultaneously remaining viable in their own personal and professional lives. Often, too, professional interests seem to work against ideals of service to individuals or to particular groups. For instance, for many years, managerial concerns seemed to take precedence in library work, and even the school and public library standards emphasized a kind of managerial style over service to individuals. More recently, librarians have been so caught up in an enamourment with technology that we are more concerned with speed on the information highway than with destination. Consequently, youth services librarians have been so busy fighting for equal access to electronic information for young people that they have too often lost sight of the need to help them evaluate, select, and use the vast stores of information available to them.

One factor that has not been adequately addressed in youth services is that of feminist approaches to adolescent development. Although those who write about adolescent development almost always include a mention of Gilligan's work, most continue to work from a male hierarchical model. It is true that youth advocates have been concerned with the flight of young males from public libraries, but perhaps there should be equal concern with the appropriateness of what is available for the young women who continue to be the primary patrons. It is important to examine research presented in reports from the American Association of University Women and other studies based on this work to identify what might be pertinent to youth services librarianship. Young adult literature is also only beginning to reflect alternative feminist views. Kay Vandergrift (1993) has called for a feminist research agenda in youth literature,⁸ writing:

Literature as culture and ideology organizes and presents dominant world views to young readers that aid them in their own social construction of reality. Much of youth literature still excludes or distorts the experiences of females and minorities. We need to be especially concerned about the double displacement of young women of color who seldom find their own lives validated in the literature available in schools and libraries. As we approach the twenty-first century, library professionals, especially those working with young people, need to take the lead in building collections that are gender-fair and multicultural. (p. 26)

Looking toward the twenty-first century, we need to identify the new leaders who will be advocates for, and champions of, young adults in public libraries. Broderick and Chelton continue among the strongest voices for young people, but new voices are also being heard. It is interesting to note that many of these new voices, such as those of Mike Prinz, Roger Sutton,

and Patrick Jones are male. Perhaps it is a form of feminist inclusiveness, combined with the obvious need to attract teenage males to public libraries, that has led men to step forward in leadership roles and caused current leaders to encourage and support men in the field. One hopes that efforts to be more inclusive will also result in stronger leadership representing the various cultures of the young people we hope to attract to libraries.

Feminist theory provides both the impetus and the rationale for a re-evaluation of women's work and women's ways of knowing. After examining the lives and contributions of six women who have had major impacts on young adult services, I would suggest that additional research is needed to truly represent these women and the discipline in which they worked during their careers. Many questions about this area of librarianship and the women who worked in it still need to be raised.

From the available external evidence, it is clear that the women discussed earlier did welcome young adults into public libraries with warmth and enthusiasm and that they provided to them a variety of materials, programs, and services. Several other things are not clear, however. Did other library personnel, both from adult and children's services, welcome this age group as well or were they greeted with apprehension, distaste, and fear by all but those designated specifically to serve them? What was it about young adults that captivated these women and evoked so strong a response of service? Why were they not afraid of young people as many of their colleagues were and are? To what extent did philosophical and professional similarities and differences among these women contribute to the development of vibrant young adult services? What enabled them to succeed with higher administrators in fostering their various programs for young people? Were there conflicts between young adult librarians and other professionals? Were there conflicts between young adults and adult library patrons that these women had to negotiate and resolve? What roles did women of color play in the development of young adult services?

The answers to these questions are not readily available, but they are important enough to merit the kind of in-depth investigation that will yield at least some of the answers. Young adults have always been at risk in public libraries and are probably even more so today than they were in the past. If we do not know enough about the past to learn from it, they will continue to be at risk. In spite of the fact that almost one in four library users falls into this age group, there are few young adult specialists and special programs for this age group. The old adage states that we must know about our past in order to avoid repeating it. Certainly there are some aspects of the past worthy of repeating. We must understand the work of the women who developed young adult services in public libraries to be able to imagine how they might respond to today's and tomorrow's young people and their needs. In this way, we can truly build upon their work to serve young people in the twenty-first century.

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NOTES

- ¹ The professional literature often uses the terms "children," "young person," or "young adult" without clarification of the precise ages to which the terms refer.
- ² The document included guidelines on general services to young people, book collections, space and equipment, standards for personnel, and administration. The second portion of the book contained brief descriptions of library service to youth, including programs and guidance activities.
- ³ An August 1979 guest editorial in VOYA reprinted the Young Adult Services Policy developed by Director David Snider of the Casa Grande (Arizona) City Library and invited readers to "crib" from it. This statement reiterated and expanded upon the principles articulated in the 1948 plan.
- ⁴ The original text has the following footnote: "The great majority of young people's librarians are women, but there is no reason why a man should not consider this field of library work as comparable to teaching or other types of community work with young people" (p. 18).
- ⁵ Evie Wilson in "The Librarian as Advocate for Youth," articulates her understanding of this role and later continues this in her book.
- ⁶ From the memorial news release issued by New York Public Library, written by Lillian Morrison, November 1985.
- ⁷ There are the various reports written by Margaret Scoggin, and Miriam Braverman devotes nine pages in her book to a discussion of the Nathan Straus Library.
- ⁸ Readers will find additional information from Vandergrift's Young Adult Page, URL:<http://www.scils.rutgers.edu/special/kay/yalit.html>

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