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## Introduction

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THIS REPRESENTS THE FIRST ISSUE OF *Library Trends* devoted to the topic of the role of women in youth services and literature in librarianship. While the term the “feminized profession” has, in the past, been used to refer to the profession as a whole, the youth services area of librarianship has indeed been notably influenced by the feminine presence. Yet, the strong creative women who have been in the position of leading where few or none have led before are not often highlighted in their roles as major innovative participants in this important aspect of the profession. Most would agree that in today’s youth rests tomorrow’s rich legacy; no one would dispute the concept that children grow up to be young adults and, finally, adults. It is also evident that what we become tomorrow is in part based upon what we have “ingested” during youth in terms of exposure—socially, politically, economically, and aesthetically. Therefore, one wonders why issues related to youth are often viewed with skepticism and not always taken as seriously as they might be. Further, when one adds the issue of the role of women and how that role has interacted with youth, there is an additional variable which generates a further “problem.” Clearly, this is an area which needs to be viewed and valued as an important area of the profession.

### OVERVIEW

This issue of *Library Trends* seeks to explore some of the different contributions women in the library science profession have made to children’s and young adult services and literature. Nine women have contributed to the creation of this issue of *Library Trends*. The women

whose lives they have researched and written about were selected because of their uniqueness, and because the legacy they created is one which shaped the course of the discipline. All of the articles here raise questions either directly or implicitly about the context in which we view women's lives and women's contributions, as well as the manner in which women have created a unique professional bond with one another.

### INITIATIVES AND ADVOCACY IN YOUTH SERVICES

The first three articles in this issue are concerned with the contributions of enterprising women who played a major role in the service and publishing aspects of the field as related to youth issues. Kay E. Vandergrift suggests that the work and approach taken by influential women who made a real difference in the foundation of youth services should be re-examined in the light of contemporary feminist studies. She uses the word "revalued" to suggest that, through this examination of their careers, we will be able to derive a greater appreciation and understanding of their contributions, the effects that their personal bonds with one another had upon their careers, and the general context in which they were able to accomplish their goals. Vandergrift discusses women like Minerva Sanders, Lutie E. Stearns, and Effie Louise Power, among others, and the careers they successfully established.

Margaret Bush focuses specifically upon women in the youth services profession who were raised within and/or worked in the New England area, the range of their influence, and the depth of their interactions among themselves. In particular, she highlights the contributions of Caroline Hewins, Anne Carroll Moore, Bertha Mahony, and Alice Jordan. She also examines such factors as the "tools of the trade" in the form of the important booklists they created and the wide influence these eventually had.

In the editor's article, the focus is upon the contributions of one woman, Virginia Haviland, the context in which she worked, and the publishing venues she accessed. Her work, both within the public sector (in terms of her public library experience) and the special children's collection of the Library of Congress, is discussed. Her major publications are highlighted as well. Of particular interest to the editor is the manner in which Haviland was able to mediate what certainly appears to have been a lifelong love of children with a successful profession and publishing career.

### THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN PUBLICATION AND SELECTION

While many women established careers which allowed them to successfully integrate service to youth with writing, some were able to do this in a way which made an unusual impact during the course of their lives. In her article on Margaret K. McElderry, Betsy Hearne examines the life

of this unusual woman who has been highly successful in the world of publishing, an area not easy to negotiate for a woman interested in publications for young people. McElderry significantly influenced the world of children's publishing; indeed her very name on the front page of a children's book within the context of the phrase "A Margaret McElderry Book" is enough to imply that, within those pages, there is the assurance of quality.

Another woman, Zena Sutherland, has made a crucial contribution to the area of writing and children's book reviewing. Through her article, Ann D. Carlson presents unique insights into the career of a woman having a strong voice in children's publishing. As editor of the *Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books* until 1985, Sutherland came to be viewed as an astute and accurate critic of children's literature. Further, her book *Children and Books* is a crucial contribution as it has helped ensure that the legacy of knowledge about literature for children is being passed down in a thorough and comprehensive manner to future professionals.

In her article on the writing of children's literature within a popular, rather than academic, framework, Lynn S. Cockett considers the work of those who have established an important power base for themselves in the area of writing about children's literature, thereby influencing parents and others who read the popular magazines and newspapers. Such publications allowed the writer to have the ability to reach larger numbers of influential readers (those having access to the children) who were interested in making the "right" reading decisions for and with their children.

#### SERVICE AND JURISDICTION: CONTEXTS OF POWER AND INFLUENCE

As women became more prominently part of the decision-making processes in youth services, they were exposed to the controversies which affect any field. In the case of the Newbery Award, it was felt by some that not enough realistic literature was being seriously considered for the award. This was literature which, in the view of some, might appeal more to boys than the "girl-oriented" stories which seemed to be popular in the eyes of the judges. In her article dealing with the early controversies over this award and what types of books should be considered, Christine Jenkins examines the intricacies of the challenges presented to the women who had an opportunity to influence the decision-making process.

One recognizes the fact that it is the reading and study of history which allows us to gain an appreciation for our heritage. We are also enabled to see the way in which the past has affected the growth of certain ideas in the present. But the past may also imply a *passing down* of tradition. In her article, Anne Lundin examines the opportunities and the knowledge base library educators offer their students about the contributions of past women who have led the way in youth services and

literature. Based upon a recent survey conducted by the author, Lundin's results indicate that more must be done to present past contributions to students currently in library schools. Only then can we ensure the survival of the legacy.

While services for young children have not been held in esteem by some, services for the young adult are often viewed with annoyance if not a little fear. In her article on young adult services, Jane Anne Hannigan offers a strong feminist context for viewing young adult services and discusses the contributions of six women who have made significant, though very different, contributions to this aspect of the field. Hannigan highlights the work of Mabel Williams, Margaret Scoggin, Jean Carolyn Roos, Margaret A. Edwards, Dorothy M. Broderick, and Mary K. Chelton, in this regard. She issues a call for more research in this area and suggests that, until those in the field view young adults differently, we will continue to perpetuate some of the myths which have attended and framed the present view of young adults.

#### BEYOND THE HORIZON

The preparation of this issue of *Library Trends* entitled "Imagination and Scholarship: The Contributions of Women to American Youth Services and Literature" has emphasized the need for re-visioning aspects of the youth services field. Areas for future exploration abound. For example, more research needs to be done in the area of the women who pioneered developments in school librarianship and also in the area of the contributions of minority women in youth services. As times continue to change and new means come to our attention which allow us to see the past within different contexts, it is necessary to take a second look at the legacy it has offered us and to actively participate in the raising of a level of consciousness about those who have led the way.