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# quick statistical information

Megan Schliesman

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From Megan Schliesman <[REDACTED]>  
Sent Wednesday, May 20, 2009 2:20 pm  
To Mary Wepking <[REDACTED]>  
Cc Kristin Pekoll <kpekoll@west-bendlibrary.org> , Deborah Caldwell-Stone  
<[REDACTED]>

Subject Re: quick statistical information

Hi Kristin,

Like Mary, I can echo that there is no formal consensus, but a general acknowledgement that the field of young adult literature began truly being defined in the early 70s.

I'm looking at the introduction to Michael Cart's "From Romance to Realism: 50 Years of Growth in Young Adult Literature" (HarperCollins, 1996). In it, he notes that the American Library Association established its young adult division (then called the Young Adult Services Division and now called the Young Adult Library Services Association) in 1958. ALA had been creating an annual book list for young adults (the definition of which was also vague) since 1930. In 1948, they officially titled that list "Adult Books for Young Adults" because there was no such thing as young adult publishing. In 1966, the name of this list was changed to "Best Books for Young Adults." But he notes that "the annual list would remain confined to adult titles until 1973, when there would finally be a body of literature of sufficient size and literary significance, published specifically for adolescents, to warrant the inclusion of young adult books."

There is also a history of the Best Books for Young Adults Committee, and how it works, in "Best Books for Young Adults" edited by Holly Koelling and published by YALSA. We have the third edition here (ALA, 2007).

I realize your question is about collections and not the literature, but the one comes from the other, so I hope it will be helpful.

There is an article available full-text in Badgerlink that might be of interest--if you can't access them let me know.

Chelton, Maru K. "Perspectives on Practice: Young Adult Collections Are More Than Just Young Adult Literature." *Young Adult Library Services* (Winter 2006)

This doesn't have much on your specific question, but it opens with a bit of history, and talks about the importance of getting materials that will appeal to YAs (in this case, emphasizing non-print)

Chelton is also one of the creators of a history of young adult library services on the VOYA (Voice of Youth Advocates) web site at:

[http://www.voya.com/whatsinvoya/web\\_only\\_articles/Chronology\\_200506.shtml](http://www.voya.com/whatsinvoya/web_only_articles/Chronology_200506.shtml)

Again, if you need anything faxed, please try to call me at 608-262-9503 before 3:15.

Megan

Like Mary, I can fax you the introduction to either/both books. I am only at my desk until about 3:15 today, however, and then am on the road all day tomorrow.

<https://wiscmail.wisc.edu/print.html>

6/11/2009

Mary Wepking wrote:

> Hi Kristin,

>

> I don't think there's a definitive date that marks the start of YA literature and YA library collections. I recall a small teen section in my local public library when I was in junior high, and that would have been the very early 70's.

>

> The first chapter of Tomlinson and Lynch-Brown's 2007 textbook Essentials of Young Adult Literature provides some useful timelines in a section titled "History of Young Adult Literature." If you can't get your hands on a copy, I could fax you a few pages. In their overview, they confirm that the late 60's and early 70's marked the publication of "some of the early important works of young adult literature." Many scholars recognize that there was diminished quality in YA literature in the subsequent decade in which "problems overpowered character development and plot." Then, in the 1990's, due in part to an increase in the number of teens, "the field matured, blossomed, and came into its own with better written, more serious, and more varied young adult books published during the last two decades." (quoted material from Tomlinson, 2007)

>

> That's an oversimplification, and WAY to speedy a summary, but it may be what you need for your slides. Let me know if you'd like me to fax the relevant pages of that text.

>

> Good luck!

>

> Mary

>

> PS - I'm teaching the GLBTQ for YA special topics course again this summer, with an online and an onsite section. We'll be following the situation in West Bend as we move through our readings & discussion.

>

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> ----- Original Message -----

> From: "Kristin Pekoll" <kpekoll@west-bendlibrary.org>

> To: "Deborah Caldwell-Stone" <dcaldwel@west-bendlibrary.org> "Mary Wepking" <marywepking@west-bendlibrary.org> "Megan Schliesman" <mschlies@west-bendlibrary.org>

> Cc: kpekoll@west-bendlibrary.org

> Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2009 9:44:42 AM GMT -06:00 US/Canada Central

> Subject: quick statistical information

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>

> Good Morning,

> I'm sending out a quick request for information to the experts in hope one of you might know this little tidbit. The library board and I are putting together a informational/promotional powerpoint about the library.

>

> Does anyone know what year/date YA fiction became a separate collection or category from Children's? Basically when YA Literature started?

>

> Thanks for any help you can give me!

>

> ~Kristin

>

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