

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 47 • NUMBER 1 • JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2008 • ISSN 0163-5506

Gaming
as a
Library
Service

Serving
Diverse
Youth

Beyond Books:
Restorative
Librarianship
in Juvenile
Detention
Centers



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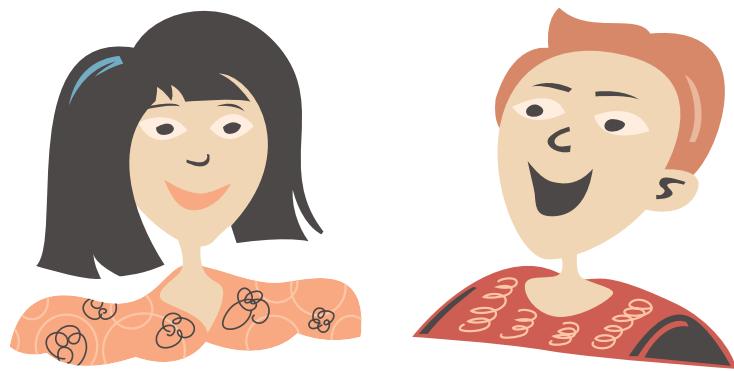
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Editor's Note

Welcome to our annual theme issue—this year the theme is Services to Teens. How does your library serve the teens or young adults in your community? Are you looking for new ideas, different perspectives, or dynamic programming suggestions? This issue is packed with articles on innovative teen library programming, services to disenfranchised youth, various analyses of YA data, and a lot more about working with teens. Does your library have a rocky relationship with area teens? Check out the Perspectives column to see how some libraries have turned around strained or difficult relationships with local teens. In addition to the feature articles, all of our regular columnists have also focused their writing on teen services. We hope you find this theme issue helpful, inspirational, and enjoyable.

Also in this issue (in News from PLA and From the President) you'll find information about the proposed PLA Bylaws changes. Visit the PLA Web site (www.pla.org) for more information or the PLA Blog (www.plablog.org) to post a comment about the proposed changes.

Be sure to let us know how you enjoy our YA theme issue and we'd love to hear suggestions for future themes, too.

Kathleen M. Hughes
Editor

Kathleen is reading *Shorter Works* by Jane Austen.





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News from PLA

Candidate Slate for 2008 PLA Election

President/Vice-President Elect

Carolyn A. Anthony, Skokie (Ill.) Public Library
Sari Feldman, Cuyahoga Public Library, Parma, Ohio

Cluster Steering Committees

Two will be elected for each Cluster Steering Committee.

Issues and Concerns Cluster

Marion W. Francis, Anne Arundel County Public Library, Annapolis, Maryland
Mary Anne Hodel, Orange County Library System, Orlando, Florida
Bruce P. Schauer, King County Library System, Seattle, Washington

Felton Thomas, Las Vegas–Clark County Library, Las Vegas, Nevada

Library Development Cluster

Pamela E. Jaskot, State Library of North Carolina, Durham
Kathy M. Knox, Pueblo County (Colo.) Library District
Larry Nash White, East Carolina University, LSIT, Greenville, North Carolina
Gary L. Shaffer, Sacramento (Calif.) Public Library

Library Services Cluster

Judy A. Napier, Schaumburg (Ill.) District Library
Jennifer J. Owens, Fremont Public Library, Mundelein, Illinois

Susan Hill Pieper, Paulding County (Ohio) Carnegie Library
Valerie Rowe-Jackson, Richland County Public Library, Columbia, South Carolina

PLA Division Councilor

Claudia Burnett Sumler, Harford County Library, Belcamp, Maryland
Christine Lind Hage, Rochester Hills Public Library, Rochester, Michigan

Ballot mailing begins and online polls open on March 17, 2008. Polls close at 11:59 p.m. CST, on April 24, 2008.

PLA 2008—12th National Conference

Registration Deadline

Advance registration deadline is February 29, 2008 (date of postmark)
Register online at www.pla.org.

Conference Highlights

As you're busy planning your 2008 PLA conference schedule (view the complete programming schedule at www.placonference.org) don't forget to pencil in time for these special events (check onsite program for program locations):

Wednesday, March 26, 2008
10:30–11:30 A.M. Nancy Pearl Presents Book Buzz



2:30–4 P.M. Opening General Session featuring Keynote Speaker John Wood

4–6:30 P.M. Exhibits Grand Opening Reception

6–7:30 P.M. New Member Reception

Thursday, March 27, 2008

7:30–8:30 A.M. Informational Session regarding PLA Bylaws Change
9:45–10:30 A.M. Exhibits Coffee Break
Noon–1:45 P.M. Author Luncheons—Children's Author Luncheon featuring Pat Mora and Raul Colon or Adult Author Luncheon featuring Arthur and Pauline Frommer (requires preregistration)

3:15–4 P.M. Exhibits Coffee Break

6–8:30 P.M. Audio Publishers Association Dinner (requires preregistration)

Friday, March 28, 2008

7:30–8:30 A.M. Informational Session regarding PLA Bylaws Change
9:45–10:30 A.M. Exhibits Coffee Break
Noon–1:45 P.M. Author Luncheons—Young Adult Author Luncheon featuring Nancy Pearl (requires preregistration) or Adult Author Luncheon featuring Louise

Erdrich (requires preregistration)
3:15–4 p.m. Exhibits Hall Closing Reception
7–9 p.m. All Conference Reception

Saturday, March 29, 2008
11:45 a.m.–1 p.m. Closing Session

Can't Make it to Minneapolis?

This year, librarians who can't make the trip to Minneapolis will be able to participate virtually in the PLA National Conference. The PLA 2008 Virtual Conference will feature panel discussions, poster sessions, interactive workshops, and chats with colleagues, all from the comfort of your computer. The Virtual Conference will include live, interactive webcasts; handouts and other supporting presentation materials; online poster sessions; and discussion boards. The Virtual Conference will be held on Thursday, March 27, and Friday, March 28, during the PLA 12th National Conference. Registration fees are as follows: PLA Members—\$200; ALA Members—\$255; Nonmembers—\$295; and Students—\$75. Visit www.placonference.org for registration and more information. PLA thanks WebJunction for its support of the Virtual Conference.

Read All About It on the PLA Blog

We hope you enjoyed our in-depth coverage of the ALA Midwinter Meeting. Be sure to check out the PLA Blog (www.plablog.org) during the upcoming PLA 2008 National Conference. We're planning to deliver detailed coverage of programs, social events, exhibits, interviews, and maybe even a few podcasts! A team of intrepid, enthusiastic PLA

bloggers will fan out to bring all of the important details to our readers. If you will be at the conference and want to help blog sessions or other live events, drop us a line at contact@plablog.org and we'll give you all the details.

inclusive means of people working together on common interests. It will allow more people to self-select their level of participation without the requirements of Midwinter Meeting or Annual Conference attendance.

Proposed PLA Bylaws Changes—Frequently Asked Questions

You've heard about the proposal to change PLA bylaws (see From the President, page 7) which PLA members will vote on in the upcoming 2008 election. Here are some answers to common questions about the bylaws change. To see side-by-side versions of the bylaws with tracked changes, visit www.plablog.org. To voice your opinion about the proposed changes, visit the PLA Blog or attend one of two informational sessions that will be held during the upcoming 2008 PLA National Conference.

Q. Why is the PLA Board of Directors proposing that the membership change the bylaws?

A. To be more nimble and responsive to our members' needs. The PLA Board of Directors feels that these changes will help us to do that. It should also help us to be more inclusive to participation. Most members don't care how the organization is structured as long as the good programs and quality publications they've always enjoyed continue.

Q. What will happen to the committees?

A. Don't worry! Most committees will be replaced by a Community of Practice (CoP), which is a more

Q. How will these Communities of Practice interact?

A. Some will choose to continue meeting at the ALA Midwinter and Annual conferences and PLA will continue to provide a space for that purpose. Many will meet online in a virtual community. PLA is working with the current Technology in Public Libraries committee and the Emerging Leaders project to develop this environment. A major selling point is that to be a part of a CoP, any PLA member would simply sign up online for the communities of their choosing.

Q. What about other committees?

A. These standing committees remain: Awards, Bylaws, Budget and Finance, Nominating, National Conference, Program (for all conferences/symposia), and Publications. Advisory groups (which liaise with similar ALA groups) on Advocacy, Intellectual Freedom, and Legislation

On the Agenda

PLA 12th National Conference
March 25–29
Minneapolis

ALA Annual Conference
June 26–July 2
Anaheim, Calif.



also will remain. Also, specialized project Task Forces will be created by the Board as needed. All committees have expected outcomes; CoPs are not required to do so.

Q. What if I need to join a committee to attend a conference?

A. PLA will create a means to produce lists of participants in a CoP—for justification back home.

Q. How are these CoPs structured?

A. The structure would be up to the group, which wouldn't require a chair; volunteer leaders will help in shaping discussions. There would be no term limits in a CoP. Nor any limits to the number of CoPs. The only

requirements would be membership in PLA; and, if there is no activity in six months, the group will dissolve. Some low-interest committees may naturally whither away due to lack of interest, and we anticipate that new CoPs will be formed.

Q. Do I have to be in a CoP to submit a program proposal?

A. No. Currently programs for Annual Conference must originate from a committee; under the new plan, any member can submit a proposal.

More questions? Send an e-mail to pla@ala.org or visit the PLA blog (www.plablog.org) to join in the conversation. ■

PLA Names Preconference Luncheon Speaker

Meg Cabot, author of the popular *Princess Diaries* series, will keynote the Preconference Luncheon at PLA 2008, the 12th National Conference of the Public Library Association (PLA) on Tuesday, March 25, from noon to 1:45 P.M. Tickets for the event can be purchased at www.placonference.org.

Cabot is the author of more than forty books for both adults and teens, many of which have been bestsellers, most notably *The Princess Diaries* series, which is currently being published in more than thirty-seven countries, has sold more than five million copies worldwide, and was made into two hit Disney movies. In addition, Cabot wrote the *Mediator* and *1-800-Where-R-You* series (on which the Lifetime television series *Missing* was based), two *All-American Girl* books, *Teen Idol*, *Avalon High*, *How to Be Popular*, many historical romance novels, a series of novels written entirely in e-mail format (*Boy Next Door*, *Boy Meets Girl*, and *Every Boy's Got One*), a mystery series (*Size 12 Is Not Fat* and *Size 14 Is Not Fat Either*), and a chick-lit series called *Queen of Babble*.



JAN SANDERS is Director of the Pasadena (Calif.) Public Library; jsanders@cityofpasadena.net.

Jan is reading *The Virgin's Lover* by Philippa Gregory (for her book club) and *Good to Great* by Jim Collins (a second time, for professional development), along with his monograph, "Good to Great and the Social Sectors." She also just finished re-reading the classic *East of Eden* by John Steinbeck.

Bylaws Changes Will Create a More Inclusive PLA

Greetings from snowy Philadelphia! I am writing this on the last day of the ALA 2008 Midwinter Meeting—just barely in time for the publication date!

I hope your plans are made to join us in Minneapolis! It promises to be another stellar conference that I know you won't want to miss. Read your preliminary program carefully (or check out the online program schedule at www.placonference.org); there is much to take in.

At Midwinter Meeting, the PLA Board continued working on the restructuring of the organization. You will remember that this year-long effort was put in place in response to a number of voiced concerns from members:

- Many of our cluster committees had trouble finding participants as home libraries cut back on travel funding.
- Many had no member able to step up and serve as chair.
- Some committees had outlived their interest or usefulness.
- Some committees were felt to be redundant, given other PLA liaisons in place.
- Members said they wanted to "connect with the organization" more easily and be able to participate virtually.
- Members sometimes felt that participation and leadership was limited and not fully open to them.
- Members felt the method of being named to a committee was unnecessarily drawn out and involved too much bureaucracy.
- Members wanted a quicker response and more nimble action from the organization.

The Board heard these comments and began working with Paul Meyer of Tecker Associates, a leadership development firm working exclusively with organizations, especially nonprofits. We studied national trends, looked hard and long at our current structure and methods, and came back with this proposed revised organizational structure and plan. Since our current bylaws were designed for the "cluster model," a number of revisions will be needed. These will be presented on the spring ballot.

President-Elect Carol Sheffer has clearly outlined major alterations on her document (available at www.pla.org), so I won't repeat them here. Let me, instead, offer some highlights to the discussion.

1. The existing Board will be reduced from twenty-four members to ten, as cluster representatives will be dropped. (Current members will serve out their terms, of course.) This smaller board will meet at least four times each year, giving members more opportunities to bring their suggestions for consideration. Because the Communities of Practice conversation will be electronic, the Board has the opportunity for a stronger view of member needs and concern—and in a more timely manner.
2. Existing committees have choices: they may *disband* for lack of interest or participation, or they may *morph* into a Community of Practice (CoP). This will allow any PLA member to join any self-selected conversation immediately and without undue roadblocks. The leadership of a CoP will rise from within itself as members' own interests drive the discussion. Any PLA member (staff, library commissioner, trustee, or Friend) can join a CoP and add to the conversation, making PLA a more participatory organization and sidestepping demands for expensive travel, the delays of an appointment

- process, and other red tape. If the existing committee is an organizational infrastructure piece (nominating, budget, programming, and so forth) that committee will continue but may solicit participation electronically from the CoPs.
3. Program definition and creation will come from a broadened base as individuals, groups, CoPs, or committees can all develop and propose sessions. This is how we currently provide for our national conference, a proven success.
4. The provision of special task forces will continue. For example, the Task Force on Leadership Development will continue until their full task is complete. Other task forces will be formed as needed or as requested by members.
5. The bylaws change does not include any dues adjustment. Careful financial management allows PLA to respond technologically, without increased fees from membership at this time. It is worth noting that while the Gates Grant (+\$7 million) is a great windfall for PLA, it is project-driven. Support for this change, as for all internal PLA actions, comes from membership fees and monies generated by conferences or publications—like always.
6. An important aspect of the reorganization is the importance of the nominating process. The nominating committee will select at least two names

for every vacant board spot, keeping in mind the needs of the association. In addition, PLA members may petition for nomination by presenting a signed list of not fewer than twenty-five active members' endorsements. Thus, members have a direct path for leadership.

7. While the final timeline is still in process, committee members can be assured that their work should be continued and will not be lost. While they may be called a CoP or a task force, the conversation they are having needs to continue. The change will be that the dialog can be open to others interested or experienced in the topic. It is likely that (if these bylaws changes are passed) current committees will meet at the American Library Association (ALA) Annual Conference in Anaheim, California, to begin discussing how they wish to proceed. Space for PLA members to meet, greet, and work will be provided (as always) within the Annual Conference program.

I hope this answers many of your questions. The guiding principles for this change are providing opportunity for strong member participation and preserving an organization that responds to members' need and requests, thus being nimble and flexible.

I look forward to meeting you soon in Minneapolis. Safe journeys! ■

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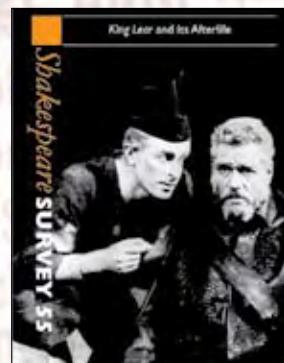
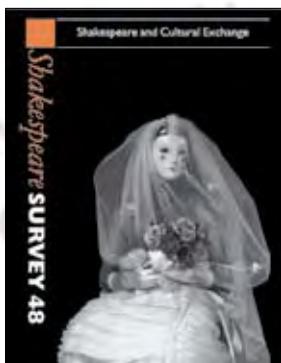
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Young Adult Services and Technology in Public Libraries

An Analysis of the 2007 Public Library Data Service

The Public Library Data Service (PLDS) is a project of the Public Library Association (PLA). Since 1988, the PLDS provides timely information on North American library finances, annual use figures, per capita measures, and technology. To coincide with the Young Adult Library Services Association's (YALSA) fiftieth anniversary, the 2007 PLDS contains a special section on young adult (YA) services. This article provides an overview of not only YA library services but also technology use in public libraries in the United States and Canada.

In 2007, 904 out of 1,672 libraries responded to the PLDS survey—a response rate of 54.1 percent.

YA Library Services

The PLDS YA survey questions focus on collections, expenditures, staff for YA services, as well as outreach to other YA service providers in the community. There have been few concerted attempts to capture YA library data at the national level. In 1994, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) released a survey on YA services in public libraries.¹ Four years later, a smaller survey, sent to only fifty of the largest public libraries in the United States, was conducted by YALSA.²

While many of the PLDS YA survey questions were based upon the NCES survey, some were revised to not only update the questions but also reflect current interest in collections and services, community involvement, and technology. Of the 904 libraries responding to the PLDS survey, 890 (98.5 percent) responded to the YA services section of the instrument.

Visit www.pla.org to advance order your copy of the 2008 PLDS Statistical Report—available in print version or database subscription. Or use the order forms on pages 78–79 of this issue.

Young Adults Defined

To better understand how libraries were already defining young adults, the PLDS survey allowed libraries to report their definition of young adults and use those criteria when reporting services. Because there is no standardized way to classify young adults, this approach was necessary to determine the range of definitions of young adults in public libraries.

YALSA defines young adults as anyone between twelve and eighteen years of age, and, accordingly, the majority (48 percent) of libraries responding defined young adults in the same manner (see figure 1).³

PLDS respondents were also asked to report the number of young adults residing within their library's legal service area. Young adults represented 10.81–13.36 percent of the public served by libraries, and the average percentage of young adults in a library's legal service area was 11.28 percent (see figure 2).

YA Services

In 1994, 89 percent of public libraries provided YA materials and/or services.⁴ Based on the 2007 PLDS survey, this figure has slipped to 86.7 percent. Libraries with larger legal service areas have a greater tendency to provide YA services than smaller libraries (see figure 3).

YA Librarians and Paraprofessionals

The ratio of YA librarian full-time equivalents (FTEs) and YA paraprofessional staff FTEs to young adults increases with the size of the legal service area (see figure 4). As would be expected, the largest libraries have more young adults in their legal service area, which results in a sig-

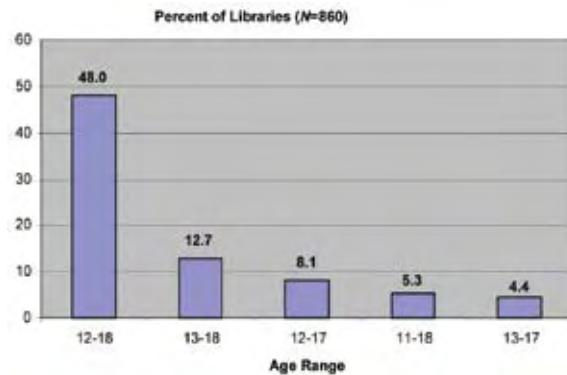


Figure 1. How Libraries Define Young Adults

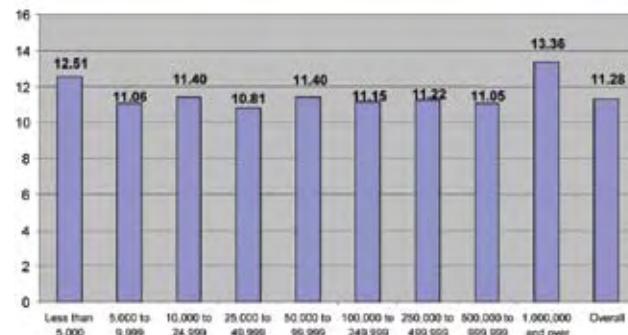


Figure 2. Percent of Young Adults in a Library's Legal Service Area

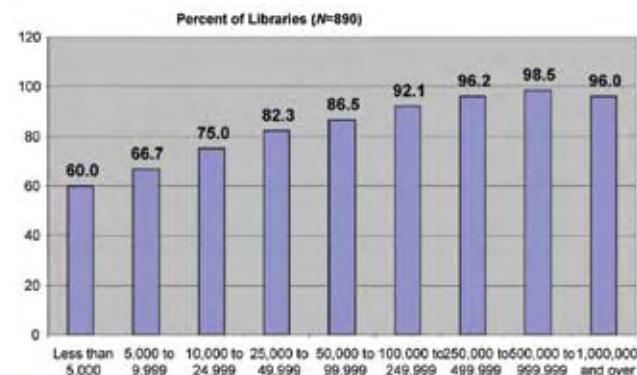


Figure 3. Libraries Offering YA Services

nificantly lower ratio of YA paraprofessional staff FTE to young adults than other public libraries. But the YA librarian FTE to young adult ratio is not significantly different.

About half (51.9 percent) of all libraries have at least one librarian FTE dedicated to YA services. Only 2.5 percent of all libraries report having no librarian FTE at the library. Similarly, 62.2 percent of libraries have at least one YA staff person, either librarian or paraprofessional. In 1994, only 11 percent of libraries had a YA librarian while only 24 percent had a youth-services specialist on staff.⁵

When comparing YA staff FTE to overall library staff FTE, almost one in four (23.7 percent) librarian FTE's are dedicated to YA services. One in eight (13.4 percent) of other library staff FTE, including paraprofessionals, clerks, pages, and non-librarian professionals, are dedicated to YA services.

As the percentage of young adults in a library's legal service area increases, the number of dedicated YA staff increases; however, the same pattern does not exist for FTE (see figure 5).

YA Materials and Expenditures

A higher proportion of young adults in a library's legal service area leads to a significant increase in the YA materials expenditures per young adult (see figure 6).

But when the YA materials expenditures are examined as a proportion of total material expenditures, the proportion *decreases* as the proportion of young adults in the legal service area increases (see figure 7). Thus in areas with higher proportions of young adults, less funding is being directed to YA services com-

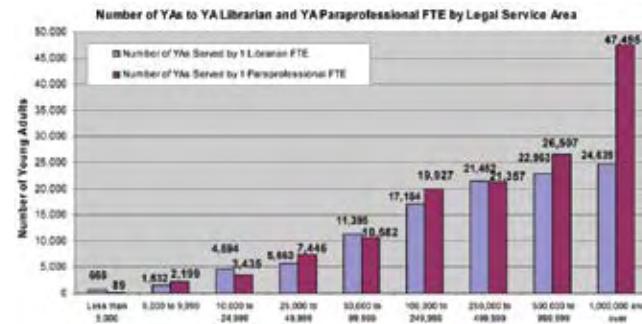


Figure 4. Number of Young Adults to YA Librarians and Paraprofessional FTE by Legal Service Area

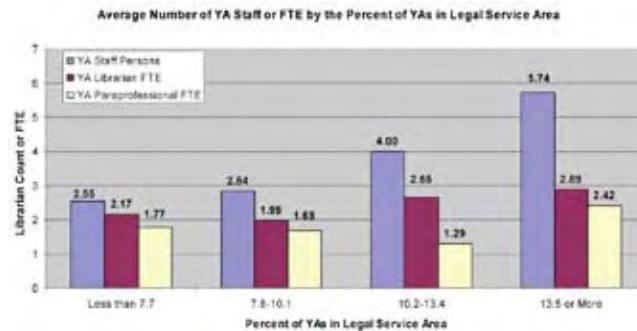


Figure 5. Average YA Staff and FTE by Percent of Young Adults in Legal Service Area

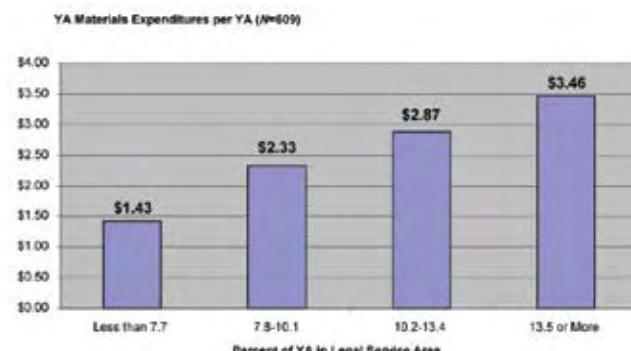


Figure 6. YA Materials Expenditures Per Young Adult by Proportion of Young Adults in the Legal Service Area

pared to legal service areas with low YA density. Therefore, though larger libraries spend more money per young adult, larger libraries devote less money to YA materials relative to other types of library materials than smaller libraries overall.

As expected, more central libraries keep their YA materials separate from other library materials, and there is a significant correlation between libraries (central or branch) that keep the materials separate and the size of the legal services area (see figure 8).

In 1994, only 58 percent of libraries housed YA materials separately from other types of library materials.⁶ The 2007 PLDS survey indicates this number has risen to 83.9 percent of central or main libraries and 72.2 percent of branch libraries keeping YA materials in a separate area.

Technology in Public Libraries

This year, the PLDS technology section was updated to reflect the ever-changing technology use in public libraries. Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tag use, electronic equipment circulation, and Web page content and functionality questions were added to the technology section.

RFID Tag Use

RFID technology has been a subject of much debate in the library field because the potential labor savings it provides contrasts with privacy concerns.⁷ About one library in ten currently uses RFID tags, and about one library in three could potentially use them, whether RFID is already in use, RFID tags have been purchased but have not been implemented, or the library has considered purchasing

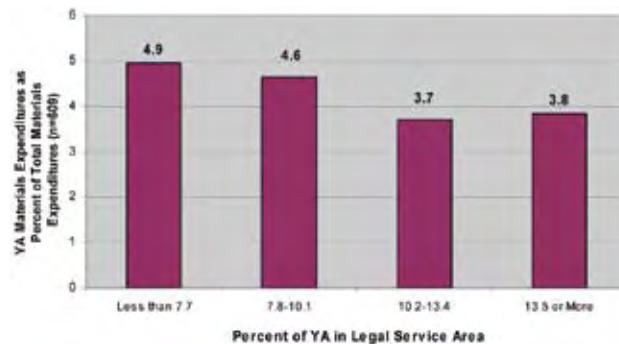


Figure 7. YA Materials Expenditures as a Proportion of Total-Materials Expenditures by the Percent of Young Adults in Legal Service Area

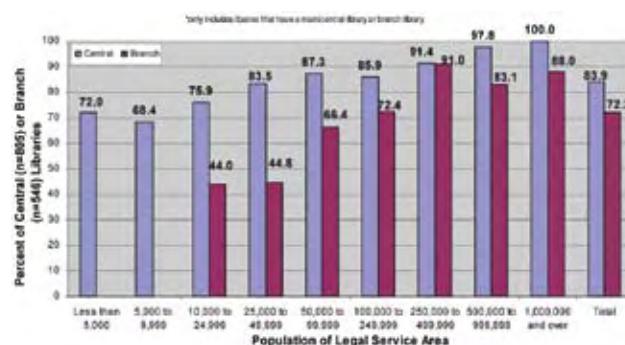


Figure 8. YA Materials in Central and Branch Libraries Kept in Distinct Areas by Legal Service Area

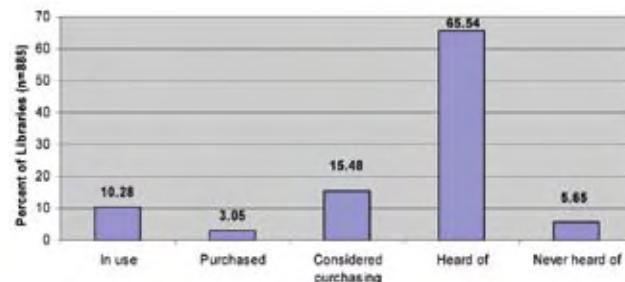


Figure 9. Public Library RFID Tag Use and Awareness in Past Year

them in the past year (see figure 9).

Three in four libraries that have never heard of RFID tags serve populations of less than twenty-five thousand and could arguably be least served by adopting RFID tags, since the “greatest barrier to common adoption of this technology in libraries and elsewhere has been the unit price of the tags.”⁸

Circulation of Electronic Equipment

Overall, 21.5 percent of libraries indicate they circulate electronic equipment of some type. Unlike other library-output measures, there are no significant associations based on library size (see figure 10).

Of those that circulate electronic equipment, 46.9 percent indicated they circulate equipment not listed in the survey question (see figure 11). The more common other types of equipment reported are displayed in figure 12.

In addition, the following electronic equipment was only mentioned by one library and not included in figure 12: portable energy meters, pedometers, digital cameras, GPS units, and a word processor. There were no libraries that mentioned other types of electronic equipment that did not also indicate having one of the listed types of equipment as well.

Web Site Content and Functionality

Overwhelmingly, almost all libraries (97.12 percent) have a Web site. Again, similar to awareness of RFID tags, almost all (23 of the 24) libraries that do not have a Web site serve populations less than 25,000.

Essentially all library Web sites

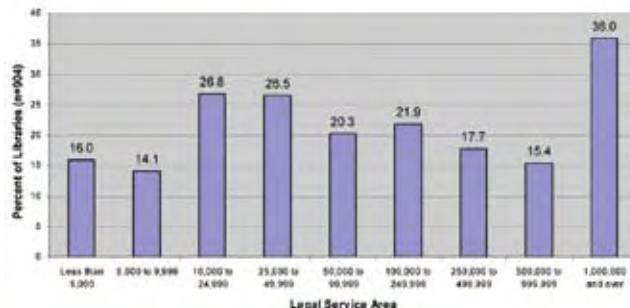


Figure 10. Percent of Libraries Circulating Electronic Equipment

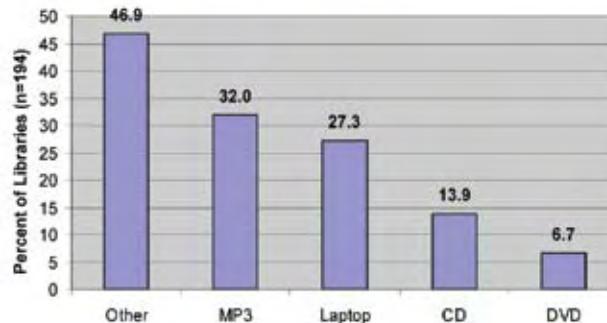


Figure 11. Public Libraries Electronic Equipment Circulation

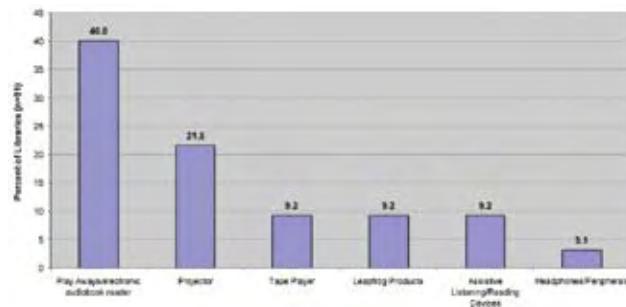


Figure 12. Other Types of Electronic Equipment Circulated

contain basic information about the library. Most also have programming information as well as access to an

OPAC/online catalog. Figure 13 displays the types of Web site features and content libraries reported. □

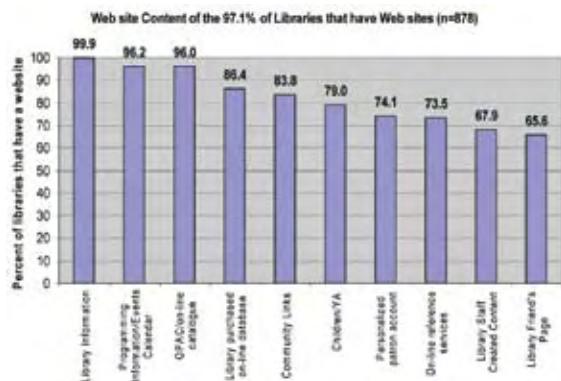


Figure 13. Library Web Site Content and Features

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2. Michael Cart, "Young Adult Library Service Redux?—Some Preliminary Findings," *Journal of Youth Services in Libraries* 11, no. 4: 391–95.
3. Young Adult Library Services Association, "YALSA Vision Statement," www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/aboutyalsab/yalsavisionstatement.htm (accessed July 7, 2007).
4. National Center for Education Statistics, "Services and Resources for Children and Young Adults in Public Libraries: Highlights," <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/frss/publications/95357/index.asp?sectionID=1>.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. See for example: Alorie Gilbert, "RFID, Coming to a Library Near You," CNET News.com, http://msn-cnet.com.com/RFID%2C+coming+to+a+library+near+you/2100-1012_3-5411657.html?tag=item (accessed July 24, 2007).
8. J. D. Archer, "An RFID Primer and Intellectual Freedom Caution," *Indiana Libraries* 26, no. 1: 21–26.

New PLA eLearning Courses Focus on Service Responses

PLA is offering eighteen new e-learning mini-courses based on the publication *Public Library Service Responses 2007* (ALA Editions, 2007). These on-demand courses will not have grades, assignments, or a set course schedule. Designed to provide participants with a starting point for implementing new service responses, the courses will offer tools to assess the current level of support for a service response in a library; identify effective programs to support a service response; develop a budget for programming that could support a service response; and assess the effect a service response would have on a library's policies. Each of the courses will include a wiki, which will allow participating librarians to share their experiences with implementing service responses and will provide an opportunity to collaborate in the creation of a comprehensive encyclopedia of effective programs that support each service response. For more information visit the PLA Web site at www.pla.org or call 1-800-545-2433, ext. 5PLA.

Get Ready for Teen Tech Week 2008

STEPHANIE ISER is Children's/Teen Librarian at the Lucile H. Bluford branch of the Kansas City Public Library. She is chair of the 2008 Teen Tech Week committee and coordinator of the Alternative Teen Services blog at www.yalibrarian.com; stephanie.iser@gmail.com. She is reading *Beige* by Cecil Castellucci and *Evolution, Me & Other Freaks of Nature* by Robin Brande.

JOSEPH J. WILK is Teen Specialist at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh; wilkj@carnegielibrary.org. He is reading *Naomi and Ely's No Kiss List* by Rachel Cohn and David Levithan and *Someday this Pain Will Be Useful to You* by Peter Cameron.

Tune in @ your library

Teen Tech Week™ (TTW) is a new initiative aimed at teens, educators, librarians, and other concerned adults for the purpose of empowering teens to become competent and ethical users of emerging technologies. The Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) launched the initiative in March 2007 to connect teens with library technology in ways that support educational, recreational, and developmental usage.

Today's teens are growing up in a shifting technological landscape, one in which new social networks have emerged, online video and photo sharing has become popularized, and information is easier to disseminate through blogs, wikis, and page builders. These new forms of content require new approaches to research and information literacy. Teens need to know that a library can be a trusted resource for accessing information in emerging formats, and that librarians are experts who can help them develop their information literacy skills to better use electronic resources effectively and efficiently.

TTW is the time to spread this message by offering programs and services that connect teens with technology in the library. The celebration encourages teens to use the library's nonprint resources such as computers, audiobooks, databases, DVDs, tabletop and video games, and CDs. Libraries everywhere can get involved with TTW by hosting a contest, display, or program that proves the library is a place for teens to explore, learn, and create in digital formats.

The 2008 TTW theme is Tune in @ your library® and will be celebrated March 2–8, 2008. This music-inspired theme can be packaged in the shape of audiobooks, podcasts, online streaming media, and music CDs. Program ideas that immediately come to mind are *Guitar Hero* playoffs, teen karaoke, iPod music sharing, and discussions about music ethics such as copyright and downloading.

Tips for Getting Started

Here are some TTW tips to get you started:

1. **Register:** It is free and easy to register your library. Registered users may opt to receive updates about contests and incentives via e-mail. Visit www.ala.org/teentechweek to register your library.

- 2. Start planning your event today:** YALSA's Teen Tech Committee has brainstormed program ideas that work for all types of libraries, including those low on tech resources. To access these resources, click on the "Teen Tech Week" section of the YALSA wiki at wikis.ala.org/yalsa/index.php/Main_Page.
- 3. Consider competing in one of several TTW contests:** You can learn more about these contests, including the Best Promotional Library Song competition, on the YALSA TTW Web site at www.ala.org/teentechweek.
- 4. Brush up on your tech skills:** YALSA's TTW Committee has

created tech guides that provide a basic introduction to new tech tools that can be used to connect with teens. Visit the TTW Web site (www.ala.org/teentechweek) to download tech guides on topics that include podcasting and setting up wikis.

Get Tech Savvy

For librarians to serve as tech mentors for teens, librarians themselves must be up-to-date on new tech tools and emerging digital formats. As part of an effort to get librarians up to speed with key tech tools, Teen Tech Week committee has created tech guides. These guides briefly

introduce emerging technologies, give a few examples of their usage with teens, and provide comprehensive resources as a starting point for becoming an expert.

"Making Music with Teens" is a featured guide that supports programming applications for the 2008 celebration. The guide was created by teen librarian Joseph Wilk, former convenor of the YALSA music and media interest group. Be sure to visit the TTW Web site to read more guides and get started with the 2008 theme, Tune in @ your library. □

Making Music with Teens: A Getting Started Guide

By Joseph J. Wilk

As the decade moves along, digital music is getting even more pervasive for teens. MP3 players let them keep almost two straight months' worth of music in their pockets. Their phones double as portable stereos. Even their shoes are becoming music devices. But this explosion in music consumption comes with another equally exciting dimension: the teen as music creator. Teens have more low-cost or free options than ever before to record, remix, and produce music—and they're taking advantage of them. Here, we'll look at one cheap and easy way to get your teens making and recording music in your library.

What You Need

- Computer (preferably a laptop for portability)
- Computer microphone (if you don't have one handy, RadioShack has microphones available for less than ten dollars)
- Computer speakers or headphones
- High-speed Internet connection
- Account with Splice Music (www.splicemusic.com)
- Free Audacity audio software (<http://audacity.sourceforge.net>)

Music, Sweet Music, in a Few Easy Steps

1. Splice Music is an online music-making program that allows people to mix and create songs without any download required. Open the program through the "Make Music" link (which also gives you a quick tutorial). Teens can then drag and drop audio
- tracks, which are used to loop and layer beats, instruments, and other sounds from the integrated Freesound Project database. Since all samples in the Freesound Project are licensed through Creative Commons, teens can freely use others' creations (see <http://wiki.creativecommons.org/FAQ> for more information). Teens can also add melodies that they create from Splice Music's virtual piano and synthesizers, as well as record simple sound loops of their own with the Splice online recording tool. Splice will automatically play all sounds at the rate necessary to fit right in with the others. If Splice's guess is imperfect, sounds can be adjusted for seamless music production.
2. Export the teen's creation to MP3 format using Splice's "mixdown" feature. Open Audacity and import the file.

3. Now the teen can record vocals, additional instrumentation, and other sounds on top of the instrumental track. Just plug the microphone into the sound card jack, make sure the microphone input is listed in Audacity's dropdown menu, and hit record. Since you might be skeptical that it's as easy as it sounds, here are some additional tips to guide the teens:

- Audacity's "play other tracks while recording new one" option allows teens to hear what's going on while singing/playing/making noise. This helps them keep in tune and stay with the rhythm of the song, which will make a big difference in the quality of their music.
- Audacity also allows users to generate a "click track," which is a metronome that plays at a specific rate. If the song has no—or no easily discernible—rhythm, the click track will help keep the teen moving with the tempo and time signature of the song.
- Try experimenting with effects to warp sound in different ways. It's fun to just play with discovering what each effect does, and how changing the different options can make a surprising difference.
- Pop filters, those black circles you often see in front of the microphone during a recording session, are very helpful for vocals—even when using computer microphones. They keep the microphone from picking up a distinct "puh" or "hsss" sound when people say their

P or S sounds. Pop filters, which normally cost around \$30, can be made on the cheap by securing pantyhose tightly over thick wire or pulling them taut inside an embroidery hoop.

- Acoustics count! The size of the room and what the walls are made of are definitely going to impact the sound of your recording. Get a fairly clean recording by putting up a sheet or blanket against the wall and moving the microphone a foot or so away from it. The idea is that the blanket will dampen the sound enough so that it doesn't go bouncing all around the room. If you are recording more in the center of the room, try putting some sort of absorbent barrier between the sound and the walls.
- Using headphones when recording keeps the sound from going back into the microphone and making a lot of noise in the process (otherwise known as feedback). Ideally, you'll be using closed-ear headphones (the kind which cup over the ears) to keep the sound from spilling back out.
- 4. Export your song to MP3 format, and enjoy!

There you have it. Your teens may already be on their way to making a demo, working on some rough sketches, or just goofing around. Regardless, they probably had some fun doing it. And even if your library has absolutely no opportunities to record music, your teens can still use Splice to put together an instrumen-

tal track. Teens who aren't interested in using samples or digital instruments can skip that step and work solely with Audacity. It's a pretty flexible system that should meet the needs of many teens.

Navigating Copyright

Copyrighting music is as simple as creating it, though proving when and by who it was created becomes an issue. In the case of online music services, registering the date of creation is often included in the process of creating music. A library can also be counted on as a neutral third party in cases of registering copyright, so consider keeping all lyrics, written music, and music files together with a register of what was created, who created it, the date it was created, and your name and signature.

As a copyright holder, your teens have privilege to all the following activities, as per the U.S. Copyright Office's "Copyright Registration for Musical Compositions":

The owner of copyright in a work has the exclusive right to make copies, to prepare derivative works, to sell or distribute copies, and to perform the work publicly. Anyone else wishing to use the work in these ways must have the permission of the author or someone who has derived rights through the author.¹

If teens used Splice Music to create their music, they choose from a series of Creative Commons licenses when saving to the site. That means the terms of copyright are different from the previous description. Use Splice Music's guide to the various licenses teens will choose from when saving music through the Splice service (www.splicemusic.com/licenses).



Teens who combine their Splice-based compositions with their original recordings retain copyright over the final product, though in a limited fashion. Teens must credit all sources of their samples from the Freesound database, in accordance with the credit/attribution guidelines.

Hosting the Creations

Teens have lots of options for hosting their music. Creating a band page on MySpace lets teens not only host their music but also build and communicate with a large potential fan base. Teens can do the same thing on Last.fm, PureVolume, and GarageBand. Keep in mind that

each site includes its own licensing terms, dictating whether people can download or stream music and what people can do with it when they get it. Make sure your teens read the terms so that they know what they're getting into.

Libraries could benefit from creating a podcast that showcases their teen's work. Upload your teen's files to Ourmedia or Podbean, and let library users from all over download your teens' creations.



For More Information

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Oland, Pamela Phillips. *The Art of Writing Great Lyrics* (New York: Allworth, 2001); \$18.95 (ISBN-13: 978-158-115093-3).
O'Reilly Digital Media Center (<http://digitalmedia.oreilly.com>).

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Contributing Editor

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Jennifer is reading *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* by J. K. Rowling, *Parnassus on Wheels* and *The Haunted Bookshop* by Christopher Morley, *The Page Turner* by David Leavitt, and *Water for Elephants* by Sara Gruen.

"Tales from the Front" is a collection of news items and innovative ideas from libraries nationwide. Send submissions to the contributing editor.

Lifelong Partners in Reading Program

The Palm Harbor (Fla.) Library requested help in offering a new, much needed community service. The library was seeking teen and adult volunteers who can read newspapers, short stories, and magazine articles to the residents of assisted-living facilities.

The concept is the brain child of Cecile Creely, volunteer coordinator, who received a request from a former library-book-club member who is now unable to read. She called to ask if there was anyone who would be willing to read to her, even if she had to pay for the service. Unfortunately, the library didn't offer anything like this. So Cecile devised the Lifelong Partners in Reading Program—a great way to help people in need and also fill the numerous requests for community-service hours she receives from teens. This new program will satisfy the requirements of the Bright Futures Scholarship, National Honor Society, and other high school assignments. The minimum age is fourteen.

Coral Oaks Assisted Living Center has agreed to be the first to offer this service to its residents. If it goes well, the library plans to offer it to other assisted-living facilities.

For more information, contact Debbie Phillips at phreggie@tampabay.rr.com or call (727) 784-3332, ext. 216.

"E.T. Phone Home"

This famous line from *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial*, the movie dealing with communication between Earth and the universe, took on a whole other meaning as kids standing in Elgin, Illinois, talked to the International Space Station (ISS). Gail Borden Public Library staff members were notified that, for the first time ever, kids in a library can talk directly to the ISS. The young people of this area had approximately ten minutes to speak directly to NASA astronaut Clayton Anderson as he glided overhead—horizon to horizon—on the ISS, which is orbiting two hundred miles above the earth at more than seventeen thousand miles per hour.

Unlike E.T., the youth at the library did not speak by phone, but by ham radio connection. Several days prior to the contact, Greg Braun of Geneva and John Spasojevich of Montgomery, from the Fox Valley Amateur Radio Society, climbed to the highest flat roof of the library and placed antennas and snake cables down through a trap door to set up the library's own command central to capture the communication. Through the combination of the Space: Dare to Dream exhibit at the library and the resulting communications from people reading the local press, the Gail Borden Public Library was granted a rare Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) contact.



International Space Station

Ham radio technology made this communication possible. The ARISS program was designed in 1983 for schools. In the last seven years of ARISS, there have been 306 contacts. Schools in the United States, in addition to other organizations worldwide, have been the main beneficiaries of this project. "You're the first library," ARISS mentor Charlie Sufana informed library staff.

Hal Getzelman, a 1972 Elgin High School graduate, was instrumental in bringing this wonderful opportunity to fruition. He is lead CAPCOM (capsule communicator) for the ISS, responsible for communicating with the Expedition Crew and helping other ISS CAPCOMs. It is his job to coordinate communications with the crew on the ISS on a daily basis. When NASA's e-roundup of NASA news indicated that his hometown and the library of his youth were hosting a major space exhibit, Getzelman contacted the library and asked, "How can I help?"

Children who live in the Gail Borden library district or who attend a school in the library district were invited to submit their questions for Clay Anderson or Hal Getzelman either via the library's Web site or in person at the Youth Desk.

For more information, contact Denise Raleigh, Director of Marketing, Development and

Communications, Gail Borden Public Library District, at (847) 429-5981, or visit www.gailborden.info.

Library Takes Poetry to the Streets

When a group of young library patrons signed up for a new after-school library program, they hardly imagined seeing their own poetry published and displayed on the streets of Providence, Rhode Island.

But that's just what has happened for each of the twenty-five middle and high school-aged library patrons who participated in Providence Public Library's Poetry Lives in Providence—a unique learning program offered to Providence youth last spring.

Eleanor Kaplan, mother of Aaron (see photo), explained, "My son does a great deal of writing, but this program helped him to expand his creative thinking. Kate shared many new techniques for him to use to look beyond his normal writing process," said Kaplan.

Kate Schapira was the poet educator at Smith Hill Branch Library, where Aaron took part. "I really have enjoyed working with such smart, brave, and inventive kids, and was



Aaron Kaplan reading one of his poems at Smith Hill Branch Library during a community poetry reading.

glad to be doing this in conjunction with two of my favorite services: public transportation and the public library," said Schapira.

"We are delighted that we can showcase poetry by some of the City's talented young people on our buses," said Karen Mensel, the Rhode Island Parent-Teacher Association's (RIPTA) director of marketing and communications.

The program was made possible by a \$7,500 National Endowment for the Arts grant. The young poets' works have been officially published, not only in a seventy-five-poem *Youth Poets Poetry Anthology* available in print, but was seen riding around on the backs of twenty-one RIPTA buses.

"This youth poetry project is just one example of how the Library is able to work innovatively to fund and deliver valuable literacy programs and services to Providence's youth, particularly during the critical after-school hours," library director Dale Thompson said.

For more information, contact Tonia Mason at (401) 455-8090.

Training the Next Generation of Librarians

For the past three years, a lot of people have asked Samantha Marker why she would ever want to become a librarian. In May, Marker graduated from Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey, with a Masters of Arts in School and Public Librarianship, and it is a decision she does not regret. "It's a very common question," the 29-year-old Wallingford, Pennsylvania, native explains, "and sadly, a question that people are asking because they have a very misinformed perspective about libraries and librarians. I now

work in one of the most fascinating and most important professions we have in this country."

As Marker studied for her new profession, one of the most significant things that helped her prepare was an internship at the Mount Laurel (N.J.) Library. This program has been in existence for many years and, according to assistant director Kathy Schalk-Greene, the Mount Laurel Library Internship Program provides a number of important values for the library student.

"We are looking for a one-year commitment to the library, are interested in students who have already completed a few classes, and who have a sincere interest in working in the public library environment. We offer a paid internship with a variety of experiences in different areas of librarianship, including children's, reference, and public programming. Once [students complete] their Master's degree, they may remain as an intern for up to six months after graduation."

"We usually hire two interns at a time," Schalk-Greene continues. "The student has the job title of Library Associate and during the year the student works with us, he [or] she is given the real-life experience of a working librarian. What we, as the library, gain are the energy and the freshness of new ideas that the student brings to our staff, administration, and customers. Because our library is nationally known through our Trading Spaces: Reinventing the Library Project (www.sjrlc.org/tradingspaces), when we advertise openings for new interns, we receive many applications, which makes our selection process very competitive."

Marker began her internship in January 2006, and in March of this year she became a full-time librар-



Librarian Samantha Marker

ian. What attracted her to the Mount Laurel Library Program was the unique way in which they serve their customers. The library is one of the pioneers

of a progressive approach to public librarianship, and the Trading Spaces Project has been recognized throughout the country. It uses the merchandising concept of displaying materials and customer service, many of the tools borrowed from the retail bookstore industry. Mount Laurel Library features a spacious interior design that includes a café, an extensive DVD and CD collection, a regionally recognized business reference center, a teen center, and a large children's department with play area. It also offers an extensive range of programs and special events throughout the year.

"Prior to becoming a librarian, in addition to being an English teacher, I was also a sales manager at Borders," Marker explains, "and I really understood how the retail approach could successfully work in a public library to better serve customers of all ages. This is one of the main things that really attracted me to the Mount Laurel Library program. The internship program allowed me to apply my retail experience as well as my experience as a teacher to developing new programs with the teens. It has been an unbelievable experience so far, and I am very grateful that I was chosen to become one of the two interns this year."

For more information on the Mount Laurel Library or its Internship Program for Library Students, call (856) 234-7319, or visit www.mtlaurel.lib.nj.us.

Amazon.com Wish List First Loan Program

Thousands of people are on their library's waiting lists to check out popular books and the Fairfax County (Va.) Public Library is not always able to buy enough copies to satisfy demand. Now patrons can help shorten the waiting lists for themselves and others through Amazon.com's First Loan program.

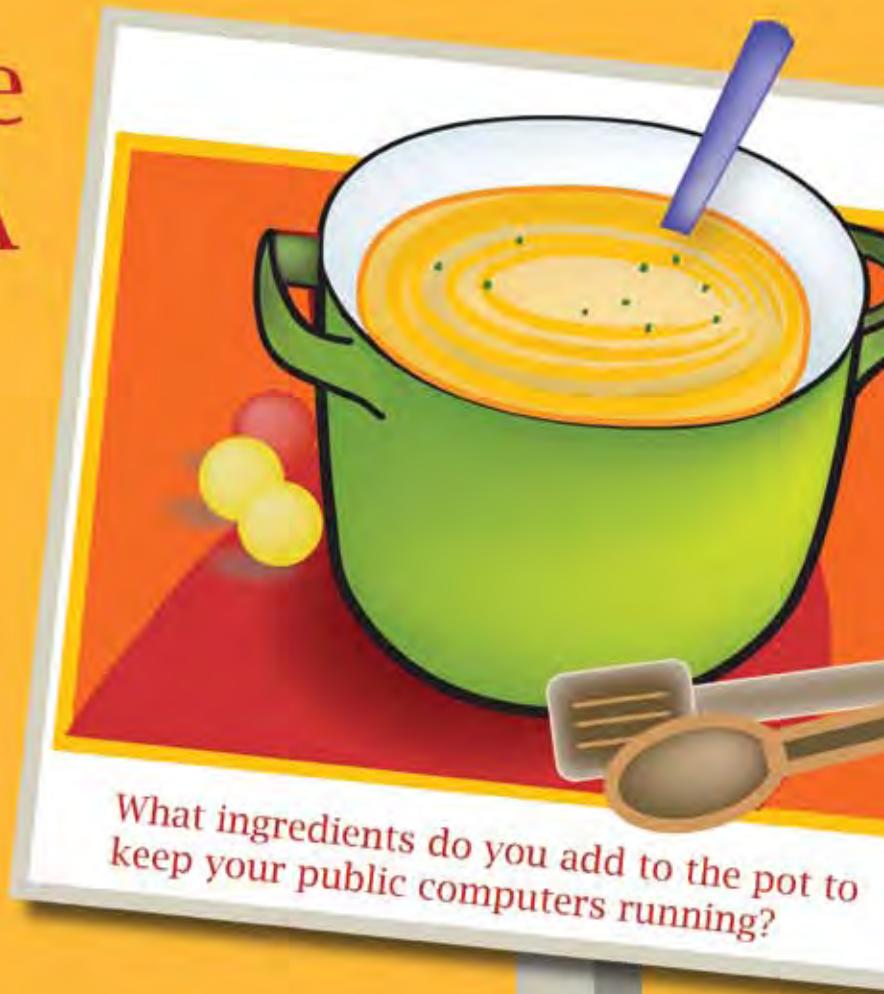
Library specialists have created a list of high-demand books that can be purchased through a special Amazon Wish List. By donating one of these books to the library, patrons can be sure they are meeting an immediate and specific need. (Note: although Amazon will suggest additional books for consideration, the library asks that patrons not purchase books that aren't specifically requested on the Wish List.)

Books purchased on the library's Amazon Wish List will be mailed directly to the library's book-processing center. The library will place a sticker on each book letting future readers know it was a gift. Once the book is cataloged, the purchaser will receive notice that the "first loan" book is on hold for them! In addition, the donation will be tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

For more information on donating a book through the Amazon Wish List program, call (703) 324-8300, or write info@fcplfoundation.org. □

Librarians Are Cooking Up A Storm!

What's your
recipe
for **SUCCESS**?



What ingredients do you add to the pot to keep your public computers running?

At the Suwannee River Regional Library system in Live Oak, Florida, they simmer their broth with **Deep Freeze**. Other libraries add a generous helping of **FORTRES** seasoning. Some invite volunteer **cooks** into the kitchen or develop robust meal plans.

The MaintainIT Project is gathering practical tips and techniques from libraries about how to maintain public computers. These stories will be the main ingredient in easy-to-use Cookbooks, distributed free to public libraries.

MaintainIT

What's your recipe for success?
Tell Us: www.maintainITproject.org

The MaintainIT Project is a part of TechSoup (www.techsoup.org), a nonprofit serving fellow nonprofits and public libraries with technology information, resources, and product donations. The MaintainIT Project is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.



NANCI MILONE HILL is the Head of Reference and Information Services at the Nevins Memorial Library in Methuen, Mass.

Nanci is reading *The Third Angel* by Alice Hoffman and *Voyager* by Diana Gabaldon.

"Perspectives" offers varied viewpoints on subjects of interest to the public library profession.

Teens— Perpetual Problem, or Golden Opportunity?

Some time ago, I sent out a call for essays on the ways in which we serve teens in our libraries. I started my plea with these words: "Teens. Can't live with 'em, can't shoot 'em." I received a response from one upset youth services librarian, declaring that, as a former teen librarian, I should have known better than to make such a statement. I apologized, of course. Those words were meant as a form of humor to illustrate the frustrations that public libraries face as they try to service this unique age group. Many of us champion the young-adult cause, but we also realize that we are often fighting an uphill battle with our coworkers and administration. We know that our coworkers do not always have the same tolerance level that we do, and (let's face it) not all the teens who come to the library are the easiest kids to deal with. How do we hook them? How do we prove the need for teen services and get everyone in our library to buy into the idea? I hope the essays that follow will provide you with some ideas for servicing teens in your libraries.

Reaching Out to Teens in Central Massachusetts Libraries

MAUREEN AMBROSINO, YOUTH SERVICES CONSULTANT, CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEM, SHREWSBURY, (MASS.); MAMBROSINO@CMRLS.ORG

Librarians know, from personal experience and articles in library literature, that young adults have specific library-service needs. Unfortunately, teenag-

ers often don't have their needs met as they transition from the Children's Room to the Adult Services and Reference Departments. Sometimes that gap in services is caused by a lack of knowledge—of adolescent development, of literature for teens and how to get them to read it, of pop culture and teen lingo, or just how to relate to teens in general. Other times it's caused by fear. Let's face it, confronting a group of rowdy teenagers who are congregated outside the front door, talking loudly, laughing, and showing off for each other can strike fear into library staff working during after-school hours. "We just don't know what to do with them" was a common message I was hearing from Central Massachusetts libraries large and small.

To alleviate some of these problems, I declared 2007 to be the Year of the Teen. Using federal Library Services and Technology Act funds, provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, I have spent the last year bringing in national experts to teach librarians about this challenging, exciting age group.

The year-long project started with a session on adolescent development to help librarians understand developmentally appropriate behavior and how library services and policies can meet the needs of teens and "tweens" (younger teens, generally between the ages of eleven and thirteen). The afternoon session featured a panel discussion with members of other teen-serving organizations, including City Year Boston, Reel Vision (a video-production program for urban teens), and Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services, so participants could see that others face the same challenges we do—and see what their solutions are. Common

issues that came up included attracting teens to our programs, dealing with disruptive behavior, and solving transportation woes. It is interesting to note that our solutions were often similar. Other organizations rely on input from their teen participants to plan activities, and all the panelists agreed that if you approach teens with respect, you get respect in return. A teen on the panel, from City Year Boston, spoke eloquently about his involvement with the organization and how important it is for adults to see teens as people and not, in his words, "as criminals."

The kickoff was followed by a program presented by the Search Institute (www.search-institute.org) on the "40 Developmental Assets for Adolescents"—a set of experiences and qualities that young people need to grow up healthy, caring, and responsible. The asset framework was created by researchers who specialize in healthy adolescent development and is a scientific framework that can be used as a foundation for library programs and services to youth. One librarian who attended the workshop commented that she had heard about the 40 Assets continually at conferences and other programs, but never really "got" it until this session.

Other workshops through the year focused on teen-advisory boards, technology, reaching reluctant teen readers, and designing teen space in the library. The project also included a component on writing a Teen Services Action Plan, which could be incorporated into a library's long-range plan and later used to apply for grant funding.

There have been two notable outcomes of the project. First, librarians were polled in late spring to find out how many would offer a teen summer reading program. In 2006, about

eight of the seventy-two public libraries in the region offered a program specifically for teens. Because of the heightened awareness of the need for this type of program, and the training they received through the project, twenty-three libraries offered a program this summer. That figure was well beyond the sixteen we had expected at the start of the project.

The second outcome has been an increase in year-round teen programming in our libraries. Staff members realize the importance of having tween-only and teen-only programs, and several approached the regional library system to ask about a purchase of video-game consoles and accessories for loan to libraries. Two Playstation 2 consoles were purchased, as well as *Dance Dance Revolution (DDR)* and *Guitar Hero* games and controllers. As soon as they were ready for checkout, librarians started requesting them and they were checked out solid from January through the summer. We added a Nintendo Wii console and games to help alleviate the demand, but it, too, was booked solid. The equipment was purchased with local funds and has gone a long way toward building assets and making libraries into welcoming places for teenagers in central Massachusetts. Purchasing decisions were made with the help of the regional library system's Youth Services Advisory Committee, a group of eighteen public and school librarians who work with children and teens.

A librarian who wrote a letter of support for the project had this to say about the gaming gear: "First of all, thank you so much for purchasing *Guitar Hero* and *DDR* for our region. I think it is a wonderful way to get teens to the library. Parents were very appreciative and said it was great that

the library was doing something for teens. They even said this is an event their teens wanted to come to and that the town really didn't have anything else for teens to do. . . . You have really revved things up."

When we approached the end of the grant cycle in September and had some funds left, we were able to add more Playstation 2 consoles, more games, guitars, and dance pads, another Wii, a karaoke game, and some Nintendo DS Lite handheld systems. We heard from librarians that crowd control during the game nights was sometimes an issue, so we hope that the DS Lites will keep the teens busy while they wait. Our October workshop for librarians on the connection of gaming to literacy helped show skeptics that gaming is a service that libraries should be offering.

Now that the Year of the Teen is coming to a close, it is inspiring to hear the success stories and to know that tweens and teens all over the state are discovering that their library is a great place to go. Even more rewarding is the knowledge that librarians who once feared teenagers, or didn't understand them, are welcoming them into their libraries. Library staff is now empowered to interact with young people in positive ways.

Teenagers—Cultivating the Next Generation of Library Users

GORDON SOUTHERN, DIRECTOR, WALTON AND TIPTON TOWNSHIP PUBLIC LIBRARY, WALTON, IND.; WALTONLIBRARY@WALTON.LIB.IN.US

At the Walton Public Library we think teenagers are the cat's meow. We take every opportunity to connect to them and to make them welcome in the library.

On game nights the seventh, eighth, and ninth graders are encouraged to stop by the library between school and game time to relax in our teen room, "The Walton Zone." The Walton Zone was established after surveying young teens on what they want from their library. It has comfortable seating, school banners, computers with Internet access, neon signs, and lots of books and magazines for the teen or teen at heart. Plus, it has a sense of privacy (we watch via camera). For more work-minded teens, we maintain a study table to which the teens can go to do homework or get help from a certified teacher. In addition to the study-table teacher, we have four retired teachers who regularly do after-school tutoring.

The library stays open late so that older teens can come after practice to study, do research, or just chat. Computers are available, as are certified teachers and programs of interest.

Our Friends group regularly advertises the library in the yearbook, school newspaper, and at events the teens attend. I and the Friends are in the school regularly to talk with the students and to make connections. The Friends also help the students with scholarship money and opportunities for public service.

While teens-to-be are in elementary school, we bring them to the library monthly for instruction. By the end of sixth grade most students are good at researching as well as finding recreational books. We hope that—apart from educating students—we are making students comfortable with visiting and using the library.

Teens like food, fun, and friends. Often after school we will make popcorn and furnish drinks for the teens and preteens present in the

library. Nothing says "we want you to be here" like a little social time. Teens like to talk, so we don't keep the teen room especially quiet, but allow them to converse and interact as long it doesn't bother others next door.

The library has sponsored musical groups and bands in the park for young adults as well as sports teams. This may not circulate a lot of books, but does cause the young adults to have positive feelings toward the library.

We know teens are our future—a future we cannot afford to lose.

Luring Teens into the Library

NIKKI EHLDERS, DIRECTOR, HUMBOLDT PUBLIC LIBRARY, HUMBOLDT, IOWA; DIRECTOR@HUMBOLDTPUBLICLIBRARY.COM

In our town of 4,500 we are blessed with both a middle school and an upper elementary school within walking distance of the public library. The young adults (we call them teens) would often congregate in the library after school. When the school district began an early-every-Wednesday dismissal, we could either chase them out or challenge them to stay and fit in. About that same time, we had installed a brand-new, gullible YA librarian. I told her to wow them with possibilities.

Our first activity was *Dance Dance Revolution (DDR)* three years ago. It was enthusiastically received. We had sessions several afternoons each week. We developed a core group of kids who came regularly. As they grew up they began to replace graduating seniors on our Teen Advisory Board (TAB). By that time they were already library fans. They signed up for our Teen Summer Reading Program and were hooked by the time the next school year rolled around.

We welcome teens and we let them know that they are valued. We give them a place to gather, a place to feel comfortable. We listen to them. We solicit their ideas. In return, they enhance our library with their vitality and energy.

YA librarian Demi Johnson is responsible for most of the successes of our program. She attends the teens' school activities, supporting their musical, theoric, and athletic endeavors. She is especially skilled at listening. They seek her out to share both their trials and their triumphs. The first full fiscal year of her reign YA circulation jumped 65 percent.

At the release of the latest *Harry Potter* movie, Demi met with the teens at the local theater at midnight. They waited in line, shared *Harry Potter* bookmarks with others and let the whole crowd know that library isn't such a frumpy old place.

For two years now, part of our summer reading program is a film festival of teen-made short movies. Last year's entries in our scary-movie contest were, surprisingly, skillfully done. This year we are awaiting a couple of films still in editing. If we don't get around to having the festival until winter vacation, we will still enjoy them. Teens move at their own pace.

DDR has lost some of its appeal. We added *Guitar Hero* to our repertoire. Our middle school has a wonderful guitar program, which has encouraged both the talented and the merely enthusiastic guitar player. To avoid moving the boxy old television set up the elevator from storage, we added a large whiteboard to the teen space. Using our multi-media projector and the Playstation 2, we no longer need the TV. As soon as Playstation 3's debut was announced, the teens began to yearn for it. Now that it is released one will

be able to purchase *Rock Band*—not just guitars, but a whole band. Yippee! Realizing that such a purchase might not fit into our budget, the teens have begun fundraising. They have sold two cases of "Book Worms" (gummy-worm candy), raising about one hundred dollars. Their next fundraiser is selling five-dollar henna tattoos. I was the first paying customer. When Natalee, our summer intern, left for college, I was forced to recruit a new tattoo artist. I was fortunate to find a willing volunteer. She starts tomorrow.

This summer a newspaper in a larger nearby town wrote an article about our TAB. The kids were quoted saying that we "lure" teens in with *DDR* and *Guitar Hero*, allowing the TAB members to "pounce" on unsuspecting players waiting their turns at gaming to introduce them to our books. Internet-gaming sites picked up on the article. We were the toast of the Web for our fifteen minutes of fame. I read one Web discussion questioning whether this might have been the library director's original intent or if increased circulation was a byproduct of the kids having fun in the library. My only intent was to keep them corralled into one area of the library and out from underfoot. If the public library were to be thought of by teens as less off-putting and more welcoming, that was all I had hoped for.

Our teens are rarely quiet in the library, but we have had only one complaint about the noise they make. That same patron is still complaining about new library car-

pet installed three years ago. Most patrons, even the elderly, are thrilled to see teens using and enjoying the library. When we began open-mic nights, we didn't push our luck. We scheduled them for evenings after close. I attended one open-mic night. I came late, hoping to just see a few minutes at the end. After two hours the music was still going strong and loud. A crowd of thirty was gathered in our small teen corner. Amplifiers were turned up and our old Carnegie was rocking! Many parents attend to see their kids perform. One dad booted his own son out from behind the drums to show us all how to play "Wild Thing." I've never heard it done better.

TAB plays a part in book, CD, and DVD selection. They also assist in weeding the collection (our shelf space is limited). I'd trust the opinion of a TAB member over *Middle and Junior High School Library Catalog* any day. If kids in our town won't read it, we move it out to make way for something they will.

One year we received a bequest just at budget time; I quickly squeezed in a line item to redecorate the YA area. TAB carefully pored over catalogs and color charts. I was (gulp!) willing to let them paint the area day-glo orange with fluorescent furniture. I was shocked and pleased with their earth-toned easy chairs and cherry and wrought iron café tables. They were so thrifty that we had enough money to spare to purchase a laptop OPAC for their space.

We welcome teens and we let them know that they are valued.

We give them a place to gather, a place to feel comfortable. We listen to them. We solicit their ideas. In return, they enhance our library with their vitality and energy.

News Flash: Teens (305.235) Are Different!

JOHN LEONARD, CIRCULATION ASSISTANT, ASHLAND (MASS.) PUBLIC LIBRARY; JLEONARD@MINLIB.NET

A boy of about 11 or 12 bursts in the front door late one afternoon and says, "I need a computer."

The librarian repeats this request back to him, prompting him to fill in the missing word, "I need a computer . . ."

Confused, the boy says, "I need a computer . . . now?"

The librarian shakes her head, laughs, and turns to go back to checking-in returned items. But just when she is about to give up hope, the boy's face lights up. He says, "I need a computer, PLEASE!"

It doesn't always go like that. I wish it did. Examples abound of less-than-ideal exchanges between library staff and middle- or high-school students. In Maplewood, N.J., things got so bad with disruptive teens this time last year that the town almost closed the library after school let out.

Anyone who subscribes to the PubLib electronic discussion group can read similar stories from across the United States and Canada. A lot of them go something like, "We're a small library in a town without much else for kids to do after school. We moved into a new facility (six months/one year/two years) ago, and since we opened up, we've been inundated with unruly kids. Can anyone tell us how to handle them?"

Things were pretty bad here, too, not so long ago, but the vignette at the beginning of this article, based on a true story, gives me reason to hope; I still have faith, even when kids seem to make progress one day and backslide the next. With older kids these days (as it was in my day), the guiding principle is "two steps forward, one step back; next come several minor skirmishes, then a complete retreat, followed by a truce, then a tentative reconciliation." And no surrender—from either side.

Like many of our PubLib colleagues, we moved from a cramped, out-of-the-way, temporary location to our new, permanent building in October 2005. Within a few days, Ashland's more streetwise youths adopted the new library as their hangout, acting like they owned the place. Maplewood's teens vandalized and terrorized their library, tagging it with graffiti, urinating on the bathroom floor, fighting, and more, according to the *New York Times*. The kids in Ashland took a more genteel approach, creatively rearranging the letters on the message board in our lobby to spell . . . well, you know.

From that point on, things took a turn for the worse. More serious incidents have occurred, leading to arrests, charges, court dates, and newspaper articles.

Despite these unfortunate events, we have never contemplated closing in the afternoon or any other time. Doing so would punish the majority of young people who use our library as it was intended: the manga fanatics who check out a dozen titles at a time; the kids who devour J. K. Rowling, Meg Cabot, Gary Paulsen, and Edward Bloor; the *Runescape* enthusiasts who bond over this strange game the way kids bonded over *Dungeons and Dragons* thirty years ago.

Even so, we have been at our wits' end trying to figure how to connect with some of the "at-risk" youth who come through our doors. So I did what any sensible person in this situation would do: I went to Google, and I learned a few things.

As I mentioned in the title of this piece, teens are different. They resemble adults the way the word *adolescent* resembles the word *adult*: it looks a lot like *adult*, but there's more noise going on inside. And where does all that noise come from? All the extra synapses in teens' growing brains misdirecting and garbling thoughts, the same way e-mails become incomprehensible after they've made their way through tens of thousands of inboxes.

Teens have extra synapses in the parts of their brains that govern choice and weigh risk, according to a 2005 CNN report. This synaptic surplus does not help them exercise good judgment; it only makes the decision-making process less efficient. As teens mature and these unnecessary synapses die off, that process improves.

There are a few key areas in which libraries can partner with schools, social service agencies, and any other entities with a role in the development of young adults. To avoid mission creep, I will limit those areas to the following four:

1. Manners. This is really quite simple: The art of good manners comes down to simply not making other people feel bad—worthless, unappreciated, or unworthy of respect.

I never thought I'd be saying this, but I think educators should emphasize the fundamental elements of polite social interaction at least as much as they hammer home the importance of math, science, and sports. I used to play bass

Learning teens' names not only helps me develop a better rapport with them, but it also lets them know I am interested in them, that I value them as human beings.

in a punk-rock band, and it may surprise you to learn that the same rules of behavior that apply in the larger world also apply in the music world. It takes an enormous amount of effort to pull off a tour or a single show, to record an album or even a single song. If you don't show at least a little gratitude to the people who help make these things possible, you won't get very far.

We should teach kids to at least get used to the idea of saying such basic phrases as "excuse me," "please," and "thank you." (The hard part is helping them learn how to handle it when other people treat them rudely.)

We need to start as early as possible. In the Children's Room, I see lots of educational materials come across the desk—the *Baby Einsteins*, the *Reader Rabbits*, the *JumpStarts* and the like. That's fine, but there's not nearly as much material as I'd like to see on how to get along with others. The only title that comes to mind at the moment is *The Berenstain Bears Get the Gimmies*.

2. Internet addiction. This is going to be huge, for children and grown-ups alike. There's no other way to put it. I have seen parents come in the library begging their children to get off the computer. Before we imposed two-hour limits on our public computers, some kids would spend the entire day online. If we asked one kid to take a break so someone else could get on, he or she would look lost, like a sheep separated from the virtual herd, despite being surrounded by books

to explore. We are going to have to entice young people back to the stacks, get them to slow down and relax, and show them some alternative to the sensory overload they have grown used to on the Web.

3. Sex. The Internet exposes children to explicit depictions of sexual activity more easily than ever before. It gives them the mistaken impression that these activities take place all the time, that everyone does them, and that they should, too. Someone needs to counter these distortions. Why not us?

4. Peer pressure. The 2005 CNN story goes on to say that teens tend to exercise worse judgment in groups than they do on their own. A high-school-age boy performed well in a driving simulator by himself but crashed the virtual car when his friends joined him. Real-world examples give me just as much cause for concern. One young man recently told me that he jumped out of a moving vehicle because the driver told him to.

A Ray of Hope?

A front-page story in a recent issue of the *Ashland Tab* discusses how our town and neighboring Framingham will split a \$100,000 federal grant to address gang activity. That's a positive sign. We hope we can help teens find better things to do than jump out of moving vehicles, just because someone told them to.

Teens: A Name Can Make a Difference

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Labeling pre-adult people is nothing new. Even the early Greeks made note of the differences among people who were in the stages we might normally call puberty (generally thought to be around ages thirteen to nineteen). In my own lifetime, I've heard people of this age group labeled as adolescents, teenagers, youth, young people, young adults, and teens. I've also heard them labeled as troublemakers, rebels, juvenile delinquents, hoodlums, and headaches. All of the various labels have been designated by adults, of course, since teenagers seldom refer to themselves by a unique title. It seems that every generation debates what to call this age group. Officially speaking, within the library world we call them young adults and identify them as people between the ages of twelve and eighteen (according to Young Adult Library Services Association, the American Library Association's teen division).

I prefer to call teens something different. I prefer to call them by their names. Dashawn, Coydi, Tyler, Brooke, Cezarey, Matthew, and Mandy . . . these are just a few of the teens that frequent the Teen Zone at my library. Learning their names not only helps me develop a better rapport with them, but it also lets them know I am interested in them, that I value them as human beings. It is

such a small task, really—learning someone's name. But for many of the teens, it is an extremely impressive act. "You remembered my name!" they often tell me when I say hello to them individually. "How do you remember everybody's name?" one of them asked me, knowing that I deal with literally hundreds of teens within my role as a teen services librarian. The truth is that I don't. I often have to ask three or four times before I can recall a student's name. Sometimes I have to write down the name and make a conscious effort to remember it. But it's worth it. The teens see that knowing them by name is important to me. Calling teens by their individual names shows them respect, which is what most teens want, and it's the start of developing a rapport with them.

In addition to respecting teens, libraries should also appreciate them. I recall one librarian who complained, "My library is full of teens after school. They take over the computers. They block the magazine racks. They talk." I responded with, "Wow! What a great situation you have there!" The librarian thought I was mocking her, but I wasn't. What better place for teens to congregate than at their local public library? We should welcome those teens into our libraries! On any given day after school, my library has fifty to sixty teens in its Teen Zone. The students talk, do homework, and get on the library computers and their laptops to do research or play online games. They play chess, read, and add a charge of energy unlike any other situation in the library. I love having them at the library, knowing that they prefer to "hang" here than at coffee shops or malls. On countless occasions I've heard students comment, "This library is so cool!" Having these students at the library

every day means I have a regular audience. It only makes sense to take a group like this and empower them.

Allowing teens to offer their input can be the first step toward empowering them. A regular gathering of teens at the library can be a core group to serve on an advisory board.

Teens love surveys, and I have often distributed questionnaires about magazine options, program ideas, and even food items to serve in the library's café. The teens are eager to offer their opinions, and they develop a sense of ownership in the library when they realize the library takes their ideas seriously. Because of the ownership factor, many of the teens ask to serve as volunteers at the library. Some of them have created student-led groups that have become successful library programs. They've led the anime/manga club, acted in readers' theaters, sponsored *Guitar Hero* tournaments, and spoken on panels.

Not only should libraries take the service these teen students offer, but also we should willingly serve those students. Taking their inquiries seriously shows that we appreciate and respect the teens. Not treating them as "kids," but as the adults they are becoming, shows we view them as valuable users of our library. Guiding them with research, providing homework help, allowing them study areas, and welcoming them into our libraries are some basic ways libraries can serve this age group.

Now that some of the teens at my library are turning eighteen, they are looking for ways to continue serving the library through adult programs. Some of them have already said they intend to continue as volunteers here. They are taking their student-led groups and finding ways to convert those programs into adult groups, such as an anime/manga

group for over-eighteen people. They are asking if it's okay for them to attend the adult book discussion groups. (Of course it's okay!) They're seeking employment within the library setting.

A few teens have since grown and moved away. I've heard from them. They've let me know that the first thing they do when they move to a new location is track down the local public library. They've told me that they've asked about programs and ways to volunteer at these new libraries.

By respecting, appreciating, empowering, and serving teens, libraries can be assured of future adults who will continue to love their libraries, eagerly visit and support them, volunteer at them, and view them as places of fond memories and lifelong learning. Develop partnerships with these library users in their younger years, and they'll remain faithful library users and supporters as they grow older.

The Adventure Begins

**MARY HOLMES, YOUTH PROGRAMS COORDINATOR,
VINEYARD HAVEN (MASS.) PUBLIC LIBRARY**

This is my first month on the job as a YA librarian. I stumbled here. The truth is I never planned on being a YA librarian, but here I am. So while this is an experiment for me, the YA librarian role is a good fit for my education, my skills, and my life philosophy: embracing happenstance even when uncomfortable. I have an undergraduate degree in film, a Bachelor of Education, and Masters of Education. I am a former English-as-a-second-language English teacher with qualifications in history and special education. In my life before teaching, I was a project

I had no idea that this would be such a hip, current, and dynamic occupation. Being a YA librarian demands that you seek change, that you know the latest gadgets and gizmos . . . and that you do not shy away from the new.

coordinator for television documentaries and Web-based technologies. I also produced print products to accompany television documentary series for schools and libraries. So I believe, with my ability to adapt to change and my three knowledge areas (teaching, producing, and technology), I can make a success of our YA library.

My "teacher" skills tell me that consistency and routine will help in everything. Also, high-school-teacher training included some of the basics in adolescent physiology and psychology. Far from an expert, I do know not to intrude; I know I should never be a pal, but a resource, and that if I am consistent, non-judgmental, and I take a few respectful risks, I might succeed with the teen crowd.

After the first month on the job, our first Teen Advisory Group (TAG) attracted three teens that joined us because of word of mouth, our flyers, and newspaper announcements. While we have had TAG groups in the past, this was the first formal meeting in about a year. During the meeting, I asked questions and listened. I repeated and confirmed what they said, and I followed through as best I could on what they wanted. I allowed a spontaneous cheerleading session to erupt in the program room, behind a closed door, so they could burn off some steam, and it helped them feel more comfortable. They made the room theirs.

So, while most things requested at the TAG meeting were put into

place—new series fiction was purchased, a Wii system with *Dance Dance Revolution* was introduced as part of our program, a book club and writing group was also planned—a few of the bigger ideas (like a dance-a-thon in the research section) will take some time to execute and may morph into a collaboration with another community center. Routine and consistency create comfort, which is why it works in a classroom and why I believe it will work in the YA library. If we provide consistent programming at regular times on the same weekdays, they may show up. If we let them do their own thing a bit—a few minutes of break dancing in the reference section—they might return. Luckily, the staff and patrons want the teens to participate and will put up with a bit of noise, though we keep the doors to the program room closed.

As a producer, I have learned that patience and promotion pays off. My strategy is to bring these teens in with consistent, reliable programs and with much patience. I am putting programs in place, I am there when I say I will be and can wait six months for them to come. Eventually they will attend and then they will bring their friends. My waist may suffer with all the leftover pizza, but by putting programs on and promoting them in every way I can over the next few months, I am optimistic that they will attend. By going into the schools, meeting the school librarians, the co-op teachers, the humanities teachers, I am pro-

moting to those who interact with teens on a daily basis. I have set up a "Welcome to Your YA library" tour for the seventh-grade class at our local school. It will be a tour to let the seventh graders know that they can leave the children's room behind and have a place of their own in the library. As a former teacher, I can add value to the program by working within the curriculum frameworks to bring the library in line with what teachers need to cover and provide rich volunteer or work/mentoring experience for their students.

I created a pamphlet that will be recognizable as the YA program brochure, and each month we will offer some of the same programs at the same times, and then add special events. All the local papers receive notices about the upcoming events and do promote them. As a producer, then, I listen to my audience, plan events according to their wishes, promote the events, execute the plan, and then follow up. My evaluation focuses on creating a better program the second time around.

Embracing technology is the final and the most important knowledge area of this job. We have been told that there is a new literacy. There is. While this article is not the place to debate the merits of technology in the library, we cannot deny that saving Princess Zelda is about participatory story telling and can be as literary as a conventional novel. Web sites, cell phones, e-mail, comics, graphic novels, and text messaging are all examples of storytelling in a

new form. I am fortunate to have a director, a community, and a library board that is behind doing more for adolescents in the community. We have purchased gaming equipment and are looking at more computers solely for the teens. I have revamped our Web site and I intend to start a blog that must be refreshed on a regular basis in addition to the content on the site. Finally, I am always looking for innovative reading products and keeping our magazines up to date and with a healthy number devoted to technology.

I should stress again, that this YA library is not just me—our library, the board, the staff, and the patrons want a vibrant YA library. I have observed in my short tenure a philosophy of customer service that is committed to serving our community in all the best

possible ways. I have been fortunate that my job has not meant fighting, pleading, or begging to get YA projects started. The community wants to do well by our young adults, and they have empowered this position to make it happen. But it does make some sense that they would. We have an outstanding children's library with programs and services and an exceptional adult service with interesting speakers and lecture series to complement Wi-Fi service and a dynamic collection, so it follows that the teen or YA population also deserves the same attention. The philosophy from the island adults is that we want our teens to have fun things to do—nondestructive outlets, healthy options for their recreation—and the library can be a great part of that community commitment.

When I took this position, I was unsure of the fit and I didn't realize how perfect my background in teaching, producing and technology would be. For me executing events is a kick. I love the teaching role in the library, from finding the perfect graphic novel to retrieving the most challenging video game or creating learning opportunities that fit into curriculum frameworks and embrace a new literacy. Finally, I had no idea that this would be such a hip, current, and dynamic occupation. Being a YA librarian demands that you seek change, that you know the latest gadgets and gizmos, that you can use a joystick with some finesse, and that you do not shy away from the new. The YA librarian seems to know that whatever is next will be new. And that suits me just fine. ■



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CARLIE WEBBER is Young Adult Services Librarian for the Bergen County Cooperative Library System in Hackensack, New Jersey. She is also the current chair of the Young Adult Library Services Association's (YALSA) Publishers' Liaison Committee and a member of YALSA's Popular Paperbacks for Young Adults Committee. She interviewed three members of the Class of 2K7 via e-mail in September 2007; carlie@bcccls.org.

Carlie is reading *Audrey, Wait!* by Robin Benway.

"Book Talk" provides authors' perspectives on libraries, books, technology, and information. If you have any suggestions of authors you would like to see featured in Book Talk, or if you are interested in volunteering to be an author-interviewer, contact Kathleen Hughes, Editor of *Public Libraries*, at the Public Library Association, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611; khughes@ala.org.

First-Class Authors

An Interview with Representatives of the Class of 2K7

Thirty-nine children's and young-adult authors whose first novels were published in 2007 make up the Class of 2K7. This collective includes writers in many genres, including fantasy, realistic fiction, and historical fiction whose accolades over the course of 2007 included starred reviews in journals such as *Publishers Weekly* and *School Library Journal*, places on the New York Times Children's Bestseller List, nominations to multiple YALSA booklists, and a finalist for the National Book Award in the category of Young People's Literature.

Here, we interview Class of 2K7 members Greg Fishbone, author of *The Penguins of Doom*; Judy Gregerson, author of *Bad Girls Club*; and Paula Chase, author of *So Not the Drama*. Fishbone is from Massachusetts and is the president of the Class of 2K7. His background in writing science fiction and humor led to his creation of a skateboarder heroine pursued by penguins. Chase hails from Annapolis, Maryland, and her writing credits include *Girls Life* and *Baltimore Magazine*. Her book is aimed at young black girls who want stories about strong friendships. Gregerson's background is in journalism and public relations, and she now lives in the Seattle area. Her novel tells the story of an abused girl who strains to keep some devastating secrets.

You can learn about all the members of the Class of 2K7 at <http://classof2k7.com>.

Public Libraries: How did the Class of 2K7 get started?

Greg Fishbone: Before I sold my first book, I hadn't given much thought to the work of marketing and promotion. It was a new learning curve that quickly became overwhelming and intimidating. I figured that other first-

time authors were probably going through the same thing I was, and that it might be a good idea for a bunch of us to pool our resources. That way we'd be able to share skills and do things as a group that we'd never be able to do on our own.

Judy Gregerson: It was the idea of Greg Fishbone, who decided that it would be difficult for one writer to grab the attention of librarians, booksellers, and teachers in a marketplace that is glutted with books. But if there were, say, a group of writers, all willing to share resources and information, as well as talent, the possibilities were much greater. That's the idea that spawned the Class of 2K7 and the vision that has kept us moving ahead.

PL: Why did you limit the group to YA and middle-grade (MG) authors?

GF: Early in our planning process we had to define the goals of our group and narrow our scope to books that would compliment each other in the eyes of booksellers, librarians, and teachers. We decided that YA and middle-grade books have a large enough area of overlap, while picture books, nonfiction, and poetry collections are all too different for our purposes. I've tried to encourage picture-book authors and illustrators to form their own marketing cooperative, which would be a great resource for teachers and librarians.

JG: I don't know that it was consciously decided to leave out picture books. But they are a whole other animal, very different than their sister, the novel. And since Greg had a novel, he went looking for other writers who also had a novel that was releasing in 2007.

PL: How did you recruit members? What were the requirements for membership?

GF: We recruited entirely by word of mouth or its equivalent on author electronic discussion lists and message forums. Prospective members had to have their first middle-grade or YA novel scheduled to be published in the United States during calendar year 2007 by a publisher listed in the 2007 Children's Writer's and Illustrator's Market. I was able to get a core group together in the first forty-eight hours and we kept adding on for the next few months. We ended up with thirty-eight members from twenty states and twenty-three publishers or imprints—and after the group filled up we probably turned away as many authors as we already had.

JG: The word went out to SCBWI [Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators] groups around the country and the members came from there, for the most part. The requirements were that you had to be a first-time MG or YA writer with a 2007 release date and that you wanted to band with other writers in marketing your book.

PL: What are the benefits the Class of 2K7 writers gained from their membership?

GF: Members joined for different reasons and got different things out of the experience. We all benefited from the increased exposure that came with being part of the group, from the sharing of skills that different members had in a variety of areas, and from the ability to reach out to booksellers, librarians, and teachers in so many different ways—our Web site, blog, brochure, tour

groups, conference appearances, articles, etc. But the most important benefit of the Class of 2K7 has been the friendship and support of a group of peers who are going through the same trials and challenges at pretty much the same time.

JG: If you talked to the members, I think that you'd find that there are many benefits. First, we've created a Web presence and received a lot of attention from industry folks as well as bloggers and various publications. Librarians, booksellers, and teachers are learning who we are, what books we offer, and how they can find us. We couldn't have done this individually. There's also the friendships that develop from working with people, the support we offer each other, and since we are all sharing the same experience, there's a fellowship that's very special. I think the downside is that the group is very large. If you're not used to working in a large group, it can be a job keeping up with what's going on since we have an electronic discussion list, a forum, a Web site, and a blog. Just keeping up with that is a job in itself.

PL: Do you think there are any downsides to membership?

Paula Chase: Not downsides. But I believe there were challenges we could have avoided by slimming the membership. There's a reason people covet the smaller classes that private schools offer. If the Class of 2K7 were in a school, the poor teacher would go mad. And like any oversized class, we ran into a few obstacles when it came to communicating at top efficiency and how to be fair with media opportunities and showcasing members. After a few growing pains we found ways to get the job done.

PL: What do you think the Class of 2K7 accomplished as a group that individual members could not have accomplished on their own regarding marketing their books?

GF: For teachers and librarians interested in new books or debut authors, a Web site or blog with thirty-eight authors is more useful than a single-author site; a brochure with thirty-eight books is going to be more useful than a postcard with only one; and something like a quarterly e-zine probably can't be done at all without multi-author content. Also, having authors in twenty states has allowed us to talk to more people in person than any one of us could do alone.

JG: I think that it's easier to bring the attention to a group, rather than thirty-eight individual authors. Instead of splitting our voice, we combined it, and I think that made all our jobs easier. As I traveled through Washington State this summer, I found that many librarians had heard of us and those who hadn't were so excited to get a brochure. There's tremendous support for authors, and our goal was to make it easier for people to find us. I think we succeeded. And I know that we're talked about because many authors come back from conferences with reports of people who have heard of us and cheer us on.

PL: Your members have written in a diverse range of genres, from urban fantasy to historical fiction. How did this affect the way you marketed the group?

GF: The wide range of genres wasn't a problem because we were targeting awareness among booksellers,

librarians, and teachers. Since they all serve many different kinds of readers, it's a benefit for them to have information about books in all genres. If the Class of 2k7 had been targeting readers directly, it would have been a lot more important to group similar books together.

JG: It didn't. Our emphasis was first novels, no matter what the genre. We believed that people read across genres and that the differences wouldn't bother them. I don't believe that it has.

PL: How has the media received the Class of 2K7's books and the overall project?

PC: The great thing was our media targets were very specific—trade journals. And we were fortunate to be featured/mentioned in both *Publishers Weekly* and *School Library Journal*. Those are huge hits for a group running on pure adrenaline and no paid PR rep.

JG: The media has been inquisitive and very kind to us. We've been interviewed by *Publishers Weekly*, *School Library Journal*, and A Fuse #8 Production. Many well known bloggers have talked us up. I think there's a curiosity there because no one in children's literature has done this before.

PL: After 2007, does your group plan to stay together? Or will it be more like college where you all go your separate ways but still stay in touch?

PC: A class of 2008 is coming behind us, started by Jody Feldman, a former member of 2K7 that bowed out because her release date was moved to 2008. I'm sure they'll be calling on

us for advice and guidance. My hope is that they'll build on this concept and continue to perfect the co-marketing strategy. As for the 2K7 members, we've made friendships and forged bonds that stretch beyond the group. As a matter of fact, because we just can't get enough of this cyber love, myself, Laura Bowers, and Carrie Jones are all touring on the Girlfriends Cyber Circuit (GCC). So I think we'll all be running into each other at various lit events—virtual and otherwise.

JG: Many friendships have been made along the way. I don't think those will end. We've shared our joys and our disappointments; we've cheered each other on and bolstered each other up. I doubt very much that this will end on December 31st.

PL: What are some projects that the members of the Class of 2K7 have planned for the future?



Greg Fishbone



Judy Gregerson



Paula Chase

PC: There's a lot of momentum within the group as each of us graduates from debut author to simply author. Thirty percent of the membership is already contracted for multiple books beyond their debut; some are sequels but not all.

Initially, I was signed for a two-book deal. But my Del Rio Bay Clique series is now contracted for three more books, so I've now had to switch gears and think about how to brand a series to ensure libraries will see it as worthy of recommending to young patrons. Melissa Marr is penning a manga series. Greg Neri has a graphic novel out next year and a YA novel in '09.

JG: There are many members of the group who have multiple-book projects. I know of several who are working on book number two or maybe even number three by now. Since the group is so big, it's very hard to keep track of what everyone is doing, but I know that everyone is very busy with new books.

PL: Tell us one or two of your favorite Class of 2K7 success stories. Who's got the starred reviews? The best sales? The greatest teen feedback?

PC: It would have to be Greg Neri getting an agent. That's social networking at its best. There are so many baby steps a writer takes along the road from new author to established. Whenever one of those steps can be reached because a guiding hand steered you in the right direction, that's a victory in itself.

When it comes to shining moments, we have quite a few:

- Starred reviews include Kelly Bingham's *Shark Girl* from both *PW* and *SLJ*.

- *Wicked Lovely* by Melissa Marr from *PW*. *Wicked Lovely* also debuted at number eight on the New York Times bestseller list.
- Kelly Bingham's *Shark Girl* has also been nominated for the ALA BBYA list.
- 2K7 Members have been nominated to the ALA Quick Picks for Reluctant Readers including: Carrie Jones' *Tips on Having a Gay Ex-boyfriend*, Jo Knowles' *Lessons from a Dead Girl*, Ann Dee Ellis' *This Is What I Did*; S. A. Harazin's *Blood Brothers* received a 5Q from VOYA.
- Five of our members made Teri Lesesne's 2007 Best Books (S. A. Harazin, Judy Gregerson, Kelly Bingham, Sara Zarr, Ann Dee Ellis).
- Several of our books were also 2007 BookSense Picks.
- The Anti-Defamation League has selected *Kimchi and Calamari*, by Rose Kent, as a featured book selection for August 2007. It was also selected for inclusion in the eighth edition of the textbook *Teaching Strategies for Ethnic Studies*, by James Bank (Allyn & Bacon Publishers) and featured in *Time for Kids* Summer Splash Book Reviews.

JG: I know that Greg Neri got a contract for a new book because someone heard about him through 2K7. As to sales . . . it's hard to get numbers until a year has passed. Several people have gone into second printings, and very quickly. As to teen feedback, it's still early and it takes a while for all that to come to the fore. Remember, we still have members whose books have not released yet. So it's hard to give any comparison about sales numbers and successes. Can we check back in a year?

PL: Now that it's 2008, what advice would you give the group and its members that you wish you had known back in 2006?

GF: "Strap yourself in tight—it's going to be a wild ride!" I'm very interested in seeing what happens with the Class of 2K8 that's coming along behind us. They've been watching us for over a year and picking our brains about what worked best and what we would have done differently, and they've also come up with a lot of exciting ideas all their own. It looks like 2008 is going to be another great year for YA and children's literature.

PC: Focus on two or three solid campaigns that would build Web traffic. As a group we created some great tools—the e-zine, the Web site, the forum. But we could have benefited from a concentrated effort or two to get librarians, booksellers, and teachers to these tools. Such a strategy would have been labor intensive at the start, but by now would be rolling along almost by itself, guided only by deadlines and last-minute logistics.

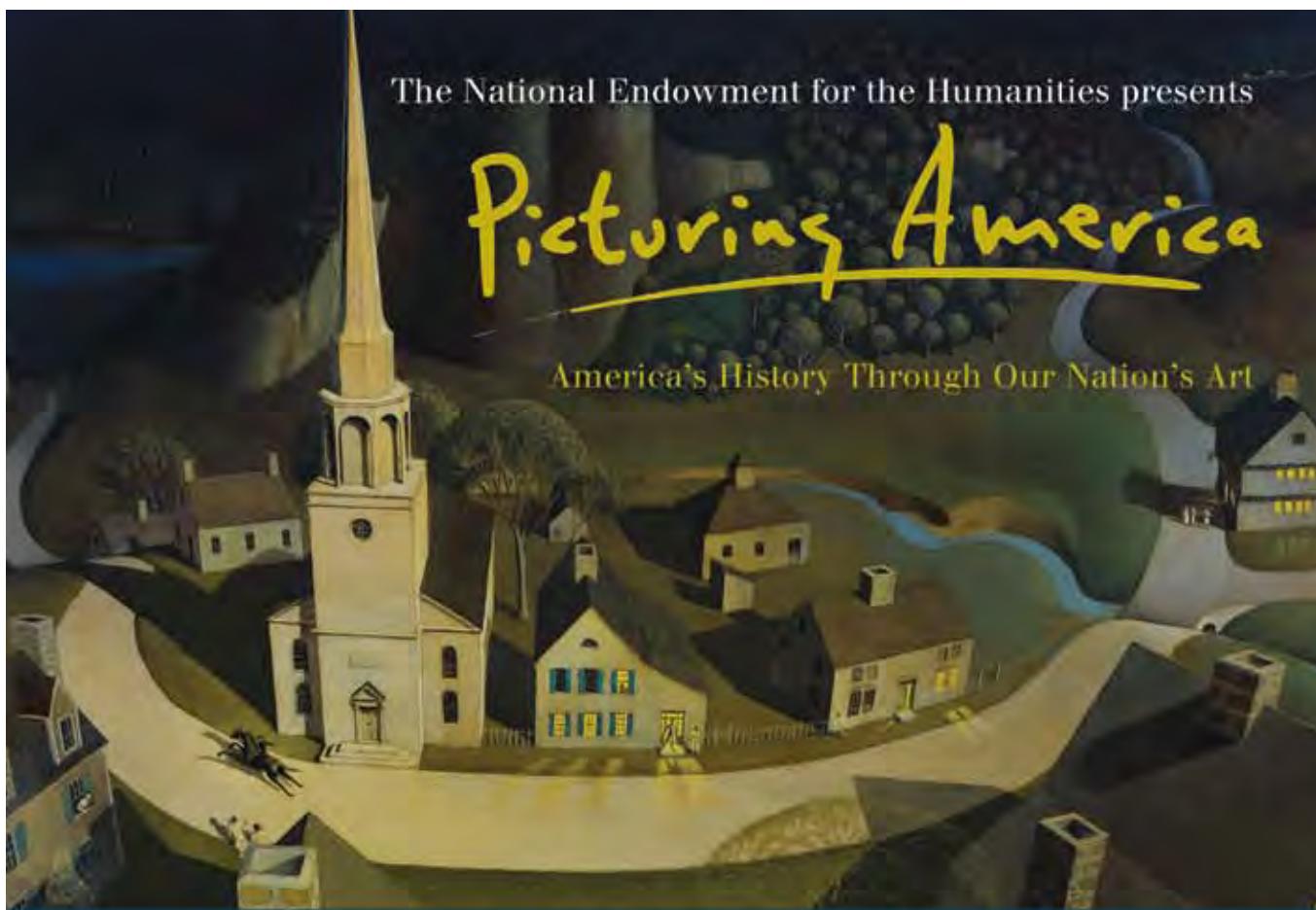
If 2K8 is listening . . .

JG: I would suggest that they keep the group smaller. Thirty-eight [books is a lot to keep track of and thirty-eight voices are a lot of voices. I think that because we've cut the ground for them, there will be greater recognition of the group, they'll be known for quality books, and they can move out into some of the areas we didn't explore. I wish we had known just what it would take to organize a group of this size. But we've passed along that information to them and they will be able to have a greater voice because of it. ☒

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Grant Wood (1891-1942), detail, *The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere*, 1951. Oil on Masonite, 50 x 40 inches. (76.2 x 101.6 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Arthur Hoppock Hearn Fund, 1950 (50.147). Photograph © 1988 The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Art © Estate of Grant Wood/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.

The **Picturing America** program is part of the NEH's *We the People* program, which supports projects that strengthen the teaching, study, and understanding of American history and culture.



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"Internet Spotlight" explores Internet and Web topics relevant to librarians in the public library sector. Your input is welcome.

What's the Internet Spotlight for Your YA Services?

MICHAEL PORTER is Community Associate at WebJunction.org; michael.libraryman@gmail.com. Michael is reading ALA TechSource's January issue of *Library Technology Reports*, "Changing the Way We Work" by Michelle Boule.

DAVID LEE KING is Digital Branch and Services Manager, Topeka & Shawnee County (Kans.) Public Library; davidleeking@gmail.com. David is reading *Wide Open Spaces: Beyond Paint-by-Number Christianity* by Jim Palmer.

If you have feedback about this article, would like to suggest a topic for future Internet Spotlight articles, have an interesting Internet resource to share, or if you just want to say hello, please feel free to e-mail the editors.

This issue of *Public Libraries*, and therefore this column, focuses on teens and teen services. Although we are sometimes accused of writing like teens, we don't actually know a whole lot about teen services in libraries . . . but realized that our readers sure do!

So Michael smartly put the call out via Facebook and e-mail to ask for help in getting ideas for interesting teen services. Here's what Michael asked: "Library staff serving young adult library users: Is there an 'Internet Spotlight' for your YA patrons? What? Why? Details!"

And here are some of the responses we received back, with comments by Michael and David (noted as "Comments from M&D"):

From Patrick Jones

Author Patrick Jones is a voice you might hope to see in any YA library services column. In addition to writing numerous YA-gearred fiction titles (including *Chasing Tail Lights*, *Nailed*, and *Things Change*), Patrick has quite literally written the books on YA services for libraries. These seminal YA services guides include *Connecting with Reluctant Teen Readers*, *Connecting Young Adults and Libraries*, and *A Core Collection for Young Adults* (among others). Find out more about Patrick at his Web site (www.connectingya.com).

When asked for his thoughts on YA librarianship and the concept of Internet Spotlights, Patrick was quick to share this gem:

I think the only thing I would add is that for a long time people in libraries were asking "How do we get kids in libraries?" and now the questions are "What do we do with all these teens in libraries?" and "Why don't these teens USE the library how we think [they] should?" Well, users determine priorities, not librarians. I think a lot of this is generational: Most people working in libraries didn't grow up with Internet so they don't "get it"; but my guess is none of these folks (including my generation) would use the Internet any different than teens do now. If I would have had Internet access at [age] 15 in a public library, I know I would not have been searching authorized Gale databases.

Comments from M&D

Very true indeed. David frequently sees groups of teens gathered around a computer, talking, laughing, and surfing—all at the same time. For these teens, the computer and the Web have become more of a social tool than an informational tool. Perfectly dandy use of the Web—and we librarians need to figure out how to reach out to these teens in their favored social spaces.

From Laura Crossett

Laura Crossett, Branch Manager of the Meeteetse (Wyo.) Branch at Park County Library (<http://parkcountylibrary.org>) responded:

Although the Meeteetse Branch Library doesn't (or hasn't yet) done any special outreach to teens using social software, we do see teens using social software in the library. Our library is unusual in that it is a joint school/public

library. The school provides the space and some of the budget, and the county library pays for everything else. Because we are a public library, we offer unfiltered Internet access, which the school isn't able to do. Thus, we often get junior high and high school students coming in to the library in order to use MySpace, IM with friends, or play games. Sometimes they even check out books! Most important, though, from my perspective, is that the library offers them a place where they feel comfortable, where they are safe, and where they feel free to explore their own worlds.

Comments from M&D

That social thing again! But this time, the social aspect has nothing to do with the library's computers. Instead, it's simply about teens hanging out in the library—using the physical library as a social space (while participating in their favorite online social activities). Another great use of the library, and another one that we library workers need to get a handle on. Teens are here—let's figure out how to interact with them!

From Rebecca Allen

Rebecca Allen, an intern for WebJunction.org, replied:

As a WebJunction intern, I often encounter a wide range of the latest online services that libraries provide to their YA patrons. If I had to choose, I'd have to say my favorite is the implementation of teen blogs as a part of the library Web site. Not only does this bring more young adults to the library, because we're providing a community forum in a relevant way, but it's an opportunity for

education! In a world where Google has transformed the reference [desk], it's important that teens learn the value of appropriately managing their online identity for their future professional selves.

Rebecca also mentioned a great WebJunction article on teen outreach. Definitely check this one out (www.webjunction.org/do/DisplayContent?id=15307).

Comments from M&D

Blogs are a great way to start a two-way conversation between teens and library staff, or even teens and teens. Rebecca also points out the whole education part, which is great, too. For example, some public libraries block MySpace from the library. Instead, how about holding classes on responsible MySpace usage—on safety issues as well as fun topics like how to customize a MySpace profile?

From Jody Wurl

Jody Wurl, teen services librarian at Hennepin County (Minn.) Library (www.hclib.org), responded:

Thought I'd share this bit of info with you about Hennepin County Library's TeenLinks. In June 2007 Hennepin County Library added a new feature to TeenLinks based on [an earlier pilot project] on our site Bookspace [www.hclib.org/pub/bookspace]. This feature, called Teen Readers' Lists [www.hclib.org/teens], allows our customers to share booklists they create themselves with other customers. Use skyrocketed once we displayed these lists on the home page at the end of June. We are currently averaging 1,513 hits a week on user-generated booklists.

At ninety-five lists and climbing, some of the most popular individual lists can get as many as seventy hits a week [www.hclib.org/teens/myBookLists/Contributed.cfm]. Teen readers love to get recommendations from other teen readers!

Comments from M&D

Did you hear that? Hennepin is allowing teens to create library Web site content *and* BOOK LISTS! This library has decided that teens are more interested in what other teens think and read, and responded to the trend they discovered.

From David Lee King

David Lee King, digital branch and services manager at Topeka and Shawnee County (Kans.) Public

Library (www.tscpl.org), and Internet Spotlight co-editor, responded:

I'm sharing a pilot project my library has been doing in Teen Second Life. We partnered with Hope Street Academy (a local charter school). The library provided an island in Teen Second Life, computer access and training, and Hope Street provided the teens and the project. Project goals included teens creating a new landscape for the school building. The teens had to work in groups, create a plan and a budget, create a visual representation of the finished landscape project in Second Life, and finally give a presentation.

We consider it a success! We ended up having twenty-three teens create three successful projects, and the students (and teachers) were introduced to an interesting new technology and virtual world.

Comments from M&D
Try an unusual emerging service, like a virtual world, and maybe even find partnership opportunities with other area organizations.

From Abby Patterson

Abby Patterson, young adult and adult services librarian at Vermilion Parish Library (www.vermilion.lib.la.us) in Abbeville, Louisiana, gave us three links—one to an innovative teen service, and two to great places to discover other innovative teen services. We decided to share all three! The links and her comments are:

1. **NASA Exhibits Online** (www.nasa.gov/centers/johnson/events/exhibits/index.html). Space is always an interesting topic among teens! This past summer, my teen advisory board and I created our own 'space camp.' We highlighted information about space travel, rockets, craters, and so on. To go along with our camp, we wanted real-life exhibits. After doing a search online, I found the NASA Exhibits Web page. Our library borrowed over \$25,000 worth of exhibits from NASA for FREE (all you pay is to ship the exhibits)!!! My teen board chose what exhibits would interest them the most. We had a full-size space suit, moon rocks, and even space food to give away as prizes! Our space camp was a complete success! The teens had so much fun and continue to ask when the next one will be!
2. **YA Librarian's Homepage** (<http://yahelp.suffolk.lib.ny.us/yaonline.html>). This Web site offers the best online resources any YA Librarian would need! There are links on programming ideas, book talks, book lists, and more! I use it all the time when I'm not sure what to do next! It's my YA bible!
3. **Best online programming source: Other libraries' Web pages.** Don't [re]invent the

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Comments from M&D

We agree—there's no need to reinvent the wheel! This article, for example, has some great ideas. Why not try them out?

From Facebook

Remember that question Michael asked via Facebook? What better place to get feedback about teen services in libraries than a place teens frequent! Here are some of the responses Michael received (slightly edited for clarity—the Facebook "My Questions" application only allows 255 characters for answers):

From Danica Radovanovic, MSc, freelance information management consultant

"YA Web portal with specific applications . . . additional links for e-resources, other library material. eTutorials are under *must haves*. But one of the *hot* spotlights for YA is [an] online community designed for their needs."

Comments from M&D

Let's repeat that last sentence: One

of the *hot* spotlights for YA is an online community designed for their needs. This isn't about creating a cool Web page or about creating youth-targeted information sources. Instead, Danica is focusing on an online community designed for teens. Remember what was said towards the beginning of this article? The Web has moved to being social, especially for teens. For some teens, you DO NOT EXIST if you don't have an online social presence. We suggest creating one—and working with teens to see what works best for them.

From Janie Hermann, technology and programming librarian at Princeton (N.J.) Public Library (www.princeton.lib.nj.us)

"Our teen librarian maintains an entire set of pages for teens. One of my fave pages is where she archives all the past programs as it really does display all that we do for teens at the library: <http://princetonlibrary.org/teens/TeenProgramsPast.html>."

From Sarah, YA/children's librarian

"We do have a teen area on our Web site and we're starting a MySpace presence. The teen area highlights some books, online homework help, online book club, some Web sites, and teen events around the system."

Comments from M&D

The social thing is great—but you have to actually put those social elements on the teen pages! Libraries are linking to their already-great content—books, movies, music games. Put this type of content on your teen spaces, then let the teens discuss.

From Fred Danowski, information systems librarian at Milford (Del.) Public Library

"I'm trying very hard to bring a blog to fruition."

From Cynthia Wilson, associate manager of support services for PALINET

"I'm hoping to work on a teen/young adult Web presence with my local public library since I just started volunteering there, but it requires board approval. I'll keep you posted on developments."

Comments from M&D

Some libraries are fighting a slightly uphill battle to get things like blogs and a teen presence on their Web sites. We suggest focusing on the end results—what will adding these services do in your libraries? If you add a blog, what will happen? Will it attract more teens? Will more books be checked out? Will your Web stats go up? Think in terms of numbers (potential numbers), usage, and untouched patron communities (i.e., the teens)—then present your project with this focus.

Conclusion

It was cool to get so many responses and ideas from other librarians, and to hear firsthand how public libraries are responding to changes in youth culture. SO—this article has some great ideas and the rest of this issue has some awesome ideas. Your challenge—see how you can incorporate some of these into your YA program! ■



Contributing Editor **LEE A. PRICE** is Director of Development at the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts in Philadelphia. In that position, and in his previous work as a fund-raising consultant, he has helped to raise millions of dollars for a wide variety of cultural organizations, including many libraries and archives. Please direct all correspondence about the column to him at leeaprice@comcast.net.

Lee is reading *Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya and *Horror 101: The A-List of Horror Films and Monster Movies*, edited by Aaron Christensen, with essays by 78 horror fans, including pieces on *The Golem* (1920) and *Jurassic Park* (1993) written by Lee (who moonlights as a horror movie fan when not fund-raising).

"Bringing in the Money" presents fund-raising strategies for public libraries. Many librarians are turning to alternative funding sources to supplement shrinking budgets. Fund-raising efforts not only boost finances, but also leverage community support and build collaborative strategies.

Libraries Take the Big Read Challenge

"The grant itself was not that difficult to write, but the expectations of The Big Read grant are high."¹

—Maureen Kilmurray, Senior Branch Librarian, Concord Library, Contra Costa County (Calif.) Library

It's mid-October 2007, and teens in Charleston, South Carolina, are reading *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. In Orland Park, Illinois, teens are reading *The Maltese Falcon*, and down south in Clearwater, Florida, teens are reading *The Great Gatsby*. Teens in other communities are reading *Bless Me, Ultima; Fahrenheit 451; My Ántonia; A Farewell to Arms; To Kill a Mockingbird; The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter; The Grapes of Wrath; The Joy Luck Club; and The Age of Innocence*. They are reading these particular great books because community organizations—often libraries working in partnership with schools—are developing exciting literary activities to celebrate these books as part of the 2007 Big Read initiative.

The Big Read was officially launched in 2006 to encourage—and to celebrate—the reading of great American literature. It is a program of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services and Arts Midwest. The goal is to get teens and adults actively engaged in reading.

In 2006, the first official year of The Big Read, seventy-two communities were selected to participate. In 2007, the number of designated Big Read communities swelled to 117. Each successful applicant receives a grant of \$5,000 to \$20,000 to implement and promote literary-themed programs, which may include activities such as read-a-thons, film screenings, author visits, book discussions, performing art presentations, and library and museum exhibits. In addition to the grant funding, successful applicants also receive reader's guides, teacher's guides, audio guides, an online organizer's

guide, and promotional materials including posters, banners, and bookmarks. The grants require a 1:1 match.²

While many different kinds of organizations may apply to lead a Big Read program in their community, this grant program seems especially appropriate for public libraries. In this past round, fifty-eight of the 117 successful applications came from public libraries or their Friends groups.

The Big Read application guidelines can be found at www.neabigread.org. The next round of applications is expected to be due in February 2008. If you haven't started planning yet, it's probably too late to do a quality job on the application. Now would be the time to start planning for 2009.

David Kipen, NEA director of literature, recommends involving as many people as possible in the planning process. "Round up as many partners as you can. Work early and often to rope in the schools. Neglect not the media, since they are your shortcut to those all-important lapsed or reluctant readers."³ Based on her experience in successfully applying to The Big Read, Maureen Kilmurray, senior branch librarian at the Concord Library in California, says it all comes down to the hard work of planning. "Plan at least nine months in advance. It is a lot of work, but has the potential to build community partners."⁴

The grant review process is competitive. Arts Midwest convenes a panel of arts and literature professionals to review the applications, looking for evidence of quality programs, a broad range of activity, geographical outreach, quality of partnerships, plans to engage children and teens, involvement of middle and high schools, promo-

tional and marketing plans, active involvement of government officials, and a well-conceived budget.

Their Eyes Were Watching God

Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston is one of two books on the current Big Read list that I love unconditionally. It's a lucky community that would get to read it.

Charleston County Public Library in South Carolina selected *Their Eyes Were Watching God* as their "Big Read" book for 2007. Cynthia Bledsoe, main library manager, says they chose Hurston's novel because it "speaks to Charleston County, with its rich African American heritage. . . . The emphasis on folkloric tradition and vernacular language allows us to honor our heritage and recognize the importance of the Gullah culture in South Carolina."⁵

For their 2007 Big Read, the Charleston County Public Library scheduled more than sixty events in twenty-seven venues. The library partnered with the Gibbes Museum of Art on a program called "Through My Eyes," where teens worked with a professional photographer to document people and places that defined their community and culture. A local performance poet, Marcus Amaker, led an open-mic-poetry evening, where teens presented works by poets from the Harlem Renaissance, as well as their original poetry.

Nikki Hunter, a hip hop artist, led a popular rap music program. The Big Read finale at Riverfront Park will be a showcase for teen talent, with a teen praise dance troupe, a local step dance team from North Charleston High School, a teen rap violinist, an acoustic guitar player, a teen performance artist, and a teen

cello ensemble performing. Cynthia says that all these people have come together because the library made a deliberate effort to reach out to the community. "Many of these teens and their family members would likely not have been involved with The Big Read if we had not done outreach to the schools and invited area teens to show off their talents for the community at large."⁶

The Maltese Falcon

Tough guys never seem to go out of fashion, and no detective has ever exemplified the hard-boiled tradition better than Sam Spade, the slightly shady detective hero of *The Maltese Falcon*. I've read Dashiell Hammett's novel twice—the first time as a teen many years ago—and have seen the 1941 Humphrey Bogart movie at least a half dozen times, including once with my teenage son and pre-teen daughter (and they liked it!).

Orland Park Public Library, located in the south suburbs of Chicago, chose to spotlight *The Maltese Falcon* because of its mainstream appeal and the fun opportunities it might present for mystery and crime-detection tie-ins. They checked with the local high schools first, and found that *The Maltese Falcon*, once a dime-store pulp novel, is now indeed on the reading lists for some of the academic-level English classes. So far, their most successful teen activity has been a Live Clue event for middle- and high-school students, modeled on the popular board game but with literature-themed settings for each of the rooms.⁷

The Great Gatsby

The Roaring Twenties fascinated me when I was a teenager. Unlike many

other periods in American history, the movers and shakers seemed genuinely young and vibrantly alive. F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* captures this energy.

The Pinellas Public Library Cooperative in Clearwater, Florida, has tried to tap into the Jazz Age spirit with their Big Read activities. They have solid experience with this type of programming. Although this is their first Big Read, the library has been doing community reads for six years now. According to Paula Godfrey, special projects and grant services coordinator, a Big Read of *The Great Gatsby* seemed like a natural development. "Our libraries have presented separate teen book discussions in conjunction with regularly scheduled adult book discussions. In addition, there have been teen film screenings of the movies, as well as our most popular event, the Puttin' on the Ritz Gatsby Lock-Ins for teens."⁸ Four lock-ins were scheduled for Friday nights during the Big Read month, and they included costume contests, Roaring Twenties trivia games, Charleston dance lessons, food, and prizes.

Pinellas County has been successful in leveraging their Big Read involvement for increased fundraising and marketing. According to Godfrey, "Our local cities have provided financial support for the large community events. The local newspaper contributed almost \$18,000 in ad space to promote the event, and also provided articles by the Book Critic, one of which included an interview with NEA Chairman Dana Gioia discussing The Big Read concept."⁹

Fahrenheit 451

This past June, we got a note from my son's school that he was to read

Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* over the summer. He wasn't too enthusiastic about this intrusion on his summer vacation. Reading the opening chapter was a chore for him, but then something clicked, and he began reading with genuine interest.

It appears that the teenagers in Concord, California, have had a similar experience. The Concord Library (Contra Costa County Library) selected *Fahrenheit 451* as their Big Read book, and Senior Branch Librarian Maureen Kilmurray reports that their biggest success so far has been with the teen activities. She reports: "Over 20 public school classrooms, as well as home schooled teens, are reading the book during the month of October. We are also sponsoring a 'Teen Illustration Contest' and have invited high school art classes to submit entries. The key for us in getting teen participation has been promoting The Big Read through the schools and offering them free classroom sets of the book. On October 15, we showed the 1966 version of the movie at a commercial theater. Nearly 250 people attended, mostly teens. They were very enthusiastic about the film, and many hung around after to discuss the differences between the book and the film."¹⁰

The Concord Library used the momentum of The Big Read grant to raise additional funds and garner promotional support. They approached a number of corporate sponsors, including Sam's Club and PG&E Corporation, both of which came on board readily. In addition, they received several thousand dollars worth of in-kind, free advertising contributions from media sources such as Astound Broadband, Comcast, KKDV-FM, and the *Contra Costa Times*.¹¹

To Kill a Mockingbird

"You see, I never expected any sort of success with *Mockingbird*. I didn't expect the book to sell in the first place. I was hoping for a quick and merciful death at the hands of reviewers, but at the same time I sort of hoped that maybe someone would like it enough to give it encouragement."¹²—Harper Lee

In Bath, New York, a committee of community members, organized by the Dorman Library, liked Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* enough to choose it as their Big Read book for 2007.

According to Carol S. Berry, library director of the Dorman Library, Big Read activities began with an opening kickoff event featuring Dr. Claudia Durst Johnson, a noted authority on both the book and Harper Lee. The following day, Dr. Johnson made presentations to four English classes at Haverling High School. Thanks to the program, every tenth grade student was given a copy of the book to read, and they were encouraged to participate in a writing contest sponsored by the Friends of the Library. Forty-eight students submitted entries, which were judged by the Friends. The winners were announced at the conclusion of the final program—a marathon reading of the book on October 29.¹³

My Ántonia

And here's the other book on the list that I love unconditionally. I envy anyone reading Willa Cather's sublime novel for the first time.

Lori Stevens, division manager-patron services at the Orem Library in Utah, says that *My Ántonia* was a particularly appropriate choice for their community: "Our state was

founded by immigrant pioneers and Utahans have a deep connection to the land. . . . We thought *My Ántonia* would connect with teens because a large portion of the book is about teens: Jim, Ántonia, and their friends, as they come of age and go out to make their way in the world. The main characters face many issues that teens of today face, from prejudice and misunderstanding and abuse, to gaining personal strength from their relationships, working to secure a future, and growing stronger in spite of the hardships life has thrown in their path.”¹⁴

For The Big Read, the Orem Library organized forty-three programs in a four-week period. More than one thousand high school students were assigned the book in their classes. The library offered book discussions just for teens on a weekly basis, in addition to other programming. Some high school classes chose to do art projects based on themes in *My Ántonia*. The library displayed the resulting student artwork in November.

The Orem Library used their Big Read grant to leverage additional fundraising. Local businesses helped fund the development by a local storyteller of a dramatic presentation of *My Ántonia*, which was presented in area schools. Also, the library raised funding from the Utah Humanities Council and Utah Valley University to pay for presenter honoraria and to purchase thrift editions of the book to give away. So far, they have handed out more than 4,500 books to their patrons.¹⁵

Bless Me, Ultima

According to Sandra Fernandez, manager of public relations at the Houston Public Library, *Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya was an

unusually good fit for the city. “It has themes, both simple and complex, with which everyone can identify. It provides a window into a Hispanic culture, but is uniquely American and is rich in imagery and symbolism. The book is already

required reading in many Houston high schools, so this was an opportunity to enhance the school curriculum.”¹⁶

It’s mid-October 2007, and teens in Houston are reading *Bless Me, Ultima* and I’m reading it, too. It was one of three books on The Big Read list that I hadn’t read, and it looked intriguing. I’m enjoying it, so far. After I finish it, I’m thinking of passing it along to my son. I think he might like it. □



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Contributing Editor

MICHAEL GARRETT

FARRELLY is a Youth Services Librarian and graphic novelist living in Chicago; michaelfarrelly@hotmail.com.

Michael is reading *London: City of Disappearances* edited by Iain Sinclair, *Consider Phlebas* by Iain M. Banks, *Requiem for Rome* by Russell Bailey, *Dreams with Sharp Teeth* by Harlan Ellison, and *Dead Cities* by Mike Davis.

"Passing Notes" focuses on young adult service issues, including programming, collection development, and creating stronger connections with young adult patrons. The column will address these topics with a humorous bent and an awareness that the key to working with young adults is constant reinvention.

Sex. Teenagers. Library.

Three words that, when placed in a single sentence, usually conjure up quite negative images. Teenage boys furtively searching for "naked" on Google while grouped around a computer, teen couples necking (or making out, or hooking up) in the stacks or firebrand parents demanding that "smut" like Judy Blume's *Forever* be removed from the shelves to protect teens.

Can libraries be sex-positive resources for teens? Simply answered, yes.

First let's define what "sex positive" means in relation to teenagers. Is this "promoting" sex to teenagers? Not at all. Every state has age of consent laws and other legal watch guards to protect children, and rightly so. Being sex positive and a YA librarian is about being an open source of information on human sexuality, as well as selecting the right materials, the right resources, and being nonjudgmental regarding issues of sexual orientation.

More to the point: The idea that—by providing materials that speak about human sexuality in frank and honest ways—you are promoting sexuality is kind of ridiculous. Advertising uses sex to sell everything from cars to iPods; children are exposed to thousands of nonpornographic but still sexualized images on television, in movies, and on the Internet as they grow up. Add to that their own biological development and is there really an argument that providing good, solid, sound information about sexuality is "promotion"?

Finding such good resources got a little bit easier with the birth of a new video podcast called The Midwest Teen Sex Show (MTSS), available at www.midwestteensexshow.com. The name sounds salacious but the content is spot on. Hosted by co-creator Nikol Hasler, the podcast has tackled unconventional topics like "The Older Boyfriend," "Gym Class," and more obvious fare like homosexuality and abstinence. The shows are wry, funny, and sharply edited. Unlike the mind-numbingly awkward sex films that have haunted health classes since the fifties, this is a show teens will actually enjoy watching while they learn. The MTSS actually posted one of those old health films found on YouTube featuring a mother catching her son in the act and delivering a creep-tacular monologue. Thankfully, we've come a long way since then.

To be clear, the tone and language of the MTSS is definitely frank. This is not a show that uses *Cosmo*-style euphemisms or shies away from giving straightforward answers. It seems odd to warn people about that. Is there any other topic where you'd want someone to give you more oblique answers?

I recently interviewed Hasler via e-mail to learn more about this resource and talk a bit about libraries, teen sexuality and, oddly enough, robots.

Public Libraries: Where did the idea for the Midwest Teen Sex Show originate? What is your, and your collaborators, background in sex education and youth advocacy?

Nikol Hasler: The idea originated in the mind of Guy Clark [creator and director of MTSS], and while I would like to say it was all about nobility, it was more about the intent to entertain. Guy looked at the Internet, thought about what was missing, and decided to create it. We all know there are plenty of informative, educational sites, blogs, and podcasts about sex. A few of these are aimed at teens. None of them were funny, nor did they try to be.

I love that people ask about our background in sex ed, because it reminds me that I don't have any background at all. Who are we to be telling anyone our opinions? Yet, I can remember all of the frustrations of being a teen girl, just as Guy can relate to all of the frustrations of being a teen boy. We aren't yet sure if Britney [Barber, co-creator who also plays various comedic parts in the MTSS podcasts] was ever a teen. We think she might be a robot.

PL: Where in the Midwest is the show based out of? What do you

feel makes the show unique to the region?

NH: The show is based out of northern Illinois/southern Wisconsin. To tell the truth, there is not a single thing that makes this show Midwest-specific beyond the name. It just sounds catchy, doesn't it?

PL: Have you had any backlash regarding the show?

NH: Sadly, no. Once we do, I will know we've made it. The closest we ever come is when people leave snarky comments on the site. We all get pretty excited when that happens.

PL: The show combines a lot of humor with solid sex education. How do you strike a balance?

NH: We are still trying to work that one out. Three to five minutes is not a lot of time to adequately cover a topic entirely, and there are millions of jokes that do not make it. In the end, Guy just picks the shots that worked the best with each other.

PL: What's been the response to the show? From teens as well as parents and other adults.

NH: The first people to notice our show were well respected professionals in sex education. Cory Silverberg, who writes the sexuality column for About.com, has done a lot to get other people interested in our show. He was pointed in our direction by Dr. Petra Boynton [a social psychologist, researcher, author, broadcaster, blogger, and award-winning sex educator]. The crew over at Sex is Fun [a podcast dedicated to the rational discussion of human sexuality] have begun telling any teens that contact



MTSS host Nikol Hasler and some very young guest stars.



MTSS star Britney Barber in one of her many roles, this time as an overly helpful gym teacher.

them that they should be coming to us instead.

Teenagers have said that they love our presentation and the way we don't talk down to them. Gen Xers often tell us that they wish this show had been around when they were growing up. The parents of teens have told us that they are literally sitting their kids down at the computer to make them watch. One father even said that he was inspired to talk to his youngest son about sex because we showed him that it is positive. Even people whose children are grown have said that they enjoy the show and hope we keep doing it so that one day their grandchildren can watch it. I'd say it has been overwhelmingly positive.

PL: The show's topics (The Older Boyfriend, Gym Class) take on subjects not usually addressed in sex ed. How did you come up with these? What are some topics you'd like to explore in future shows?

NH: Coming up with the topics is pretty easy. There are a million things we dealt with as teens that were never discussed and there are new suggestions we are given every day from the teenagers who are living through it right now. We've got quite the list of topics to cover. A few of them are abortion, transgenderism, and breaking up.

PL: What resources, both online and in print, do you recommend for teens with questions about sexuality? What resources should be avoided at all costs?

NH: [Worth recommending] of course, there is Scarleteen.com and Planned Parenthood. In print there is an awesome book called *The Truth About Teens and Sex* by Sabrina Weill as well as *The Sex Book* by Jane Pavanel. A wonderfully humorous book that is also more than informative is *The Guide to Getting It On* by Paul Joannides. (He even sent me a signed copy!)

What to avoid, however, is a tougher issue. I would have to say that abstinence-only sites and books are the most useful to avoid for parents as well as teens. There has been a great

deal of research which indicates that this type of education does not lead to less teen sex, but instead to less teen condom use. Teens are being taught false information about condoms that leads them to believe that an attempt to practice safe sex is futile.

Albert Mohler is an outspoken blogger [*Editor's note:* He is also the current president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.] who has been quoted to say, "I think there could be no question that the pill gave incredible license to everything from adultery and affairs to premarital sex and within marriage to a separation of the sex act and procreation."¹ He even compares the invention of the pill to the fall of man. While he is entitled to such opinions, he is presenting a harmful tone which discourages teen girls from using contraception in a time where he clearly believes that the removal of such necessities would turn us all into good, nonsexual beings.

All of that said (and it was a lot to say), those sites out there like AdultFriendFinder.com do just as much damage by presenting sexuality as a free and easy thing to be had by anyone at any time.

PL: What role do you think librarians and informational professionals can play in helping teens access sex-positive information?

NH: Well, we all know that librarians are the sexiest members of society. Long live shushing! I would love to see our libraries more equipped with health and wellness sections which include resources aimed at teenagers. Those books I mentioned earlier should not be hidden on a shelf. And one more thing that would be useful is to stop blocking our site! I know, I know. It has "sex" in the URL name. Yet my son was recently able to access a pornographic site in a search engine at his grade school while looking for plants. The Internet game is changing. I do not envy your tech people. ■

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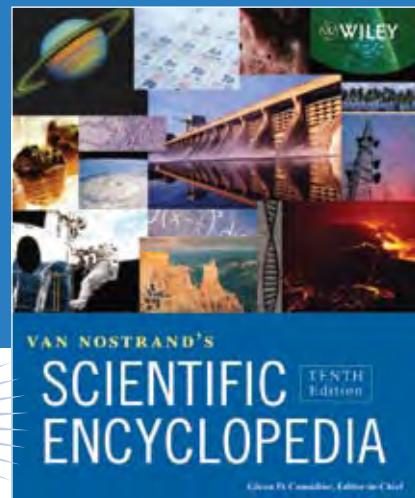
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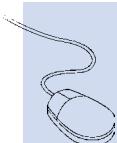
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STRIVING TO SERVE Diverse Youth

MAINSTREAMING TEENS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS THROUGH PUBLIC LIBRARY PROGRAMMING

ELSWORTH ROCKEFELLER is Young Adult Services Librarian at the Point Pleasant Borough Branch of the Ocean County (N.J.) Library System and currently serves on YALSA's 2009 Best Books for Young Adults committee; eirockefeller@gmail.com. He is reading *Another Kind of Cowboy* by Susan Juby.

To be effective in their field, public librarians in young-adult services must attempt to serve all youth, including those with unique needs due to emotional and behavioral disorders or developmental disabilities. Targeted hospitality and active outreach will help bring this population into the library, and careful and creative planning will ensure all youth involved in programming and library events grow from the experience regardless of the presence or lack of a disabling condition.

Please note: Any names and identifying descriptions of minors throughout this article have been changed to ensure anonymity.

Young Adults with Special Needs in the Public Library

As a young-adult librarian in a midsized public library, I have the privilege of serving a truly diverse group of adolescents. I enjoy planning and facilitating programs that draw a wide variety of teens: *Dance Dance Revolution* tournaments for gamers, trivia contests for quiz enthusiasts, book groups for emerging literary critics, and arts programming for young crafters and artists. Successful programs are always rewarding, but the events with the most gratifying results are those that involve youth representing the full spectrum of library customers. Among the youth who frequently attend the programming I facilitate are several teens that display behaviors commonly associated with emotional, behavioral, and developmental difficulties. While I cannot know the specific diagnosis of each teen with special needs I work with, some adult caregivers give me unsolicited information about the teen (or teens) they care for as an explanation of atypical behaviors or to

offer refocusing techniques that work with the youth in question. Additionally, some adolescents feel compelled to inform me of the reasons they behave the way they do. For example, fifteen-year-old Jake, who told me that he "can't sit still for more than ten seconds because of [his] really really bad ADHD," and fifteen-year-old Juanita, who approached me at her first teen library event and said, "You will have to remind me that it is not okay to hit people, because sometimes I do that without even knowing it." When teens or adults share such information with me, I try to use it to better serve that particular youth while keeping the diagnosis confidential.

Due to my lack of specific training or education in diagnosing or treating emotional and behavioral disorders or developmental disabilities, I will speak in terms of behaviors, not specific disorders, diagnoses, or disabilities. When I refer to emotionally, behaviorally, or developmentally disabled teens in this article, I am using these terms to identify adolescents who consistently display atypical behaviors in the library environment. The majority of the teens discussed do have a medical or psychological diagnosis that I have been made aware of, but, regardless of the presence of a diagnosis or disability, if atypical behaviors are displayed by a teen participating in a library program, program facilitators will be more successful at guaranteeing a safe, enjoyable, and productive environment for all program attendees and library staff if the individual's special needs are taken into account.

Challenges of Inclusive Programming

It can be challenging to facilitate activities and programs that welcome both adolescents with and without special needs. All teens deserve the utmost respect and compassion from program leaders and should be offered programs and projects that engage and stimulate in a variety of ways. I have found that teens, regardless of abilities, share many interests, and library programs involving popular culture, the arts, video games, and craft activities have drawn strikingly diverse participants.

Among the challenges of actively welcoming youth with disabilities into public library programs are preparing and coaching the library staff to ensure appropriate relations and interactions with patrons, working with participating teens to make library events comfortable for all program attendees regardless of abilities, fielding the questions and concerns from parents and caregivers of teen participants, and facilitating interactions between teens and outside

visitors who might not expect to see youth with special needs at the library (such as media representatives) who come to observe an event or program.

Targeted Hospitality and Active Outreach

Serving youth with special needs was not addressed in my library school courses or practicum work. I had some experiences with library users with physical disabilities in my library jobs while working toward my MLS, but it wasn't until I began employment with Ocean County Library System last June that I began to evaluate services offered to teens with special needs through the public library. While I saw many adolescents with special needs in the community, in schools, and even in the library building, none of these youths were participating in library programs. I began approaching teens with observable special needs who already visited the library and explaining what teen events were coming up, thus extending a personal invitation for them to participate. This targeted hospitality resulted in a small number of teens with special needs attending library programs. After initial success with this user group's participation in library programs, I began to perform outreach directly to agencies serving youth with disabilities. This included maintaining a working relationship with area group homes, families with teen children with special needs, and special-education teachers at local public schools. This outreach has resulted in a steady increase in the number of teens with disabilities attending library programming. I can now expect at least one or two youths with handicapping conditions at all teen events, with some types of programs consistently drawing a higher percentage.

The Sushi Slayers Anime Club

One biweekly program I facilitate, an anime group called the Sushi Slayers Anime Club, attracts many teens who have special needs. As the group has developed and grown over the past six months, it has been both a challenge and a joy to ensure all participants have fun and feel comfortable with each other and with the program content. The purpose of the program is to give young anime enthusiasts an opportunity to watch new anime episodes and talk to other teens who share this passion for Japanese animation. The program is structured yet relaxed; some attendees quietly watch the anime, some chat with friends about their favorite books and movies, some hang around the snack table and eat, and some

compare drawings and original manga writings. It is not unusual to have between fifteen and twenty-five teens at anime events, and when sixty or seventy percent of the participants have special needs, creative planning is essential to keep everything going smoothly. The best part of working with the Sushi Slayers Anime Club has been watching how quickly and easily teens accept each other's unique behaviors and form strong friendships. While it is fantastic to see these friendships take root within the boundaries of the anime club, it's even better to see them grow outside the library. For example, when Sasha, a sixteen-year-old who exhibited some severely disruptive behaviors—including excessive shouting, swearing, and growling—started coming to Sushi Slayers, many teens were hesitant to interact with her simply because of the loud volume of her voice and the words she used to express herself. After two meetings, the group became able to see through these behaviors and appreciate all that Sasha had to offer (including an impressive mastery of all things related to *Fullmetal Alchemist* and a stellar Winry Rockwell impression). During a book-talking visit to the local public high school last month, I heard Sasha down the hallway, and when I reached her, I saw she was surrounded by four other teens that come to Sushi Slayers, and they were engaged in a spirited conversation about the previous night's television airing of *InuYasha*. I don't know what Sasha's school social life was like before she became part of the anime club, but it was clear that she was successfully networking with peers through our meetings.

Another Sushi Slayer Club regular, fifteen-year-old Raj, also displayed an increase in social skills through participation in the group. Raj's mother introduced herself and her son at the first club meeting. "Raj has some needs you should be aware of," his mother told me, "He has Asperger's Disorder, and tends to avoid contact with peers." Raj added that he liked older people and younger people more than peers his own age, because peers were "generally much more unkind and much less understanding of my social interaction styles." But Raj's love of anime and manga were enough to keep him coming to meetings, and four or five weeks after his first visit, his mother called to let me know that Raj had asked her permission to invite two teens he had met at anime meetings to spend the night at his house. She was surprised—Raj had never asked to have friends over before. "He told me that the other club members are just as interested in anime as he is," Raj's mother reported, "which I find hard to believe, but we'll give this having friends thing a try."

The Public Library's Role in Development and Socialization for Young Adults

Though growth and development of social skills are evident in youths like Sasha and Raj, it is unrealistic to claim that public library programming can alleviate emotional disorders, behavioral disorders, or developmental disabilities. But I believe that library programming is, by definition, beneficial to adolescent participants. All teens are faced with constant challenges, including physical changes in the body, variations of hormone levels, new social and behavioral expectations, and important changes in the ability to think in an increasingly abstract way. Well-designed library programming can help teens establish healthy self-esteem, strong information-seeking skills, confidence in their problem-solving abilities, and a better understanding of the importance of a diverse social network.

The library is a natural place for teens to want to be during the period of transition from child to adult. Many teens who exhibit one set of behaviors at school or home act differently at the public library. The library is a place where a teen can essentially "start over" by establishing themselves as the person they want to be, since the library staff does not usually know how the teen interacts with her parents and siblings, how she does in school, or what her police record looks like. Thus the library is a safe place to try out new personas. Since the library offers many recreational options, like video-game events and popular culture-themed programs, it can be seen as a respite from other parts of a teen's life where there are established patterns of negative behavior. For example, I have a very enthusiastic fifteen-year-old teen volunteer who has been working with me at the library for almost five months. He has never let me down in any sense; he's always on time, energetic, and pleasant, as well as talented artistically and attentive to detail. During a recent school visit, I spoke to one of his classes, and he came up to chat with me after my presentation. When the period ended and the students left the room, the classroom teacher expressed shock that I knew Jason, claiming that he was a "thug" who consistently causes trouble and fails classes. I was disappointed that she felt it necessary to label a student that way, and if I had not known Jason previously, her opinion may have had a significant impact on the way I viewed him. Since I had met him outside of his school environment, however, I had the opportunity to interact with him away from his existing reputation. Likewise, teens with special needs have no real responsibility to tell

me what their diagnosis is, so I am able to work with them without knowing about any issues I don't see. By focusing on present behaviors, I can serve that teen in a way that makes sense in a library environment, without focusing on other needs that do not apply to our current project.

Creative Programming and Event Facilitation

At the beginning of most teen library programs, attendees split themselves into the small groups they feel most at ease with. Assorted clusters of teens take over different corners of the meeting room, and if a participant does not "belong" in one of these established groups, he has no choice but to stand apart from the rest of the young adults in the room. This isolating behavior can be magnified if one or more of the teens display atypical behaviors. It is not unusual for teens without obvious disabilities to be slightly taken aback when first introduced to youth with special needs. It can take some encouragement to get groups of teens to welcome adolescents displaying unusual behaviors into their crowd. At programs, I often ask all teens in attendance to "mix up" so everyone can get to know new people. If that doesn't work, and a participant seems to be left out of the larger group, I will simply walk the teen who seems hesitant to actively engage with others to a table or small group and introduce her while making a space or pulling up a chair for her to occupy. I have yet to have a serious problem with teasing or ostracizing youth because of a difference, but I have had a few teens distressed over symptoms of specific observable differences, like loud voices, differences in personal space needs, and the use of inappropriate language. Ten minutes into an activity, however, everyone gets more comfortable, and differences—while not forgotten—become a nonissue.

Adult Caregiver, Community, and Library Staff Concerns

While most teens are able to quickly overcome any discomfort from working with peers with special needs, adult caregivers of young adults without a disability often display more hesitation. Adults coming to pick up an adolescent from library events have made some surprising comments when seeing youth with special needs involved in the programs, ranging from statements like, "I didn't know that this was a community service program" to more offensive questions, such as "Is it safe to have kids like that with

regular ones?" I find it most effective to answer queries from adults directly and in a normal tone, without pulling them aside or whispering. I answer all questions honestly, without sharing any unnecessary information about the teens or their unique diagnoses or symptoms. I will say things like "I think we all feel safe with each other, and if things start to get out of hand I just encourage the group to reevaluate their actions," or "Isn't it great to see so much diversity in young library users?" which is usually enough to satisfy concerned adults. I have had phone calls from parents who want more information on my ability to "control" adolescents with special needs while their own children are present at programming. When this occurs, I do my best to offer these parents reassurance that library events are designed with safety in mind for all participants. I frequently invite caregivers—concerned or not—to attend teen programs, but few choose to stay through the events.

Another hurdle to welcoming diverse teens into library activities is ensuring all library staff are knowledgeable of appropriate ways of interacting with youth who act in ways that seem unusual. I am fortunate to work in a library in which essentially all of the staff enjoy teens and will eagerly make accommodations for youth with disabilities. When teens who exhibit eccentric behaviors visit our library, the staff handles atypical actions and seemingly inappropriate behavior graciously. Beyond demonstrating a high level of respect for the customer regardless of their behavior, the staff also impress me with their professionalism while working with other customers' who have comments or questions. I recently observed the circulation staff serving a large group of teens with special needs visiting from a group home. The teens made several inappropriate remarks, including accusing the library staff of withholding certain privileges from the group based on race. Not only did the staff effectively work through the issue, but when a later customer attempted to start a conversation about the needs of these adolescents, the circulation representative looked him straight in the eye and asked "What can I do for you?" without acknowledging his query about the youths. By ignoring the comments about the previous customers, the staff was able to effectively and efficiently continue their work while protecting all customers' right to privacy and integrity.

An occasional issue I have had with teens with special needs arises when media representatives visit the library to cover teen programming. It can be a difficult space to navigate when a reporter wants to interview a teen with special needs. While I am thrilled

to see any teen receive attention from reporters and photographers, unusual interactions can ensue when the youth involved exhibits unusual behaviors. I generally do not step in to assist with communication unless the situation gets obviously uncomfortable for the teen involved. I once witnessed a twenty-five-minute interview, which was supposed to be about an anime event, in which the young adult being questioned enthusiastically explained not why he enjoys coming to the library to watch new Japanese animation with his peers, but instead detailed the complex relationship between his Faye Valentine (a *Cowboy Bebop* character) action figure and his stuffed Kakuna (a Pokémon character) toy. The teen loved having the chance to talk to someone new about his toys, and if the reporter couldn't find a creative way to end the conversation, I wasn't about to bail her out. Joe talked about his interview for several weeks afterward, and now refers to his Faye Valentine and Kakuna as "newspaper stars."

Safety and Behavioral Issues

While I am in total support of hosting all kinds of teens at public-library events, it should be acknowledged that regardless of diagnosis or known disability, it is absolutely unacceptable to have abusive or physically out-of-control young adults involved in public library programming without proper support. While all teens deserve the opportunity to take part in programs and events at the library, it is not appropriate to allow potentially or previously violent teens to endanger other participants. If a potentially or previously violent teen comes to an event without a support staff—whether a parent, other relative, or professional caregiver—who can assist the teen with maintaining appropriate behavior, that teen may need to be, respectfully and compassionately, asked to leave the event. This is also true for teens that are verbally abusive or socially manipulative. Safety of the group must come first, and as a public librarian this occasionally means having to exclude a teen from a program until effective support can be established. At larger public libraries, it may be possible to enlist the help of additional library staff for programs drawing a large percentage of teens with special needs, similar to aids and teaching assistants employed by schools. At many libraries, though, there simply are not enough resources to train and allocate staff for this type of work.

While behavioral issues arise with some frequency when working with any large group of adolescents, groups of youth including individuals with special

needs are especially prone to behavioral difficulties. It is important not to reprimand the whole group when one or two adolescents are acting out. I also refrain from loudly identifying the teens who are having trouble with self-control. The most effective strategy I have found while working with a large group of teens, including some with special needs, is to target specific behaviors in ways that work for that particular youth. If John responds well to a "three strikes and you're out of the program" model of facilitator feedback, I will use that system. If Marta reacts quickly to redirection when she is acting out, I will have some possible tasks in mind that I can offer if her behavior starts to escalate, such as asking her to check on the snack table or help me do a count of the program participants. It can take several interactions with a teen to find the best way of effectively redirecting their energies, and if I have difficulties working with a particular youth, I will often ask the youth or their guardians for suggestions.

Peer Support

Inclusion in public-library programming has the potential for being a fundamental steppingstone for youth with special needs making the transition from teen to adult. Teens with special needs require effective modeling from others in the community to help them feel confident of their ability to become contributing members of adult society. As proven by the high rate of school failure and dropout, inability to get or hold a job, financial failure or incompetence, and poor connectedness to peers seen in young adults with disabilities, youth with special needs have a difficult time making the transition into adulthood. One way of helping this transition is to offer teens minimally invasive and destigmatizing intervention strategies.¹ One such strategy is peer mentoring. In a recent research paper entitled *Effects of Peer Mentors on Work-Related Performance of Adolescents With Behavioral and/or Learning Disabilities*, authors Debbie Westerlund, Elizabeth Granucci, Peter Gamache, and Hewitt Clark explore the ways peer mentoring can assist with the development of necessary skills in a workplace. According to their findings, "A peer-mentor instructional and coaching role for youth with disabilities in . . . training programs could provide an especially effective means to build on young people's interests and strengths, tailor supports, and improve successful learning of work-related curriculum skills," a statement which can easily be extended to encompass public-library programming. The study observed youth with learning disabilities and emotional distur-

bances, and the "intent was for these young people in transition to gain greater competencies and successes through the use of a nonstigmatizing, natural support in a vocational educational setting."² Offering teens with disabilities a place in large- and small-group activities, where participants work together to create a pleasurable environment and complete a task, allows them to watch, understand, and mimic the appropriate behaviors of other young adults. By being a part of the group, each teen is essentially mentoring and mentored. Subtle behavior modification, in the form of natural supports such as targeted demonstrations, descriptive praise, and corrective feedback, are more effective when provided by peers instead of an adult facilitator.³

Thus said, it is not only the teens with special needs that benefit from inclusion in library programs. Youth who do not exhibit symptoms of mental, behavioral, or developmental disabilities can also gain significant knowledge and experience by participating in events alongside adolescents with unique needs. Research with teens has shown that individuals with "psychiatric disorders are stigmatized more severely than people with health problems."⁴ Teens actively discriminate those who exhibit stigmatizing behaviors caused by mental illness more readily than similar behaviors caused by non-biological origins, to the extent of rating an adolescent with mental illness caused by a brain tumor "less dangerous, less likely to be feared, more worthy of help, and less likely to be avoided than the teen with mental illness without organic cause."⁵ This type of finding emphasizes the importance of grouping diverse teens together. Early and frequent exposure to peers with special needs will effectively reduce the negative stigma associated with teens who have disabilities. Facilitating and encouraging group work with adolescents of varying abilities creates an opportunity to allow teens to grow into compassionate adults who do not discriminate against individuals exhibiting atypical behaviors.

An Optimistic Future

Evidence in recent publications indicates that public libraries are beginning to actively develop their ser-

vices to youth with special needs. Articles like Holly Halvorson's "Asperger's Syndrome: How the Public Library Can Address These Special Needs," published in the winter 2006 issue of *Children and Libraries*, and Emily Dagg's "Middle School Volunteers with Special Needs at the Denver Public Library," from the summer 2006 *Young Adult Library Services*, do a great service to librarians and library-support staff by modeling empathetic and constructive ways of serving youth with special needs. I look forward to seeing this trend of inclusion continue.

Thus far in my tenure with the Ocean County Library System, I have found great fulfillment from welcoming young adults with emotional, behavioral, and developmental disabilities into teen programming and library events. I believe that continuing to do so will increase the awareness of diversity in the youth I serve and help build a strong foundation for a sense of community among teens who may otherwise resist interaction. By sharing diverse skills and gifts, adolescents can begin to see that the best results in life come from collaborating with people who reflect difference. Through group work and interaction with diverse peers, all youth can gain an appreciation of differences and build from this understanding a sense of human unity. □

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BRINGING BOOKS TO LIFE FOR Teens

BY HAVING TEENS GIVE LIFE TO BOOKS

KELLI DEAN is Program Coordinator for the Lexington (Ky.) Public Library; kdean@lexpublib.org. She is reading *We're Just Like You, Only Prettier: Confessions of a Tarnished Southern Belle* by Celia Rivenbark and *The Reagan Diaries* edited by Douglas Brinkley.

DOUG TATTERSHALL is Media Relations Coordinator for the Lexington (Ky.) Public Library; dtattershall@lexpublib.org. He is reading *The Three Ages of the Interior Life: Prelude of External Life* by Father Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O. P., and (aloud with his sons Jack and George) *The House at Pooh Corner* by A. A. Milne.

Summer reading programs attract children by the thousands to public libraries. Programs offer story times, crafts, musicians, puppet shows—everything a child (or parent) could ask for. As a result, libraries have been occupying, entertaining, and educating children each summer for decades. But when summer reading program participants grow up, they tend to disappear. As teenagers, they often come to the library for help with their schoolwork, but not for summer reading. The Lexington (Ky.) Public Library has in recent years expanded its programming for teens to offer them something that is not only fun, but also instills a love of reading in a generation that is constantly on the go.

So what does a library have to do to get teens interested in a book and to bring that book to life for them? In Lexington, the library decided to leave it to the teenagers to bring the book to life. We did it with a program called Page to Stage. The idea came from a conversation between me (the library's program coordinator) and the artistic director of the Actors Guild of Lexington. Both the library and the guild had noticed a lack of summer opportunities for teens in town, so the two organizations decided to partner to create a unique program for both aspiring young actors and writers alike—a program to get them in the library and in the theater.

Page to Stage began with the selection of a book that teens would read. After reading it at the beginning of summer break, they would create from it a stage adaptation that they would perform at the end of the summer, thus taking the book from page to stage. The result was an unusual summer reading program that involved one book, twenty high school students, and two performances watched by an audience of two hundred.

The advice of Tonya Head, assistant branch manager at Tates Creek Branch of the Lexington Public Library and a well-respected librarian known for her interest in serving the teen population, was sought to select a

title. She came up with five possible titles, but from her descriptions, Chris Crutcher's *The Sledding Hill* quickly emerged as the perfect choice.

"I thought *The Sledding Hill* was an interesting choice, not only because it was about teens coming together to work toward something they felt was important, but also because it had so many interesting characters that I thought would work well on stage," Head said.

We visited Crutcher's Web site to tell him our idea, and he immediately responded with, "Of course, I'd be honored to have you use *The Sledding Hill*." He also indicated a desire to come to Lexington for the performances, which, in the end, his schedule unfortunately did not allow.

But Crutcher took an interest in the program every step of the way. The library was in contact with his publicist throughout the summer, and Crutcher documented the program on his Web site. He sent the participants "Read Chris Crutcher" bracelets and lots of encouragement. He was always agreeable with the small changes the participants made for the script.

Crutcher's books have proven popular with teens because he writes on somewhat "edgy" topics. Many of his books have been challenged, and *The Sledding Hill* takes on this theme by having Crutcher step into the story as a character whose book is in danger of being banned.

Page to Stage found funding through \$5,000 from Toyota Motor Manufacturing Kentucky and \$4,000 from the JP Morgan Chase Foundation. The grants were used to pay for the director's salary, necessary props, advertising materials, t-shirts, books, and a reception. Funders said they awarded the grants because of the unusual partnership, the outreach to teens, and the focus on arts education. The funding and staffing of the program provide perfect examples of the benefits partnerships provide: the Actors Guild identified one of the benefactors and hired the director while the library identified the second benefactor and provided a member of its cable channel staff—a graduate of the American Film Institute—to oversee scriptwriting.

The library sought participants through fliers and posters sent to local high school faculty (librarians as well as English and drama teachers) and organizations such as the YMCA, with a release sent to the news media, and with listings in the library's own communication channels, which include a monthly calendar, a cable channel, and a Web site. The library also posted information about the program on a local theater message board. The library's graphic artist designed a Page to Stage logo for all materials associated with the

program, which helped set the materials apart.

The library staff's existing relationships with the local schools, particularly the librarians and the public school system's community relations director, proved

an invaluable resource. Schools announced the time and date of the first meeting in the classroom, in their newsletters, on their Web sites, and on the public school cable channel.

"I was flipping channels and saw it," participant Madeline Carey said. "I said, 'I'm a drama nerd, I've got to do this.'"

Participants tended to hear about the program through their schools (eight schools were represented), through television, and through word of mouth. Twenty-five students attended an informational meeting in June. A schedule was set from the beginning, with twice-a-week meetings leading up to two August performances.

The first task was to read and discuss *The Sledding Hill*. Then, participants made the tough decisions about what the most important scenes and the most important characters were, since not everything from the book would fit into a play, especially one limited in time and number of actors.

Specific interests and talents emerged. One student was particularly interested in writing, so he took on the primary responsibility for the script. Others were interested in directing, lighting, set design, acting, or costumes.

As meetings led from discussion to script to play rehearsal, meetings became more frequent and longer. By this point, however, participants were highly committed and were anxious to spend extra time with the project. At the end of summer break, the group was ready for two performances at the library's theater. They performed twice to nearly full houses.

The library helped expand the audience for the Page to Stage performances by videotaping them and airing them on the library's cable channel. Participants also received a DVD copy to keep.

The library evaluated the program through surveys of the participants and found an overwhelmingly positive response.



Five Lessons From Page to Stage

1. Look for partnerships in unexpected places. The Lexington Public Library and the Actors Guild of Lexington have been neighbors since 2002, when the guild moved across Main Street from Lexington's Central Library. With different missions and different audiences, the two organizations for years saw themselves as neighbors rather than partners. A meeting of personnel from each organization during a community leadership institute broke the ice.
2. Keep things flexible. A sense of ownership is important to teens, so the library emphasized to participants that Page to Stage was to be their program and they would be making the decisions. The program's coordinator attended meetings and rehearsals and reassured that promise whenever it seemed threatened.
3. Use word-of-mouth and nontraditional marketing. The library used every means available to spread the word about the program prior to an informational meeting. As teens heard about Page to Stage, they began spreading the word in their own ways: two participants heard about the informational meeting on MySpace.
4. Discover the hidden talents within your library's staff. It's no surprise the Lexington Public Library was able to find an expert on teen literature to help select a title, but the library also was fortunate that the library's video media coordinator holds a master of fine arts in film and has experience writing screenplays and teaching scriptwriting.
5. Find business sponsors. Page to Stage emerged as an idea in the latter half of the library's budget year. Without corporate sponsorship in the form of two grants and other business contributions such as headshots donated by a local photographer, the program would not have happened.



"Drama camps can cost \$600, and look how much we got to do here for free," participant Elizabeth Greenfield said.

Other participants expressed similarly positive remarks, such as:

- "I had so much fun this summer (at a library of all places)! I think everyone learned a lot"; and

- "I thought it would just be a nice little summer activity at the library, but it turned into this whole experience."

The responses were no surprise to the adults who had helped with the program—the positive feelings among participants had long since become apparent as the program progressed.

"The Page to Stage program was such an incredible experience because the teens were so incredible. I think the adults were all amazed at the high quality of work that went into the script as well as into the stage production itself," Head said, who kept up with the program after recommending titles for it. "Finding out later that some of the teens began to think of theater—whether writing, directing or acting—as a career path, made me realize what an important program it was." □

Beyond Books

RESTORATIVE LIBRARIANSHIP IN JUVENILE DETENTION CENTERS

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Public libraries have a long history of providing services and resources that build and strengthen communities. By offering free access to information and safe communal spaces, libraries encourage growth—both intellectual and social—in community members. There is no greater need for this aspect of librarianship than in the lives of incarcerated community members—especially incarcerated teens.

Providing a library collection or library services in a juvenile detention center (JDC) is not a new idea. Existing service models differ depending on the nature of the detention center (short- versus long-term), and include everything from bookmobile visits and booktalks to an in-house branch of the local public library.¹ Examples of successful programs can be seen across the country, from Seattle (through the King County Public Library) to New York (through the Brooklyn Public Library).

It is clear from both anecdotal evidence and a review of professional library literature that the primary focus of library services in detention centers is on providing recreational reading materials and encouraging literacy. But, as Katherine Dittman notes, “Literacy is not enough.”² Promoting literacy is a core value of every librarian as well as an important step in rehabilitating teens and preparing them to be productive community members, but libraries have much more to offer teens and JDCs. By expanding the vision of detention library services to reach beyond literacy and recreational reading, libraries can become integral partners in the mission of the juvenile courts—affecting a positive change in teens and in their communities.

Survey of Librarians and Detention Staff

To identify how libraries can best support the mission and programs of JDCs, it is necessary to (1) understand the mission of the juvenile courts, (2) identify library strengths that can support that mission, and (3)

identify the challenges (and possible solutions) to initiating and maintaining successful partnerships. To this end, two surveys were conducted, drawing on selected samples from both juvenile justice and librarianship. The first survey was mailed to all JDCs in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho; responses were solicited from both juvenile court administrators and detention managers. Though the survey covered a limited geographic area, the variance in size, nature, and mission of the JDCs surveyed provides a close approximation of national differences. The companion survey sought input from librarians serving JDCs and was administered online using SurveyMonkey. Responses were solicited from the Pacific Northwest Library Association, Young Adult Library Services Association, and Prison Librarians electronic discussion lists.³ Both surveys received an excellent response: forty-two returns from the JDC survey (a response rate of 53 percent), and fifty-six returns from the librarian survey. Returns from the JDC survey included responses from facilities both with and without current library services; returns from the librarian survey only included responses from librarians currently serving JDCs.

Just Doing Time?

It's a common perception—held by community members, teens, and even some detention staff—that teens in detention are simply “doing time”: paying their debt to society and, if they're lucky, keeping up on their education. It is this perception that has largely contributed to the current place that library services hold in most JDCs. After all, what better way to pass the time than by reading a book? And isn't that what libraries do—provide books? The survey of detention staff bears this out: 89 percent of respondents at a facility with some form of library services believed the most important functions of a library in a detention center were providing “recreational reading/way to pass time” and “literacy development.” The current pattern of library services, as reported in the librarian survey, indicates that libraries are doing little to dissuade JDCs of this notion. The most commonly reported services were filling requests (59 percent), readers' advisory (50 percent), book discussion groups (43 percent), and booktalks (41 percent).

If it were true that the sole mission of JDCs was to help teens pass time, there would be little need for libraries to expand their partnership with detention centers. By the same token, there would be little need for detention centers to make partnerships with libraries a priority. But the mission of the juvenile

courts (and their detention centers) is undergoing a renaissance of which libraries should take notice and recognize as a means to move from being seen as a supplementary service to being a vital partner working with incarcerated teens.

Restorative Justice in JDCs

In the last decade, the philosophy of *restorative justice* has slowly gained a toehold in the North American justice system. Whereas a purely punitive approach to justice emphasizes punishment and retribution, restorative justice emphasizes meaningful repayment for harms done; and a purely rehabilitative approach encourages offenders to dwell on their own victimization and brokenness, restorative justice encourages offenders to take accountability for their actions and responsibility for their futures.

Further setting it apart, restorative justice takes an unprecedented interest in the needs of not only offenders' victims, but also their communities. Victims are given a voice by having a meaningful role in deciding how offenders can best be held accountable for their actions. The community is given a role in embracing the victim and in helping reintegrate the offender into the community.

Many members of the juvenile justice community see restorative justice as an especially appropriate approach to dealing with juvenile offenders. Through restorative justice's holistic approach, the opportunity exists to transform young offenders into accepted and productive members of their communities.

As noted by the administrators of the Juvenile Court in Clark County, Washington, the three guiding principles of restorative justice are accountability, community safety, and competency development.⁴ Not surprisingly, these goals were the most common survey responses when detention staff members were asked to identify the mission(s) of their detention facilities. The most commonly cited aspect of JDCs' missions was the safety and security of the teens and the community—obviously a key concern for a detention facility. But accountability and competency development were also frequently listed as important elements.

Making Time Count

So what does the move to a restorative mission in detention facilities mean? At the broadest level, it means that detention centers are transforming the idea of teens “doing time” into the reality of incarcerated teens actually making time count. To that end,

juvenile courts dedicated to restorative justice are making a concerted effort to ensure that, while in detention, teens "have access to a wide range of educational, skill-building treatment and intervention resources that are appropriate and responsive to their interests and needs, as well as those of the community."⁵

With the transition in JDCs from doing time to making time count, libraries have the opportunity to demonstrate that they are more than just books—that they can have a meaningful effect on accountability and competency development. Certainly, these are concepts that every public librarian is familiar with in some way. (After all, what better example of accountability is there than an overdue notice?) The next step is identifying how libraries can support these goals inside a detention center.

Accountability

There are many ways librarians can encourage accountability in the teens with which they work. The simplest, of course, is the action of checking out books and returning them in good shape. One of the most commonly cited challenges for the librarians who responded to the survey is damage to or loss of materials. But by working with teens and establishing relationships with them, librarians can encourage respectful behaviors and hold teens accountable for their actions. Jill Morrison, librarian at Washington's King County Youth Service Center, has worked to build respect with the teens there, resulting in no tagging (graffiti) in the library space, and very little tagging in books.⁶

More important than teaching respect for library

materials, however, is conveying the importance of taking accountability for the actions that landed the teens in detention and for their actions in the future. One of the most successful approaches is the use of focused discussion groups. By using techniques similar to those in character-based literacy instruction (frequently used by teachers at alternative schools), librarians can focus discussion around a fictional

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protagonist's choices and the consequences of those choices. Teens can then "apply this cognitive experience to their own lives, evaluate the choices they've made, and begin to question their own thought patterns and habits."⁷ Many librarians, such as Naomi Angiers at Multnomah County, Oregon, already lead successful discussion groups with the teens they serve.⁸ By tailoring these groups to focus on restorative outcomes, librarians can be of greater value in the eyes of juvenile court administrators.

Beyond directly working with teens to encourage accountability, librarians working in JDCs can partner with detention staff by providing resources such as curriculum, videos, and workbooks related to facilitating programs and groups for teens. It is encouraging that, in the JDC survey, 71 percent of the detention staff at facilities without current library services expressed a desire for a library to provide these types of resources.

Competency Development

Competency development is a key component of all detention-center programming. Though speaking specifically of education, Walter MacFarlane, superintendent of the Virginia Department of Correctional Education, expressed the rationale behind competency development: "We hope that educational opportunities will improve the average inmate and help him turn from crime. This change has benefits that reach far beyond the prison walls and ultimately has a payoff for any would-be crime victim."⁹

Activities aimed at transforming troubled teens into healthy, responsible citizens are at the core of competency development. While teaching accountability is a vital first step in this process of transformation, giving teens the tools to function in positive ways on the outside is extremely important. It is here, by promoting both intellectual and social growth, that libraries can have the most positive impact.

While most detention centers offer educational programming (often associated with the local educational service district), there often is a need for more. Mike Riggan, former detention manager at Clark County Juvenile Detention Center in Washington State, notes that "most detention programs are begging for additional programming to be delivered on a consistent basis."¹⁰ Libraries can provide that additional programming in the form of materials, educational resources, funding, and extra staff.

Technology Instruction

Beyond basic literacy and curricular instruction, another important aspect of education in detention

is vocational—teaching teens about the responsibility that comes with employment, helping them explore employment options, and teaching skills that will help their job search. At many JDCs the librarian may be limited to using print materials or showing videos, but at facilities with computing resources available (see figure 1), these can be the primary mode of vocational research and skill training. The ubiquity of computer technology demands that if teens are to be successful members of their communities upon release—whether as students, employees, or both—they will have to be computer literate. As people who are specially trained to help others access and navigate information, librarians are well suited to tutor teens in computing processes.

At the most basic level, a librarian can offer instruction on how to navigate a computer's operating system. After learning basic computing, teens would benefit from learning simple software packages. Word processing (preferably Microsoft Word or a similar program) is an important skill. Learning to use simple spreadsheet or desktop publishing programs can prepare teens for many functions required in school or entry-level employment. If Internet access is available, and JDC policies allow it, librarians can help teens do vocational research online. Computer tutorials in such areas as reading and math can also be an effective way to build a variety of skills. Finally, using computer applications to perform creative projects can be a meaningful way to engage (and teach) teens—for example, using desktop publishing applications to produce anthologies of teen poetry, writing, and art.

Library and Social Skills

As important as it is for teens to gain skills that will help them find employment on the outside, it is even more important that they gain skills that will enable them to be socially competent when they return to their communities. Because libraries are, in a sense, communities in microcosm, with similar social expectations, opportunities, and challenges, librarians are perfectly situated to help teens acquire these competencies. By introducing teens to public library services—familiarizing them with the space and the expectations—librarians can ease the process of reintegration into their communities. Yet, in the library survey, only 25 percent offered any kind of library-skills training, and only 9 percent coordinated contact or follow-up with the local public library upon a teen's release.

In her work at the Youth Service Center library, Morrison tries to stress the importance of teens

becoming comfortable with library use. By introducing teens to call numbers, book spines, the differences between fiction and nonfiction, and the general layout of library resources and facilities, Morrison hopes they will not only be comfortable walking into a public library in their community, but also feel that they belong there.¹¹ That sense of belonging is a key component to a teen's successful reintegration to his or her community.

Whereas basic library-skills instruction can help teens feel comfortable using the public library, instruction about the library ethos can help teens feel more comfortable in the community at large. Libraries, by their very nature, encourage respect for other's differences, offer equitable service regardless of social standing, and encourage free discourse. These are expectations that translate to all social interactions, and if teens are comfortable with these values, they are more likely to be respectful of those around them and be healthy community members. By demanding and modeling these values in the library space inside, librarians play a vital role in preparing teens for expectations outside.

Beyond offering lessons on how to interact with others, libraries offer opportunities for those interac-

tions. Library spaces in JDCs should be no different. Bringing in authors and community members from diverse backgrounds to interact with the teens can be an opportunity to connect teens with mentors, to offer inspiration, and to reinforce lessons on respect. (California's Alameda County Library, winner of a 2006 President's Committee on Arts and Humanities award for its work in a local detention facility, has made a determined effort to bring in well-known authors to visit with the teens incarcerated there.¹²) As Lynn Anderson notes in her 2002 article "Books in Prison," it is "the work of mentoring and commitment, [and] teaching and listening" that is absolutely vital to working with teens in detention.¹³

From Current Success to Future Stability

Whether providing mentorship opportunities, teaching valuable computer skills, leading book groups, or helping teens prepare to return to—and succeed in—their communities, it's clear that there are many ways that librarians can contribute to the restorative mission of the juvenile courts. Yet for every example of a successful partnership between a public library

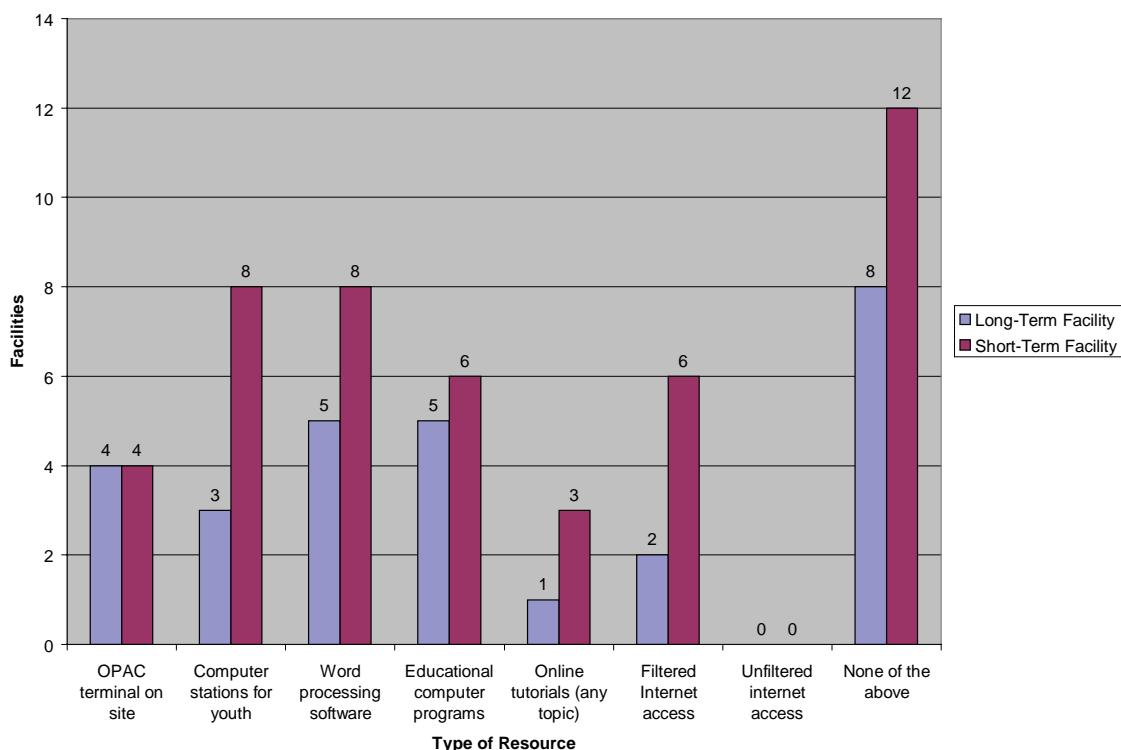


Figure 1. Technology Available in JDC Libraries (Librarian Survey)

and a JDC (see figure 2), there are just as many examples of facilities where partnerships are tenuous or don't exist—only 20 percent of the respondents to the library survey had a written service agreement in place, while nearly 33 percent of the respondents to the JDC survey had no library services. So how do libraries move past the point where their services are viewed in a positive, yet not always permanent, light?

The first step is ensuring that libraries tie the services they are offering directly to the mission(s) and goals of the juvenile court with which they partner. Listen to juvenile court administrators like Clark County's Ernie Veach-White, who sees library services as a beneficial way for "kids to do some exploring, research, and learning about their behavior, thinking errors, substance abuse, educational needs, etc., while in detention . . . a kind of guided self-examination/self-help/action planning process."¹⁴ Working closely with detention staff to determine their needs and goals will ensure that the library earns a lasting place within the facility.

Even with a shared mission, however, several challenges exist for libraries seeking to provide services in JDCs. Among these are funding, staffing, philosophy, and space:

- Fifty percent of the detention facilities without current library services indicated that a lack of funding was a main reason for lack of services; 72 percent of the same facilities said they would be interested in having services if the public library would fund them.
- Thirty-six percent of the detention facilities without current library services indicated that a lack of staffing to administer a library collection or supervise a space was a main reason for lack of services.
- Thirty-eight percent of librarians reported censorship by detention staff related to material content, while 31 percent reported censorship related to safety concerns about the physical nature of materials.

Library

King County (Wash.) Public Libraries

Newport (Ore.) Public Library

Alameda County (Calif.) Library

Multnomah County (Ore.) Library

Brooklyn (N.Y.) Public Library

St. Louis (Mo.) Public Library

Chesterfield County (Va.) Public Library

Anderson (Ind.) Public Library

Miami-Dade (Fla.) Public Library

Ketchikan (Alaska) Public Library

Ocean County (N.J.) Library

Hennepin County (Minn.) Library

Johnson County (Kans.) Library

Services Offered to Facility

In-house branch of public library with full services

Weekly librarian visits

Partnership between library and educational staff, authors visits, discussion groups, in-house collections

Weekly librarian visits, rotating collection, author visits

Library cards, book delivery, book clubs

Booktalks, discussion groups, in-house collection

Rotating deposit collection, requests, discussion groups for incarcerated and recently released teens

Librarian visits, rotating collection and requests, discussion groups, library-skills training, contact/follow-up with local library

Bookmobile service, requests, reference, library-skills training

Rotating deposit collection, requests, readers' advisory, reference

In-house collection, weekly librarian visits, readers' advisory, requests

Discussion groups, writing workshops, author visits, literary magazine, in-house collection

Booktalks and discussion groups, writing workshops, author visits

Figure 2. Examples of Successful Library—JDC Partnerships

- Thirty-six percent of the librarians responding to the survey indicated that a lack of space was a challenge to providing services; 43 percent of the detention facilities without current library services indicated that one of the main reasons was lack of room for a library collection/space.

Overcoming these three pragmatic challenges (and one philosophical difference) are the final steps to ensuring a lasting relationship between a library and detention facility.

Funding and Staffing

The best approach to solving funding problems will vary, depending on the resources of the library, facility, and local government. While it is possible to use grant money (for example, Library Services and Technology Act grants, American Library Association [ALA] grants, private grants) to initially fund a program, it is essential to obtain a commitment from the library system, the state, and the county to provide long-term funding. As Bonnie Crell, in the 1986 article "Developing Detention Libraries," so aptly stated, "Never, never substitute outside funding for agency dollars, unless you do *not* believe that your library program is as worthwhile as every other program."¹⁵ Make sure that the juvenile courts believe that your library program is as worthwhile as every other program.

Solving a staffing shortfall is directly related to the issue of funding. By providing library personnel whose salaries are paid by the library, or by coordinating community volunteers, the library can take a burden off the detention facility. Not only can library staff manage library collections and provide library-specific services, but they can also collaborate with detention or school district staff. These collaborations are valuable for the teens, but can also further integrate the library into the facility.

Censorship

While issues of funding and staffing have more clear-cut solutions, overcoming the challenge of philosophical differences between librarians and detention staff can be a sensitive process. Patrick Jones and others working with incarcerated teens have written extensively about the challenge posed by both format and content restrictions in JDCs. Jones defines the challenge thus: "Librarians are paid to provide free access to information; correctional officers are paid to work in an environment where freedom is limited."¹⁶

As in any library, having a collections policy is an important method of settling disputes over content.

But, unlike the local public library on the outside, librarians "inside" may not have the final say when it comes to the provisions in that policy. On the outside, parents have the right to decide what their children will read. Inside the facility, however, the detention staff acts *in loco parentis*, and librarians must agree to limitations that would normally cause them to cringe. But even the strictest proponent of intellectual freedom will admit that there is little sense in providing novels that glorify death to potentially suicidal teens, or in providing sexually explicit books to a young sexual offender. By working closely with detention staff, librarians will still be able to provide a wide variety of quality materials to the teens.

More than a Space

The lack of space in current detention facilities speaks volumes not only about detention budgets in general, but also about the current view of library services in JDCs. If there is a lack of a dedicated space for a library, it means three things: (1) there was no consideration for a library during facility planning; (2) the planners viewed a library as a supplementary, not a core, service; and (3) there were certainly no librarians involved in the planning process.

If libraries are to truly become integral partners in the mission of the juvenile courts—in both short- and long-term facilities—then libraries need to be an intentional part of new facilities. Obviously, this doesn't help libraries working to establish their presence in current JDCs. Gaining a dedicated library space at an existing facility may not be possible at first, but by patiently demonstrating the value of library services (and tying them to the mission of the facility), it can be surprising what opens up. Or, as was the case at Virginia's Beaumont Juvenile Correction Center, state standards may encourage facilities to add or upgrade library spaces.¹⁷

For libraries to be a part of the plan in new facilities, librarians must expand their job descriptions and act as advocates and politicians. By becoming familiar with standards for detention facilities (such as the American Correctional Association standards), ALA standards for juvenile correctional facilities, and the missions and goals of JDCs, librarians can build a case for the necessity of library services. By presenting that case to juvenile court administrators, county officials, and state legislators—along with a plan for funding and service delivery—librarians can convey the benefit of adding libraries to new facilities (see figure 3).

Beyond Books

It may seem sacrilegious, but it is only by moving beyond books that librarians will find a lasting place in juvenile detention centers. By focusing on the varied ways in which libraries can support the restorative aims of the juvenile courts, librarians will not only promote literacy, but also truly help teens make their time inside count. Public libraries are spaces of community growth, community integration, accountability, and freedom. By bringing these values along with their books, libraries will have a restorative effect on incarcerated teens and their communities. □

“Quick Start” Guide: Tips for Initiating JDC Library Services

Contact local detention facility and juvenile court administrator to discuss how the library can best support the mission of the facility

Research funding sources—seek both outside funding and funding from the public library, detention facility, and relevant government agencies

Based on needs of facility and available funding, create service proposal and present to library board; have a plan for growth

Create collection policy and service agreement; collaborate with detention manager and juvenile court administrator; be intentional about focus/purpose of services (will collection emphasize curricular support, recreational reading, and so forth?)

Initiate services—start small and grow as you earn the trust of teens, detention staff, and administration

Develop relationships with detention staff, education personnel, and local government representatives; seek opportunities for collaboration

Evaluate services; be prepared to demonstrate the value your services add to the facility

Have fun!

Figure 3. Tips for Initiating JDC Library Services

References and Notes

1. A short-term facility may be a facility that holds teens until they are transported to a different facility, or one that only holds teens for limited amounts of time (e.g., while awaiting adjudication or for status or probation offenses). A long-term facility (also known as a “correctional center”) is closer in characteristics to an adult prison, holding teens with longer sentences.
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3. pnla-l@yahoogroups.com (PNLA); yalsa-l@ala.org and YAL-OUT@ala.org (YALSA); prison-l@ala.org (Prison Librarians) (survey sent to these electronic discussion lists in April and May 2007).
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9. Veronica A. Davis, “Breaking Out of the Box: Reinventing a Juvenile-Center Library,” *American Libraries* 31, no. 10 (Nov. 2000): 61.
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Gaming AS A LIBRARY SERVICE

JULIE SCORDATO is Teen Services Specialist for Columbus (Ohio) Metropolitan Library; jscordato@columbuslibrary.org. She is reading *Beastly* by Alex Flinn.

Gaming as a library service, especially geared towards our teen customers, has gained momentum in the past few years. The Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) has hosted several gaming nights at recent American Library Association (ALA) conferences, allowing attendees to try their hands at *Guitar Hero*, *Dance Dance Revolution*, and popular Nintendo games such as *Mario Kart*. In July 2007, an ALA TechSource symposium focused solely on "Gaming, Learning, and Libraries." *School Library Journal* now reviews video games in a newly added column, and there are two professional books on gaming in libraries (see the Resources sidebar on page 72).

To celebrate YALSA's first Teen Tech Week, Columbus (Ohio) Metropolitan Library unrolled gaming programs across our twenty-one locations. Since then, more than three thousand teens have regularly attended our gaming programs. (Details of our tremendous success can be found in the Numbers and Narratives sidebar on page 70.)

Has gaming gained momentum at your organization? Do you want to introduce gaming but don't know where to start or how to get your library on board? This article outlines the tools you will need to develop a comprehensive gaming program, from building support to making it a reality. After general points are discussed, a detailed timeline of how Columbus Metropolitan Library embraced gaming will show these tools in action.

Key Things to Know about Gaming

The first thing to recognize about American video game culture is that it's not a niche consumer group and hasn't been for a very long time. Playing video and computer games is a normal part of teens' daily media consumption and, in the case of online games, media creation. From the Internet, PC, and video-console games to cell-phone games and handheld games like the Nintendo DS and Sony PSP, the market is much larger for our millennial generation.

Consider the following research from the Entertainment Software Association:

- Sales of computer and video game software in the United States alone reached 7.4 billion dollars in 2006.
- Sixty-seven percent of American heads of households play computer and video games.
- The average age of a game player is thirty-three and the average number of years a gamer has been playing is twelve.

Not only kids and teens are playing video games, but adults are playing too. And, in many cases, these adult gamers are parents as well. According to the Entertainment Software Association:

Columbus Metropolitan Library Gaming Initiative: A Timeline for Success

December 2005: Teen services staff Julie Scordato and Wendy Morano attend the Metropolitan Library System gaming symposium in Chicago. They listen to a variety of speakers, including Eli Neiberger of Ann Arbor (Mich.) District Library, about the potential of gaming as a service for teens.

January 2006: Julie and Wendy present to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) about what they learned and how it could work for Columbus Metropolitan Library.

March 2006: Julie and Wendy present gaming at a teen services meeting. Discussion, including staff reservations and staff enthusiasm, ensue.

June 2006: A formal request for a proposal outlining gaming for Columbus Metropolitan Library is made. Julie and Wendy begin drafting.

September 2006: Julie and Martha Lund, manager of the Center for Discovery, visit branches to assess teen areas and services. During these visits, gaming and its potential is discussed with staff and questions are informally answered.

October 2006: A comprehensive proposal is submitted to the ELT. This proposal can be found in Beth Gallaway's book, *Game On! Gaming at the Library*, published by Neal-Schuman.

November 2006: The ELT approves proposal and approves funds beyond what was originally requested to show their strong support and commitment to this new teen-programming initiative. The Board of Trustees approves the ELT's recommendation to budget \$25,000 to purchase gaming equipment.

March 2007: All Columbus Metropolitan Library locations receive shipments from Circuit City containing a PlayStation 2, a *Dance Dance Revolution* game and pad combo, a *Guitar Hero II* game and guitar combo, and extra dance pad and guitar to allow for two player games, a copy of *Guitar Hero* (donated by Activision) and a memory card (donated by Intec) to save games on the Playstation 2. All equipment is received in time for Teen Tech Week (TTW), and in seven days, nearly four hundred teens attend gaming systemwide.

May 2007: Between TTW and May 31, twelve hundred teens attend gaming programs.

July 2007: All Columbus Metropolitan Library locations receive from Circuit City a Nintendo Wii console, the Nintendo Wii Play pack of games, and extra remotes and nunchuk controllers for four-person play.

August 2007: At the end of Teen Summer Reading Program (August 4), more than 2,100 teens have attended gaming programs across the system in eight short weeks.

- Ninety-three percent of parents who play computer and video games have children who also play, and 80 percent of gaming parents say they play games with their children.
- The average age of the gaming parent is thirty-seven, and 73 percent of gaming parents consider themselves regular voters.

These are just a handful of the interesting statistics that bust stereotypes about the video game industry and gaming culture. (For more data that can help you convince your organization to introduce gaming, see the Resources sidebar on page 72.)

So, what does this really mean for you and your library? How can bringing video games in as a pro-

gram benefit your teens and your organization?

By providing video game programs to teens, you have an opportunity to build an incredible amount of teen participation in, and identification with, the library. Video game programs can promote the library as an authentic member of the teen's social network and be perceived not just as a place to "get" (Internet access, materials and information for school, and personal needs) but as a place to "be." The library becomes a place to "be" by building relationships with other teens and staff through repeat visits to a casual, interactive teen program that develops its own story.

Besides a teen advisory board or book discussion group that meets regularly, preparing interesting teen programs appealing enough to draw teens from their other activities and social preferences is often a challenge. This challenge becomes even more difficult under the pressures of staff and funding constraints; therefore video game programs offer several practical advantages:

- **After an initial investment, equipment can be used repeatedly.** Similar to storytime materials such as puppets and props, video game consoles and games can be reused, whereas craft activities entail supplies that need refreshing. If there aren't funds to buy equipment, start small by having teens bring in some of their games or gamers on your staff to bring in games. You can also rent game consoles and games to start out as you begin to build the interest in gaming. If teens bring games from home, make sure to remind them to only bring what they themselves can keep track of and that the library isn't liable for damage or theft. Begin to talk with your Friends of the Library and local game stores about possible future partnerships for discounts on equipment and sponsorships.
- **Preparation for a video game program is truly minimal.** Book your meeting/activity room or hold it right in your teen area, depending on its size and placement in the building. Empower teens to help you set up the equipment, which will lead to teachable moments for teens unfamiliar with the consoles, and opportunities for teens to build self-esteem from getting the program up and running.
- **Video games are universally attractive and provide great social opportunities.** At Columbus Metropolitan Library, we have discovered the appeal of video games crosses social economic boundaries. Staff from our smaller,

urban branches regularly report teens actively participating in and asking about the next gaming program.

This is a great repeat program because it takes little time to prepare and teens love it so much. They want to continue improving their gaming skills, learning new games, and contributing to the story that friendly competition cultivates. At Columbus Metropolitan, several anecdotes about teen behavior have surfaced. Teens with less-than-stellar histories with the staff have made positive connections with the same staff at gaming programs. At some branches, teens have self-generated anxiety over losing the privilege to play games and thus encourage each other to behave well, not only at the programs but in the library building in general. The laid-back, casual environment gaming seems to encourage brings out the best in teen participants, even in large groups. Older teens have also been observed setting the tone of behavior for younger teens and acting as informal role models by setting up equipment, building strategies for game play, and in general behavior.

Because of the casual environment, library staff members are shifted from program leader/presenter to facilitator/participant, and the staff is able to mingle with and play games alongside the teens. Non-teen services staff who are gamers can help with the program, thus feeling good about teen services and giving teens a chance to feel good about other library staff.

Those are just a few examples of how gaming can be good for teens in your library. If you are ready to start talking about it, this will get you started. Here are more tools to help you build support for gaming.

Getting Gaming on the Table: Be Informed

Once you've educated yourself on the gaming industry and the movement of public-library gaming programs across the country (see the Resources sidebar on page 72), the next step is to know your own library. You must be prepared to connect the benefits of gaming programs to your organization. What are your library's values, missions, and strategic plans? How does improved and expanded teen services through gaming programs support your library's vision for what it should be in the community? Once you can respond to those questions with a variety of related answers, you now have the groundwork to garner solid support.

Nurturing young minds, promoting literacy, and building relationships with our customers are a few

Numbers and Narratives

So much of our work is driven and measured by numbers. From circulation to reference statistics and full-time equivalents, measurable data is what puts the *science* in Library Science. But libraries are also about service. Sometimes the best way to let a service shine is to share that service in action, and this is where narratives come in. In both the proposal to gain initial support for gaming and in following reports, combining numbers with narratives was a high priority. Columbus Metropolitan Library staff members have been asked to keep gaming statistics since the program began and will continue to do so in measured phases, from TTW to Teen Summer Reading, throughout the fall school semester, and so on. Following are some examples of narratives (which were posted on the organization's intranet and in board reports) that have been used to complement the numbers in the gaming proposal. As you begin your gaming programs, keep track of both numbers and stories to round out your reports and gaming promotions. It is also a good idea to include pictures in your reports and promotions.

These two examples were narratives taken from our early pilot programs:

- “At the end of our last gaming program, the father of thirteen-year-old Alex shook my hand and told me, ‘This is really great, putting on a program like this. If it’s not games, Alex isn’t interested and I was pleased he wanted to come to this every week and it looks like he’s made some new friends.’”
- “We have several long-time teen customers who have repeatedly been behavior issues over the years. Examples are Damon and Mark. They have repeatedly been evicted for rough-housing, disobeying and disrespecting staff and library rules over the years. They have also never, ever attended a library program. No way would they ever lower themselves to come to a library program; it’s simply not cool. However, they were the first ones to sign in, and they brought friends and cousins with them. They were polite, respectful, and even friendly with staff during the program, and they thanked us for the program, too! They were also really good at some of the games, so staff were able to praise them and applaud for them in ways that we’d never been able to before. I am confident that these kids have a newfound respect for the library because of this program, and we were able to have positive interactions with them that we can build on, instead of the repeated negative interactions.”

key elements of Columbus Metropolitan Library's strategic plan and values. Gaming can support all three of these aspirations. Ever since gaming started at Columbus Metropolitan Library, statistics and anecdotes illustrate teens making repeat visits to our library locations, seeking out teen staff, mentoring each other, participating in Teen Summer Reading Program, and learning about specific reading materials from our staff through casual reader's advisory conversations. This is a small sample of the connections between gaming and Columbus Metropolitan's strategic/tactical plan and values. Because gaming has the potential for many positive outcomes, it should not be too difficult to find connections with your own organization. Keep in mind that the Search Institute's Developmental Assets for Adolescents can support your argument for how gaming helps your teen customers. When looking at the institute's forty assets that young adults need to grow into healthy adult members of the community, one can see how gaming can effectively cultivate many of them

including, but not limited to, assets like positive peer influence, adult role models, cultural competence, and self-esteem.

Getting Gaming on the Table: Two Conversations

Knowing the gaming industry, the current presence of gaming in other libraries, and your own organization's direction and values, it is now time for you to incorporate all of this information into two conversations that you will be holding simultaneously. On one hand, you need to be having an ongoing conversation with your administration about gaming. Maybe your administration is already interested and wants you to present some research and recommendations. Maybe you need to start the conversation in the right way to encourage interest. Depending on how your organization works, you may be drafting a short preliminary document, preparing a presentation to the

These and similar narratives from other pilots anticipated questions and concerns about gaming that were sure to surface, such as parent reactions and discipline issues. Having real-life instances to illustrate answers to these concerns is vital.

The following two narratives are from gaming programs during the 2007 Teen Summer Reading Program. Now that the program is established across the organization, it is still necessary to remind staff and administration of the positive results of gaming, from relationship building to statistics as in the examples below:

- “At our last gaming program, one of our *Guitar Hero* ‘experts’ organized a mini-tournament of his own. The kids ran it themselves and I ‘participated’—but even so, it was something to see the initiative that some of these teens have, especially the boys, when it’s an activity that they are truly interested in. This could really work to our advantage this coming school year. We’ve made some great connections with some of our teens and this is the type of program that can really foster a unique relationship. It’s no secret to any of us that the gaming program will attract teens that wouldn’t otherwise attend *any* teen program—and what’s even more amazing is that they will return again and again. Throughout the course of the summer we’ve been able to get to know them a little better each time.”
- “We signed up fifty-six teens for Teen Summer Reading Club during our Teen Gaming programs—a little over 6 percent of our total teen registration. At our first program on June 11th, we signed up twenty-six teens. I brought reading records and sign-up forms into every meeting. Every teen who attended was required to sign up for Teen Summer Reading program. Those who didn’t sign up during Gaming had already done so. This summer, our teens were very enthusiastic about the program. They would often come early and wait in the lobby. I had so many teens volunteer to help set up our programs that I often had to turn some away until the official start time. Our teens have also been very appreciative and always stayed to help me to clean up at the end, from putting away games and systems to moving tables and putting up chairs. A sense of community is really developing amongst the regular gamers and several of them have expressed to me how they look forward to the program every week.”

Board of Trustees, or having a casual conversation with key administrators. Whatever the context, you need to be

- knowledgeable about the industry;
- able to point to success of other libraries;
- prepared to articulate benefits specific to your organization; and
- able to communicate your confidence in introducing gaming to your organization.

If you work in a larger system, take advantage of any opportunity you get to see staff at other locations to talk about gaming. Trainings and system-wide or specialized committee meetings are good times to informally bring up gaming to hear people’s questions, ideas, and honest concerns. Also be looking among your library’s staff members. They might not necessarily be in your IT department. Staff members who are gamers will be an excellent resource of general support by talking to non-gamer staff, by making

informed suggestions to you, and by helping run programs at a later time.

It is essential that you don’t wait for an edict to come down from administration before talking to staff about your gaming initiative. If you want genuine support and enthusiasm, the staff must already be excited and thinking about it. Administration can establish gaming, but it is the staff that will make it a success.

But talking and making proposals will only get you so far. The proof is in the pilots. As soon as you get enough administration/management and staff support, you must hold gaming pilots at your location and in larger systems (a few of the locations where you have found enthusiasm for the initiative). At Columbus Metropolitan Library, four of our twenty-one locations held pilot gaming programs during our 2006 Teen Summer Reading Program. The pilots were held during the drafting of the system-wide gaming proposal. Statistics and narratives from these pilots enriched the proposal and gave readers a pre-

Resources

Print

- Gallaway, Beth, *Game On! Gaming at the Library* (New York: Neal-Schuman, 2007).
- Helmrich, Erin V., and Eli Neiburger, "Video Games as a Service," *Voya* 27, no. 6 (Feb. 2005): 451–53.
- , "Video Games as a Service: Three Years Later," *Voya* 3, no. 2 (June 2007): 113–15.
- Levine, Jenny, "Gaming & Libraries: Intersection of Services," *Library Technology Reports* 42, no. 5 (Sept./Oct. 2006).
- Neiburger, Eli, *Gamers . . . in the Library??: The Why, What and How of Videogame Tournaments for All Ages* (Chicago: ALA, 2007).
- Squire, Kurt, and Constance Steinkuehler, "Meet the Gamers," *Library Journal* 130, no. 6 (Apr. 15, 2005): 38–42.

Online

- The Search Institute. *What Are Developmental Assets?* (www.search-institute.org/assets). The Search Institute is one of the leading authorities on adolescent development. Looking at their organization and assets lists will provide great insights into the important role teen services play in developing the teens in our community.
- Gaming—Library Success: A Best Practices Wiki (<http://libsuccess.org/index.php?title=Gaming>). This link reflects what public libraries are already doing around the country with gaming, including past and current events, and a variety of resources.
- Game On: Games in Libraries (www.libgaming.blogspot.com). This is the definitive blog on gaming and libraries. Contributors include Beth Gallaway, Jami Schwarzwalder, and Kelly Czarnecki.
- Google Groups: LibGaming (<http://groups.google.com/group/LibGaming>). This is the definitive discussion list for all things gaming and libraries.
- Federation of American Scientists and Entertainment Software Association, *Summit on Educational Games* (<http://fas.org/gamesummit>). This Web site covers the many facets and findings of this 2005 summit on educational games. The Entertainment Software Association, Federation of American Scientists, and National Science Foundation were all sponsors of the summit. There is a lot of good information here in easy-to-read formats.

view into future success, but the diverse pilot locations were useful in other ways. The four locations represented a cross section of socio-economic populations. Gaming proved to have wide appeal, no matter the demographics. Pilots also enabled curious or reluctant staff an opportunity to see gaming in action, interact with the teens, and play games with them. Invite any interested and reluctant staff to pilots so they can see teens' positive behavior, ease of preparation and tear down, socializing of a diverse group of teens, and the casual atmosphere that invites relaxed conversation between staff and teens and among the teens themselves.

Ideally, all firmly resistant staff and staff who are "sitting on the fence" should observe participation in a gaming pilot. Those that convert will be some of your best gaming advocates. Don't limit yourself in staff involvement, no matter the level or area of service—let those who are interested help and observe. This builds solid support and paves the way for teen-services advocacy across all levels of staff. Even if your organization is initially supportive of gaming, pilots will only cement this support and give you early successes to report and promote, as well as the opportunity to fix any initial problems.

While it isn't necessary to schedule pilots around major events like your Teen Summer Reading Program, Teen Read Week, or Teen Tech Week, I recommend it because you can promote other teen programs at the gaming pilots, enabling you to point to how gaming promoted other library services to teens. In 2007, with our gaming firmly established, one branch reported that 6 percent of teens that registered for the summer reading program did so while at a gaming program. Another good time to have pilots is during winter and spring breaks. Promote the program during your school visits to give the teens motivation to come into the library during their breaks. Always be tracking statistics and recording narratives in an organized manner for later use. You can do this in spreadsheets and folders for each location. Statistics and narratives can work hand in hand to connect gaming to your organization's mission and values. Besides overall attendance, we track elements including the male to female ratio, the number of teens who sign up for other programs, the number of repeat visitors, and narratives from staff, parents, and the teens themselves.

At Columbus Metropolitan Library, we have encountered very few security issues. Staff members have noticed that teens are very protective of this program and exhibit self-policing behaviors not only during gaming, but in the library at large, anxious that poor behavior could reduce opportunities to game. Another aspect of this success is that, during gaming, teens get to see the staff as real, friendly people rather than adults that are watchful for bad behavior.

After Getting the Green Light

Once formal approval for gaming is obtained, work with both administration and staff to define expectations for gaming. How often should branches provide gaming programs to teens? What conditions, if any, need to be introduced for the best customer service? Ease of preparation and tear down, along with rewarding experiences, should cultivate enthusiasm to offer gaming as staff resources allow and demand by teens dictates. Continue to report gaming success at regular intervals and continue to work with staff for ideas to improve and expand your gaming programs. By focusing on how gaming can and does improve teen services and connects to both the teens' needs and your organization's direction, gaming not only proves itself, but also proves that positive outcomes result from dedicated teen services and can act as a springboard for new and improved teen services. □

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GREAT Stories CLUB

DONNA ALWARD is Library Director at the Houghton Lake (Mich.) Public Library; dalward@hlpl.lib.mi.us. She is reading *Star of the Sea* by Joseph O'Connor, *There's No Place Like Here* by Cecelia Ahern, and *Free for All: Oddballs, Geeks, and Gangstas in the Public Library* by Don Borchert.

As in many public libraries, promoting reading to various groups is standard operating procedure at the Houghton Lake (Mich.) Public Library. Though small and rural, we have offered various reading programs including Welcome Wrigglers for preschoolers, Battle of the Books for grades four through six, Popcorn and Pages for seventh and eighth graders, summer reading programs for children up to seventeen years old, and Page-Turners, an adult reading/discussion group.

The opportunity to promote reading to teens in detention facilities came with the Great Stories CLUB (Connecting Libraries, Underserved teens, and Books), a grant program from the American Library Association's Public Programs Office and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA). The grant would provide free books relevant to the challenges in the lives of at-risk teens.

Pam Bauchan, Houghton Lake's youth services librarian, was very enthusiastic about the Great Stories CLUB reading program. She serves on the Community Advisory Action Council at the Nokomis Challenge Center, which houses young men with delinquency and substance abuse problems. The program fit perfectly with the committee's goal to improve interaction with the local community.

When I explained the grant program at a library board meeting, I was approached by board member Bob Gariepy. He is also a program manager at the Shawano Treatment Center, a juvenile facility in nearby Grayling that houses males who are chronic delinquent offenders. Bob expressed interest in the grant program and wondered if his facility could also participate, so we worked with staff member Laurie Chudzinski to submit two grants. We received both—one to work with the Nokomis Challenge Center and an additional grant to work with the Shawano Treatment Center. Since the teens stay an average of six months at Nokomis and eighteen months at Shawano, we had time to get the programs into place and get our readers reading.

While pleased to be the recipient of two grants, I felt some trepidation, too. Serving teens well can be a challenge, evidenced by the number of articles, books, and professional development workshops focused on this topic. The road to success appears to involve hiring young, savvy librarians immersed in teen culture to deliver edgy, innovative programming guaranteed to engage teens. Pam and I were neither young and savvy nor immersed in teen culture. Plus, the young adults we would be working with were not ordinary teens—they had complications of their own.

Detained in secure, controlled environments, these young men had been involved in very serious situations. We knew little of how troubled some of their lives were. Would a reading discussion program really be of any interest? Would other staff at the two facilities wonder why these "do-gooder" librarians were bringing this program in? Was it realistic to think that law-abiding librarians (one of senior-citizen status) could make a meaningful connection and share their passion for reading with such troubled youth? Despite concerns, we forged ahead and began testing our belief that reading is enjoyable, social, and valuable, even for those in detention centers.

Pam and I met with teachers from the facilities to plan our program. Each participating library received sets of books for the members of the book club and teachers. The books were selected by YALSA and included *The First Part Last* by Angela Johnson, *Born Blue* by Han Nolan, and *Stuck in Neutral* by Terry Trueman. YALSA'S Outreach to Young Adults with Special Needs Committee had developed terrific online resources that were available free to all grant participants.

At our first meetings with our readers at the facilities, Pam and I explained the Great Stories CLUB program and presented book talks to spark their interest and generate enthusiasm for these great stories. Teachers agreed to focus on each book in their English classes and we librarians would return for discussions with small groups after the books had been read. We also proposed our idea of a final competition between the two participating facilities, which would be called The Great Stories CLUB Jeopardy Challenge. This competition would be based on the three books, include a pizza party for readers, and be held in the library's community meeting room, which meant these young men would be allowed to participate in a public event away from their facilities. The teens welcomed the idea and looked forward to the opportunity to attend the outside event. Teachers stressed that only those who read all three books, were participating in discussions, and observing all rules and regulations of their facilities would be able to attend the final program.

The potential to share further resources prompted a discussion with Sherrill Smith of the Saginaw Public Libraries, another Michigan public library that had also received a Great Stories CLUB grant. Sherrill was an extremely successful grant writer, and I wanted to explore a collaboration that would bring one of the Great Stories CLUB authors to Michigan through a successful grant or by sharing costs. Our goal was to

provide an opportunity for our readers to personally meet and speak with a Great Stories CLUB author about writing.

We coordinated our dates and time (and shared some of the expenses) so we could invite author Terry Trueman to Michigan. Tom Moreau, president of our local Chase Bank and a long-time library supporter, championed a grant for us within the bank to provide the necessary funding for Trueman's visit to our community.

By this time, Lisa Sutton, media specialist at Houghton Lake Community Schools, had organized a small group of high schools students who had decided to read the Great Stories CLUB books and participate in the Jeopardy Challenge too. We coordinated Trueman's visit with Lisa and Patty Webb, library director of the Gerrish-Higgins School District Public Library in Roscommon so all of our county's high school students could attend a book talk by Trueman.

At the first book discussion of *Stuck in Neutral* at Nokomis, we met with two groups of young men who had read the book. Several at a nearby table chose not to participate in the discussion. Teacher Paul Fry said they didn't have to talk about the books but they could listen, if they wished. The other participants were extremely vocal and shared opinions, demonstrated detailed knowledge of the book, and compared the situation of the main character, Shawn, to their own. They all wanted to know exactly what happened to Shawn (the ending was unclear), and they intended to ask the author directly when he came to the Lake.

We began to notice the nonparticipating boys had stopped doing their other work and started listening to our discussion. A couple of them eventually moved their chairs over to join us. They asked if there was a sequel to this book so they would know what really happened to Shawn. Pam explained there was no sequel but that Trueman's *Cruise Control* was the same story written from the brother's point of view. The teens identified with the brother's anger issues and immediately wanted to read that book. Pam personally purchased copies of *Cruise Control* the next day and sent them to Nokomis.

There were so many poignant moments during the book discussions. In talking about Janie's drug use in *Born Blue*, one teen said that his own mother had called the police on him, and that was how he ended up at Nokomis. I was taken aback and the room became silent. After a pause, he added quietly, "Probably saved my life!" Another said drugs had taken over Janie's life and he knew from personal experience just what that was like.

Some Comments from CLUB Readers

- “At first I thought it was boring and a waste of time. Now I can see that reading is actually kind of fun and time filling.”
- “The books were phenomenal and have taught me a lot about obstacles that may occur in my life.”
- “Now I have a hobby to do on a regular basis.”
- “If I hadn’t been involved in the book club, I would have really missed out on good books.”
- “Never judge a book by its cover!”
- “I have learned that I can lose myself in a book for hours and actually have fun while doing it.”
- “I would recommend these books for any young teen that is going through problems just to let them know people have problems everywhere from real life to storybooks.”
- “I hope the program continues because I have seen it do wonderful things for residents.”
- “The best part about being selected for the reading club is getting that sense of pride knowing that someone sees something good in you.”
- “I liked giving my opinion about the book, so other people can hear my side because I think what I have to say is important.”
- “It helped me stay out of trouble.”
- “The thing that I like best about being selected for the Book Club is the recognition. The fact that someone recognizes my talent means a lot to me.”
- “I learned that competition can be fun as well as serious. Personally, I’m very competitive and usually I take everything seriously and have no fun at competitive events, but I had fun at the finals!”
- “New and exciting ways to have fun without breaking the law.”

At Shawano’s discussion of *The First Part Last*, one teen was critical of Bobby’s behavior as a parent and expounded on parental responsibility. He said he would never leave a child of his to go out with his friends. I challenged him to put himself in the char-

acter’s place and imagine what it would be like to go from a carefree teen at the tender age of sixteen to a full-time parent with the total care of an infant, and asked if he could better understand the boy’s frustration. He seemed a bit surprised and said, “You mean you really want to hear what I think?” He had been saying what he thought we librarians wanted to hear. One young man shared that he already had a daughter and, yeah, it was hard. After that, the discussions seemed more genuine and realistic.

Our three teachers, Paull Fry, Bob Roberts, and Lisa Sutton, were terrific collaborators. At Nokomis, Paull used his own unending enthusiasm and incentives to keep teens motivated and participating. Special privileges were linked to the reading program. For example, participating readers were able to have lunch with the librarians and staff in a separate room off the cafeteria. Some teens got into a bit of trouble because they continued talking about the books into the evening, but that got resolved with good results.

At Shawano, Bob organized teens in literature circles designed to stimulate small-group literature discussions and to encourage connections to personal life experiences. Each reader was assigned a role (discussion director, discussion illustrator, discussion connector, vocabulary enricher, and literary luminary) and demonstrated those roles during the circle’s book discussions. This worked well and teens often compared characters and events to incidents from their own lives.

Lisa had encouraged her high school students to consider taking on the Great Stories CLUB books even though they had extracurricular activities, which made it very difficult for the students to meet for book discussions. Several decided to join anyway, and Lisa supplied them with books. Despite the fact that they only held brief book discussions, they came determined to participate in the finale.

For the Great Stories CLUB Jeopardy Challenge, Pam downloaded a Jeopardy template (www.ftc publishing.com) and used PowerPoint software to create a terrific Jeopardy game with sound, graphics, and animations, much like the TV version. Pam and I had created questions and answers as we read the books, and she put them into the game.

At the final gathering, after pop and pizza, we presented the Jeopardy Challenge, which proved to be a real hit. All teachers were present and cheered their teams on. What started as a contest for bragging rights turned into a competition with all teams demonstrating excellent sportsmanship, manners, and a great spirit of fun. The evening became a very special event when the teams from the two detention

facilities actually began to commiserate with the high school team, who had not had as much time to read and discuss the books and were lagging behind in points. Both the Nokomis and Shawono teams were quite empathetic with their plight and wanted them to do well.

Author Terry Trueman was a perfect choice to speak about writing. The teens asked very specific questions and were surprised by his frankness and willingness to answer. Trueman was also very funny. Answering a question about his life as an author, Terry said "It means that two weeks ago I was all dressed up in a suit and tie having breakfast with the First Lady and various dignitaries at the White House" (he projected a large photo of himself at the National Book Festival with First Lady Laura Bush for everybody to see), "while this week it means dress-

ing like this [very casual in jeans!] and having breakfast with you guys at Houghton Lake." The teens appreciated the contrast and laughed out loud, which seemed to make

everyone immediately comfortable. Trueman spoke with each of them when he personally autographed their books.

The number of comments we received about the author's visit surprised us. One teen said it "was a shock . . . meeting someone famous is almost a once-in-a-lifetime event for me." Another said it was inspirational and made him realize that dreams can come true. He added, "It was also kind of cool just talking with someone who's made some major accomplishments in their lifetime." Deb Jones, the director at Nokomis said, "In the fourteen years I have spent at Nokomis I had never heard the youth get so involved in a literary discussion. The opportunity to actually meet the author was more exciting than they originally thought. The kids that are sent to our program rarely have experienced a positive, meaningful educational moment in their schooling."

After we submitted our final evaluation report, we were surprised by a visit from Paull. He told us that thirty-one of the forty residents at Nokomis had asked when the *next* Great Stories CLUB would start. They were ready! Were we? ■



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YOUTH, PUBLIC LIBRARIES, AND THE **Internet**

PART FOUR

WHY YOUTH DO NOT USE THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

JUNE ABBAS (abbasjm@buffalo.edu) is Associate Professor, MELANIE KIMBALL (mkimball@buffalo.edu) is Assistant Professor, KAY BISHOP (kgbishop@buffalo.edu) is Associate Professor, and GEORGE D'ELIA (delia@buffalo.edu) is Professor in the Department of Library and Information Studies at the State University of New York at Buffalo.

June is reading *Synaptic Self: How Our Brains Become Who We Are* by Joseph LeDoux. Melanie is reading *How the Scots Invented the Modern World* by Arthur Herman. Kay is reading *Atonement* by Ian McEwan. George is reading *Before the Dawn: Recovering the Lost History of Our Ancestors* by Nicholas Wade.

This article is the fourth in a series of four that report the findings of a survey conducted in 2003 by a team of researchers from the University at Buffalo, State University of New York designed to investigate the impact that youth's use of the Internet has had on their use of the public library. This article will provide the findings of the analysis of youth's reasons for not using the public library and any connection that their preference for using the Internet may have on their use of the public library.¹

Survey Design

Researchers at the University at Buffalo, State University of New York received a grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to conduct a survey of youth in grades five through twelve in both public and private schools in the Buffalo-Niagara Region of Western New York State.² A total of 4,237 completed questionnaires were obtained. In order to improve the representativeness of the sample, data were weighted to conform to current national estimates of the percentages of students enrolled in public and in private schools broken down by Hispanic ethnicity and race.³

Objectives of the Study

One of the objectives of this research study was to describe the reasons why some youth did not use the public library and to investigate whether youth's use of the Internet has contributed to this non-use of the public library. Unfortunately there do not appear to be any studies prior to 1995 (the generally accepted date when the Web became more widely used as a consumer communication medium) which provide estimates of the proportion of youth from the general population of youth who visited the public library. Consequently, the estimates obtained from this survey cannot be compared to any estimates from surveys prior to the wide-scale availability of the Internet to determine if the proportion of youth who visited the public library in 2003 has decreased from that earlier pre-Internet time. If such a decrease could have been demonstrated, then it could be hypothesized that one probable cause for the decrease was the wide-scale availability and use of the Internet. If no such decrease could have been demonstrated, then it could be hypothesized that the impact of the Internet on youth's use (in terms of visitation) of the public library was negligible. In the absence of any pre-Internet data, the survey included questions about youth's opinions of their reasons for not using the public library, including their use of the Internet. In the following sections we analyze these opinions for possible insights into why some youth did not use the public library.

Reasons Why Youth Do Not Use the Public Library

To determine the reasons why youth did not use the public library, youth were provided with a list of possible reasons why some youth do not use the public library. These reasons were obtained from focus group interviews with youth in middle and high school prior to the development of the questionnaires in which, among the other issues of interest to the survey, youth who did not visit the public library discussed their reasons for non-use. For this analysis, the sample was limited to those youth who did not visit the public library during the school year. The youth who were public library non-users comprised 30.5 percent of the total sample. The youth were asked to read each reason for non-use and then asked to indicate, for each reason, the degree to which they disagreed or agreed that this was a reason why they did not use the public library. The youth were provided with the following response categories: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; and

4 = strongly agree. The non-user youth's responses are reported in table 1.

Results indicate the reason for nonuse with which the highest percentage of youth agreed (85.5 percent) was E ("I prefer to use the Internet"). The high level of youth's agreement with this reason suggests that the preference for using the Internet was the primary or *most prominent* reason for nonuse. However, it was reported in an earlier paper in this series that having Internet access at home did not affect whether youth visited the library or not (68.3 percent of youth who did not have Internet access at home visited the public library compared to 70.4 percent of youth who had Internet access at home who reported that they visited the public library).⁴ This previously reported finding suggests that use of the Internet might not be as strong a reason for not using the library as youth reported it to be.

In order to further investigate this apparent anomaly, the researchers divided the segment of youth who did not visit the library into two groups, those youth who reported that they had, previous to last year, visited the library and those youth who reported that they had never visited the library. Those youth who indicated that they had visited the public library before last year might represent youth who had opted to use the Internet instead of the public library (or opted not to use the public library for other reasons). Therefore, if having Internet access at home had a negative impact on youth visiting the public library, it would be reasonable to expect that youth who had access to the Internet at home would have exhibited a greater tendency to be former users of the public library than youth who did not have Internet access at home. In order to test for this possibility,

Table 1. Reasons For Not Using the Public Library

Percentages of Youth Selecting "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" in Rank Order (N=1,184)

	%	Reason for Not Using the Public Library
E	85.5	I prefer to use the Internet
H	54.5	I don't like having to return things
G	47.1	I don't like to read
A	39.9	Public library too far away to get to
F	39.6	I prefer to use the school library
C	26.4	I don't feel welcome at public library
D	23.5	Librarians are not friendly
I	22.8	I've never used public library
B	15.9	Public library is not in a safe place

the “former library users” segment of youth were cross-tabulated with whether or not these youth had Internet access at home (and used it).⁵ The results of this cross-tabulation indicated that 73.9 percent of the youth who did not have Internet access at home were “former library users” and that 77.6 percent of the youth who did have Internet access at home were “former library users.” While youth who had Internet access at home were slightly more likely to be “former library users” than youth who did not have Internet access at home, this observed difference was not statistically significant (that is, it could have occurred by chance). Consequently, *there is no evidence to support the notion that the availability of the Internet at home was related to these youth's apparent decision not to visit the public library.* (The reader is reminded that the prior analysis was conducted using only segments of public library nonusers which comprised 30.5 percent of the total sample.) Given these results it appeared that, while youth reported that their nonuse of the library was primarily due to their use of the Internet, the reasons for their non-use might be a bit more complicated. The results reported in table 1 indicate that there are many other reasons, beyond use of the Internet, why youth reported that they did not use the public library.

Given the apparent lack of negative impact of use of the Internet on use of the library reported previously, a factor analysis of the reasons for nonuse was conducted to try to better understand the underlying reasons why some youth choose not to use the public library. Factor analysis is a statistical procedure which identifies, from a set of variables, any patterns of relationships that might exist among those variables. If such patterns are found, these sets of related variables can be considered to be measuring the same underlying construct, called a factor. Factor analysis is very useful for reducing a large set of variables to a smaller set, which simplifies analyses, and for identifying the common themes among these sets of related variables, which enhances our understanding of what these variables are measuring. This factor analysis was conducted with the entire sample of nonusers. The results of this analysis indicated that there were three factors underlying youth's reasons for not using the library.

The first factor included those reasons that might be considered negative opinions about the library such as safety (B), not feeling welcome (C), unfriendliness of librarians (D), and never having used the library (I). We called Factor 1 “Negative Opinions about Library.”

The second factor included reasons related to a preference by youth for using the Internet (E), not liking to read (G), and not liking to return materials to the library (H).⁶ We called Factor 2 “Convenience/Dislike of Reading.” This factor appears to be measuring an interesting convergence of three somewhat disparate reasons for nonuse. On the one hand, the relationship between not liking to read and the preference for the Internet appears plausible in the sense that these youth appear to prefer one kind of activity or one source of information over another. However it is difficult to discern the apparent relationship between a dislike of having to return borrowed materials with a dislike of reading, since, if the youth did not read, there would appear to be little likelihood of the youth borrowing materials from the public library in the first place. Upon reflection, however, the commonality underlying these three reasons for nonuse appears to be a dimension of *convenience* as indicated by youth's preference for using the Internet (rather than going to the library) and by youth's dislike of having to return borrowed materials. While in the context of this factor we think it plausible that these youth might think of the reading of printed materials as an inconvenient activity, we recognize that there are any number of possible reasons why youth may not like to read beyond this sense of inconvenience. These other reasons might include, for example, the physically sedentary, intellectually reflective, and solitary nature of reading—all of which would face competition from other more active or socially interactive activities. Other possible reasons why youth might not like to read include peer pressure, the negative association of reading with required school work, and learning disabilities (both diagnosed and undiagnosed). Unfortunately, it was beyond the scope of this survey to explore these many possible explanations of the underlying causes of these youth's expressed dislike of reading.

The third factor identified just one reason for nonuse, a preference to use the school library media center (SLMC) (F). We called Factor 3 “Preference for Using the SLMC.” This factor also seems to reflect youth's preference for convenience, although in this case, a preference for using the SLMC over visiting the public library. This factor suggests that the SLMC is a “friendly” competitor to the public library. The SLMC may appear to be less convenient than the public library in terms of hours of operation. However, since youth spend the majority of their weekdays in school, the SLMC might be more convenient to them than making a trip to the public library. It should be noted that one reason—the library is too

far away (A)—did not load onto any one factor.

Factor scale scores were then calculated for each of these three factors and it was determined that:

- 66 percent of the nonuser youth agreed with the reasons for nonuse identified by Factor 2: Convenience/Dislike of Reading;
- 39.8 percent of the nonuser youth agreed with the reasons for nonuse identified by Factor 3: Preference for Using the SLMC; and
- 23.6 percent of the nonuser youth agreed with the reasons for nonuse identified by Factor 1: Negative Opinions about Library.⁷

These results indicated that the set of reasons with which the largest percentage of youth agreed was the set associated with Factor 2, which measured youth's preference for using the Internet, youth's dislike of reading, and youth's dislike of having to return materials. A smaller, although still somewhat substantial, percentage of youth agreed with Factor 3, which measured youth's preference for using the SLMC instead of the public library. The smallest percentage of youth agreed with the reasons associated with Factor 1, which measured youth's negative opinions about the public library.

Discussion

These analyses clearly indicated that having Internet access at home did not affect whether youth did or did not visit the public library. And, while youth who had Internet access at home were slightly more likely to be "former library users" than youth who did not have Internet access at home, this observed difference was not statistically significant. If the Internet were such a strong competitor against the public library for the attention of youth, then one could reasonably expect that access to the Internet at home would have had a much more profound and negative impact on youth's visits to the public library.

Furthermore, the reasons for not using the public library with which the highest percentage of youth agreed were a preference for using the Internet combined with a dislike of reading and a dislike of having to return materials. However whether youth's preference for the Internet was the stimulus for youth's nonuse of the public library or whether youth's preference for the Internet was a reasonable rationale for explaining a behavior in which they were already engaging, is still open to question.

It appears that use of the Internet, as an alternative to use of the public library, was attractive pri-

marily to those youth who did not like to read. We suspect, therefore, that these youth's professed dislike of reading was probably the prime motivating factor for not using the public library. We could also posit that these findings indicate a preference by youth for the more interactive nature of the content found on the Internet. Do youth prefer this form of reading (scanning and browsing through hyperlinked content) to the more linear print format?⁸ This question should be explored further as a possible reason why youth prefer the Internet to the public library.

Furthermore, youth's dislike of returning materials cannot be discounted. However, the need to return materials would obviously be obviated if these youth did not read in the first place. In this context, we suspect that these youth's preference for the Internet might just be a convenient alternative to the public library, an alternative which is also compatible with their dislike of reading. In effect, we think it likely that, in the absence of the Internet, these youth would probably still not want to use the public library.

The convenience factor of almost universal access to the Internet also can not be downplayed. Information-seeking studies of older youth and undergraduate students have shown that the convenience factor is one reason why youth use the Internet. Studies conducted by Lubans, OCLC, Young & Von Seggen, Agosto, and Shenton and Dixon with older youth and undergraduate students support this conclusion of convenience.⁹ Students report that the ease of use and self-service aspects of the Internet, as well as the time youth saved by using the Internet, were important reasons for Internet use. Zipf's theory of the Principle of Least Effort has been used to explain convenience and time-saving aspects of information-seeking behavior of adults and youth.¹⁰ Zipf proposed that people make choices of resources to use during information-retrieval activities based on criteria of saving time and expending the least amount of effort to find information that will suit their immediate information need.

These analyses also demonstrated that for some youth the SLMC was a convenient alternative to the public library and, unfortunately, some youth had negative opinions about the public library which apparently contributed to their nonuse of the library. However, while the proportion of youth who had negative opinions about the public library suggests that there is probably room for improvement in their services to youth, it is also reasonable to conclude that for the substantial majority of nonuser youth, nonuse of the library was an affirmative preference

for an alternative activity rather than a negative reaction to the library.

Conclusions

The results of these analyses lead us to conclude that while youth's preference for the Internet cannot be discounted as a reason for why these youth do not use the public library, we do not think that it is the primary reason. Findings indicate other potential reasons such as:

1. The nexus of motivations associated with youth's dislike of reading is probably the primary reason why these youth do not use the public library; however, the survey was not designed to explore this factor further;
2. The inconvenience of having to return borrowed materials to the library might also be a contributing factor for not using the public library; and
3. For some youth, the convenient school library media center is a "friendly" competitor to the public library.

Given that, as a result of this survey, we now have these baseline data estimating the proportion of youth who visit the public library and the proportion who do not, researchers who investigate youth's use of the public library in the future will be able to monitor any changes in these proportions to determine if the Internet has had a demonstrable impact on the proportion of youth who use the public library. Future research should also extend these findings to a larger national sample of youth to validate the findings of this study. The dislike of reading factor should also be explored further to understand the underlying dimensions this factor uncovered. Is youth's dislike of reading attributed to their general dislike or is it tied to their preference for a more interactive Internet or other factors yet uncovered? □

References and Notes

1. Additional discussion of the other aspects of this research project can be found in George D'Elia, "The Impacts of Youth's Use of the Internet on the Public Library" (2004), www.urbanlibraries.org/youthsuseoftheinternet.html (accessed Jan. 18, 2008); George D'Elia, June Abbas, Kay Bishop, and Joey Rodger, "Impacts of Youth's Use of the Internet on Youth's Use of the Public Library," *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 58, no. 14 (Oct. 2007); June Abbas, Kay Bishop, and George D'Elia, "Youth and the Internet," *Young Adult Library Services* 5, no. 2 (Winter 2007); and June Abbas, Melanie Kimball, Kay Bishop, and George D'Elia, "Youth, Public Libraries and the Internet, Part One: Internet Access and Youth's Use of the Public Library," *Public Libraries* 46, no. 4 (July/Aug. 2007).
2. This project was supported by a grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services under the National Leadership Grants for Libraries Program, Research and Demonstration. The contents of this article do not carry the endorsement of the Institute for Museum and Library Services. The opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors.
3. A complete explanation of the survey method is provided in the first article in the series: Abbas, Kimball, Bishop, and D'Elia, "Youth, Public Libraries and the Internet, Part One: Internet Access and Youth's Use of the Public Library," *Public Libraries* 46, no. 4 (July/Aug. 2007).
4. Ibid.
5. The data were submitted to Chi-Square analyses for contingency tables. Chi-Square analysis is a procedure which tests for differences among groups in terms of the percentages of respondents within the groups who selected a given response—in this case a comparison of the percentages of youth who did or did not have Internet access at home with whether or not they were former users of the public library. A statistically significant difference is an observed difference between two or more groups whose probability of having occurred by chance is so small (five chances out of a hundred, or less) that we conclude that the observed difference did not occur by chance but that the observed difference occurred because youth who had Internet access at home responded differently than youth who did not have Internet access at home.
6. The question did not distinguish between reading as an activity (for example, the reading of books and other kinds of printed materials for pleasure or self-edification) and reading as a skill (for example, the ability to read messages and script on a computer screen). This distinction appeared to be self-evident among the youth in the group interviews who offered this as a reason for not using the public library.
7. A factor scale score for each of the three factors was calculated for each youth who responded to

- these reasons for nonuse. For Factor 1 (Negative Opinions about the Library) scores for reasons for nonuse A, B, C, D, and I were summed and then divided by five to create a factor score based on the mean of the responses to the four reasons that loaded onto Factor 1. For Factor 2 (Convenience/Dislike of Reading) scores for reasons for nonuse E, G, and H were summed and then divided by three to create a factor score based on the mean of the responses to the three reasons that loaded onto Factor 2. Factor 3 (Preference for Using the School Library Media Center) was comprised of that one reason for nonuse. Consequently, the factor score for Factor 3 was simply the score for reason for nonuse F.
8. Eliza T. Dresang in "The Information-Seeking Behavior of Youth in the Digital Environment," *Library Trends* 54, no. 2 (Fall 2005), 178–96, poses the question of whether or not children seem to prefer using digital resources (Internet, handheld computerized books) because of their hypertextual nature.
 9. John Lubans, "When Students Hit the Surf," *School Library Journal* 49, no. 9 (1999): 144–47;

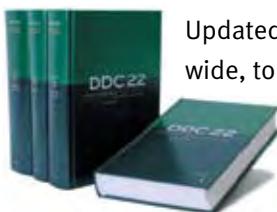
OCLC White Paper on the Information Habits of College Students, "How Academic Librarians Can Influence Students' Web-based Information Choices" (June 2004), available at www.mnstate.edu/schwartz/informationhabits.pdf (accessed Jan. 18, 2008); Nancy J. Young and Marilyn Von Seggen, "General Information Seeking in Changing Times: A Focus Group Study," *Reference and User Services Quarterly* 41, no. 2 (2001): 159–69; Denise Agosto, "Bounded Rationality and Satisficing in Young People's Web-based Decision Making," *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 53, no. 1 (2002): 16–27; Denise Agosto, "A Model of Young People's Decision-making in Using the Web," *Library and Information Science Research* 24, no. 4 (2002): 311–41; Andrew K. Shenton and Pat Dixon, "Issues Arising from Youngster's Information-seeking Behavior," *Library and Information Research* 26, no. 2 (2004): 177–200.

10. George Zipf, *Human Behavior and the Principle of Least Effort* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1949).

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Julie is reading *Take a Girl Like You* by Kingsley Amis.

"By the Book" reviews professional development materials of potential interest to public librarians, trustees, and others involved in library service. Public Library Association policy dictates that PLA publications not be reviewed in this column. Notice of new publications from PLA will generally be found in the "News from PLA" section of *Public Libraries*. A description of books written by the editors or contributing editors of *Public Libraries* may appear in this column but no evaluative review will be included for these titles.

Serving Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Teens: A How-to-Do-It Manual for Librarians

By Hillias J. Martin Jr. and James R. Murdock. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers. 2007. 267p. \$55 (ISBN-10: 1-55570-566-9) LC 20066039469.

This is book number 151 in the Neal-Schuman How-to-Do-It Manuals for Librarians series. The authors, Hillias Martin and James Murdock, have done an exceptional job tackling an area of library service that is frequently neglected, and they seamlessly fill an information gap for librarians serving lesbian, gay bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) teens.

Serving Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Teens is divided into two sections. Section I, "Serving LGBTQ Teens in the Library," provides a brief historical overview of the queer movement and discusses issues such as coming out, sexual orientation, and sexual identity. Librarians unfamiliar with the queer population will find this portion of the book particularly useful and enlightening. This section also contains strategies for integrating LGBTQ materials into your library's young-adult collection.

Section II, "Recommended LGBTQ Materials and Programs,"

contains an annotated bibliography to assist with developing young-adult LGBTQ collections. Throughout this book, the authors emphasize that LGBTQ teens frequently defer to public libraries for their information needs. Therefore it is critical that public-library collections include print materials (fiction and nonfiction), movies, and online resources addressing the concerns of the LGBTQ population. Libraries with established LGBTQ teen collections can evaluate their holdings against the fifty works recommended in this bibliography. For libraries serving conservative communities or those with small teen collections, the authors provide an abbreviated list of ten LGBTQ materials that all public libraries should own. Section II also outlines sample LGBTQ book talks and programs for teens.

Serving Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Teens is an important book because it focuses on a frequently forgotten population in library service and provides methodologies for librarians to effect change in their facilities. This book is highly recommended for all public service librarians working with teens.—Adrienne Leonardelli, Reference Librarian, Forsyth County Public Library, North Carolina

Going Places with Youth Outreach

By Angela B. Pfeil. Chicago: American Library Association, 2005. 120p. \$32 (ISBN-10: 0-8389-0900-0) LC 2005007430.

Marketing and outreach services to youth (elementary and middle school age) should be an intertwined mission for libraries. According to Pfeil, "Marketing is outreach in that you are reaching out to a target audience with the goal of informing them of your products" (8). The opening chapters provide an overview of library marketing strategies and techniques such as developing marketing plans, goals, and objectives. The how-to of community networking, conducting outreach presentations, developing marketing materials, and program analysis are covered in subsequent chapters. *Going Places with Youth Outreach* is most innovative in its advocating for online outreach services to digital natives. Beyond the standard online services of reference resources, circulation, and readers advisory, Pfeil focuses on developing online programming such as author chat events, Web scavenger hunts, and online story times. New outreach librarians or those wishing for a refresher will want a copy of this book. Appendixes include sample outreach programs and additional reading. Selected bibliography. Indexed.—Ernie Cox, Librarian, St. Timothy's School, Raleigh, North Carolina

Teens, Technology, and Literacy: Or, Why Bad Grammar Isn't Always Bad

By Linda W. Braun. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2006. 128p.

\$30 (ISBN-10: 1-59158-368-3) LC 200631714

Author Linda Braun proposes that while teens may not use the best grammar in cyberspace, they are learning valuable literacy skills by connecting with other teens, and through their ideas, reading, and writing, they are redefining literacy. The book is divided into three parts: defining literacy history and what literacy means today, covering literacy tools that teens are currently using, and examining the library and classroom as a virtual literacy tool.

Literacy is discussed as not just a skill such as reading and writing, but also as a measure of intelligence and a part of a person's identity. The author states that teens who are using technologies such as instant messaging, chat, and e-mail are demonstrating literacy, and that these technologies can only improve rather than hurt related literacies.

The newest technologies such as blogs, wikis, and podcasts, also enhance literacy as teens collaborate with others, read the content of blogs, write and produce content, and respond to others about ideas and content. The chapter on gaming discusses how talking and learning about games and playing games in the library also presents opportunities to teach literacy, such as offering workshop gaming, having teens review games, and having teens produce online content about gaming through reviews and podcasting. Finally, social networking is discussed as a way for teens to communicate their ideas, discover their identity, and improve their literacy skills.

This book is a fascinating read for anyone who works with teens, and it can play an important role in educating the public about these literacies. It also can be used

to teach educators that by incorporating these technologies into programs, they can maximize how they reach the teen audience. This book is highly recommended for all libraries.—Susan McClellan, Community Outreach Coordinator Librarian, Shaler North Hills Library, Glenshaw, Pennsylvania

The Extreme Searchers Internet Handbook

By Randolph Hock. Medford, N.J.: CyberAge Books, 2007. 326p. \$24.95 (ISBN-13: 978-0-910965-76-7) LC 200636791.

The second edition of *The Extreme Searchers Internet Handbook* considerably updates the previous version. Hock, a former reference librarian and experienced Internet trainer, provides a good review of the basics while also covering new ground. Intent on exposing the "nooks and crannies" of the Web, Hock provides useful tips for the experienced librarian, researcher, or Internet trainer (xix).

Much of the handbook focuses on the new players that have emerged since the earlier edition came out. The formerly revered AltaVista, AlltheWeb, and HotBot have given way to Google, Yahoo!, Ask, and Live Search. Though Google and Yahoo! are briefly mentioned in the earlier handbook, they have notably improved their output and capabilities since 2004. An excellent table, 5.1, compares the features of each of these "new" search engines (127).

Though some of the core information, such as the history of the Web, remains the same, the newer edition is a must-have for its coverage of Web 2.0 tools. Blogs, podcasts, mash-ups, aggregation sites, video search engines, and visualization search

engines (for example, Grokker), which are not even mentioned in the older version, are fully explored in the newer edition. Also, the second edition offers new sites for finding images, sounds, news, and consumer information.

The second edition of *The Extreme Searchers Internet Handbook* is a valuable resource and is highly recommended for all libraries.—*Chantal Walvoord, Public Services Librarian, Christopher A. Parr Library, Plano, Texas*

Dynamic Youth Services through Outcome-based Planning and Evaluation

By Eliza T. Dresong, Melissa Gross, and Leslie Edmonds Hold. Chicago: American Library Association, 2006. 155p. paper. \$42 (ISBN-13: 978-0-8389-0918-8; ISBN-10: 0-8389-0918-3). LC 20067487.

The most pressing question for libraries and those who toil in them is this: Does my library make a difference in the lives of its younger customers and patrons? To answer this query, librarians and library administrators need to measure outcomes. This process is absolutely necessary when launching new programs and services, according to the three coauthors of *Dynamic Youth Services through Outcome-based Planning and Evaluation*.

The three experts actually piloted their ideas for the youth in the St. Louis Public Library, and they share their wisdom and experience in this volume. *Dynamic Youth Services* is extremely Library 2.0. Translation: it is focused on customers and patrons. Moreover, the book aims to help libraries generate government- or grant-based support for their innovations.

Dynamic Youth Services is required reading for not only youth librarians but also for library administrators. Who could deny that libraries have much to learn from the fields of advertising, marketing, and competitive intelligence? Library employees must be able to identify what business the library is in, who its customers are, and who the competition is. Perusing *Dynamic Youth Services* will help develop this mindset.—*C. Brian Smith, Reference/Electronic Resources Librarian, Arlington Heights (Ill.) Memorial Library*

Encountering Enchantment: A Guide to Speculative Fiction for Teens

By Susan Fichtelberg. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2007. 328p. \$48 (ISBN-10: 1-59158-316-0). LC 2006033739.

Before "muggles" evolved into a common term in children's literature, Susan Fichtelberg read J. R. R. Tolkien and other classic fantasy literature. Fichtelberg's love for the fantasy and science fiction genres combined with her background as a children's librarian for nearly twenty years conjured a fantastic guidebook for library professionals serving audiences in grades six through twelve.

Fichtelberg's tome covers the entire realm of the fantasy and science-fiction genres in detail. She includes an extensive introduction, which details the purpose and audience for the book, defines "young adults" (which can be vicarious), and explains the value of imaginative literature, scope, criteria, methodology, organization, young-adult paperback series, and keeping current with speculative fiction. Fichtelberg

also has a section with eight author interviews, a "how-to use this book" section, and references.

Early chapters cover wizards, epic fantasy, myth-and-legend fantasy, and fairy-tale fantasy. The middle chapters focus on alternate and parallel worlds, the faerie realm, fantasy romance, fantasy mystery, and creature fantasy. The later chapters delve into time travel, science fantasy, science fiction, the paranormal, and horror. The last chapter covers graphic novels.

The appendixes and indexes provide rich resources for the reader with programming, fantasy lists, fiction in audio-visual formats, best books for book clubs, resources, author/title/subject indexes, and an index of award-winning titles in the fantasy/science fiction genres.

Overall, an eclectic and thorough resource guide for an increasingly popular genre with young adults and adults alike. Fichtelberg's magical book is essential for young-adult media centers and public libraries.—*Lori Sigety, Branch Manager, LaSalle Branch Library, St. Joseph County Public Library, South Bend, Indiana*

Measuring Library Performance: Principles and Techniques

By Peter Brophy. London: Facet Publishing, 2006. 242p. \$99.95 (ISBN-13: 978-1-8560-4593-3; ISBN-10: 1-8560-4593-3). LC 2007360829.

In the past, libraries were measured by the number of print volumes housed in their collections. The most salient question in the digital age is now this: How is the library impacting and affecting its users and society? Peter Brophy, Professor of Information Management at

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England's Manchester Metropolitan University, provides a framework as well as guidance to answer this question in *Measuring Library Performance*.

This book features helpful tables, charts, and graphs, as well as a glossary of acronyms and abbreviations for business, technology, and standards. The appendixes, though, might be the most valuable section, as they focus on data-collection methods as well as data analysis and presentation. Think Likert scales, mystery shoppers, standard deviations, significance tests, scatterplots, and Pareto charts.

This book is an essential resource for libraries and librarians who are serious about measuring their impact on customers, patrons, and society at large. The rapid changes of the twenty-first century behoove libraries to examine and justify their existences. *Measuring Library Performance* will benefit library and information-science students, professors, and busy information professionals, too.—C. Brian Smith, Reference/Electronic Resources Librarian, Arlington Heights (Ill.) Memorial Library

public—clients and customers—are unaware that these tools cost thousands of dollars, librarians must be aware of the behind-the-scenes process of delivering information to the masses. More and more, doing so requires the licensing of Web-based content and forging mutually beneficial relationships with big corporations.

Library/Vendor Relationships is a compilation of articles, skillfully organized by Sam Brooks, senior vice president of sales and marketing for ESBCO, and David H. Carlson, dean of library affairs at Southern Illinois University. Overall, the spirit of this collection is one that advocates for a working alliance and interdependency. Libraries and vendors need one another. Libraries need to provide access to datasets, and vendors can glean much from librarians' and end users' feedback—whether it is in the form of focus groups, user groups, mailing lists (such as Web4Lib and Liblicense-L), wikis, blogs, and so forth.

This is a helpful and practical book for digital and electronic-resources librarians in any information environment—be it corporate, government, public, or academic. Publishers and vendors will profit from reading this work, too. Couple this book with *Getting to Yes* (Penguin Books, 1991), and a foundation for successful, win-win negotiations between libraries and vendors will emerge. As Sarah Raley and Jean Smith point out in *Library/Vendor Relationships*, "The relationship between librarians and vendors should be symbiotic; libraries need the vendor's products and vendors need the revenue generated by library sales" (200).—C. Brian Smith, Reference/Electronic Resources Librarian, Arlington Heights (Ill.) Memorial Library

Library/Vendor Relationships

By Sam Brooks and David H. Carlson.
Binghampton, N.Y.: The Haworth Information Press. 2006. 232p. paper. \$24.95 (ISBN-13: 978-0-7890-3352-9; ISBN-10: 0-7890-3352-6). LC 2006002789.

Libraries and librarians are content providers. In our increasingly digital society, many of the resources that information professionals offer are available over the Web, accessible via a library's Web site. These resources include e-books as well as full-text articles. While the general

Crash Course in Web Design for Libraries

By Charles P. Rubenstein. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2007. 196p. \$30 (ISBN-10: 1-59158-366-7) LC 2006033742.

Do you consider yourself technologically challenged? Does the idea of writing HTML code send your heart into tachycardia? Have you been assigned the difficult task of creating a Web site for your library with neither the budget nor training to do so? If you answered yes to at least one of these questions, then *Crash Course in Web Design for Libraries* is the answer to your prayers. The good news is *Crash Course* was written for all skill levels; therefore even tech-savvy librarians will benefit from its content.

Although *Crash Course* won't teach you to write HTML code like a

pro, it will give you the fundamentals needed to construct a Web site for your library using "the popular Microsoft Word software program with its built-in word to Web converter" (1). The author, Charles P. Rubenstein, guides readers through the convoluted landscape of Web site development by using minimal technical jargon, providing explicit recipe-style instructions, and including screen shots displaying how pages will look published on the Web. Novice Web designers will appreciate that Rubenstein provides forewarning when addressing difficult concepts by cautioning, "this section might be too advanced for some. Feel free to jump to the [next] section" (173).

Crash course also discusses informational elements that should be included on every library Web site, as well as how to create Web forms for

patron questions and design surveys for customer feedback. Usability issues, which should be of paramount concern to those developing library Web sites, are also addressed. After all, patrons will not continue visiting the library's Web site if they cannot easily find the information they need.

If you intend to develop a Web site and have no clue where to begin, reading *Crash Course in Web Design for Libraries* is an excellent first step. As you embark on your Web site-development journey, keep in mind the mission and objectives of your library. But, more importantly, no matter how your library Web site ends up looking, "remember, the key to information is content" (184).—Adrienne Leonardelli, *Business/Science Reference Librarian, Forsyth County (N.C.) Public Library* ■

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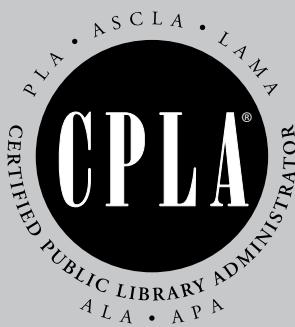
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For more information, visit <http://www.ala-apa.org/certification/cpla.html> or call 800-545-2433, x2424. Reviews are quarterly. See the Web site for details.





for Teen Tech Week™ 2008!

March 2-8, 2008

Teen Tech Week

is a national initiative sponsored by the Young Adult Library Services Association to ensure that teens are competent, ethical and safe users of technologies, especially those offered through libraries.

Teen Tech Week encourages teens to use libraries' nonprint resources for education and recreation, and to recognize that librarians are qualified, trusted professionals in the field of information technology.

Join the celebration!

Visit www.ala.org/teentechweek, and you can:



Get **great ideas for activities** and events for any library, at any budget



Download **free tech guides and social networking resources** to share with your teens



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... and much more!



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publications



Get Connected: Tech Programs for Teens by RoseMary Honnold is chock-full of innovative ideas, cutting-edge tech programs, and YALSA's creative ideas for celebrating Teen Tech Week! Visit www.neal-schuman.com or call 1-866-NS-BOOKS.

Get Connected: Tech Programs for Teens. (Neal-Schuman, 2007) 1-55570-613-4. ISBN-13: 978-1-55570-613-5. 6 x 9. 166p. \$45.00.



Best Books for Young Adults is back! Teen services librarians, along with parents and English teachers, will welcome this fully updated third edition, the most comprehensive and effective reference for great reading for young adults. Edited by Holly Koelling. Available at the ALA Store, www.alastore.ala.org.

Best Books for Young Adults. (ALA Editions, 2007) 0-8389-3569-9. ISBN-13: 978-0-8389-3569-9. 7 x 10. 376p. \$42.00 (ALA Members: \$37.80).



Stay current with the latest in teen services by subscribing to *Young Adult Library Services*, YALSA's quarterly journal. Visit www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/yalsapubs/publications.cfm or call 1-800-545-2433, ext. 5. ISSN 1541-4302, \$50.00 (U.S.).



The contributing editor of this column is **VICKI NESTING**, Assistant Director at the St. Charles Parish Library, Louisiana. Submissions may be sent to her at 21 River Park Dr., Hahnville, LA 70057; vnestin@bellsouth.net.

Vicki is reading *Friend of the Devil* by Peter Robinson, *The Last Days of Dogtown* by Anita Diamant, *Silent In the Grave* by Deanna Raybourn, and *Soul Catcher* by Michael White.

The following are extracted from press releases and vendor announcements and are intended for reader information only. The appearance of such notices herein does not constitute an evaluation or an endorsement of the products or services by the Public Library Association or the editors of this magazine.

NotePods: iPod Study Aids

www.notepods.com

NotePods are detailed audio and text summaries of books and plays by Shakespeare, Hawthorne, Dickens, Austen, and other authors that can be played on a student's iPod, MP3 player, or computer. Each CD in the collection contains both audio (in MP3) and text files (in PDF) so the user has a choice of format when using the study aid.

NotePods are different from CliffsNotes, to which they're often compared. NotePods tell the whole story, introducing all the characters and events, and leaving the literary analysis to the teacher. The shortest NotePod (*Romeo and Juliet*) is about twenty minutes, and the longest (*Gulliver's Travels*) is almost three hours.

Students who are having trouble with plays by Shakespeare or books by Hawthorne, for example, may find that listening to the NotePods summaries first makes it easier to understand what they're reading. NotePods can also be a useful study aid for English Language Learners and children with reading disorders.

NotePods have been very popular as downloads directly from the company's Web site, and now InterLingua is making the collection available in CD format for purchase by libraries and schools.

TutorAce Math DVD Series

www.tutorace.com

AceMath is a comprehensive series of math tutorials available on DVD and CD-ROM. These series are produced by award-winning mathematics professors who have not only been making videos for the past eighteen years and understand exactly what they are trying to convey, but also understand the mistakes students make, the anxieties they have, and the conceptual barriers they must hurdle. The series includes:

Pre-Algebra: Consists of 31 DVDs. Each DVD is approximately twenty-five to thirty minutes in length. Topics include fractions, real numbers, exponents, solving linear equations and inequalities and applications, polynomials, factoring, rational expressions, ratio and proportions, graphing linear equations and inequalities and equations of lines, functions, systems of linear equations and inequalities, radicals, rational exponents, solving quadratic equations.

Algebra I: Consists of eighty-nine video segments on sixteen DVDs. Each segment is approximately fifteen minutes in length. Topics include algebraic expressions, exponents, real numbers, solving equations and inequalities

and applications, polynomials, factoring, rational expressions, graphing linear equations and inequalities in two variables, relations and functions, solving systems of linear equations, radicals, and solving quadratic equations.

Algebra II: Consists of 31 DVDs, each approximately twenty-five to thirty minutes in length. Topics include exponents, solving linear equations and inequalities and applications, polynomials, factoring, rational expressions, complex fractions, graphing linear equations and inequalities, and equations of lines, radicals, rational exponents, solving quadratic equations.

High School Exit Exam Math Prep:

A four-video series on DVD targeted for students in grades nine through eleven preparing for their high school exit exam. The series is based on NCTM and state standards and offers multiple hours of video instruction on topics that a student would find on a high school exit exam.

Chart-Topping Music Titles to Be Available for Download from Libraries

www.overdrive.com

Music lovers will soon be able to download and fill their MP3 players with chart-topping tunes—using their library cards. Depending upon the territory within which the OverDrive partner library lies, titles from artists including Barenaked Ladies, Sarah McLachlan, and Delerium will be available to lend from the library's Web site as a result of an agreement between OverDrive, a digital media provider for libraries,

and Nettwerk Music Group.

More than five thousand libraries in OverDrive's network now provide audio books, eBooks, music, and video that library patrons can browse on the Internet, check out, and download to portable devices. Titles are automatically returned when the lending period is over, eliminating overdue fines.

A Vancouver, B.C.-based record label, Nettwerk is known for its creative ways of promoting and distributing music. They are credited for popularizing multiple artists using grassroots movements. Nettwerk works to make music more freely available to fans by leaving the traditional record sales model to find new ways to profit from music (concerts, ringtones, etc.). Libraries are one of the many new places Nettwerk is offering their music.

The agreement will initially add about 130 Nettwerk albums to the more than 100,000 audio book, eBook, music, and video titles OverDrive offers, including more than five thousand music titles.

It's a Girl's World on DVD

www.nfb.ca

It's a Girl's World is a documentary about social bullying among girls. It takes viewers inside the tumultuous relationships of a clique of popular girls. The camera captures a disturbing picture of how they use their friendships to hurt—with shunning, whispering, and mean looks—in order to gain social power. *It's a Girl's World* shatters the myth that social bullying among girls is an acceptable part of growing up.

The DVD includes the educational version (fifty-two minutes), the original film (sixty-seven minutes),

selected excerpts from CBC Radio Ideas Series on aggression and girls (titled "It's a Girl's World" Radio Series), a user's guide for teachers, and a resource guide for parents, educators and community groups.

New Customer Support Tools for Teen Health & Wellness Electronic Resource

www.teenhealthandwellness.com

Rosen Publishing announced several enhancements to the Teen Health & Wellness: Real Life, Real Answers electronic resource introduced in early 2007. As a service to teens and caregivers, the Teen Health & Wellness national teen hotline directory has been made available to the general public. Subscribers to Teen Health & Wellness will now have the opportunity to allow their users to submit a question to online expert, Dr. Jan, for consideration and response. Additionally, Rosen Publishing has introduced a bimonthly newsletter specifically for Teen Health & Wellness subscribers, which includes updates on site enhancements, proven promotional and programming ideas, and advice on how to best serve teen users.

"Our customers let us know that making the Teen Health & Wellness hotline directory available to all teens anywhere with an Internet connection was important to them," states Miriam Gilbert, director of electronic sales and marketing, Rosen Publishing. The hotline directory can be found at www.teenhealthandwellness.com/static/hotlines.

The "Ask Dr. Jan" question and answer component of Teen Health & Wellness has proved immensely popular, and students and teen users

quickly indicated that they would like to be able to directly pose questions to Dr. Jan. To accommodate this, licensed institutions will now be able to offer their users the opportunity to submit a question to Dr. Jan Hittelman. Hittelman is a licensed psychologist and director of Boulder Psychological Services.

As a service to subscribers, Rosen Publishing has also introduced a Teen Health & Wellness Customer Newsletter. This free, bimonthly newsletter gives Teen Health & Wellness customers the latest news on resource updates, marketing and programming ideas, insights on serving teen users, and more.

C.A.G.E. the Rage DVD Helps Teens Learn to Manage Their Anger

www.films.com

Calm down, Assess the situation, Gauge alternatives, and Empower yourself by choosing how to react: that's the way to safely C.A.G.E. the rage. In this video program, teens will learn how to identify anger in themselves and those around them; understand why mismanaged anger is so destructive; discover how anger gets repressed and the bodily and mental illnesses that may result from

it; and learn to release anger and express emotions in an acceptable and positive way using the C.A.G.E. method.

The DVD includes exercises in which teens model first unhealthy and then healthy behaviors, making this a useful teaching tool. Candid interviews with experts and teens are also included. A viewable/printable instructor's guide is available online.

Free Content from Top Universities Now Available at iTunes U in the iTunes Store

www.itunes.com

Apple announced the launch of iTunes U, a dedicated area within the iTunes Store featuring free content such as course lectures, language lessons, lab demonstrations, sports highlights, and campus tours provided by top U.S. colleges and universities including Stanford University, UC Berkeley, Duke University, and MIT.

Created in collaboration with colleges and universities, iTunes U makes it easier than ever to extend learning, explore interests, learn more about a school, and stay connected with an alma mater. Content from iTunes can be loaded onto an iPod with just one click and experi-

enced on-the-go, anytime, making learning from a lecture just as simple as enjoying music.

Frontline, American Experience, and Other PBS Programs to Be Made Available for Download at Libraries

www.overdrive.com

www.pbs.org

Libraries will soon be able to lend quality educational and entertainment programming from PBS as downloads. A recently signed distribution deal between PBS and OverDrive will allow libraries to select from more than 300 PBS programs, including episodes from the Emmy Award-winning series *American Experience* and *Frontline*, to add to their online collections starting later this year.

Libraries can select the PBS titles from OverDrive to lend via download from their Web sites. Examples of award-winning programs include the science series *Scientific American Frontiers*, history series *Empires* and *American Experience*, the investigative journalism program *Frontline*, and kids' series *Cyberchase* and *Liberty's Kids*. ■

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www.placonference.org



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Don't Miss the PLA National Conference

Join PLA in Minneapolis, a city that continually tops travel destination lists, for the 12th PLA National Conference, March 25-29, 2008. The biennial National Conference is the premier event for the public library world, drawing librarians, library support staff, trustees, Friends, and library vendors from across the country and around the world.

Visit www.placonference.org for information about registration, conference programming, special events, travel, and insider tips on everything the Conference and Minneapolis have to offer.

Join PLA and Save Big on Conference Registration!

Become a PLA member and take advantage of early bird registration! Register for the Conference before January 2008 and take advantage of our lowest registration fee - \$180, compared to ALA members who pay \$260 and non-members who pay \$315. For more information about all the benefits of PLA membership, visit www.pla.org or call 800.545.2433, ext. 5PLA.



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