

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE YOUNG ADULT LIBRARY SERVICES ASSOCIATION

young adult library services

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ISSUE!

young adult library services

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About This Cover

Poster art for Teen Tech Week™ (TTW), March 4–10, 2007. TTW is a new event designed to assist library workers in illustrating the wealth of technology that school and public libraries have to offer. Let the teens in your community know that the library is the source for electronic resources such as DVDs, databases, audiobooks, electronic games, and more. To purchase the poster and other TTW materials, go to www.alastore.ala.org. Poster design by Distillery Design Studio.

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Statement of Purpose

Young Adult Library Services is the official journal of the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), a division of the American Library Association. YALS primarily serves as a vehicle for continuing education for librarians serving young adults, ages twelve through eighteen. It will include articles of current interest to the profession, act as a showcase for best practices, provide news from related fields, and will spotlight significant events of the organization and offer in-depth reviews of professional literature. YALS will also serve as the official record of the organization.

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from the Editor

Valerie A. Ott

Staying Connected through 2.0

Internet 2.0, Library 2.0, Teen 2.0. What does it all mean? Kim Bolan, Meg Canada, and Rob Cullin do an excellent job of explaining the ideas behind the 2.0 concept in their article, "Web, Library, and Teen Services 2.0." But, in a nutshell, the main thrust behind the 2.0 version of anything, really, is improved usability. This idea may seem threatening if it's taken to mean creating something bigger, better, and faster by adding bells and whistles, and in the case of libraries, *more* services. The beauty of 2.0, however, is that it largely depends on user feedback and user-added content. The Internet, for instance, personifies 2.0 concepts through blogs, customized interfaces, and sites that allow user comments and reviews or even invite authorship, as Wikipedia does. So, Library 2.0—and by extension Teen Services 2.0—is a similar concept. Instead of providing core services the same way libraries have essentially done for centuries, why not ask what users want from us and invite them to interact with those services? (Hint: "Because we've never done it this way" is not an acceptable response.)

The fact is, libraries are losing ground to for-profit entities like Starbucks, Borders, Amazon, and Netflix because they have strived to make the user experience what *users* have indicated they want it to be. We all know what happens to companies that don't listen to their customers. Why should libraries be any different? The good news is that the 2.0 concept embraces the idea of throwing something out that doesn't work, so instead of just providing *more* services, you'll have ample opportunity to provide *more effective* services. The great news is that the 2.0 concept really just puts a techy-sounding name to something we already do: Find new and better ways to involve young adults through materials, programming, and technology. By listening to teens, observing their online habits, and incorporating their feedback into the services we provide, 2.0 status can surely be achieved.

In recognition of YALSA's first-ever Teen Tech Week™, to be celebrated March 4–10, 2007, this issue of YALS is dedicated to all things electronic. The benefits of providing chat reference are discussed in "Homework Help Is a Click Away"; Beth Saxton details how to hold video game programs at your library, while Matt Gullett and Eli Neiburger explain the social benefits achieved through such events; and the darker side of the Internet is explored in Tara Anderson and Brian Sturm's eye-opening piece on cyberbullying. These are just a few of the topics I hope you find useful as you stay mindful of the 2.0 concepts that are so central to providing excellent services to teens. Here's to staying connected! **YALS**

from the President

Judy Nelson



My first assignment as a student in a YALSA online class was to set up a MySpace account, edit my profile, and invite fellow classmates to be my friends. Simple, right? Teens do this every day so I could, too. I logged in, signed up, looked at the “Edit Profile” page, and realized I was short of breath and my blood pressure was rising. I was suddenly very uncomfortable with this assignment because completing it meant sharing myself publicly with the world at large, or in this case, the world online. As a dutiful student, I did the assignment; after all, I was taking this class to educate myself about new literacies for teens. However, my first efforts were as generic as I could make them, even though I learned to create an avatar instead of uploading a personal photograph. Through the first week, I diligently completed the readings and responded to the questions posed, but I found myself talking about my unexpected discomfort to everyone around me. Honestly, I was flabbergasted by my own reaction.

While this was going on, I was being your president. I was writing letters (or sometimes just signing my name to letters from ALA) that were going to congress-

people and editors of major newspapers, trying to bring reason and logic to the national discussion taking place on the subject of social networking. But here I was, having a very different reaction personally to what I was saying professionally. The truth is, the mom and grandma in me were distinctly uncomfortable with social networking!

By week two, the class set up blogs on our MySpace pages. I was poking around my classmates’ pages and even venturing out to discover family members’ personal accounts. Yet, I was still talking to friends about my discomfort even though I was starting to have fun.

The third week saw the class advance into the world of online gaming, wikis, and other technologies. I felt more comfortable with this stuff. Blogging seemed like old hat to me now, and that’s when it hit me—there is *no* substitute for education. After two and a half weeks of discomfort, my anxiety about exposing myself online was gone, and I was enjoying playing around with these technologies even if I wasn’t very good at them. Now I’m a pretty competent, reasonably savvy adult. I am wise enough to know the boundaries when

using social networking sites. But teens don’t necessarily have that knowledge yet. In fact, studies show that many young people who use social networking venues don’t realize that the rest of the world can peek into their online lives while they’re innocently connecting with friends. Technology constantly changes, and while this is familiar to those who’ve grown up with it, there are many adults in positions of power who aren’t yet comfortable with technologies considered old school by our teens.

So, while you read this issue of *YALS* about the hottest technologies your teens are using, and you are figuring out how to add them to your services, don’t forget to educate the adults around you. By offering adult learning opportunities, you’ll gain more supporters for your work. Make sure to check out Teen Tech Week, and don’t forget about all the great online courses YALSA offers. Did I mention that YALSA is turning fifty? Yeah, that sounds old, but hey . . . if I can open a MySpace account how old is YALSA really? **YALS**

Excellence Recognized

Award Winners Speak

By Kerry Sutherland

Serving teens can often be a thankless job, but YALSA members continue to demonstrate the passion and commitment necessary to successfully advocate for young adult services. This year, three of those members reaped the benefits of their dedication by winning prestigious awards. YALSA Fiscal Officer Amy Alessio, teen coordinator of the Schaumburg Township (Ill.) District Library, won the Illinois Library Association Davis Cup Award. Patrick Jones, young adult author and manager of outreach for the Hennepin County (Minn.) Library, received the ALA Scholastic Library Publishing Award for his contribution to the field. Past YALSA President Bonnie Kunzel celebrated her retirement from her position as youth services consultant for the New Jersey State Library with the New Jersey Library Association Librarian of the Year Award. All three were kind enough to share their thoughts on winning, work, and why young adult service is so important to them.

SUTHERLAND: You're obviously leaders in your field. Which of your



Amy Alessio

Library (STDL) Teen Advisory Board is the thing of which I'm most proud. The board started eight years ago with seven teens and has driven everything good about teen services at STDL, including redesigning the teen area at the Central Library. I would have to say that I am almost as proud of winning the Illinois Library Association Davis Cup this year

accomplishments in young adult services are you most proud of and why?

ALESSIO: Thank you for the compliment. I usually say that

the Schaumburg Township District



Patrick Jones

for many reasons. The folks who wrote letters in support of me from local and national contacts are people I greatly admire and respect. I was stunned to receive it. My state is just starting to organize a young adult forum, and I feel that my winning this award validates the importance of teen services in Illinois. I have tried to be a voice for Illinois and Midwest teen services while on the YALSA Board, and winning this award makes me feel as if my efforts are being recognized.

JONES: I'm most proud of the accomplishment of visiting all fifty states to train library staff on working with teens. My hope is this training has done three things: first, made some direct changes in the skills, attitudes, and behaviors of staff who might have viewed teens as problems to be solved rather than customers to be served. Second, although I can't prove it, I have reason to believe that the spike in membership in YALSA, which I promote at most training sessions, has something to do with my road work. Third, these training sessions have taught me more about the real work librarians, many of whom are not YA librarians or YALSA members, are doing to connect young adults and libraries. I have learned much more than I've taught.

KERRY SUTHERLAND is a Teen Librarian at the Akron-Summit County (Ohio) Public Library. She is a member of YALSA's Book Wholesalers Grant Jury Committee for 2006–2007 and recently accepted an appointment to YALSA's selected DVDs and Videos for Young Adults Committee.



Bonnie Kunzel

KUNZEL: Obviously the first accomplishment that comes to mind is being elected president of YALSA. It is such an honor to receive the overwhelming support of your peers. This year I was selected

Librarian of the Year by the New Jersey Library Association. This is an incredible honor, especially since I represent youth services in the state. I'm only the second youth services librarian to receive this prestigious award, and the first young adult librarian in the state to receive this honor. Being selected as the first youth services consultant for the New Jersey State Library in over a decade was also a considerable honor. In this position, I represent youth services—both children's and young adult—and work with all the youth services librarians in the state. I'm retiring and leaving New Jersey at the end of November. I still plan to stay active in youth services, but on a part-time basis. I will continue to go around the country as a Bureau of Education and Research speaker on the subject of young adult classics.

SUTHERLAND: What is the most difficult part of your job?

ALESSIO: The hardest part for me in serving teens has always been the heart-break of some of their issues. I was very disappointed recently that one of my teens who was a top student chose not to go to a four-year college. Another started college, then dropped out. I recently gathered some of my son's old baby items for one of my teens who is now a new parent. Some of my younger ones have run into trouble at home, with the law, or at school. I have seen some struggle with dating or sexual identity issues, and I worried they might

harm themselves. While I love that they are comfortable enough to confide in me, I want to see them all happy and successful and it is painful when they struggle or hurt. I can direct them to counselors and other resources, but it often does not feel like enough.

JONES: The most difficult part of my job as manager of outreach for the Hennepin County Library in suburban Minneapolis is really twofold. The big picture is not so much time management, but mind management. On my work commute, I used to think about work: projects, programs, personnel, and so forth. Now, I'm thinking about plots, characters, and scenes for the teen novels I'm writing (the third one, *Chasing Tail Lights* is due out in spring 2007 from Walker Bloomsbury). The smaller challenge is in working with juvenile correctional facilities, which restrict access to certain materials, and balancing between intellectual freedom, the benefits of partnership, and providing access to the most materials for the most residents.

KUNZEL: I love my job and really hate the fact that I'm retiring; however, I also love my husband, who has already retired. The most difficult part of my job is the fact that there is not enough of me to go around. There are 311 library systems in New Jersey, from countywide systems to independent libraries, and approximately 450 library buildings in the state. I started a discussion list (NJYAC) just for youth services people, and I'm available to do programs, including staff in-service on youth services and collection development; regional and statewide programs on Best Books; science fiction and fantasy books; graphic novels, and so forth. I also run three annual statewide programs: Youth Services Forum (hot topics of interest to youth services people); the young adult and children's author conference; and summer reading. The other big challenge was introducing membership in the

Collaborative Summer Library Program to a state that had just started doing its own statewide summer reading program two years before I joined the state library staff.

SUTHERLAND: What motivates you to continue working in teen services?

ALESSIO: I want to do more for teens, so I keep trying. They are so often just missing some encouragement or support. I thought I first began advocating for teens when I started at STDL, but my mother recently reminded me that I used to write letters to the editor of the paper of the suburb where I grew up. I would complain when they would accuse teens of crimes without facts, and about how the town offered nothing for teens. I guess those feelings have not changed.

JONES: In the day-to-day work, it is seeing the "aha" when a teen in corrections finds the book that makes him or her—if only for the short term—a reader. What motivates me most now is . . . [writing] fiction that empowers young adults to examine the facts in their lives, perhaps leading to making a positive change. Oh, and to sell some books, too.

KUNZEL: I like teens. I see our future in them. They're inquisitive and curious and challenging and demanding. It is so extraordinarily rewarding to connect a teen reader with the right book. I always had such fun with the members of my book clubs. Some were voracious readers who loved talking about books with each other and me; but, even more rewarding were those who were just being introduced to the joys of reading. I continue to be motivated by the truths that Mary K. Chelton shared in the speech I heard that first turned me in the direction of becoming a young adult librarian. Teens need advocates in the library community—

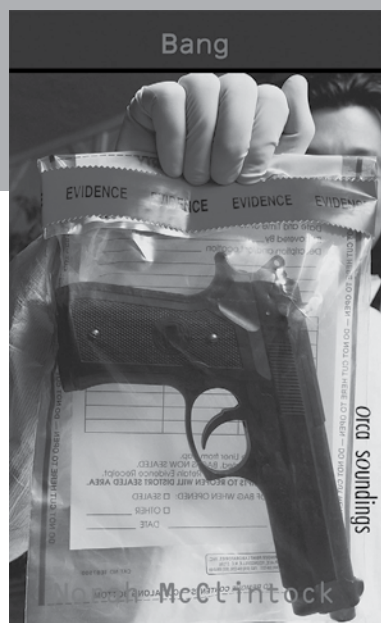
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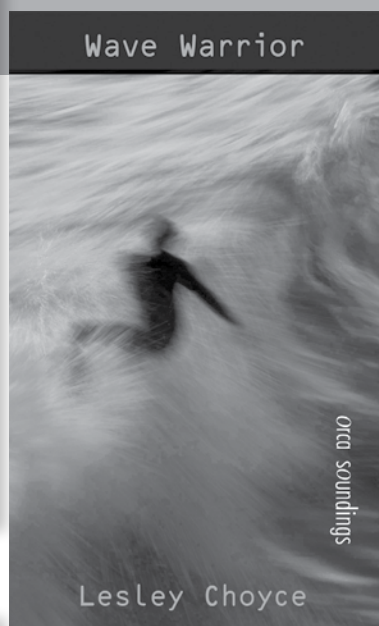
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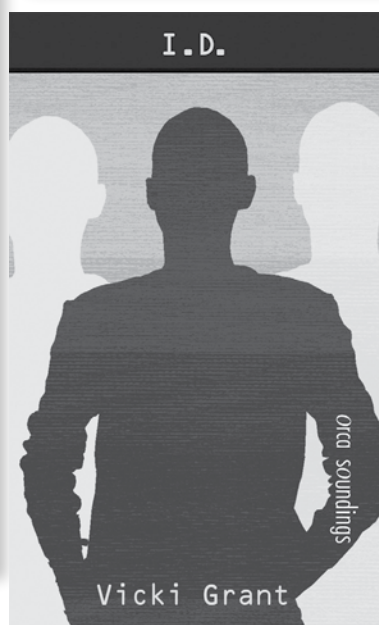
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At YALSA's Midwinter Institute in January 2006, Anthony Bernier, assistant professor at San Jose State University School of Library and Information Science, challenged librarians to move beyond their focus on books and to center their attention on technology and the important role that it plays in the lives of the teens they serve. He highlighted all the ways that librarians promote books through events and awards, and lamented the lack of efforts being put towards recognizing technology as a key ingredient in the lives of contemporary teens.

YALSA's first annual Teen Tech Week™ (TTW) will take place March 4–11, 2007. This is an important step in helping librarians balance their efforts between traditional ways of serving teens through books and book-related activities, and using new technologies to support the needs of teens in the twenty-first century.

By sponsoring TTW, YALSA makes a commitment to recognizing that technology is important to YA librarians and the people they serve. TTW will be a time to celebrate technology in teens' lives; learn more about the technologies teens use; and learn how libraries use technology to provide programs and services for them.

YALSA staff and the TTW Committee have been working to get things ready for the March event. Here are some components that have already launched:

- A TTW logo contest—The winner of the contest was selected by the TTW Committee at ALA Midwinter Meeting in San Antonio. Ahmad Ghadban of the Wood County (Ohio) District Public Library in

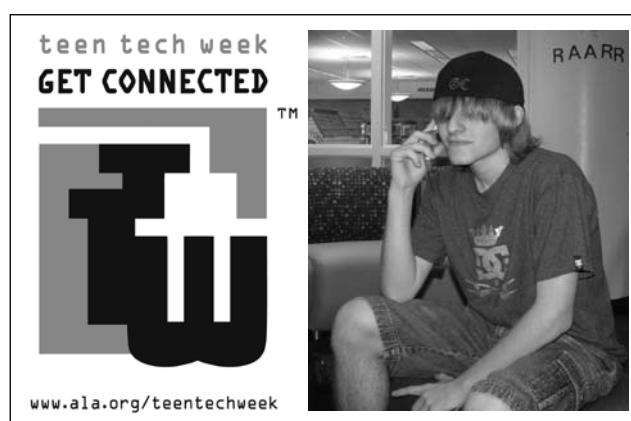
Announcing Teen Tech Week™

Don't Miss It!

By Linda W. Braun

Bowling Green won the contest with an image that integrates a plug and the TTW initials. Ghadban was awarded a \$50 gift certificate to Borders as a prize. (You can read more about Ghadban at www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/teentechweek/logo.htm.)

- The TTW Web site (www.ala.org/teentechweek)—This is the place to find general information on how to participate in TTW, information on sponsorship, and links to resources of interest to those who will participate in TTW.
- The TTW Wiki (<http://teentechweek.wikispaces.com>)—



The winning Teen Tech Week logo design (left) by Ahmad Ghadban (right).

Visitors to the wiki will find activity ideas, information on technology tools, booklists, and examples of how libraries are integrating technology into their programs and services. YALSA and the TTW Committee decided to use a wiki for providing this information because it gives teen librarians a chance to participate in creating ideas and content for TTW. Librarians are encouraged to take a look at the wiki and add activity ideas, technology tools, book titles, and examples of their library's use of technology with teens.

LINDA W. BRAUN is a New York City-based Educational Technology Consultant with Librarians and Educators Online (LEO). She is also an adjunct faculty member at Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Science in Boston.

- TTW podcasts—YALSA plans to produce monthly podcasts on topics related to teens and technology. The first podcast launched in late September with an interview with teen librarians Kelly Czarnecki and Christy Mulligan about the Deleting Online Predators Act (DOPA). Future podcasts will be produced by teens and librarians and include teens talking about technology use, and librarians talking about how they have implemented technology for and with teens in their libraries. Podcasts are available at www.pod-serve.com/podcasts/show/yalsa-podcasts.

A TTW kick-off event is planned for Sunday, January 21, 2007, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at ALA's Midwinter Meeting in Seattle. The kick-off will include giveaways and news about activities and events for TTW. Librarians planning to attend Midwinter should be sure to put this event on their schedules in order to be up-to-date on YALSA's plans for TTW.

There's no denying it, technology is central to the lives of many teens. They use technology to communicate, collaborate, create, find, and use information. Through participation in TTW, librarians can demonstrate to teens that libraries are no longer only about books and print

resources. Participation in TTW is also a way to demonstrate to a larger audience that libraries are thinking about the future and are not moribund. Help send these messages to your community and to your teens—show that you are a part of the twenty-first century and are ready, willing, and able to provide library programs and services using the same tools that teens use. To register for Teen Tech Week™, visit <http://tinyurl.com/yxf2q4>. **YALS**

EXCELLENCE continued from page 5

librarians who understand them and can support and encourage them as they navigate the rocky shoals of the adolescent years. Librarians who appreciate their literature, of course, but also their music, movies, and so forth, and who make an effort to familiarize themselves with pop culture as it pertains to teens. The world of teen service is expanding by leaps and bounds. I love working with teens and hope to be able to continue doing it long after I retire.

SUTHERLAND: What was your favorite book as a teenager?

ALESSIO: As a teen, I was a reluctant reader, although I enjoyed creative writing and journalism. I would enjoy a book as a school assignment, then get hooked on that topic. For example, *The Chosen* by Chaim Potok really affected me, so I read the Asher Lev books and some nonfiction on Hasidic Judaism. I had other phases when I read biographies, some teen series, nonfiction on magic, true crime, and history. I read in-depth on any topic that caught my fancy for that particular month.

JONES: *Ball Four* by Jim Bouton.

KUNZEL: We only went to the library every two weeks, and I was a fast reader. This was in the days before the flowering of young adult literature. I read historical fiction, mysteries, Westerns—never nonfiction. That was for school work. My favorites were science fiction and fantasy. I was introduced to science fiction when I read *Star Beast* by Robert Heinlein and immediately wanted another book just like it. I read all the Tarzan books as well as the Mars books by Edgar Rice Burroughs. At the same time that I discovered Heinlein, I also discovered the Witch World books by Andre Norton and went on to read everything by her that I could get my hands on.

SUTHERLAND: What are you reading right now?

ALESSIO: I just started reviewing teen mysteries for *CrimeSpree Magazine* and have about twenty on my nightstand. I am also speaking at a mystery conference with Kathleen Ernst, Stacey Cochran, Pete

Hautman, and Daniel Hale, so I'm reading their mysteries first.

JONES: *Endgame* by Nancy Garden and *Between Mom and Jo* by Julie Anne Peters.

KUNZEL: I'm reading Delia Sherman's *Changeling*, and Ellen Kushner's new one, *Privilege of the Sword*. I just finished Stephanie Meyer's *New Moon*, the werewolf sequel to the fascinating vampire novel *Twilight*, and the new Temeraire dragon series by Naomi Novik, which is a cross between Anne McCaffrey's Pern series and [Mercedes] Lackey's Dragon Jousting series, or Jane Yolen's Pit Dragon Chronicles and C. S. Forester's Admiral Hornblower series. I'm listening to the entire Gregor the Overlander series by Suzanne Collins. I'm eagerly waiting to read Megan Whalen Turner's *The King of Attolia* and the sequel to *Hidden Talents* by David Lubar, which should be out soon, not to mention the next Bartimaeus title by Jonathan Stroud. So many books, so little time. **YALS**

Phonograph, radio, telephone, television, computer, MP3 player. People of every generation of the past century can probably remember the one piece of technology that changed their lives. My mother remembers quite fondly the event that changed her teenage years: watching *American Bandstand*. As a teenager in the 1980s, I could not have lived without my portable cassette player and INXS's "Need You Tonight" video on MTV. Not long ago, the CD player was the most popular gadget. But now, mobile phones with video, text messaging, Web, and MP3 capabilities are the thing to have.

Members of the Worthington (Ohio) Libraries' teen advisory board, TWI (Teens with Ideas), were asked, "What is the one piece of technology that you can't live without?" After some of the more stubborn teens initially asked, "Do you mean things like lights? Or are you talking about high-tech items like computers?" we came up with a list of ten must-have items for teens today.



Top Ten Gadgets

1. **Computer**—"My number one choice is the computer (now my own laptop). I use it to read webcomics, talk on discussion forums, do research, amuse myself, play games, e-mail people, and video-conference with my girlfriend in Quebec. My computer is my

connection to the world outside my house. Oh yeah, and it also has all my music on it!"—Adam L., college freshman

2. **Cell phone**—"Cell phone! It is my main communication with friends and family."—Amanda L., twelfth grade
3. **iPod/MP3 player**—"It's so much more convenient than carrying around a bunch of CDs."—Annie W., twelfth grade
4. **Digital camera**—"I am addicted to taking pictures of my friends."—Claudia D., eighth grade
5. **Game systems** (Nintendo DS, Xbox, PlayStation 2, PlayStation Portable [PSP])—"It's all about the *Super Smash Bros. Melee*."—Adam L.



6. **Flash drive**—Great for transferring songs, school papers, and anything else between home, school, and friends' houses.
7. **Television**—Some things never change!
8. **TiVo**—"Now it never matters when you're up, you can watch whatever you want."—Annie R., tenth grade
9. **DVD player**
10. **Microwave**—"Gotta have that microwave!"—Shruti P., college freshman

I Can't Live without My . . . Teens' Top Ten High-Tech Gadgets and Web Sites

By Ann Pechacek

ANN PECHACEK has been a Teen Librarian for Worthington (Ohio) Libraries for five years. She received her MLIS from the University of Southern Mississippi. Ann's teen advisory board, TWI (Teens with Ideas), was formed in spring 2002.

I CAN'T LIVE continued on page 16



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Alyssa Brugman is an Australian YA writer whose novels *Finding Grace*, *Walking Naked*, and *Being Bindy* have had success around the world, and have been shortlisted for numerous awards. She has also recently released a series of pony books published by Random House Australia: *For Sale and Swap*, *Beginner's Luck*, and *Hot Potato*. Her forthcoming novel, *Solo*, is scheduled for release in 2007. She lives in the gorgeous Hunter Valley, Australia's oldest wine producing region, where she writes full time.

MCCAFFERTY: You've lived in Australia all your life. Where in Australia did you grow up?

BRUGMAN: I grew up in a few places. When I was a child we moved from the mining towns out west to the northern beaches in Sydney.

MCCAFFERTY: What was it like for you growing up?

BRUGMAN: It's probably too complicated to go into at any length; but, to summarize, my parents divorced when I was six. I had one brother at the time, and then my mother married a man who had three daughters. They had two sons together. Then my father married a woman who had a daughter and a son. And then both my mother and my father divorced from their second partners. So at one stage I had four brothers, four sisters, and four parents. Now I have one brother and two half-brothers—technically—and only one parent who I am still in contact with.

Over the course of the years I have lived in many different arrangements. I've been the oldest, the youngest, the middle

child, the only girl, the youngest of four girls, with a single parent, in a nuclear family, and so forth. I've experienced most incarnations you can imagine. It all sounds a bit bogan (you would probably say "trailer park") when you summarize it like that, but it all happened over the space of twenty years or so.

MCCAFFERTY: When did you begin writing?

BRUGMAN: I can remember sitting in class in Year Four and embarking on a very Enid Blyton-inspired piece and being frustrated because I didn't have the vocabulary to express the story I was trying to tell. I must have been okay since I was selected for a special class with a visiting author (which was much less common than it is these days). It was during that visit that I decided writing wasn't for me because I had a lot of trouble doing the task that the writer set for me. So I'm careful these days when I visit schools, not to make the exercises too daunting.

The Naked Truth

An Interview with Alyssa Brugman

By Dominique McCafferty

After Year Four I pretty much gave up on fiction until I was in my early twenties and I started again with *Finding Grace*. I did become involved in drama at school, and actor-improvised pieces in particular, which is storytelling. Writing essays is storytelling. Entertaining friends and family with tall tales over a meal is storytelling. We all do it every day.

MCCAFFERTY: I agree that we're all storytellers in one way or another. It was Maeve Binchy who wrote that writing is talking. Surely you were a reader, too. What were some of your favorite books as a child?

BRUGMAN: Writers that spring immediately to mind are Joan Aiken, Robert Cormier, and John Wyndham. We didn't have a television when I was growing up. Other kids used to stare and ask, "Do you have electricity?" as if they are mutually inclusive. My stepfather "didn't believe in it" [television]. So I read. I must have always had some interest in structure, because in primary school I read all the Agatha Christie mysteries. I would bookmark the pages with notes on how I thought the murder happened and then at the end I would go back and see if or when I figured it out. My mother was an English teacher

DOMINIQUE MCCAFFERTY is a Librarian at the Riverside (Calif.) Public Library and a part-time Reference Librarian at California State University, San Bernadino. She recently made a promise to herself to read all of Dickens's novels.



Alyssa Brugman

so she gave me a lot of books to read and most were YA. She would give me eight or ten books and ask me to pick the ones I enjoyed most, and she would teach those. In later years, I would be given a book in class, and I would think, “Hey, I’ve read this already!”

My parents had an extensive library, and they didn’t censor my reading. I think they probably should have, but as you can imagine, there were a lot of kids to watch in my family, so the one sitting on the couch reading was the least of their worries! For example, I read *Lolita* when I was about eleven. I picked it up because the cover had a young girl, not much older than me, in funky sunglasses. I found it quite confusing.

MCCAFFERTY: Would you talk about your college experience?

BRUGMAN: I went to University of Newcastle [in Australia]. I did a bachelor of business majoring in marketing. I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life, so I picked business because it seemed the broadest degree with the most potential in the workplace. It has come in handy

because essentially I run a small business now. I do accounts and pay tax, I market a product, and negotiate contracts.

MCCAFFERTY: Did you take any writing classes along the way?

BRUGMAN: I haven’t gone to any writing classes. I suspect that the best way to learn how to write a novel is to write one (or ten). I did read *Story* by Robert McKee, *On Writing* by Stephen King, Vogler’s *Writer’s Journey*, and *How to Write a Screenplay* by Richard Walters. There were useful tips in all of them. I did find McKee frustrating because so many of the screenplays that he held up as shining examples of innovative storytelling were novels first.

MCCAFFERTY: Do you rely on a writing group?

BRUGMAN: I used to try. I haven’t found a group that works for me. People either said, “It’s good,” and that’s all, which is not very helpful, or they would pick up typos, which is also not so helpful when the changes you are hoping they will contribute are structural. People are too polite. Nonwriters also don’t really understand how a novel grows. They’re often quite linear in their view. Now I pretty much rely on my editors who are, after all, professionals at this. They are usually very perceptive. We also communicate in a shared language that evaluates a piece of writing objectively. It’s hard to do that with a layperson without sounding like a wanker.

MCCAFFERTY: Despite your not having attended workshops, you’ve done extremely well as a writer. And the reviewers have been kind to you.

BRUGMAN: Thank you, Dominique! Although I had some trouble with the feedback from *Being Bindy*. A lot of readers and reviewers couldn’t understand why

Bindy would forgive Janey. They wanted Janey to get her just desserts, and I was disappointed, because for me the whole book was about love in a family, and about a family’s infinite capacity to forgive. Several reviews pointed to that aspect of forgiveness as the novel’s major flaw.

MCCAFFERTY: Forgiveness as a major flaw? Not according to the Dalai Lama. To my mind the reviewers are wrong. Indeed, I thought *Being Bindy* was wonderful. But *Walking Naked* is my personal favorite. What sort of reader response have you been getting from teens with regard to that book?

BRUGMAN: The book is studied in schools [in Australia], so usually people ask me to do their homework. It would never have occurred to me when I was at school that the writer was accessible to me. “Dear Miss Austen, I was just wondering which revelation do you think is most influential in the development of Emma’s character?”

MCCAFFERTY: *Walking Naked* brought back all those awful junior high memories—the heartlessness and certainly the beauty, but mostly the heartlessness of that time. I imagine you had some difficulty yourself—nearly everyone does.

BRUGMAN: Actually, I loved school! I have certificates for 100 percent attendance.

MCCAFFERTY: Really? So you are one of the exceptions!

BRUGMAN: I had chicken pox once in primary school, but other than that I went every day. Besides, if you stayed home you missed what happened—not just academically, but in the playground. Who loved whom, which allegiances had switched, abrupt shifts in territory. What

was happening at home? Nothing! My parents were at work. I could sit around by myself, or I could go to school where all these social dynamics were happening. No contest.

MCCAFFERTY: Maybe you were bearing witness in your own way because you were a future young adult novelist at work?


BRUGMAN: Oh, I wasn't just witnessing. I was an active participant, believe me! I went to five different schools and what I saw were just versions of the same thing. Lots of young people ask me if I do research on what it's like going to school, which makes me laugh—as though I dropped onto the planet at age twenty-five! While I think the culture has changed significantly, I don't think the species has evolved so much since I went to school. **YALS**

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Cosplay, Gaming, and Conventions

The Amazing and Unexpected Places an Anime Club Can Lead Unsuspecting Librarians

By Paula Brehm-Heeger, Ann Conway, and Carrie Vale

Teen services librarians have worked hard during the last few years to respond to teens' love for manga and anime. As a result, anime clubs have become a staple at many libraries. The dedicated librarians who run these clubs, many of whom have spent hours previewing screeners and watching many, many episodes of *Inu-Yasha* and *Full Metal Alchemist*, will testify that it seems anime is more popular than ever. They realize that hosting regular anime nights is a terrific way to serve an often hard-to-reach customer base. At the Harrison Branch of the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County (PLCH) in Ohio, for example, anime night may bring in anywhere from twenty-five to forty teens ages fourteen to nineteen. What's even more surprising is that half of them are guys. These

teens crowd into a program room to watch anime, chat with friends, sketch manga characters, play Yu-Gi-Oh, and snack on Pocky. For two hours the library is completely theirs and they know it.

PLCH's embracing of anime clubs has given teens a feeling of ownership. Anime club teens know their ideas are valued.

When a teen at one branch asks if the library system can purchase a new anime or manga series, we do our best to make that happen—preferably before the next time that branch's anime club gets together. Once anime club teens realized the library was paying attention to their DVD and book suggestions, they started voicing their opinions and offering suggestions about some other, slightly stranger-sounding ideas.

Idea One: Cosplay

The term "cosplay" is derived from combining the words, "costume" and "play." There is evidence that the trend of dressing up for conventions started not in Japan, but in the United States, when twenty-two-year-old Forrest J. Ackerman and a friend attended the 1939 Science Fiction Worldcon dressed in futuristic costumes.¹ In the 1980s, masquerading and cosplay made a big splash in Japan, garnering much science-fiction media attention.

To gain a real-world understanding of cosplay, close your eyes and picture cat ears, humongous swords, and hot-pink hair. This is the stuff of which cosplay is made. Lots of librarians probably know firsthand that teens devoted to manga and anime enjoy dressing up as their favorite characters. Serious fans may come in costume to regular anime club meetings. But when the anime club teens at PLCH's

PAULA BREHM-HEEGER is the Teen Services Coordinator for the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County (PLCH) in Ohio and President-Elect of YALSA. **ANN CONWAY** has worked for PLCH as a Reference Librarian (teen services) for twenty years. She has been facilitating an anime club for four years, and presents workshops at the local and state levels on anime, cosplay, and merchandising teen collections. **CARRIE VALE** has worked for PLCH as a Reference Librarian for fifteen years, and has been in teen services for the last six years. (Photos courtesy of PLCH except where indicated.)

Anderson Branch suggested that the library host a cosplay event, they wanted a stand-alone event with a convention-like atmosphere.

In Cincinnati, the library's cosplay event is a chance for the anime faithful to show off their creativity. Two basic competitions are included: costume and skit. Such rules as no nudity, no lethal or real weapons, and no flashpots (a pyrotechnic device), were used when advertising the costume part of the cosplay. These rules are a little tongue-in-cheek, but do acknowledge that serious cosplay costumes can be pretty unusual. Costumes run the spectrum from very simple to extremely elaborate. Some participants come in purchased costumes, but those that show real ingenuity in utilizing what's at home are often the most impressive, like using PVC pipe as armor or airbrushing fabric or skin.

When participants arrive, they sign up and are assigned a number. Three or four volunteers from the audience who are not dressed up serve as judges. Judging criteria include the effort put into assembling the costume, realistic portrayal of the charac-

ter, and creativity. As participants' numbers are called, either the panel of judges or the facilitator asks questions about choice of character or costume.

The second element of the library's cosplay event is the skit. These are usually kept to fewer than two minutes and feature pairs or groups of teens. Skits can be judged independently or as extra points for the costume competition. Again, the skits give participants a chance to show off their extensive anime and manga knowledge and highlight their own creativity.

Many cosplayers use skits as an opportunity to describe invented characters that fill in missing themes or plot elements of their favorite manga or anime. One of our regular skit participants is a poetry-writing, gourd-playing character created by a teen who felt the Mews from *Tokyo Mew-Mew* could use a little extra help in getting out of trouble.

Idea Two: Gaming

Anime club teens were also the first to bring up the idea of gaming at the library. Teens originally asked about playing *Dance Dance Revolution (DDR)* as part of their regular meetings. *DDR* became a huge hit and is now part of every cosplay. Gaming other than *DDR* is still in the early stages, but with some strong encouragement from anime teens, two of our branches



Recent winner of a cosplay costume competition.



Cosplay skit competitors.

Additional Resources

Costuming.org

<http://costuming.org>

This site offers an interesting perspective on cosplaying, costuming, and masquerade.

Cosplay.com

www.cosplay.com

Features discussion forums and convention information.

SugoiCon

www.sugoicon.org

Example of a smaller, local convention.

Gen Con Indy

www.gencon.com

A big convention with a lot to offer and experience.

wrote successful grants to purchase Sony PlayStation 2 consoles, and then began hosting teen-only gaming nights. These gaming events quickly moved beyond the circle of anime teens, drawing in a regular crowd of guys and a few brave girls, many of whom had previously never set foot in the library. Other than the demand for *DDR*, the influence of gaming is apparent in other aspects of the cosplay, with more and more teens coming dressed as their favorite characters from such games as *Final Fantasy*.

Idea Three: Conventions

In 2005, Anderson Branch teen librarian Ann Conway received the highest honor from one of her longtime anime club teens. He asked her to stop by a local Cincinnati anime convention where he would be competing in a cosplay competition and selling his own original manga. Intrigued, Conway took a trip to SugoiCon. There she received an up-close-and-personal look



PLCH librarians Ann Conway and Natalie Fields enjoy the company of Pikachu at Gen Con Indy. (Photo by Paula Brehm-Heeger)

at the popularity of anime, manga, and gaming; the connection between gaming

and anime fans; the enthusiasm for both; and, the amazing potential that existed for engaging young people at the library.

When Conway told her teens how much she enjoyed SugoiCon, they urged her to consider traveling to Gen Con Indy (Indianapolis), one of the country's biggest and longest-running gaming conventions. Teen Services Coordinator Paula Brehm-Heeger ran this by a few cosplayers and they, too, thought it was a great idea. Armed with their teens' support and advice to "make sure you wear something black," Conway and Brehm-Heeger traveled to Gen Con Indy.

Gaming conventions can be mind-blowing for anyone who has never gone to one. Conway and Brehm-Heeger attended only one day, but learned more about role-playing, board, and video games than they ever expected. They also had a chance

to visit "anime alley" and hear a panel of anime industry experts speak. Next year, they plan to take several librarians and stay for more of the four-day event.

Who would have dreamed that taking a chance and starting monthly anime clubs would lead to so many inspiring and unusual programs and experiences? But that is the joy and power of working with teens: you just never know what amazing things can happen! **YALS**

Reference

1. Dragon*Con Web site, "Biography of Forrest J. Ackerman," www.dragoncon.org/people/ackermf.html (accessed Nov. 9, 2006).

I CAN'T LIVE continued from page 9

Top Ten Sites

Once we had the high-tech gadgets taken care of, the teens voted for their favorite Web sites and one game.

1. **Google** (www.google.com)
"I use Google for its great images, to help me with my school work, and to read the current news stories."—Frances L., eighth grade
2. **Wikipedia** (www.wikipedia.org)
"I use Wikipedia for all my homework assignments. I normally get to Wikipedia from Google since I can never spell Wikipedia correctly."—Claudia D.
3. **MySpace** (www.myspace.com)
"Cuz that is where all my friends are."—Amanda L.
4. **AOL Instant Messenger** (www.aim.com)
"AIM is more secure than other instant messenger services."—Peter O., college freshman
5. **Facebook** (www.facebook.com)
This is a site like MySpace, but users have to have a valid e-mail address from a college, high school, or supported organization or company. In late September 2006, Facebook expanded service to more users, but many teens still use it because it is more secure than MySpace.
6. **Dance Dance Revolution**
"Not a Web site, but no one can resist DDR."—Andrea B., ninth grade
7. **You Tube** (www.youtube.com)
This is like *America's Funniest Home Videos* for today's teens.
8. **Photobucket** (www.photobucket.com)
Most TWI teens use this site to link pictures to their MySpace pages.
9. **RuneScape** (www.runescape.com)
"You are either an extreme RuneScape user or an extreme anti-RuneScape user. There isn't a middle ground."—Claire M., eighth grade
10. **Worthingteens blog** (www.worthingtonlibraries.org/teenblog)
The place for Worthington Libraries' teens to connect to the library. **YALS**

What a great time to be a youth librarian! Granted, teens might think that search engines are the be-all and end-all of research, and they have more options than ever for entertainment—but librarians have more options, too. Today, as never before, librarians can put their services in front of teens and meet them where they seem to live nowadays—online.

We didn't really need the 2005 Pew Internet & American Life Project study to tell us what we already know: 87 percent of people between the ages of twelve and seventeen are online.¹ Approximately eleven million teens go online daily; 75 percent of these teens—about two-thirds of all teens—use instant messaging.² Teens online create opportunities for libraries—especially when they can offer services indispensable to their daily lives. And what could be more indispensable than homework help?

Live Homework Help Generates Local Government Praise and Support

According to a 2006 report, three-quarters of Americans believe it is a high priority for local public libraries to offer a safe place where teenagers can study and congregate.³ Two-thirds of people say that having online services should be a high priority for their local library.⁴

SARAH COFER is a Teen Librarian, **JANET INGRAHAM DWYER** is the Outreach Services/Volunteer Coordinator, and **ANN PECHACEK** is a Teen Librarian at Worthington (Ohio) Libraries. **KAREN KOLB PETERSON** is Youth Service Coordinator for Saint Paul (Minn.) Public Library. **SUZANNE HAROLD** is Live Homework Help Coordinator/School Corps Librarian and **SARA RYAN** is the Teen Services Specialist for the Multnomah County (Ore.) Library system in Portland.

Homework Help Is a Click Away

*By Sarah Cofer,
Janet Ingraham Dwyer,
Suzanne Harold,
Ann Pechacek,
Karen Kolb Peterson,
and Sara Ryan*

In Minnesota, there is a lot of interest in what students do with their time spent out of school. A major focus of Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman's administration is the Second Shift initiative, which focuses attention on the need to increase students' access to after-school programs. Mayor Coleman is a reader and values libraries. He believes that communities can support families and play a role in the lives of school-age children by providing programs and safe places for them to be after school. In February 2006, Mayor Coleman announced Saint Paul Public Library's (SPPL) launch of Live Homework Help

(LHH), Tutor.com's unique online service that matches students in grades four through twelve with a tutor for one-on-one help with math, science, English, and social studies questions. This service is provided in English seven days a week and in Spanish five days a week throughout the year. LHH is a good match for the Second Shift initiative, in that it supports parents, schools, and children. Funding was provided by the Friends of SPPL.

Like many other public libraries, SPPL's views on the role of libraries and homework have changed. SPPL sees providing homework help as a way to improve its service to learners and support the work of the local schools. Teens are SPPL's resources and assets. Libraries can play an important role in youth development by providing safe places, as well as the resources teens want and need, readily available in the formats they prefer to use.

The planning and launch of LHH at SPPL was managed by Outreach Services Librarian Ginny Brodeen. SPPL has a

central library, a bookmobile, and twelve branches. When the system launched the program, every branch had at least one person who had been trained to instruct others on LHH and to remind staff about what a good tool it is. Visits were made to every school—public, private, and charter—with information about LHH in hand. Once the kids tried it, they loved it. No other service SPPL offers gets the level of positive feedback that LHH does.

Users signing on to LHH are anonymous and communicate with tutors using interactive chat and a two-way whiteboard; they can also share relevant Web pages and files. Providing what teens need in a way that is interesting and matches the way they communicate through instant messaging makes it easier—and less threatening—for them to seek help in the first place, and encourages them to continue going back for help once they get accustomed to the service. Teachers are delighted to know this resource is available and welcome the library as their partner in education. LHH is truly a community initiative.

Although touted as a service primarily for students in grades four through twelve (as well as those in introductory college courses), LHH is also used by adults. Parents use it to get help for their children, and it is also used by adults reentering school. In particular, SPPL finds that English-language learners use LHH because they are sometimes more comfortable writing words than they are speaking them. The flexibility of LHH allows the library to serve these adults in a way that is helpful and nonthreatening.

SPPL librarians have been amazed at how the use of LHH has skyrocketed. From February through June 2006, they completed more than 2,500 sessions, and estimate that about half of these sessions came from students using the service remotely through the library's Web site (www.stpaul.lib.mn.us). Librarians are thrilled that kids are taking advantage of library resources even when they're not

at the library. LHH complements the library's homework centers and supports its goal of having materials and services that users want in the formats they prefer.

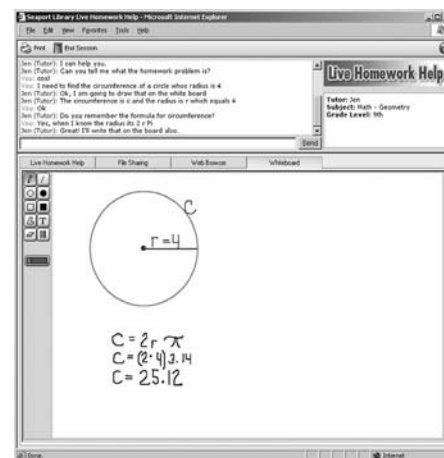
Expanding Online Homework Resources with Live Homework Help

Meeting the homework help needs of kids is considered a core service at Multnomah County (Ore.) Library. One of the most popular pages on the library's Web site is the Homework Center (www.multcolib.org/homework). Here, students find resources for common homework topics and carefully selected Web sites for background information as well as a link to LHH.

What does a typical LHH session look like? First, it starts with a login screen where the students identify their grade level and the subject with which they need help. The students are then connected to an appropriate tutor for assistance. Primary interaction inside LHH's online classroom is through instant messaging—which the kids are familiar with and love. Students can also upload files—like an English paper to be reviewed—and either party can write or draw on the two-way whiteboard to explain a math problem, scientific concept, or diagram a sentence. All the while, chat is used to control the learning process during the session and ensure that the student understands what is being explained.

There is a distinct difference between reference help and homework help. The great thing about LHH is that the tutors are trained to help students solve problems—not provide the answers. In this way, the service is a logical extension of what Multnomah County librarians have built in their Homework Center.

LHH tutors include certified teachers, college professors, professional tutors,



Inside the LHH online classroom, student and tutor can communicate through instant messaging and two-way whiteboard, as well as share useful files and Web pages.

subject experts, graduate and undergraduate students from accredited universities, and other professionals. Tutors must complete an extensive online application process that includes submitting a number of work samples in the subjects they wish to tutor, demonstrating how they would guide a student to discover an answer and learn. All LHH tutors receive a third-party background check that includes a criminal background check and verification of their educational background and degrees. They also complete mock sessions prior to beginning tutoring. These safety precautions and preparations, as well as regular mentoring and ongoing professional development, compose the Tutor.com Tutor Certification Program.

In Multnomah County, every branch has at least one youth services librarian. In half of its locations, the size of the branches cannot accommodate large teen areas with comfortable furniture, so community rooms are taken over and turned into teen lounges once a week. The lounges are equipped with computers for two to three hours after school and everyone who helps in the lounges is trained on LHH.

Teen volunteers are used to help spread the word and contribute to the success of these teen spaces.

Multnomah County Library started using the LHH program in 2003. Since then, program usage has steadily increased. During the 2005–2006 school year, there were more than 5,600 homework help sessions completed. A primary contributor to this growth is the School Corps program. In addition to trying to reach as many media specialists and teachers as possible in eight school districts through a quarterly newsletter, three full-time librarians provide resources for teachers and visit schools to do presentations every year. Librarians also occasionally give presentations at teachers' meetings, but in general, they reach out directly to the students.

During presentations to students, live demonstrations—during which librarians connect to actual LHH tutors—really wow the kids. Bookmarks and postcards are then left behind to remind kids to use LHH. Many of these promotional items must find their way home with the kids because two-thirds of all usage of the LHH program is remote, through the library's Web site. Therefore, LHH addresses a challenge many libraries today are facing: how to attract new kinds of users (that is, those who prefer to interact using the library's online resources rather than the resources in the physical building).

Since teens often look for interactivity, LHH is a great way for them to have chat interaction and get homework help at the same time. LHH also recognizes that librarians aren't tutors, and provides a quality service that teens can access in a way that is compatible with their lifestyle and comfort level.

Marketing Live Homework Help to the Community

Reaching teens with information about library events and services is always a chal-

lenge. One reason staff at Worthington (Ohio) Libraries (WL) love LHH is that it gives them a tool teens need and respond to that helps make the library cool.

WL subscribe to LHH individually as an institution (in addition to offering access to it through Ohio's statewide KnowItNow/HomeworkNow initiative, a live online reference service). Through its own subscription, WL provide direct access to LHH tutors from 2 to 10 p.m., seven days a week. With direct access, students are connected to tutors without having to go through the extra step of first connecting to a librarian as they do with HomeworkNow. Students who have connected to LHH through HomeworkNow

in the past often simply ask the librarian to connect them to a tutor. The librarians typically honor such requests without asking further questions. The statewide KnowItNow/HomeworkNow program extends students' access to Tutor.com's online tutors until midnight. Between midnight and 2 p.m., tutors are not available, but the KnowItNow/HomeworkNow program provides online access to reference librarians who can assist students with questions every day, 24/7. The availability of the statewide program allows WL to offer around-the-clock reference service that they couldn't provide on their own.

One great advantage of subscribing to LHH is the availability of

In Their Own Words

Comments from Live Homework Help post-session surveys:

"My tutor was so nice and great! She helped me work through the problem and made sure that I got it! I'm so glad you made this program and hired the best tutors!!!!!!!"

—Worthington Libraries, sixth grader

"My tutor just spent 25 minutes helping me cite an ancient Roman work. It was incredibly helpful and I couldn't have done it without this program."

—Multnomah County, tenth grader

"This is an outstanding service! I like the late hours too because night time is when I get all my homework done. It's a lifesaver! Thanks!"—Saint Paul, college student

"This is so great. I'm going to pass this test I know it."

—Multnomah County, seventh grader

"I like the way the tutors can show us what to actually do on the board. The teacher I had made the subject so much easier to understand. This is a great service!"

—Worthington Libraries, seventh grader

"It is an awesome site that everyone should know about!"—Saint Paul, fifth grader

"Wow I really like it it's very helpful . . . one-on-one learning without even seeing the other person, I'm gonna come back and do some more work. Thanks."

—Saint Paul, twelfth grader

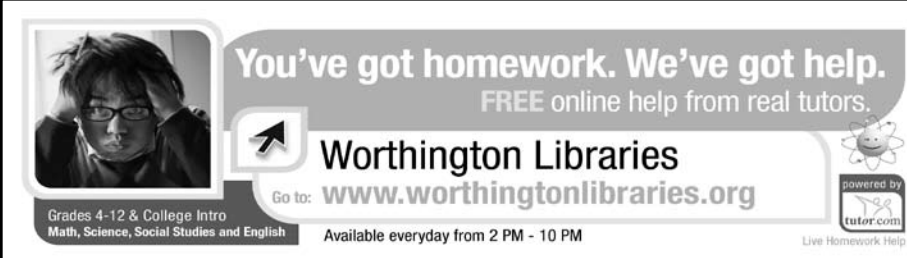
"Live Homework has helped me for a long time! I've been using it for 4+ months, and it continues to help me. Thanks Tutor.com!"—Worthington Libraries, eighth grader

Spanish-speaking tutors for math and science in a Spanish online classroom. Like many libraries, WL serve a diverse population for whom English is not the primary language. LHH allows students who are struggling with school to get help in their native language.

To expand their marketing to teens, WL launched a teen blog in June 2006. Just one month after its launch, the blog had 1,600 hits and more than 300 kids had signed up for the RSS feed. Everyone who signs up for the blog has to have a valid library card. Postings from library-card holders are unmediated and posted immediately. The blog is still in its early stages, but is viewed as the library's home page for teens. Teen librarians love the blog's flexibility; they can post to it any time without having to contact the library's webmaster. This allows them to respond to topical issues and react quickly to trends. Since the blog debuted during the summer, the main focus was on summer reading, but with the start of school, the blog began highlighting tools and resources teens need for school, including LHH.

While WL librarians are excited about blogging, they also recognize that reaching teens effectively requires a variety of activities. To market the LHH program, several tools are used, such as bookmarks, fliers, posters, school presentations, and the blog. Also, a quarterly teen newsletter is distributed to about 500 people and is used to highlight different resources, including LHH.

Tutor.com provided WL with bookmarks and other marketing tool templates, as well as LHH "business cards" that students love. These are customized with the library's URL and hours of operation and distributed at library service desks and during school visits. The bookmarks are extremely popular and are a great



Bookmarks created with Tutor.com templates are used in the library and on all school visits to remind parents, teachers, and students of the access to free online tutoring available through the library.

way to introduce LHH to parents as well as spread the word to the rest of the community.

WL enjoy a great relationship with their schools and an active Ambassador Program that sends librarians into the schools to talk about library services and provide live demonstrations of online homework resources. In the elementary schools, the librarians generally work with school library media specialists on the schools' staff, while in the middle and high schools, they usually work directly with teachers. Once the kids see LHH, they're much more likely to go back and use it than they are to use a database. The interactivity really grabs them; spikes in usage almost always occur after these school visits.

Live Homework Help Speaks for Itself

Tutor.com tutors completed half a million homework help sessions during the 2005–2006 school year alone. After every LHH session, the student is asked to complete a survey. Nationwide, students who use LHH report they are gaining confidence, completing their assignments, and improving their grades. Ninety-five percent of students say they're glad their libraries

offer the service and would even recommend LHH to friends.⁵ These comments speak volumes about the value of this type of service. What a great use of technology to serve teens! **YALS**

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Here is a familiar story to all audiobook publishers: A cleaning lady who was working on the floors at a major audiobook publishing house stopped to ask one of the company's producers what kind of work he did. When the producer told her that he produced audiobooks, she stopped mopping to say she had a lovely voice and would love to do an audiobook.

It seems that everyone feels they have the perfect voice to narrate an audiobook. Perhaps our work as librarians for children and teens has made us particularly vulnerable to believing the rapt attention and enthusiastic response of our listening audience means we are, in fact, the best living audiobooks there are. Whatever the reason, the preconference workshop at ALA's 2006 Annual Conference in New Orleans proved the above story's point; the line to audition for a chance to record a literacy message on a Listening Library audiobook was very long.

Obviously, audiobooks feed a need whether you are a reader with learning difficulties, a commuter, or just like to listen as a family activity. The popularity of Jim Dale's rendition of the *Harry Potter* books attests to this. The majority of the audience at the preconference had listened to Dale's narration and were suitably impressed when informed that Guinness World Records lists Dale as the record holder for creating the "most character voices in an audiobook" at 134 for *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*.¹ YALSA's preconference workshop, "Reading with Your Ears," was a soup-to-nuts program on everything audio.

The morning began with a presentation on how to connect audiobooks to schools' curriculum. Sharon Grover of

Hedberg Public Library in Janesville, Wisconsin, and Mary Stump of Arlington (Va.) Public Schools started the morning by playing clips of their favorite audiobooks and talking about how they shared them with their students and faculty. One of the most important aspects of their presentation was how they were able to defend audiobooks against some teachers' charge that using an audiobook is cheating. According to Grover and Stump, "Research has shown that listening to audiobooks builds vocabulary and increases fluency."² By allowing listeners to let go of the anxiety sometimes associated with reading, students are able to develop a concept of the story. Another

positive aspect to audiobooks is their ability to "model fluent reading and proper pronunciation" and to improve a reader's comprehension.³ This fact is especially true for auditory learners.

Grover and Stump trumpeted the use of audiobook sound clips as a way to jazz up ordinary booktalks. Their example, using Nathaniel Philbrick's *Revenge of the Whale* narrated by Taylor Mali, was gripping. In addition, Grover and Stump recommended audiobooks for international students, because they can improve their English verbal skills; for remedial readers, because they allow students to bridge the vocabulary gap between listening and reading, forcing them to concentrate on the story's elements; and for tech-savvy teens who may enjoy using their iPods as a way to listen to audiobooks.

After discussing the curricular advantages, Grover and Stump defined the

Reading with Your Ears

Preconference Workshop at ALA's 2006 Annual Conference

By C D McLean

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various types of voicing an audiobook may have:

- **Fully voiced:** One narrator, with a different voice for every character.
- **Partially voiced:** Some voices are spoken with different tones or pacing, with some characters fully voiced.
- **Unvoiced:** No character voices, but a nuanced reading.
- **Two speakers:** Two different voices, usually used for books with two characters—one male and one female, or two very different characters. (Avi's *Who Was the Masked Man Anyway?* features one voice for the main character and another voice for the character on the radio. Using two distinctly different voices may allow children to follow the plot more easily.)
- **Full cast:** Every character has a different actor narrating the part.

Finally, Grover and Stump highlighted how specific audiobooks can be tied to a state's scope and sequence requirements, proving that not only is "reading with your ears" *not* cheating, it actually encourages reading and learning for a whole variety of students.

Following Grover and Stump was a panel of audiobook producers: Daniel Bostick and Bruce Coville (Full Cast Audio); Tim Ditlow (Random House/Listening Library); and Eileen Hutton (Brilliance Audio). These producers emphasized that the cassette format is dead, saying that major bookstores no longer accept cassette audiobooks. In fact, they predict audiobook downloads to have 50 percent of the audiobook market in four to five years. The industry is so convinced of this trend that Fisher-Price is making a downloadable audiobook player for children. Additionally, the members of the panel expect to see a phone chip developed that will allow users to listen to audiobooks on their mobile phones.

The new trend in delivering audiobooks is the Playaway. The Playaway, from Findaway World and BWI (www.bwibooks.com), is an all-in-one audiobook that provides listeners with headphones and a preloaded playing device so that all they need to do is check it out, plug in the earphones, and start listening. Alternatively, teens wanting to use their iPods can download books from iTunes; unfortunately, Apple has not created a library-friendly format for downloading audiobook copies to patrons. The panel lamented this fact and encouraged the audience to complain to Apple.

Noted fantasy author Tamora Pierce spoke during the keynote address at lunch about how comforting it is to be read to. She described the magic we all felt as we listened to parents, friends, and babysitters read to us throughout our childhoods, and how we were first introduced to new characters such as the Cat in the Hat by the spoken word. She said that a good performer will make the literature "stick" to you, and that the voice has a power to which we are genetically programmed to pay attention. Pierce went on to say that, "[Audiobooks] take the pressure off kids and adults who have trouble assembling the printed word."⁴ As opposed to films, audiobooks still allow for internal movie-making and appeal to sophisticated and reluctant readers alike.

Following Pierce's talk, workshop attendees were entertained by two voice actors from Full Cast Audio, Spencer Murphy and Carmen Viviano-Crafts. Viviano-Crafts said she really enjoys how audiobooks affect kids and that kids still get to imagine the characters when they hear a book. Both actors were a bit concerned that the profession of being a voice actor did not garner much respect and noted that positive feedback from listeners was important to them. Murphy narrated the part of Justin in *Buddha Boy* by Kathe Koja, which won the 2005 Audie Award for Audio Drama. He related that Koja

had told him that her father was blind and couldn't read her books, but because of audiobooks, he was able to hear her books, which strengthened the bond between the author and her father. After a question and answer session, both actors performed a cold reading from a work with one of the Full Cast producers guiding them through the script to show the attendees what a typical audiobook recording session was like.

After the talented voice actors spoke, Junko Yokota, professor of education at National-Louis University in Chicago, spoke about multicultural literature and its presentation in audiobook format. She stressed that multicultural titles must have cultural authenticity. Cultural markers that make the experience more authentic include metaphors and the proper pronunciation of foreign words or names. Yokota described three ways to experience a multicultural audiobook:

1. as a mirror reflecting an experience;
2. as a window that allows listeners to see outside more clearly; or
3. as a sliding glass door through which listeners can move in and out of a culture and come away with a deeper understanding of that culture.

It is important for multicultural audiobooks to be culturally true, and for them to add "a richness to the book that the printed word can't give you."⁵ When assessing the quality of a multicultural audiobook, one should ask two questions:

- Does the cultural and linguistic background of the reader match the book's setting and characters?
- Do the music, sounds, and other effects enhance the audio experience and accurately reflect the culture?

The panel that followed Yokota's presentation featured five audiobook reviewers from *Booklist*, *KLIATT*, *The Horn Book*, *VOYA: Voice of Youth Advocates*, and

Audiofile, who discussed how reviewing an audiobook differs from reviewing a printed book. Mainly, the job of an audiobook reviewer is not to review the plot elements of the story (that having already been covered in the print-version book review). Rather, the reviewer should concentrate on the particular challenges presented when transferring the printed word to the spoken word. *KLIATT* does not print negative reviews and stresses the pacing, voice, and accents of the performance. This review journal also points out if strong language or sexual situations are present in the title. *VOYA* includes an age range for their audiobook reviews and tries to review the audio experience. Audiobook reviews can be found at the following Web sites:

- www.audiofilemagazine.com;
- <http://booklistonline.com>;

- <http://hometown.aol.com/kliatt>;
- <http://schoollibraryjournal.com>; and
- <http://voya.com>.

The workshop concluded with a panel discussing the marketing of audiobooks. As mentioned before, using a dramatic or funny sound bite from an audiobook will generate interest. Other ideas included celebrating an audiobook month (for example, Tune In @ your library®) or adding downloadable audiobooks to your collection for tech-savvy teens, with the idea being that the delivery format (iPod, Playaway, and so on) may generate interest where a plain CD or cassette would not. Another resource that may help market audiobooks to library patrons, students, and faculty is YALSA's Selected Audiobooks for Young Adults (1999 to 2006) available at www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/booklistsawards/selectedaudio/selectedaudiobooks.htm. **YALS**

www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/booklistsawards/selectedaudio/selectedaudiobooks.htm. **YALS**

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Cyberbullying From Playground to Computer

*By Tara Anderson
and Brian Sturm*

While bullying may affect anyone in any situation, childhood and school are the prevailing age and context for bullying, as children interact with peers and struggle to assert their identity and understand appropriate social behavior. Schoolyard bullying has received considerable attention in psychological journals and child behavior manuals, which suggest that bigger children (typically boys) resort to physical violence and threats against younger or smaller children at school. Society is moving away from the attitude that bullying is just a part of growing up, to understanding the deep, emotional damage it can cause. The recent rash of violence in schools has highlighted just how angry and helpless children can feel. Many schools have begun awareness programs promoting anti-violence and an end to bullying.

The definition of bullying is slowly expanding. In the past three or four years, nonphysical aggression has been highlighted in the world of female bullying. Girls will often use rumors, social exclusion, and other forms of quiet aggression to attack other girls. This form of bullying falls beneath the typical teacher's and

parent's radar, and can continue for years without intervention.¹ It is this quiet, psychological aggression that has migrated to the digital world to become "cyberbullying," as bullies of all ages and genders have taken advantage of the anonymity and accessibility of digital technology to harass their victims.

What is Cyberbullying?

According to Bill Belsey,

Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication

technologies such as e-mail, cell phone and pager text messages, instant messaging, defamatory personal Web sites, and defamatory online personal polling Web sites, to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.²

Cyberbullying is the newest form of bullying, emerging as children become more adept at using computers and cell phones for communication and socialization, but the topics of abuse are the same in cyberspace as in face-to-face communication. Bullies can harass victims about their appearance, sexual promiscuity, poverty, grades, diseases, or disabilities. Bullying can also be based on "others' perceptions of a student's value based on gender, race/ethnicity, color, religion, ancestry, sexual orientation or ability level (mental/physical/sensory)."³

There are several types of cyberbullying, depending on the available technology. Instant messaging (IM) services such as AOL Instant Messenger (AIM) or Yahoo! Messenger allow children to have private conversations with friends, or "buddies," in real time. These services combine the instant communication style of the chat room with the personal style of e-mail, creating an arena where youth can establish social networks. This type of communication has provided fertile ground for the

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bully to send mean or obscene messages to others. Children may be bullied by a friend on their buddy list or by peers with anonymous screen names. Added features, such as buddy profiles, allow buddies to insert derogatory or slanderous remarks about peers for anyone to read, and buddies can also create false personal profiles of their targets that insult or ridicule them. Children can also block other children from—or refuse to add them to—a buddy list, creating an effect called *relational aggression*, in which children engage in “the hurtful manipulation of peer relationships/friendships that inflicts harm on others through behaviours such as ‘social exclusion’ and ‘malicious rumour spreading.’”⁴

Similar to the harassment done through instant messenger services, bullying can also occur through text messaging. Cell phones are one of the newer tools put into the hands of children, and they provide an extremely mobile method for bullying other children. All the bully needs is the target’s phone number, and a message or threat can be sent anywhere, anytime. E-mail bullying works in a similar fashion, and while the originating account can be traced, it is often impossible to prove who actually wrote the message.⁵ Mobile phones and e-mail can be used by the bully to transmit unflattering photos, such as pictures of the victim dressing in the locker room, wearing the wrong outfit, or eating a large lunch. Digital technology facilitates capturing unprotected moments that can be used as weapons in the wrong hands.

Web sites and message boards are another avenue for cyberbullying. A bully can very easily create a free Web site or message board devoted to the ridicule of another child. This form of cyberbullying creates the feeling of group bullying, where multiple students post hateful thoughts on a message board or the Web site is written as a club that is against the victim. Lists can be posted on Web sites and message boards of reasons the victim is inferior to

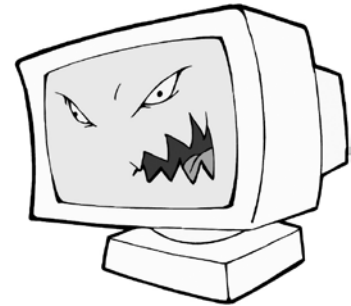
others in some way, as well as pictures—often digitally altered—that support the prejudice. The link to the Web site or message board is then sent anonymously to other children as well as to the victim with a message that will convince them all to visit the site.

Blogs are online journals where a reader can comment on other users’ entries. A bully can use a blog to write derogatory thoughts about a victim (a “bashboard”), similar to the thoughts posted on a bullying Web site. If the victim has a blog, a bully could either read the entries as an anonymous guest and post mean comments about the victim’s personal thoughts, or take the victim’s blog comments out of context, quoting the victim’s personal thoughts in the bully’s own blog, Web site, or message board.

Who Is Involved?

Older children are the largest group using computers and experiencing cyberbullying. Younger kids may not be able to use services like e-mail and IM programs without their parents’ help, but young adults are often left alone at the computer. Privacy is a huge concern for teens, and parents often try to respect this privacy when it comes to e-mail and instant messaging. Young adults have a strong desire for social acceptance as they shift their dependence from family to peers, so they may be unable to resist responding to mean or threatening messages, and they may give into the temptation of looking at a bullying Web site link they’ve received. As teens increasingly rely on computers and cell phones for their social networking, they become more susceptible to cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying can happen to anyone. Both the bully and the victim can be very quiet and subtle about the abuse, and most adults in the children’s lives may not know that anything untoward is happening. In



fact, a bully may be devious enough to convince adults that he or she is the victim, getting the actual victim in trouble. It is a myth that victims of bullying are weak or wimpy; in fact, “people who are targeted by bullies are sensitive, respectful, honest, creative, have high emotional intelligence, a strong sense of fair play and high integrity with a low propensity to violence.”⁶ These qualities are exactly what makes it easy for a bully to hurt a target. Victims will respond to bullying with dialogue and a sense of fairness, which the bully then exploits.

Bullies see their victims as weaker than they are and will use any vulnerability against them. Bullies may have low self-esteem and act aggressively to overcompensate for their weaknesses, but often bullies are the socially dominant children who ensure their power by degrading others. They have bullied before and have gotten away with it, so they continue to do it. This is especially true of cyberbullying, where anonymity allows the bully protection from being caught.

Is Cyberbullying Worse than Face-to-Face Bullying?

Skeptics of cyberbullying say that victims are not hurt physically, so it is not as harmful as face-to-face bullying. These skeptics, however, overlook the psychological damage caused through online and mobile phone bullying. Recent

scrutiny of psychologically damaging bullying among girls suggests that such aggression is just as damaging as physical aggression.⁷ Victims may experience stress, tension, low self-esteem, and depression. Cyberbullying, like bullying in general, can also have extreme repercussions such as suicide and physical violence.⁸ Marr and Field refer to suicide brought on by bullying as “bullycide,” and report that sixteen children commit bullycide each year in the United Kingdom alone.⁹ *People* published a 2005 article on the effects of cyberbullying, telling the story of thirteen-year-old Alex from Virginia. Alex spent a lot of time on his computer, and a group of girls used an instant message service to tease him about his size and his physical ability. In June 2004, Alex committed suicide by shooting himself with his grandfather’s gun. The suicide was linked to cyberbullying when Alex’s suicide note was found on his computer. The computer was emptied of all files except a note stating, “The only way to get the respect you deserve is to die.”¹⁰

Cyberbullying has the added effect of reaching victims in their own homes. Before computers, children could generally feel safe from other bullies in their own bedrooms, but now a cyberbully can enter that sanctuary. While children can temporarily get rid of cyberbullies by changing screen names, going offline, or turning off the computer, it is unreasonable to ask victims never to use a computer again. Teens especially may feel alienated from their peers if they must refrain from IM, e-mail, and text messaging due to a fear of bullying. In the case of mobile phones, children need to keep them turned on in case a parent or guardian calls, so being victimized by phone bullying is a constant threat. Cyberbullying is much harder to escape or avoid than face-to-face bullying.

The anonymity of cyberbullying is also damaging because kids don’t know if the bully is a best friend or a complete stranger, or if there is more than one bully

involved; they are left confused and distrustful of everyone, even the innocent. The faceless threat is often more frightening than the identified one.

Victims often avoid telling adults about the abuse because they fear that nothing can be done to help. In the case of cyberbullying, schools have often been helpless due to the nature of the offense; schools feel they cannot take action on something that is occurring outside of school hours or off school property. Victims may feel as though adults will tell them to ignore the bullying or to stand up to the bully. Parents and school officials are often ineffective against cyberbullying, since children know more about new technologies than many adults.

Bullying has spread to the computer because it provides a greater advantage for the bully. The bully can remain anonymous, inflict greater psychological harm, harass a victim at home, and rest easy knowing that most authority figures will be unable to trace or stop the harassment. A victim, on the other hand, feels more vulnerable and alone and experiences emotional damage that lasts longer than a black eye.

What Can Be Done?

One easy answer when it comes to any form of bullying is to tell victims just to ignore it. While this is easy to do by simply turning off the computer or phone, doing so deprives victims of their digital social network. Teens should continue to use these technologies but should not respond to the bully’s advances, and they should take the time to document all communication made by the bully.¹¹ Documentation can be used later when discussing the bullying with school officials or with the local police if the situation gets out of hand.¹² If a cyberbully commits a serious offense, parents can try reporting the abuse to their Internet Service Provider (ISP). The ISP can take action

against the bully if the actions are malicious and in violation of their privacy or Internet use policies.

Before taking the situation to civil authorities, parents and children can block users or e-mail addresses attached to hurtful messages (AIM even offers the ability to block messages from users not on the child’s personal buddy list). Children can change their screen names or e-mail addresses, controlling who receives their new contact information. Parents can also contact a mobile phone company to block certain numbers or turn off text messaging services. Higher quality message boards often have moderators who will take action against bullying. Contact information for the moderator is usually available.

As awareness of cyberbullying and its effects on children grows, more information is becoming available on the topic. Educating teens about cyberbullying can help victims realize that the aggression is not their fault. Future cyberbullying can be minimized if they learn how to recognize the attacks, how to deal with them, and how to stop the bully from contacting them in the future. As parents and teachers learn about the dangers of cyberbullying, they can reduce future problems by monitoring children’s online behavior, helping them set up their online accounts, asking them about their online friends, and watching for sudden changes in their children’s attitudes toward the Internet. Bullies need to be held accountable for their behavior whenever possible, and victims need to have the support of caring adults. Schools may need to extend their disciplinary purview beyond school walls to match the information services they provide, although this is currently a legal nightmare. Finally, ISPs need to continue to improve their methods of handling misuse of their services.

If parents, caregivers, and technology experts work together, they can help children cope with this potentially devastating

form of abuse. Concurrently, we must also try to protect our children's privacy, their freedom of expression, and their right to access these new communication and information technologies. It is a difficult balancing act, but as information professionals who work with children, it is our responsibility to accept this challenge, and to mentor children in socially beneficial ways. **YALS**

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Social Networking Sites

Why Teens Need Places Like MySpace

By Sean Rapacki

There's a song by new-wave rockers (and hair-mousse proponents) Echo & the Bunnymen titled "What Are You Going To Do With Your Life?" in which the singer answers the titular question by stating that he is going to "be me." Such simple direction, while admirable, is easier said than done—especially for an adolescent going through a turbulent phase where the very issue of what constitutes "me" is constantly up for grabs. Read any parenting book or ask any psychologist and they'll tell you that young people need space in which to discover their identities. What kind of "space," you ask? Well, a lot of teens are using MySpace to explore who they want to be, and, believe it or not, this can be a very good thing.

Many parents (and even a few teen librarians) might raise their eyebrows at this claim. A recent study by the nonprofit organization Common Sense Media showed that parents they polled considered the Internet a bigger threat to their children's safety than television.¹ After all, we've all seen the horror stories on the news about innocent teens lured from their homes by sexual predators using MySpace

and similar social networking sites. The recent Deleting Online Predators Act (DOPA) controversy, if nothing else, illustrates that there is a certain amount of social inertia towards keeping kids off of these parts of the Web. But let's put things into perspective. With more than 100 million users on MySpace alone, the anecdotal evidence of a few scattered news stories really doesn't suggest that the Internet is any more unsafe than crossing the street.² And, as the chicken would be quick to point out, the goal is to get to the other side.

Getting to the other side of adolescence in one piece is no easy trick, especially with the media, peers, and society pulling kids in frequently disparate directions. Even some adults find themselves listening to voices and following paths not truly their own. How many of us have looked back at old photos and wondered

what we were thinking to have worn such an outfit, sported such an outlandish hairdo, or hung with a certain crowd? When we're lucky, embarrassing photos or memories are the only things left to chronicle our experiments and mistakes. For the less fortunate, lapses in judgment can lead to permanent reminders like scars, bad credit, and tattoos. For teens trying to find their own path, social networking sites like MySpace are closer in nature to an easily airbrushed photo than they are to a tattoo that requires painful laser surgery to remove. Identity, particularly for young adults, can be a liquid concept, and the Web can be the ideal means for navigating the waters of self discovery.

Many librarians and historians have pointed out how the fluid nature of the Web has made it difficult to keep records over a period of time of high-profile Web sites, like those for the White House. The very same characteristics that make archival work with the Web a challenge, however, are what make it a great way for teens to find out who they are. Web sites aren't set in concrete; they are malleable, like Play-Doh. Few places on the Web emphasize this fluidity better than MySpace and its ilk. The best way to illustrate this is to take a look at the major elements of a MySpace account (user profiles, bulletins, blogs, and friend lists) and examine how they offer opportunities for fluid exploration of identity.

User Profiles

The core of a MySpace account is the user profile, which consists of a basic template containing personal data and pictures.

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Users are also allowed to personalize or “pimp” their pages by adding background images, artwork, songs, videos, and various style elements unique to the layout. Many teens change their profile constantly, using a variety of other Web sites that will create the HTML code needed to produce a custom layout, which users can design by choosing elements (colors, fonts, patterns) through a graphic interface. Feeling goth? Try a black background with animated skulls falling across your page. Like anime? Maybe some wallpaper with characters from such manga series as *Bleach* or *Fullmetal Alchemist* will let the world know who you are. A song that plays when someone views your profile can be selected by visiting a musical artist’s profile and clicking “add” next to the song you want. Thus, it is a simple matter to change music as your moods and tastes change, even within the space of a single day. Similarly, it requires little effort on the part of users to change the information in their “About Me” and “Interests” sections if they decide, for example, that a potential employer might be more impressed with what books they read than by how high they can perform an ollie on a skateboard.

Bulletins and Blogs

Journaling or keeping a diary has long been a way for teens to carry on a dialogue with themselves about their lives, and MySpace’s bulletin and blog features allow teens to extend such dialogues to their network of friends (or even the entire MySpace universe). The bulletin feature allows a user to post a message simultaneously to everyone in his network, perfect for when a teen wants his posse to know he has posted new pictures (pics), changed his profile layout, or just wants to chat. The appeal of the bulletin is its immediacy. Although it is possible to access an archive of bulletins from the past ten days, most users content

themselves with the five most recent bulletin posts that appear when they log into their account. If users post something in a bulletin and then change their minds about it later, they have the option to edit or delete the bulletin, making it possible to substitute “I HATE CHELSEA” with “katy & chelsea bff!!!!!!” once Katy’s temper simmers down. (Of course, if Chelsea is one of her MySpace friends and has already read the bulletin, Katy better hope that Chelsea has either a forgiving nature or a short memory.)

A MySpace blog has several interactive features that allow teens to explore who they are. One popular feature is the search engine that is linked to Amazon .com, which allows users to attach an image of a CD they’re listening to, a book they’re reading, a movie they’re watching, or a video game they’re playing. Letting friends know that a blog entry was written under the influence of, say, Panic! at the Disco’s CD can be a literal representation of what is currently playing or yet another way for users to broadcast their moods at that point in time. Similarly, users have the option of choosing their current mood from a pull-down menu. Unlike a traditional diary, which is generally kept completely secret unless your mom or little brother finds it, blogs have privacy settings that can be applied to each individual entry. That is, users can decide to make extremely personal entries available for viewing only to themselves, extend that viewing right to a select group of people, further extend it to everyone in their network of friends, or make it available to the whole MySpace community. Blogs, like bulletins, can also be edited or removed, and privacy settings can be changed. Teens can write about a budding romance, for example, and either remove it later if things don’t work out or make it public when it comes time to share their joy with the world.

Friends

The tagline for MySpace is “A Place for Friends,” and the idea of the Internet as a place where you can find your friends is especially true for young people. According to Diana and James Oblinger, 96 percent of children ages 8 to 18 have gone online, and students in grades 7–12 know more instant-messaging screen names than they do home phone numbers.³ Social networking sites have become the virtual commons where teens go to hang out with their friends. The “My Friends Space” feature on MySpace lets users determine who is going to be part of their digital posse, or their network. Moreover, best friends can be arranged in a user’s “Top Friends” group of 4, 8, 12, 16, 20, or 24 people. This order can be rearranged frequently if one is fickle, friends can be removed or added to reflect changes, and the list can even be kept private. As with adults, teens tend to define themselves by the company they keep, and this feature allows teens a variety of ways to experiment with defining themselves through their friends.

A Powerful Tool

If you haven’t already done so, this is probably a good time to create your own MySpace account. It’s free (the only requirement is that you have an e-mail address), and having one will allow you to experience firsthand the array of ways in which social networking sites can be used, as well as communicate and engage the teens your library serves. The first thing you’ll probably notice when signing up for an account is that all personal information is self-reported. As long as your e-mail address is valid, you are trusted to properly report your age, gender, name, and other characteristics. It is an understatement to say that many users take advantage of this situation to misrepresent the facts,

Other Social Networking Sites

AIM Pages

www.aimpages.com

Facebook

<http://hs.facebook.com>

Friendster

www.friendster.com

My Yearbook

www.myearbook.com

whether for innocent or nefarious purposes. The most common example of misrepresentation is teens under age fourteen lying about their age to beat the minimum age requirement for using the service.

It is only natural that young adults strive impatiently for the freedoms taken for granted by adults and older teens, but there is a very real danger present when such role-playing gets out of hand on social networking sites. Teens trying to appear sophisticated and worldly to their peers will often lie about or exaggerate experience with sex, drugs, alcohol, violence, and other risky behaviors. While putting information on a MySpace account is not the same as having it on their permanent records, the short-term results can be just as devastating for young adults. Teens often don't realize the danger

of giving out their account password to friends (a common practice, particularly as friends often help each other customize their profiles). More than one young adult has had to deal with a damaged reputation resulting from someone hacking into their account to post false or damaging information. So even though there is nothing permanent about a MySpace account, the effect it can have on the transitory, often melodramatic, emotional landscape of a young adult can be powerful. Social networking sites can be powerful tools for self discovery, but—to quote Spider-Man's Uncle Ben—with great power comes great responsibility.

The Wadsworth (Ohio) Public Library decided to use that power by creating a MySpace account for our teen department (www.myspace.com/wadsworthpubliclibrary) as a means to better engage the teens in our community with the library. To be honest, it has created some interesting issues, such as deciding who will be added as friends. Young adult authors, librarians, and other “book” folk generally get the thumbs-up. Local teens are approved, unless their screen names contain offensive language the library doesn't want associated with its page. On the other hand, it was decided that the actual content on teens' pages should not be a factor in deciding whether to add them as friends. This is because the

very teens we might turn away because of lurid content on their profiles are exactly the sort of at-risk youth we want to engage. As the word gets out about the library's MySpace page and more local teens request to be added as friends, this site becomes an increasingly effective method of promoting programming and discovering the dreams and challenges of our YA community. You tell me: Doesn't this make it worth putting up with all those tacky banner ads MySpace sticks on your page? **YALS**

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3. Diana Oblinger and James Oblinger, “Is It Age or IT: First Steps toward Understanding the Net Generation,” EDU-CAUSE, June 2006, www.educause.edu/content.asp?page_id=6058&bhcp=1 (accessed Sept. 29, 2006).

Would you like to attract new teens to your library? Are you wondering how you can reach those teens that only come to the library to camp out on the computers for as long as possible? Would you like to get more boys involved in your activities? Then warm up your thumbs and plan some video game programs.

Programs that capitalize on teen interests are how we maintain relevance in the busy lives of our teens. By taking traditionally solitary activities like reading, writing, and crafting and adding expertise, structure, and community, libraries offer teens enhanced experiences they are unable to create on their own. Giving video games the same consideration can attract new teens to the library and improve your relationship with teen gamers.

Go to the Source

For librarians who are not active gamers, it can be hard to keep up with what the most popular games and systems are in your community. This presents a great opportunity for teen input and leadership in your library. Consider forming a gaming or technology-specific teen advisory board. Seek out your most game-obsessed teens, and be sure to talk to teens that don't usually attend other types of programs. Let them guide your program choices and recommend game-related titles for your collection. Find out what systems they own and what games they are playing, including those for portable systems. Ask them what games they think would attract a lot of players for a tournament. Finally, browse the gaming magazines and Web sites they

read. Your teens are a key resource when planning video game programs.

Equipment

If you are considering a tournament or free-play program, equipment can be one of the major obstacles in planning. For each game station you will need a television, game system, game, and the correct number of controllers. You will likely need two controllers each for Microsoft Xbox or Sony PlayStation systems and two to four controllers for each Nintendo GameCube. Consult the back of the game package for the number of players to be sure. If you are planning to play *Dance Dance Revolution* (DDR) or another game with special equipment, make sure you have enough equipment for each game station. (If your game of choice is DDR, it is highly recom-

mended that you choose the best quality dance mats you can afford.)

There are several ways to procure equipment depending on your library and community. Several libraries have purchased the equipment, either out of their budgets or with grant funds, as part of plans for ongoing video game programming. This is the optimal solution if you plan on multiple, well-attended events, and your library can afford it.

If this is not an option, then you may be able to solicit help from your local video game store by asking them to cosponsor an event and loan the equipment. Employees at your local store are generally quite knowledgeable about their products. An ongoing relationship with the staff can be a strong asset, especially for librarians who are not gamers themselves. Beyond loaning equipment, these experts can tell you what the most popular games and systems are in your area, help you reach your target audience, and may even be willing to volunteer at your event. The store benefits from the publicity and from your teenagers test-driving games and systems they may later decide to buy.

All Thumbs Isn't a Bad Thing

Video Game Programs @ your library®

By Beth Saxton

BETH SAXTON is a Young Adult Librarian at the Martin Luther King Jr. Branch of Cleveland (Ohio) Public Library. She has been working with teens as a librarian for four years and is a member of YALSA's Technology for Young Adults Committee.

If you are just starting out and do not expect more than about twenty participants, you can run a tournament on one or two systems that can often be borrowed from library staff. Look into renting additional copies of a game for these events as it can be significantly cheaper than purchasing games for a one-time event. Finally, it may be possible to ask participants to bring in their own equipment. Do this only if you can be sure everyone is aware that the library cannot be held responsible for damage or theft.

Tournaments

A proven way to attract gamers to your library is to hold a tournament. These events can range from informal, after-school competitions with one game system to a large scale, day-long affair with multiple systems. There are several advantages to holding a tournament. First, this type of event offers something patrons would be hard-pressed to organize on their own. Second, the structure of the tournament helps to ensure that everyone gets an equal turn, the most common reason for disputes during free-play programs. Finally, few teens can resist the idea of proving they are the best at anything, especially something as central to their existence as video games.

When planning a tournament, consider the number of playing spots you will have available. The more spots you can offer, the less players will try to entertain themselves with things you would rather they *didn't* do. This is one way in which the GameCube is superior to PlayStation 2 and Xbox—many popular GameCube games allow four people to play at once with only extra controllers required.

Your choice of game and the time available for your tournament will also influence the format of your tournament. Many popular games have ways to shorten

the length of the time it takes to determine a winner. For example, it is possible to adjust the length to half or a quarter of the time in many sports games, and *Super Smash Bros. Melee* offers a sudden-death mode that shortens playing time considerably. Consult the game's manual, gaming Web sites, or ask your teens for shortcuts to chosen games.

MarioKart and *Super Smash Bros. Melee*, both for GameCube, allow four players to compete simultaneously and finish a game in a relatively short amount of time, making them ideal for tournaments. *Madden NFL* is available for all systems and is incredibly popular with boys, although it has a high learning curve for those unfamiliar with sports video games. For a more active tournament, consider some popular rhythm games. *DDR* has versions available for all systems and is played on a dance mat on which players step in-sync with arrows on the screen. Other options include *Donkey Konga* for GameCube, during which players beat bongos, or *Guitar Hero* for PlayStation with its guitar-shaped controller.

When planning your tournament find teens who are experts at the game you have chosen and ask them to bring their memory cards. Nearly all games have special features that can only be accessed after a certain level of play is reached. To give your players the best experience possible, it is important to make sure all these little extras are available. When possible, avoid single elimination tournaments and give each player as many chances at the controller as possible. There are several freeware generators to help you create your tournament bracket. Have game-related activities available for participants when it is not their turn at the controller. Board games and a selection of gaming books and magazines are a good start, although many teens will simply choose to watch others compete.

There are several ways to enhance your tournament. Ann Arbor (Mich.) District Library projects key games on a big screen and invites teens to contribute commentary for the featured games. Allowing teens to predict the winner after the first round is fun, and a small prize can be distributed to the best prognosticators. It is a good idea to have a large copy of the tournament bracket posted in the room as well. This ensures all players understand how the tournament works, and adds the fun of predicting future match-ups as well.

Free Play

A second option for video game programming is to simply set aside a time for free play. This works especially well as part of a larger program such as an after-school drop-in time, community outreach event, or lock-in. As with a tournament, the more spots you have available for players the better your program is likely to be received. Games that work well for tournaments also work well for free play. You might also consider collections of classic games and mini-games such as the Mario Party series.

Decide in advance how players will take turns. You may choose a set length of time, a single game, or multiple games depending on the games offered. For short multiplayer games like *Mario Kart*, you may consider allowing the winner to keep their seat while rotating the other players.

You'll also want to decide which games will be available and who will be allowed to change the games and have access to the games not being played. Be sure to check the rating of any games your players bring from home and stand firm on the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) age guidelines. There are plenty of popular and challenging games rated "E" for "Everyone" or "T" for "Teen."

Meet-ups

A third type of game-related programming is to have a portable system meet-up. A meet-up is simply a group of people with a common interest who get together face-to-face. Both Nintendo DS and Sony PlayStation Portable (PSP) allow players to compete across a wireless connection. If your teens express interest in Nintendo DS or PSP, this is the simplest way to get gamers into the library.

This program has a clear advantage in that there is no equipment to provide and only the amount of space available limits the number who can participate. Participants in this type of program move through the group, playing games and swapping virtual items. Specify one or two specific games for each meet-up so gamers know what to expect. Nintendo DS has many games in which interaction with other players has a significant advantage in game play. For example, players of *Animal Crossing Wild World* “live” in their hometown, but reap high benefits from traveling and accepting tourists. Puppy parents in *Nintendogs* can swap goods and arrange playdates for their furry friends, and Wi-Fi competition adds an extra dimension to staples like *MarioKart DS* and *Tetris DS*.

The biggest disadvantage to this type of program is that teens must have their own systems to participate; however, if your teens have expressed interest in meet-ups, this should not stand in your way of offering this type of program. Remember that you are trying to fill a specific need with this program and other events will fill the needs of the teens who can't participate this time.

Video Games and Traditional Library Programming

There are many options for integrating gaming into more traditional types of library programming, in addition to the

game advisory group. This is an area, however, where it is crucial to have teen input. Your own attempts may backfire, leaving teens with the impression that the library can make even video games boring.

Form a video game discussion group at your library in addition to your book discussion group. Attendees can discuss titles they have played and enjoyed, elements of what makes a good game, the best games they've played, sources of video game information, and the issue of violence in video games. The discussion group may also complete world-building exercises.

Many libraries put together publications featuring teens' creative writing and artwork. This idea can be adapted by inviting gamers to write for a video game magazine instead. Allow the gamers to decide what types of things should be included and if they are going to limit content to console games or include table and computer games as well. They may want to include teen-generated game reviews, playing tips and tricks, or articles about gaming topics. You can even assign a reporter to cover your own tournaments.

Career-related programs are another place to capitalize on the popularity of video games. Seek out professionals in your community who have careers related to the gaming industry including programmers, designers, marketers, or small business people. Invite them to give presentations and ask their advice on books related to their area of expertise. Professional organizations, colleges, and universities are a good starting point to make these kinds of contacts. This is another way to involve your local game store.

Game Over

Librarians holding video game programs report that they have no more—and often fewer—behavioral issues at game programming events than any other kind of event. Many have reported better library behavior overall among game program participants,

thanks to improved relations with the librarian and teens who feel a sense of ownership of the library. Many teens who initially became involved in the library through gaming events have gone on to attend other library programs as well. Adopting any of these options for video game programming can have great benefits for both your teens and the library. **YALS**

Additional Resources

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Erin Helmrich and Eli Neiburger, “Video Games As a Service: Hosting Tournaments at Your Library (No MARC Records Required),” *Voice of Youth Advocates* 27, no. 6 (Feb. 2005), 450–53.

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Web Sites

Bracket Maker

www.bracketmaker.com

DDR Freak

www.ddrfreak.com

Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB)

www.esrb.org

Game FAQs

www.gamefaqs.com

Game Spy

www.gamespy.com

Nintendo

www.nintendo.com

PlayStation

www.us.playstation.com

Xbox

www.xbox.com

Out of the Basement

The Social Side of Gaming

*By Eli Neiburger
and Matt Gullett*

Picture a gamer for a moment. A teenage boy, probably, sitting in a dark basement on a smelly couch, bathed in that flickering glow, slack-jawed and drooling. All alone, completely antisocial, shutting out the world. Right?

Well, not exactly. It's not that that scenario doesn't exist within the gaming culture, but video games are rarely a solitary activity. The positive social aspects of gaming are wide-ranging and an important part of the social habits of the gaming generation. Since *Pong* (which was popular thirty years ago already), the focus of video games has been to play against your friends, get the whole family involved, and be the best in the neighborhood. While the equipment is a little more complex, video games are still games, and just like canasta, Monopoly, or euchre, they're just not as much fun to play solo.

Video Games Are Positive Social Activities

There are reasons why games have been a central component of leisure culture for millennia: they provide mental stimulation, solid entertainment, attainable mastery, and, most importantly, the possibility of proving beyond the shadow of a doubt that you are better than your friends. Video games offer players all these opportunities

embedded within a framework of artificial, gameplay-optimized worlds that often add story, character, excitement, and eye candy into the mix, producing a compelling and rewarding environment in which social interaction can take place. The only fundamental difference between a video game and a chessboard in the park, a bingo night, or an evening of bridge, is the format, and libraries should have learned by now that when we don't deliver formats that our customers demand, entire industries spring up to fill that void.

When people play games together, the competition has value in and of itself, but the sharing of knowledge that occurs also increases the social value of the encounter. While both the loser and the winner learn something from every chess match, video games are usually so full of arcane secrets and exploitable glitches that exclamations of "How did you do that?" are central components of any gaming event. Players who can reliably execute difficult maneuvers, but also explain how they were done, have cachet and credibility among their peers that simply can't be obtained in the classroom. These are useful *life* skills here, unlike trigonometry.

Of course, the social benefits of competition itself are central to the appeal of video games. In addition to the opportunities for sweet victory, the simple opportunity for mutual enjoyment and excitement

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that video games provide to a group of players help knit that group closer together and form bonds that last after the plug is pulled. You feel closer to someone who you've almost beaten again and again, and you feel kinship with those around you as you witness the final moments of a close match.

It's also worth stating that despite some high-profile and undeniably prurient titles, video games are not an inherently degenerate or violent pursuit. Only 15 percent of the games sold in 2005 were rated "M" for "Mature" (for ages seventeen and older), despite receiving extensive coverage from major media outlets.¹ Non-gamers may decree the popularity of video games among young people as a sign of the downfall of humanity and ruination of fine young minds, but that actually places video games in good company alongside other forms of entertainment that have borne the same accusations over the years, such as comic books, movies, the telephone, the waltz, and the novel. (Most of these are now well-ensconced within libraries, making it fair to say that public libraries specialize in materials that were once thought to lead to the ruination of fine young minds.)

Social Aspects of Gaming and Tournaments

Never underestimate the power of common cause. Simply bringing together a group of players who all seek mastery of, say, *Super Smash Bros. Melee*, has significant social benefits for all involved. It's not just the sharing of information and excitement; it's the simple power of getting a group of people together to do something that they might otherwise do alone. Bringing an audience together and focusing its attention promotes the establishment of friendships among people with

a common interest, and provides shared experiences they can fondly reflect upon. Again, libraries have been doing this for decades in the story room; gaming is just a newer format.

Another similarity to storytime is a gaming event's ability to introduce new people to each other. Team events are especially successful at creating new friendships or strengthening old ones as players attempt to form mutually beneficial relationships. Add in the relatively wide mix you can get at a tournament event, and you can form some friendships that simply would not have happened any other way.

Of course, any contest of skill is going to produce some conflict, but the common goal and desire to proceed with the next match will often lead to emergent compromise and conflict resolution. Tournament events especially foster this kind of interaction. With equal stakes and opportunity on the line for all involved, there is great incentive to exercise diplomacy and settle disputes instead of dissolving into chest-thumping.

Gaming as Equalizer

Because of the broad appeal of video games, especially among today's teens, gaming events have the ability to bring together players from different schools, cliques, castes, races, ages, or cultures, and give them a relatively level playing field that they can't find anywhere else. The authors of this article have witnessed eight-year-old girls playing *Donkey Konga* with seventeen-year-old tough guys; interracial matches—that could have flared up—ending with handshakes and mutual respect; and even friendly matches between competitors who had almost no common language except button-mashing.

In addition, gaming events provide opportunities for intergenerational socialization that are extremely rare, especially in

a library setting. The all-ages *Dance Dance Revolution (DDR)* tournaments at Ann Arbor (Mich.) District Library (AADL) routinely attract more than one hundred people, including parents with both teenagers and elementary children, twenty-somethings looking for a pre-bar activity, and even groups of older women. Bringing these different groups together in one room to play one game creates a wonderfully welcoming atmosphere that provides unique social benefits to all involved.

Social Creativity in the Gaming Culture

Gaming becomes even more interesting and productive when it's taken to the next level by offering learning opportunities for those teens who are motivated to create their own games and interactive applications. If you're one of many who think that offering such learning opportunities is totally out of the realm of possibility, think again. There are many options available to those that are sufficiently motivated. Librarians do not have to be expert programmers, artists, or multimedia producers to offer these learning opportunities to youth.

When connecting with teens in this way, new interactions and social connections open up. Many of the products available offer self-learning components that connect learners and interested parties together in the game-making endeavor. These software programs and online tutorials are designed to be self-sustaining and also socially engaging to learners. By offering this opportunity to youth, it's easy to see just how collaborative and socially engaged a person must be to create games and interactive media. Through this process, youth learn that the game-making process is a team effort that relies upon community.

Gaming Is the Best Kind of Learning

While the social and recreational benefits alone make gaming events a good fit for any public library, games are also learning activities and even, in many cases, literacy activities. On the most basic level, all video games require the development of cognitive skills that are useful in the always “on” modern world, such as pattern recognition, spatial reasoning, and information processing. For example, one study found that surgeons who played video games worked faster and made fewer mistakes than their nongaming counterparts, and that study only tested the effects of *Super Monkey Ball*!²

Games are widely used as educational tools, not just for pilots, soldiers and surgeons, but also in schools and businesses. . . . Games require players to construct hypotheses, solve problems, develop strategies, learn the rules of the in-game world through trial and error. Gamers must also be able to juggle several different tasks, evaluate risks and make quick decisions. . . . Playing games is, thus, an ideal form of preparation for the workplace of the twenty-first century, as some forward-thinking firms are already starting to realise.³

In addition, the built-in social aspect of gaming, combined with the positive feedback and inherent incentive to constantly improve, provides players with a positive learning experience they may not even know they’re having. The classic game *Oregon Trail* has been an example of this for more than twenty years. As gaming generations raised on edutainment continue to grow up and further enhance

games and learning, the pastime that some call mindless may result in faster, more capable minds than ever before.

AADL-GT in a Nutshell

AADL-GT is the name of the gaming service at Ann Arbor District Library. Staff members host a weekend of tournaments almost every month for different games and audiences, featuring a six-month-long Saturday tournament for teens that culminates in a Grand Championship Event. They also hold tournaments for kids, twentysomethings, and adults for such games as *DDR*, *Guitar Hero*, *Mario Kart*, *Super Smash Bros. Melee*, *Pokémon*, and more. AADL’s gaming services began in 2004. They are wrapping up the third annual championship season, which routinely draws more than one hundred players to the library.

BPL Game Fests in a Nutshell

Game Fest is a program that developed at the Bloomington (Ill.) Public Library (BPL) in 2004. It started with quarterly events that were, for the most part, comprised of open-play on computer, video, and board games. After the second event, the program quickly morphed into multiple competition activities playing *Battlefield 1942*, *Mario Kart*, and *DDR*. During the course of a year and a half, *Guitar Hero* and other experimental ideas were added. In their first two years, Game Fests brought in far more than three hundred youth to interact, play, learn, compete, and network. Keep your eyes on BPL, because it has new leadership in the informa-

tion technology and young adult services departments, as well as an administration with some big plans in the works.

PLCMC/ImaginOn in a Nutshell

Gaming events for teens at ImaginOn: the Joe & Joan Martin Center of the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County (PLCMC) in North Carolina began in October 2005, at the first Teen Read Week party, attended by more than five hundred teens. Since then, the center has established an after-school gaming club that meets twice a month. Last summer, the center pulled off a county system-wide *Soul Caliber* tournament. Sixteen teenage boys qualified throughout the PLCMC-area libraries. Gaming is becoming a key component of most PLCMC program developers. In fact, PLCMC has one of the most successful and active adult gaming initiatives out there.

Staff Benefits

In addition to the socialization that happens among players, one of the most positive benefits of these gaming events has been the relationship that staff has been able to build with an audience that previously could not have cared less about the library. By meeting gamers’ interests head-on and delivering a high-quality, compelling service, staff at these libraries have been able to forge meaningful, mutually-respectful relationships with some tough customers who associate a negative stigma with being seen walking into the library. Through adults’ validation and embracing of gamers’ interests, new connections are

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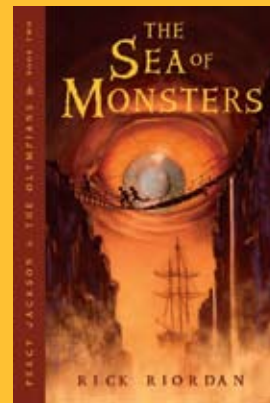
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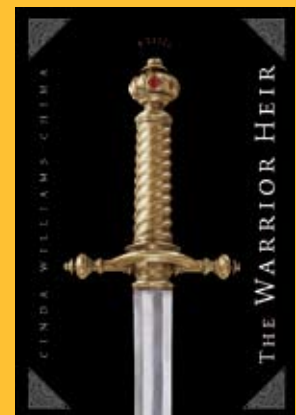
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Continued from page 36

created that not only garner high-quality feedback about how services should evolve, but also gives staff the credibility it needs to adequately control boisterous events and help lead the way towards peaceful resolution of conflict.

Participatory Elements

Encouraging players to come to a gaming event is the first step; but, getting them involved in the production of such events delivers even more benefits and promotes several of the Search Institute's Developmental Assets.⁴ Teen players were asked to add color commentary during tournaments. This has become so popular at AADL that we have to hold auditions each season to pick the best commentators. We also added a clan scoring system to allow players to form teams of up to six players and work towards a higher total score. Clans also earn bonuses for each new player or—taking a suggestion from one of our female gamers—a bonus for each girl they welcome into their clan. Players also like to come early and stay late helping set up and tear down. When we have live broadcasts, sideline interviews are conducted with players to help cement their “celebrity” status and provide ample opportunity for shout-outs. We also host a blog where we post information about

upcoming events, tournament results, and other items of interest to our players. Players are encouraged to comment, allowed to trash-talk, and empowered to convince us when something needs to change. Tournaments are already more interactive than almost any other library program; finding ways to further involve the players and make them feel a part of the action greatly increases the positive social impact for attendees and the library alike.

Developing learning and social interaction around gaming interests addresses many of the developmental assets and skills that speak to our public and community leaders. Some emerging methods are available to direct libraries in this activity, such as teaching teens how to create their own games using Multimedia Fusion software or the online curriculum available through the Youth Digital Arts CyberSchool (www.ydacs.com). The Alliance Library System in East Peoria, Illinois, and PLCMC have recently announced a new collaboration to build a cultural and informational service with and for teens as part of Teen Second Life (<http://teen.seconddlife.com>), a 3-D virtual online community for youth ages thirteen to seventeen.

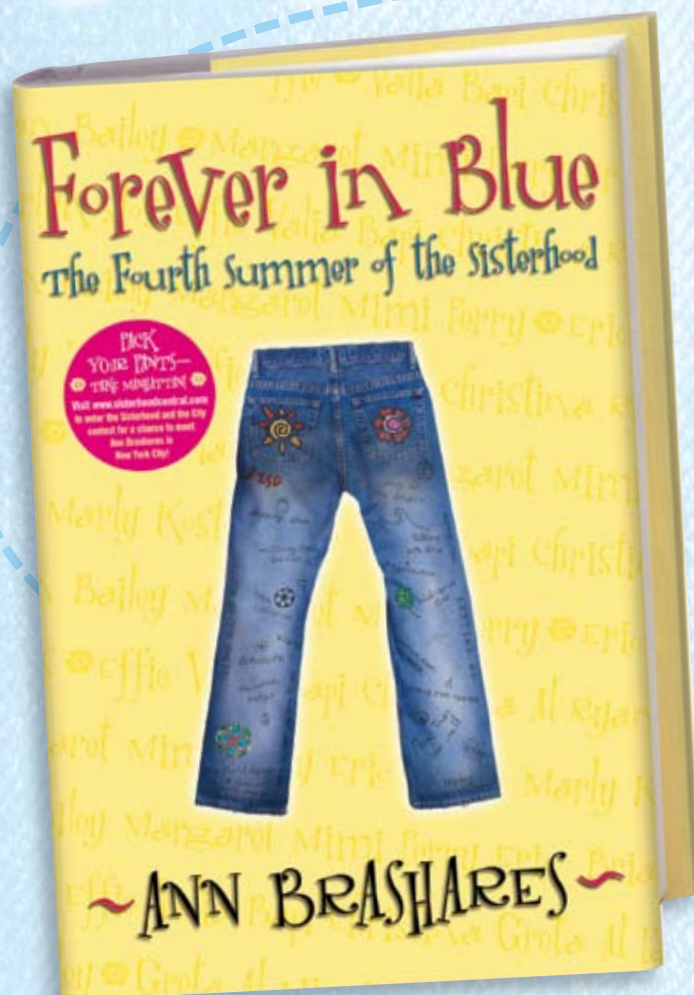
By offering teens opportunities to learn about creating music videos and movies, image editing, computer graphics and drawing, and writing and storytelling, we are speaking their language and creating a culture in which they love to interact.

Clearly, there is much more to gaming in libraries than just playing. Putting an educational spin on the community and culture of games in libraries puts a much different face on the activity than many perceive. Take some time to really think about what fits best in your library and your community, and let us know what you think. E-mail Eli Neiberger at eli@aadl.org or Matt Gullett at mgullett@plcmc.org. **YALS**

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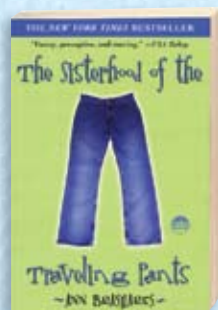
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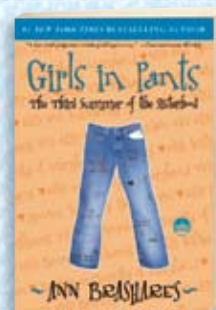
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Web, Library, and Teen Services 2.0

By Kimberly Bolan, Meg Canada, and Rob Cullin

It seems like you can't go anywhere these days without someone throwing the 2.0 moniker around. Some argue it's the future of libraries and others maintain it's hype. The truth is, it's somewhere in between the two. Library 2.0 was significant enough to merit a multiple-week staff training course for ALA leaders, but what does it mean for everyone else? How does 2.0 apply to those working in YA services and why does it matter? And, more specifically, how does 2.0 apply to the teenagers in our schools and communities? In simplest terms, 2.0 is a new way of thinking about libraries. First and foremost, it follows one underlying golden rule: to dynamically interact with and listen to your users to create more user-centered services, both physical and technology-related. Fundamentally, 2.0 is the willingness to enhance library services through user collaboration.

What is Web 2.0?

Even though Library 2.0 isn't solely about technology, it's useful to know how the 2.0 concept evolved. The phenomenon began outside the library world with the moniker Web 2.0. In simplified terms, Web 2.0 is the next generation of the Internet. It is not so much defined by speed or infrastructure, but how content

is created, distributed, and disseminated, and how people interact with that content and each other through a whole new generation of Web platforms and tools. Wikipedia (a Web 2.0 concept in itself) says that the term Web 2.0 is attributed to Tim O'Reilly of O'Reilly Media and refers to a second generation of Internet-based services such as social networking sites (MySpace, Friendster), wikis (collaborative, shared-content sites), communication tools, and folksonomies (shared tagging and labeling, short for "folks" and "taxonomy").¹ These tools let people collaborate and share information online in previously unavailable ways. Everything to date has been Web 1.0, which consists of static Web sites containing graphics, or perhaps multimedia, and links to other static Web sites. According to Stephen Abram, Web 2.0 is about "conversations, interpersonal

networking, personalization, and individualism."² One early adapter to Web 2.0 was Amazon.com. Amazon opened its e-commerce site to allow users (not necessarily customers) to add comments about books and products. Amazon allows its users to catalog or add tags to their inventory, making it easier to search. Users can also make lists to combine interests or compile favorites. See the Web 2.0 sidebar for more examples.

What is Library 2.0?

The leap from Web 2.0 to Library 2.0 was the brainchild of Michael Casey, who first used the term on his blog, Library Crunch. Casey asserts that Library 2.0 will "embrace disruptive ideas."³ At its heart, this means that in order to embrace Library 2.0, those who manage and work in libraries must be willing to make significant changes in the way they think and conduct business. This shift will result in taking the traditional library of sterile spaces, static collections, and vanilla catalogs to the next level in a variety of areas. Library 2.0 may initially seem painful for libraries as it requires radical trust, a concept highlighted by Darlene Fichter, data library coordinator at the University of Saskatchewan Library in Canada. Radical trust encompasses the community, library staff, and leadership; radical trust is about trusting the community; it means allowing

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and encouraging customers and patrons to participate in shaping and creating the library.⁴ This calls for library administrators and frontline staff to let go of some of their control; it also means building something without setting the end result in stone. Perhaps librarian Michael Stephens of the Tame the Web blog has the most unambiguous definition of how this comes together. He writes, "Library 2.0 simply means making your library's space (virtual and physical) more interactive, collaborative, and driven by community needs."⁵

Essentially librarians have to listen more, trust more, and be willing to relinquish some control to allow customers of all ages and backgrounds to have the best library experience possible. The focus of Library 2.0, however, is not just on technology components. Library 2.0 concepts are just as applicable and important to the building's physical design (for example, comfortable and inviting spaces that encourage excellent customer service). If the focus is only on the technology aspects of Library 2.0, we'll end up with Library 1.5 instead. Library 1.5 would consist of plenty of interesting Web 2.0 technologies with which few people would be familiar, emanating from buildings that have the same look, feel, and customer-service approaches they had before the Internet age.

Teen Services 2.0

So, what does all this mean for library service to teens? Basically, it all boils down to looking to teen users and nonusers—engaging them; listening to their needs, wants, and ideas; and actively implementing and moving forward. Think about their *experiences* with the library and then design library services for *them* (not us). Ask these questions: What kind of encounter can a teenager have with the physical library? What kind of encounter can a teenager have with the virtual library

Examples of Web 2.0 in the Library

RSS (Really Simple Syndication)—a way to easily collect news, announcements, postings, and content from a variety of Web sites in an automated way. Feeds could be used to broadcast arrivals of new materials (books, audiovisual, etc.), announcements, and event information.

Commentary and user-driven rating functionality—the inclusion of patrons' comments in online catalogs, online review sharing, and so on.

Blogs—Web pages that serve as publicly accessible personal journals that include commentary and idea sharing.

Wikis—collaborative Web sites (for example, Wikipedia) that are the collective work of many authors and allow anyone to edit and modify content.

Social networking sites (for example, MySpace and Facebook)—sites that allow librarians to create library profiles, link to "friends," share what's new, and just generally network in a virtual environment.

Photo sharing sites (for example, Flickr)—sites to post pictures of various library and community functions, services, and activities.

Audio and video—post digital audio or video (of library and community func-

tions, interviews, events, resources, and tours) to sharing sites such as YouTube in streaming format or in downloadable formats such as podcasts.

Personalized alerts—e-mail and text messages about reserved and overdue materials, program and event reminders, and more.

Interactive Web services—instant messaging (IM) reference, dynamic and searchable online program and event information with online registration, online summer reading programs, and online access to meeting room and equipment information with the ability to submit electronic reservation requests.

Personalization and "My Profile" features—use a library barcode and pin number to manage subscriptions to electronic newsletters and announcements and allow users to personalize a Web page with content and color.

Folksonomies, tagging, and tag clouds—in library catalogs, users can add their own categories and keywords with frequently used words appearing in a cloud of hyperlinked words.

(the library's Web site, blog, and so on)? How can a teenager's library experience become more interactive and user-driven?

Teen Involvement

Community involvement from participants of all ages is the most important ingredient of almost anything a 2.0 library does, and the backbone of the Teen Services 2.0 movement is teen participation. It's about keeping those teens you currently serve while actively seeking out those who don't

use library services. Teen involvement is not only a Library 2.0 concept unto itself, it is also what drives the other elements of 2.0. For instance, how can a library be more interactive, collaborative, and driven by community needs without directly asking and involving the community? When it comes to getting teenagers involved, the most successful libraries encourage teen input and assistance from the beginning, and continue encouraging them into young adulthood. This means involving young adult users in service creation

and evaluation, including information gathering, assessment, library planning, and implementation. Participation can come in the form of teen advisory boards, focus groups, committee work, and even teen representatives on the library board. Involvement and input should relate to all areas of the library including technology, customer service, space design, marketing, collection development, programming, and more. Ask teen collaborators about Web 2.0 concepts and ideas. Get their input and their assistance. Since some of Web 2.0 ideas are still foreign and intimidating to many adults working in libraries, teens can often be a great resource for incorporating what's hot and relevant.

Physical and Virtual Space

Another key component of Teen Services 2.0 is the creation of comfortable, inviting teen spaces. When polling teens ages 13–18 about what they like in their physical library space they consistently want:

- a recognizable space—something that they know is for them and that they can call their own;
- an area that is colorful, comfortable, energizing, spacious, and welcoming;
- a well-organized and well-laid-out place where materials can easily be found; and
- someplace where they can stay awhile and just hang out, read, do homework, listen to music, or work on the computer.⁶

Hand-in-hand with physical library space is virtual space and the development of library Web sites. Just as with physical space, teens have an abundance of opinions and requests when it comes to library Web sites. Functionality is number one on their list. They want clean, easy-to-use sites that aren't overloaded with text. Young adults ask for sites they can use to interact with

other teens and library staff, take quizzes, submit reviews, play games, look up information, chat with library staff for assistance, post messages and comments, get current information on library programs and registration, participate in online summer reading, and more. The Prince William County (Va.) Library enhanced its Web site by offering online summer reading in 2006. They increased active reader participation by 70 percent and the number of reviews submitted increased almost 500 percent.⁷ Starting a mediated blog or a library wiki, answering reference questions sent by IM or text, or adding an RSS feed to the teen Web page are just a few simple ways to get on the path to 2.0.

Customer Service

Customer service is yet another important element of Library 2.0 centered around breaking down the barriers of traditional library customer service. Getting out from behind the desk (or eliminating the desk altogether) and moving toward a more proactive interaction with customers is key. Examples of this include examining self-serve options where staff is readily available for patron assistance, using library greeters, implementing information kiosks and digital signage throughout the library, and using roaming librarians. Another relevant aspect involves changing how libraries deal with teens—too often with double standards—by writing teen- and user-friendly policies. Many of these ideas, coupled with working to eliminate the us-versus-them mentality among library administration and staff, constitute a more retail-minded approach.

Gaming

Gaming is one of the newer services that libraries are implementing that embraces

Library 2.0 beliefs. Contrary to what some may think, gaming is recognized as a literacy activity. Cynics might consider gaming to be a disruptive or noneducational activity, but administrators and staff at libraries such as Ann Arbor (Mich.) District Library, Bloomington (Ill.) Public Library, and Kansas City (Mo.) Public Library recognize that teens self-regulate their behavior for the privilege of participating in events and using the library's space. Even smaller, rural libraries such as Carver's Bay (S.C.) Public Library, are incorporating gaming as a part of regular services by purchasing dedicated gaming workstations.⁸ Some libraries invite teens to bring in their own game consoles and use a meeting room with a projector to display the games. Circulating video games as part of the collection is another way to incorporate games in libraries.

Podcasting

Podcasting and vodcasting (video podcasting) are two ways libraries can harness the energy young adults bring into the library. At ImaginOn's Library Loft, part of the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County (PLCMC) in North Carolina, Studio-i is a multimedia production studio where teens produced a commercial about the summer reading program to vodcast to their peers. Rather than expect teens to view the video only on the Library Loft page, the teens also uploaded the commercial to YouTube (www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_foIxyL-CPU). Likewise, many libraries produce podcasts by and for teens and make them available on iTunes, as well as on their own libraries' Web sites.

Social Networking

As more and more teens join social networking sites like MySpace and Facebook,

it no longer seems adequate to simply provide pages on library Web sites that “advertise” to young adults. Libraries can create accounts on social networking sites to promote events, garner teen input, and link back to the library home page. Creative libraries, such as Alexandria (Ind.) Public Library, use MySpace accounts to advertise new books. A social networking site can also be an excellent way to connect with teens by linking to popular authors and teen advisory group members with their own accounts or profiles.

Photo sharing sites like Flickr.com are another excellent venue for pictures taken at teen-oriented programs. Flickr allows users to upload digital photos yielding a searchable database of pictures and the stories they tell. The search terms “teen” and “read” in Flickr’s search field results in photos of Teen Read Week™ displays, summer reading programs, and volunteer photos. This gives the library a human face, showing a visual representation of teens actively participating in its services. Flickr is also easy to update and offers another dynamic service as photos may be added regularly.

Learn More about the Web 2.0 Movement

Several libraries are incorporating training to help familiarize staff with Web 2.0 concepts. One notable example is PLCMC’s Learning 2.0 project. While the training program offers incentives for PLCMC staff to participate, the curriculum and activities are available to anyone (<http://plcmcl2-about.blogspot.com>). Another program,

Five Weeks to a Social Library, will be presented free of charge online from February 12 through March 17, 2007 (www.sociallibraries.com). Topics will include blogging, RSS, wikis, social networking software, Flickr, and SecondLife (<http://secondlife.com>), an online digital “world” created entirely by its residents. Library Success: A Best Practices Wiki (http://libsucces.org/index.php?title=Main_Page) provides examples of cutting-edge ideas and resources. The wiki collects lists of libraries that use different technologies such as instant messaging to provide reference assistance online. The teen services section contains a list of library blogs for teen patrons as well as a list of library MySpace profiles with teen services as their focus. **YALS**

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Youth and the Internet

*By June Abbas, Kay Bishop,
and George D'Elia*

How many youth have Internet access? Where and how often are they accessing the Web?

What types of activities do they engage in when they are online? These are a few of the questions asked in a study conducted by faculty members in the department of library and information studies at the State University of New York at Buffalo; the Institute of Museum and Library Services funded the research, which was completed in 2004.¹ This article presents a portion of information from the larger study, which explored the impact that youth's use of the Internet had on their use of the public library, as well as their reasons for use or nonuse of the public library.

Research Methods

The University at Buffalo (UB) researchers designed the survey, which contained questions related to Internet use, as well as some demographic inquiries. Before administering the survey, researchers sent a copy of the questionnaire to administrators and teachers at the participating schools and asked for possible changes to the questions. They wanted to make certain the questions used age-appropriate language that would easily be understood by middle and high school students. Additionally, one of the researchers pretested the questionnaire at one middle school and one high school by having a small sample of students complete the questionnaire and asking them to suggest any changes or additions.

Researchers obtained completed questionnaires from 4,237 young people

(grades 5 through 12) in public and private schools in the Buffalo–Niagara area of western New York during the spring of 2003. Urban, suburban, and rural schools were represented in the sample. Teachers administered the questionnaire during the students' regular classroom periods. The data were weighted to make them representative of current national ethnic and racial characteristics of students in public and private schools.

Results and Discussion

Sources of Access

All of the youth in this study (100 percent) reported having access to the Internet from at least one location, but 1.8 percent of the students responded that they did not use the Internet and 0.8 percent reported that they did not have parental permission to use the Internet.

Most of the youth (90.3 percent) reported having Internet access from more than one location, which included:

- 85.8 percent from home;
- 78.2 percent from the house of a friend or relative;
- 66.2 percent from a school classroom or computer lab;
- 58.5 percent from a school library media center;
- 24.7 percent from a public library; and
- 15.7 percent from some other place.

Internet access in homes with similarly aged young people was somewhat higher in the current study than in other recent studies: Seventy-nine percent of Silicon Valley youth between the ages of 10 and 17, and 83 percent between the ages of 15 and 17, had Internet access at home.²

Using the demographics gathered in the current study, some interesting and statistically significant (using a chi-square analysis) items resulted. For instance, male students were more apt to have Internet access at home (90.6 percent) than females (88.4 percent). Grade point averages, as reported by students from their last

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marking periods, also revealed statistically significant differences in Internet access at home:

- A student: 93.5 percent
- B student: 88.6 percent
- C student: 86.1 percent
- Less than C: 82.2 percent

There was more Internet access in homes in which parents had more formal education:

- Graduate degree: 97.5 percent
- College graduate: 92.4 percent
- Some college: 90 percent
- High school graduate or less: 77.7 percent

High school students were more likely to have Internet access at home (90.8 percent) than middle school students (88.3 percent). Students in private schools had more Internet access at home (96.6 percent) than those in public schools (88.5 percent). Ninety-five percent of the students in suburban schools had Internet access at home, while 85.3 percent of students in rural schools and 64.2 percent of students in urban schools had Internet access at home.

The administrators of the schools involved in the study advised that the questionnaire not ask about economic status; thus, parents' incomes were not specifically solicited in the survey. However, some of the demographics gathered in this study (formal education of parents, type and settings of schools) are often related to income levels. Assuming this to be the case, one might conclude that economic status of a home does affect whether students have Internet access at home. This is substantiated by other research, that "the income of a child's family is a significant factor on whether or not he or she has access to the Internet at home."³

These demographic statistics demonstrate that a digital divide based on economic status still exists for middle and high school students. Thus, educators cannot assume that all students have an equal opportunity to complete assignments outside of school if Internet usage is required. Also, there continues to be a need for public libraries to provide Internet access to students and for schools to provide after-school hours for school library media centers or computer labs.

Frequency of Access

Researchers asked how frequently students went online from different locations. Results from the students noting frequent access (either "every day" or "a couple times a week") are as follows:

- 73.3 percent from home;
- 36.8 percent from the house of a friend or relative;
- 22.9 percent from a school classroom or computer lab;
- 14.5 percent from a school library media center;
- 8.6 percent from some other place; and
- 5.4 percent from the public library.

From this data it is obvious that most use of the Internet is occurring in the homes of students. It is surprising to the authors that there is not more frequent use of the Internet in school settings even though the students reported a much higher percentage of accessibility in those locations. Perhaps educators are providing less time for students to work on assignments requiring use of the Internet at school while assuming most students will have Internet access at home. Such an assumption again reflects an inequity of Internet access at home according to

the demographics previously discussed. It was also interesting to the authors that the public library was the location least used for Internet access. This could suggest that youth choose not to use the public library for Internet access because: (1) of lack of privacy, (2) lack of available computers during times young adults are in the library, or (3) youth are not using the public library.

Personal Interests

Gender

Included on the questionnaire were fifteen personal interest areas that students might pursue when accessing the Internet. Table 1 shows the comparison of male and female responses to this section of the survey.

While the largest percentage of both genders indicated they go online for fun or to pass the time, it is interesting to note that more female students (88.3 percent) reported spending time surfing the Web for fun than boys (84.7 percent). Since much has been written about having more computer games for boys than girls, it is not surprising that more boys (80.6 percent) accessed the Internet for this activity than girls (77.7 percent). While there does exist a gender gap for computer game use, research now shows that this gap has been narrowing during the past few years, perhaps due to an emphasis on creating more computer games that appeal to girls.⁴

Fairly large differences between the genders are apparent in such responses as "go to Web sites about movies, TV shows, music groups, or sports stars"; "look for sports scores or sports information"; "get information about your hobbies"; and "look for health, dieting, or physical fitness information." More girls (80.2 percent) reported that they went to entertainment Web sites

TABLE 1. Personal Interests in Which Youth Engage on the Internet: A Comparison of Male and Female Students

	% Males	% Females
Go online for fun, to surf the Web, or to pass the time	84.7	88.3
Play games online or download games	80.6	77.7
Send instant messages	76.0	79.6
Download music files	73.0	71.7
Send or read e-mail at a location other than school	72.2	79.0
Go to Web sites about movies, TV shows, music groups, or sports stars	70.6	80.2
Look for sports scores or sports information	68.6	35.4
Get information about your hobbies	65.0	52.9
Get news or information about current events	56.9	56.7
Shop for things online, such as books, clothing, or music	52.5	47.7
Go to chat rooms	40.2	43.0
Create or work on your own Web page	27.1	31.0
Go to Web sites and bulletin boards where you can write opinions	26.2	30.3
Look for health, dieting, or physical fitness information	22.8	34.8
Send or read e-mail at school	22.2	20.2

(movies, TV shows, music groups, sports stars) than male students (70.6 percent). The researchers have no logical explanation for this divergence.

Lenhart, Rainie, and Lewis, authors of the report “Teenage Life Online,” used the Pew Internet and American Life Project Teens and Parents Survey to report differences and similarities of teens online.⁵ They too found that girls go to entertainment sites more often; however, the difference between genders was not as significant (females, 85 percent; males, 81 percent).⁶ In the current study, the difference between the genders in accessing the Internet for sports scores or information (females, 35.4 percent; males, 68.6 percent) is most likely reflective of the general level of interest in sports by each gender. To explain the difference in the item concerned with hobbies (females, 52.9 percent; males, 65 percent), it could be assumed that boys are more involved in hobbies—

such as stamp or coin collecting or model building—than females during their pre-teen and teen years, although the researchers have no data to definitively support this idea. The variation in interest in obtaining health and dieting information (females, 34.8 percent; males, 22.8 percent) might be explained by the dramatic changes in female bodies during the preteen and teen years, as well as greater pressure from society for females to be slim.⁷ The findings in the current study generally demonstrated a larger percentage of teens in each of these online activities than reported by Lenhart, Rainie, and Lewis, but the differences in the genders was fairly similar.

It is also interesting to note that the male students (52.5 percent) were more likely to shop online than females (47.7 percent), which is the antithesis of society’s view of females as more avid shoppers than males. The data in the survey revealed that female students are more active than males

in creating or working on their own Web pages, writing opinions on Web sites, and going to chat rooms, all of which demonstrate a definite female presence on the Web in this age group. Lenhart, Rainie, and Lewis reported that all three of these activities were engaged in fairly equally by both genders.⁸ Since their survey was conducted a few years earlier than the survey reported in this article, it appears that we are seeing more females accessing the Internet for these types of activities.

Grade Level

Analysis of the data from the survey also made it possible to compare the responses of high school students to those of middle school students. Table 2 shows these comparisons as they relate to the personal interest activities that students engage in on the Internet.

For all but two of these items the percentage of students engaging in these activities increases from middle school to high school. This is partially explained by the larger number of high school students having Internet access at home, as reported earlier in this article (high school, 90.8 percent; middle school, 88.3 percent). One exception to such an increase is the item “play games online or download games” (high school, 73.6 percent; middle school, 83.7 percent), where it is apparent that more middle school students are spending time engaging in this activity. The other exception is somewhat troublesome and should be noted by parents, for 40.4 percent of high school students and 43.1 percent of the middle school students reported spending time in chat rooms. Lenhart, Rainie, and Lewis found an even larger percentage of young people visiting chat rooms (high school, 60 percent; middle school, 49 percent); but, in their survey this activity was engaged in more by older teens (ages 15 to 17) than younger teens (ages 12 to 14).⁹ They also reported more

game playing among younger teens than older teens.¹⁰ Like the researchers of the current study, they found from their survey an increase (from younger teens to older teens) in all other online activities.

School-Related Activities

Gender

Ten items relating to use of the Internet for school-related activities were a part of the survey. Comparisons of the responses of the male and female students can be found in table 3.

It is particularly interesting to note that a larger percentage of females than males engaged in all but one of these activities ("work on creating a Web page for a school project"). In some of the instances ("use online reference books," "visit Web sites assigned by teachers," "e-mail about assignments," "download study aids," and "use homework helper sites"), there were at least nine percentage points of variation. Although the researchers cannot explain these differences, they may be indicative of females being generally more willing to ask for help since most of these items have to do with seeking some type of assistance. This finding also agrees with other research that indicates that female students are more likely to do their homework assignments than male students.¹¹

Grade Level

Table 4 presents a comparison of high school and middle school students in their use of Internet for school-related activities.

For many of these school-related activities, we again see an increase in use from middle school to high school. Exceptions include "visit Web sites assigned by teachers," where the percentage of both groups of students is identical (56.5 percent); "visit your school's Web site," which was reported

TABLE 2. Personal Interests In Which Youth Engage on the Internet: A Comparison of High School and Middle School Students

	% High School	% Middle School
Go online for fun, to surf the Web, or to pass the time	87.5	85.8
Send instant messages	85.5	71.6
Send or read e-mail at a location other than school	82.0	70.6
Go to Web sites about movies, TV shows, music groups, or sports stars	80.0	72.6
Download music files	77.4	68.5
Play games online or download games	73.6	83.7
Get information about your hobbies	66.7	51.4
Get news or information about current events	64.7	50.0
Shop for things online, such as books, clothing, or music	57.5	43.5
Look for sports scores or sports information	51.1	50.1
Go to chat rooms	40.4	43.1
Look for health, dieting, or physical fitness information	39.3	21.2
Send or read e-mail at school	34.4	10.6
Go to Web sites and bulletin boards where you can write opinions	31.9	25.7
Create or work on your own Web page	30.0	28.8

TABLE 3. School-related Activities in Which Youth Engage on the Internet: A Comparison of Males and Females

	% Males	% Females
Do research using an Internet search engine	81.2	86.6
Find pictures and clip art for school projects	75.5	83.4
Use online reference books (such as a dictionary or encyclopedia)	61.6	73.6
Visit Web sites assigned by teachers	51.0	60.7
Use school Web site databases (such as SIRS, InfoTrac, Electric Library)	35.5	38.3
Visit your school's Web site	34.0	38.0
E-mail or instant message your teachers or classmates about schoolwork	31.3	41.8
Download study aids off the Internet (such as CliffsNotes, Monarch Notes)	30.4	31.8
Use homework helper sites (such as Homework Hotline, Ask Dr. Math)	30.3	39.9
Work on creating a Web page for a school project	18.8	17.2

TABLE 4. School-related Activities in Which Youth Engage on the Internet: A Comparison of High School and Middle School Students

	% High School	% Middle School
Do research using an Internet search engine	89.1	79.9
Find pictures and clip art for school projects	83.4	76.7
Use online reference books (such as a dictionary or encyclopedia)	74.0	63.1
Visit Web sites assigned by teachers	56.5	56.5
Download study aids off the Internet (such as CliffsNotes, Monarch Notes)	44.0	20.5
E-mail or instant message your teachers or classmates about schoolwork	43.0	32.1
Use homework helper sites (such as Homework Hotline, Ask Dr. Math)	37.3	34.2
Visit your school's Web site	36.0	36.8
Use school Web site databases (such as SIRS, InfoTrac, Electric Library)	35.6	38.5
Work on creating a Web page for a school project	20.7	16.2

by 36 percent of high school students and 36.8 percent of middle school students; and “use school Web site databases,” reported by 35.6 percent of high school students and 38.5 percent of middle school students. In some middle schools, teachers limit the use of Internet sites and encourage students to use articles from selected databases for assignments since they think these younger students may have difficulty evaluating the validity of information on the general Web. This may be one explanation for more middle school students than high school students reporting the use of school Web site databases.

Applications and Future Research

Youth access the Internet for a variety of personal and school-related reasons. This study demonstrates differences based on

student grade point averages, parents’ education, school settings, gender, grade level, and activity type. While there are an increasing number of research studies focused on young adults’ online activities, there is still much that we need to learn. Some of the following topics would be ideal for action research by practicing young adult and school librarians:

- How efficient are young people at finding good quality information online?
- Are young people able to successfully evaluate the content of Internet Web sites? If so, what are *their* criteria for choosing what to use?
- Are teens aware of the copyright issues related to the use of Internet information?
- How is remote access to public and school databases affecting the schoolwork of young people?

- How has the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) requirement of installing filtering software affected the use of the Internet at public libraries and schools?
- Are young people (and parents) aware of the safety issues involved with accessing chat rooms and other online community sites (blogs, electronic discussion lists)? If so, are young people heeding safety precautions?

Additionally, school library media specialists can use the findings of this study to help encourage equity of access to the Internet by collaborating with teachers to make certain students have adequate time at school to work on assignments that require Internet access. Also, media specialists and teachers should inform parents of statistics dealing with students who participate in chat rooms and other online communities. While the gender gap seems to be narrowing for activities in which young people participate online, media specialists and teachers should continue to encourage computer use by females. Young adult librarians can also use these findings to develop or enhance existing services and programs designed to teach youth about Internet use. Young adult librarians and school library media specialists are in a unique position to positively influence youth’s use of the Internet and to contribute further to our understanding of young people’s online use. **YALS**

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Guidelines for Authors

Young Adult Library Services is the official publication of the Young Adult Library Services Association, a division of the American Library Association. *Young Adult Library Services* is a vehicle for continuing education of librarians working with young adults (ages twelve through eighteen) that showcases current research and practice

relating to teen services and spotlights significant activities and programs of the division.

For submission and author guidelines, please visit www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/yalsapubs/yals/authorguidelines/htm.

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the YALSA update

ASSOCIATION NEWS

YALSA Turns 50 in 2007

YALSA celebrates its fiftieth anniversary in 2007, and we want you to join in on the festivities! If you have a memory or photo of something YALSA-related, please share it on our anniversary wiki (<http://wikis.ala.org/yalsa50>). Here is a calendar of events for our yearlong celebration:

January

- Kick off YALSA's anniversary with refreshments at the Joint Youth Division Member Reception, Monday, January 22, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. during ALA's Midwinter Meeting in Seattle.

February

- Look for an article by Betty Carter and Pam Spencer Holley in *School Library Journal* outlining the major accomplishments of YALSA over the past fifty years.
- Fifty teen spaces in libraries will be featured on the YALSA Web site (www.ala.org/yalsa).

March

- March 4–10: Celebrate the first annual Teen Tech Week™ (TTW). Learn more at www.ala.org/teentechweek.

April

- April 19: Celebrate the first Support Teen Literature Day.

May

- May 1–2: Join YALSA during National Library Legislative Day. Download YALSA's Legislative Advocacy Guide from YALSA's Web site to help you prepare and keep an eye out on the same site for information on how to participate virtually.
- May 31–June 3: Book Expo America's Day of Dialog will include a session on YA literature.

June

The following events will be held during ALA's Annual Conference in Washington, D.C.:

- June 22: *Booklist's* Books for Youth Forum will feature the authors who were honored in 2000 for the first Printz Award. An anniversary party will follow.
- June 24: YA Author Breakfast. YALSA is inviting all of the past winners of our Printz and Edwards awards. Come mingle with them at an informal breakfast.
- June 25: ALA's Public Programs Office (PPO) and YALSA will feature YA authors (including Cecil Castellucci, John Green, and Patrick Jones) all day long at the Live @ your library® Reader's Stage in the Exhibit Hall.
- June 25: YALSA's President's Program will feature five decades of YA literature and an author from each decade.

July

- Visit YALSA's Web site for a list of the fifty best summer reads for teens.

August

- Back to school with YALSA. Visit the Web site for fifty back to school tips and resources.

September

- Visit YALSA's Web site for a list of fifty banned YA books.

October

- Oct. 14–20: Celebrate the 10th Annual Teen Read Week.™
- Fiftieth anniversary issue of *Young Adult Library Services* is published.

November

- Visit YALSA's Web site for a list of fifty Web sites for teens.

December

- *American Libraries* features YA literature with an article from Michael Cart.

Thanks to the Fiftieth Anniversary Task Force for coordinating the anniversary celebration.

2007 YALSA Election Candidates

YALSA's Nominating Committee has submitted the following slate for 2007. According to YALSA's bylaws, the Committee will obtain at least two candidates for Vice President/President-Elect, four candidates for Board Directors-at-Large, two candidates for each unexpired vacated position of Director-at-Large, at least six candidates for the Edwards Committee, and at least eight candidates for the Printz Committee. Elections will be held March 15 to April 24, 2007. To learn more or to specify your ballot preference (printed or online), go to www.ala.org/ala/ourassociation/governance/electioninfo/alaelectioninfo.htm.

Vice President/ President-Elect

Sarah Cornish Debraski
Kevin Scanlon

Board of Directors

Jana Fine
Michele Gorman
Mary Hastler
Dawn Rutherford

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Carrie Bryniak
Steve Crowley
Kristine Mahood
Diane Monnier
Sharon Rawlins
Stephanie Squicciarini

2009 Michael L. Printz Award Committee

Elizabeth Burns
Donna Cook
Stacy Creel-Chavez
Alison Hendon
Celia Holm
Ellen Loughran
Karyn Silverman
J. Marin Younker

Teen Read Week 2006

YALSA has successfully completed its ninth annual Teen Read Week™ (TRW), Get Active @ your library®. Thousands of school and public libraries and bookstores celebrated the event October 15–21, 2006, by hosting an array of events that focused on the resources libraries have to give teens an opportunity to “read for the fun of it” and help them lead active lives and find books on sports, fitness, volunteerism, activism, college preparation, and career direction.

Libraries nationwide encouraged teens to nurture both mind and body, holding up as examples such standout reading enthusiasts as Major League Soccer players and event co-chairs Kevin Hartman, goalkeeper for the Los Angeles Galaxy, and Chris Armas, midfielder for the Chicago Fire. Olympic skater and avid reader Kimmie Meissner served as this year's National Teen Chair.

This year's TRW again offered an opportunity for teens to speak up. Teens voted on their favorite book for Teens' Top Ten (TTT). More than five thousand votes were cast and *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* by J. K. Rowling took the number one spot. To view the entire TTT, please visit www.ala.org/teenstop. Teens also voted on the theme of TRW 2007, which will be held October 14–20. The winning theme is LOL @ your library®.

This was the first year that TRW was extended. The World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) and YALSA 2006–07 WrestleMania Reading Challenge took place between October and January for librarians who registered to participate during TRW. The contest challenges teens in grades nine through twelve to read one book a week between TRW and January 16, 2007.

For information and ideas about TRW and teen reading visit www.ala.org/teenread.

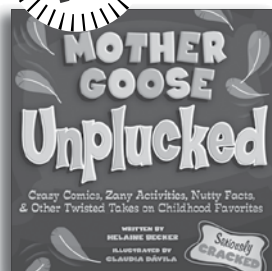
YALSA Expands Use of Online Resources

- YALSA's blog gets nearly 2,000 hits per day and can be accessed at <http://blogs.ala.org/yalsa.php>.
- Podcasts are available through the YALSA blog.
- YALSA has a TTTW wiki at <http://teentechweek.wikispaces.com>. Members can post their own ideas and information about teens and technology.
- YALSA is listed on Technorati at www.technorati.com/search/http://blogs.ala.org/yalsa.php. Technorati helps users find other blogs that cover topics relating to issues in YA librarianship.
- YALSA can be found on del.icio.us at <http://del.icio.us/yalsa>. Del.icio.us is a social bookmarking tool where users can compile, annotate, and share recommended Web resources with others.
- YALSA's Flickr account is at www.flickr.com/photos/yalsa. Share your Teen Read Week photos and other YALSA images.
- Contribute your YALSA memories to the fiftieth anniversary wiki at <http://wikis.ala.org/yalsa50>.
- Don't forget that YALSA has electronic discussion lists on several different topics. The newest one was established by the Teen Music Interest Group. Go to www.ala.org/yalsa and click on “Electronic Resources” from the left menu to learn more or to subscribe (it's free and open to both members and nonmembers).
- YALSA's MySpace page (www.myspace.com/yalsa) is currently in beta. **YALS**

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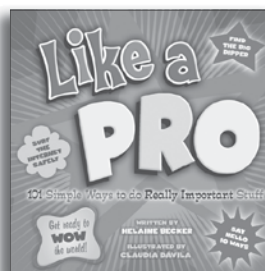


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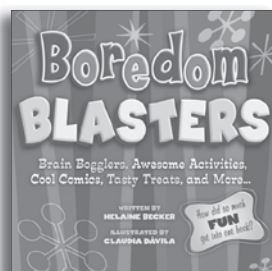
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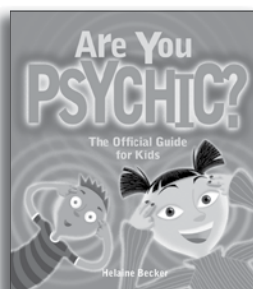
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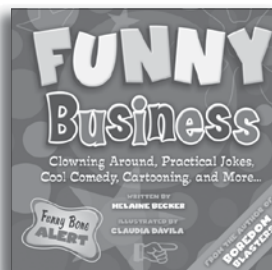
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