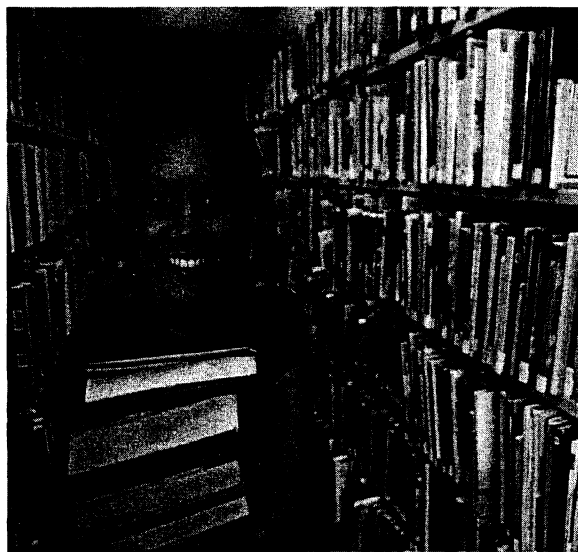


Shelving Opportunities for Canadian Young Adult Literature

How and where should Canadian YA literature be shelved? Is it most appropriate for Canadian YA to be integrated into a library's larger YA collection or should it be given special status in Canadian public libraries? Perhaps a more important question to ask would be where and how should librarians shelve YA literature generally? When considering these questions librarians must examine several related issues. The foremost of which is whether or not Canadian YA literature should be granted special status via concentrated book displays, identification stickers, and purchasing priorities? In this brief article I will argue that the focused marketing of particular sections of your YA collection, including Canadian YA, is crucial to the maintenance and growth of your YA patron numbers.

Patrick Jones argues in his article "Mall Things Considered" that libraries must cater to the aesthetic tastes of young adults if they hope to attract them to their institutions. Jones suggests that to attract and build young adult patron numbers libraries must mimic the model provided by malls and commercial book stores. In relation to shelving at the library this means the creation of creative and compelling book displays that grab the attention of young adults. This means moving beyond the conventional ordering of books to draw patrons to highlighted and potentially undiscovered and unique aspects of the collection.



Fortunately most Canadian public and school libraries already contain such an idiosyncratic element in their Canadian holdings. By highlighting the breadth of Canadian YA literature by utilizing unique book displays focusing on theme, genre or region your Canadian YA collection can be used as a gateway to introduce young adults to Canadian literature and to your wider collection. By creatively presenting this collection in a high browsing area of the library, librarians can create an interest that extends beyond this particular section of the collection. This does not mean that the differentiation of Canadian YA should extend beyond temporary special displays. Your

Canadian YA collection should remain a permanently integrated piece of your YA collection. The measure for the success of the collection is ultimately the quality of the pieces of the collection regardless of nation of origin.

A highly integrated collection that periodically focuses on and celebrates its component parts is the goal of successful shelving program and should result in increased circulation. By regularly cycling parts of your YA collection, through high traffic areas of your library and through the use of creative merchandising you can accomplish this at your public and school library.