

Creating a History of Children as Readers, 1890-1930

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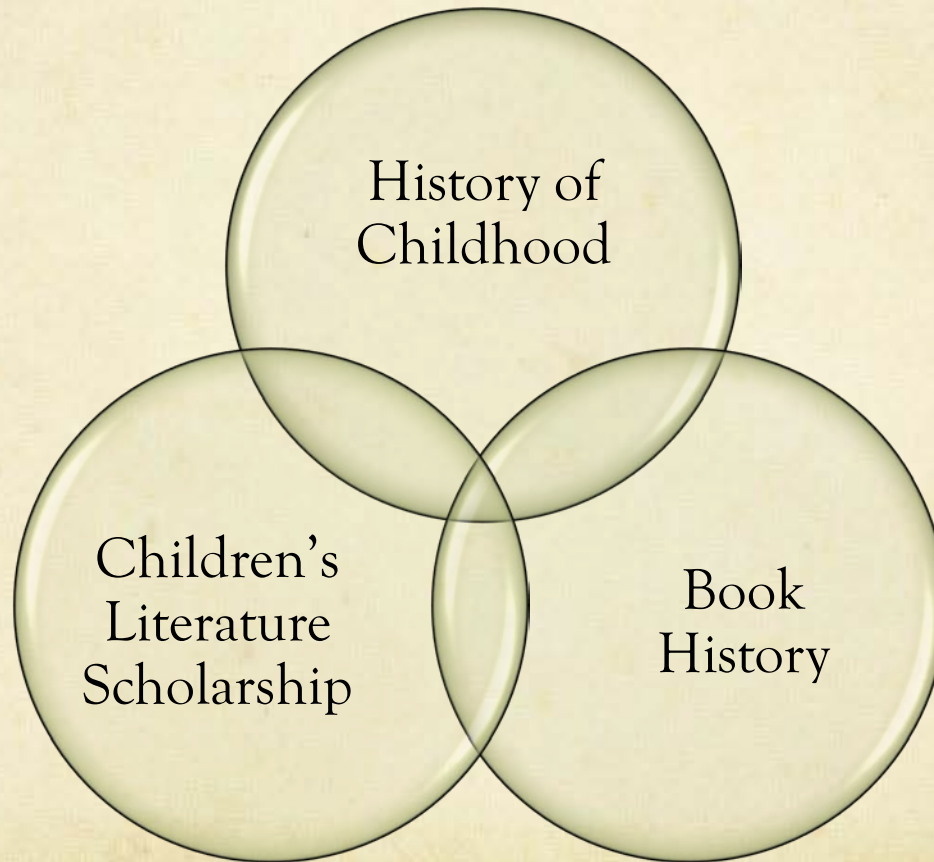
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Children in Harper's Weekly, 1909



Some of the seventh-grade pupils who wrote opinions of the books they had read

Situating children's reading



Adults who Collected Evidence of Children's Reading

- Children's librarians in public libraries (ALA)
- Teachers (NEA)
- Educational researchers
- Journalists

Children's reading imagined in Good Housekeeping, 1914



1924 Survey, San Antonio, TX

Top 5 Books

- Tom Sawyer
- Robinson Crusoe
- Tarzan books
- Pollyanna
- Tom Swift books

Top 5 Authors

- Mark Twain
- Daniel Defoe
- Edgar Rice Burroughs
- Eleanor H. Porter
- Louisa May Alcott

1924 Survey, San Antonio, TX

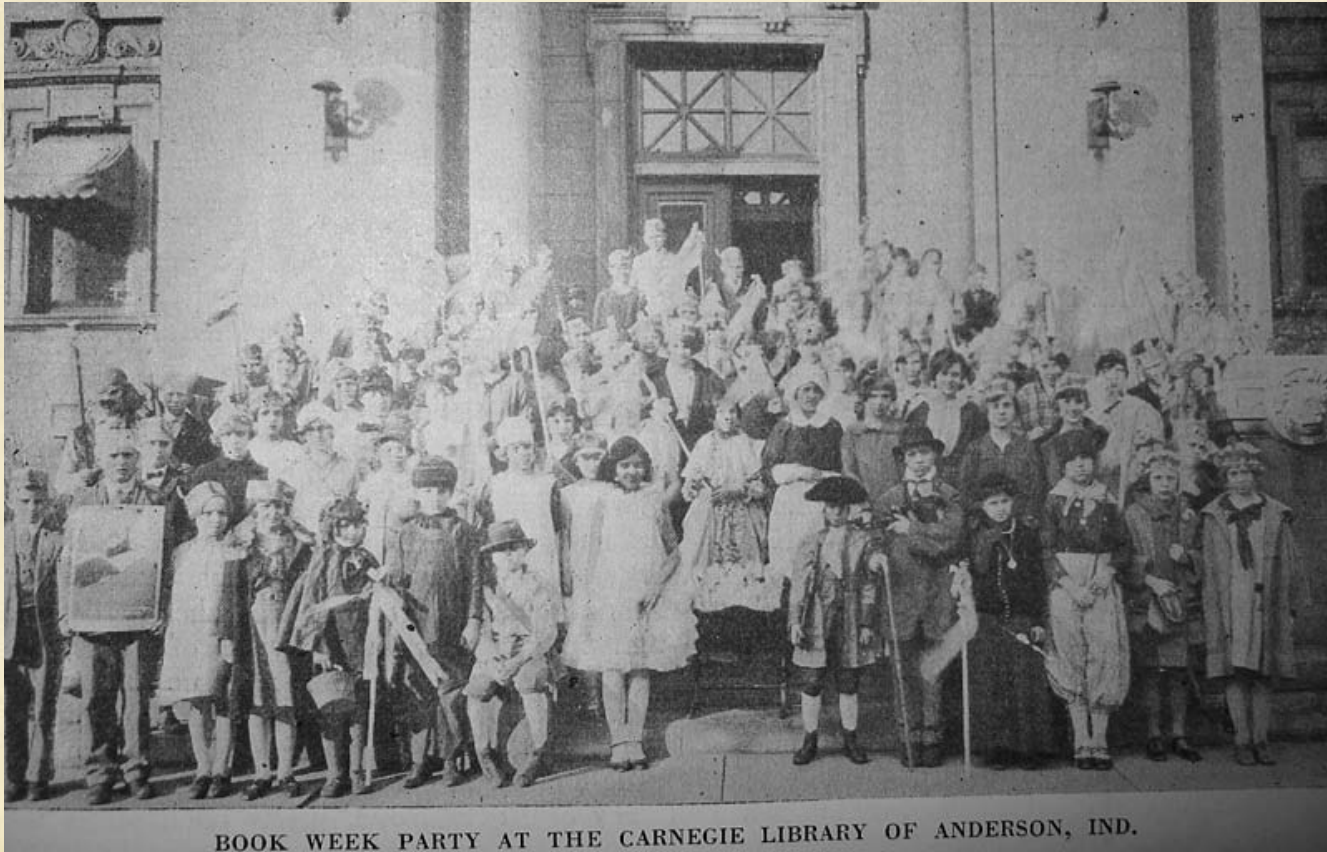
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Book Week Party, Library Journal, 1927



BOOK WEEK PARTY AT THE CARNEGIE LIBRARY OF ANDERSON, IND.

Conclusion: “Wild Taste”

- Understanding children’s reading requires understanding the contexts in which they read and the adults who recorded information about their reading
- Future research directions
- Questions?

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Evidence of children's reading preferences and practices

- Sources: published journal articles, 1890-1930, professional literature and popular press
- Surveys of children's reading
- Anecdotes about children's reading
- Librarians and teachers: professional roles and approaches to understanding children

Surveys, Anecdotes, and Readings

- Surveys, children's favorite books, authors, and other preferences
- Anecdotes: choosing books, understanding books, unconventional interpretations
- Other influences on reading