

## DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 435 387

IR 057 537

AUTHOR Christian, Mary R.  
TITLE Publishing Trends in Juvenile Collective Biographies  
Emanating from the Worthington Public Library Collection.  
PUB DATE 1998-12-00  
NOTE 35p.; Master's Research Paper, Kent State University.  
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses (040)  
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.  
DESCRIPTORS \*Biographies; \*Childrens Literature; Comparative Analysis;  
Demography; \*Individual Characteristics; \*Library  
Collections; Occupations; Public Libraries; Publishing  
Industry; Racial Differences; Sex Differences; Tables  
(Data); Trend Analysis  
IDENTIFIERS National Origin; Ohio (Worthington)

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to note patterns in the publishing of collective biographies at the juvenile level in order to uncover trends with regard to gender, race, occupation, and nationality of individuals in these volumes. Worthington Public Library (Ohio) has a well-established collection of collective biographies ranging in years from 1958-98. As this library is a well-funded, medium-sized library, it is an excellent microcosm for study. A database of the juvenile collective biographies has been completed. In this database, 130 sources published from 1977-97 were recorded and subjects listed. A total of 3,048 subject entries were entered concerning the 130 sources. A subject entry may be an individual or a subject area connected with an individual. Eighty of the sources fall into the time frame of this study; fourteen of these were published from 1977-87, and sixty-six were published from 1988-97. Charts have been created presenting information for both decades represented. The charts reveal information about the sources with regard to occupation, race, nationality, and the sex of individuals portrayed in the biographical sources. This study reveals the similarities and differences between the two decades with regard to these demographic classifications. A list of the collective biographies used for the study is appended. (Contains 13 references.) (Author/MES)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made  
from the original document.

PUBLISHING TRENDS IN JUVENILE COLLECTIVE BIOGRAPHIES  
EMANATING FROM THE WORTHINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY COLLECTION.

ED 435 387

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND  
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL  
HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D.P. Wallace

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES  
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Office of Educational Research and Improvement  
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION  
CENTER (ERIC)

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

A Master's Research Paper submitted to the  
Kent State University School of Library  
and Information Science  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree Master of Library Science

by

Mary R. Christian

December 1998

Master's Research Paper by

Mary R. Christian

B.S.E., Otterbein College, 1988

M.L.S., Kent State University, 1998

Approved by

Adviser \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to note patterns in publishing of collective biographies at the juvenile level. The views of the media are mirrored in the publishing trends about popular subject matter. A politically correct subject matter will receive a great deal of attention at given points in history whereas a subject that is not in vogue will disappear for a while.

Worthington Public Library in Worthington Ohio has a well established collection of collective biographies ranging in years from 1958-1998. This study covers the years 1977-1997. As this library is a well-funded, medium-sized library, it lends itself to being an excellent microcosm for study. A database of the juvenile collective biographies has been completed. In this database, one hundred and thirty sources were recorded and subjects listed. A total of three thousand and forty eight subject entries were entered concerning the one hundred and thirty sources. A subject may be an individual, or may be the subject area about which that the individual was most famous. Eighty of the sources fall into the time frame of this study. From 1977-1987, there are fourteen of these books. Sixty-six of the sources fall into the decade from 1988 to 1997.

Charts have been created presenting information for both decades represented in this study. The charts reveal information about the sources with regards to occupation, race, nationality, and the sex of individuals portrayed in the biographical sources. This study reveals the similarities and differences between the two decades with regards to these demographic classifications.

## Table of contents

|                                                    |    |
|----------------------------------------------------|----|
| Introduction .....                                 | 1  |
| Purpose of the Study .....                         | 2  |
| Limitations, delimitations, and significance ..... | 3  |
| Definitions .....                                  | 3  |
| Literature Review .....                            | 5  |
| Methodology .....                                  | 9  |
| Data Analysis .....                                | 11 |
| Comparisons .....                                  | 13 |
| Dependent Variables .....                          | 15 |
| Independent Variables .....                        | 15 |
| Summary .....                                      | 16 |
| Suggestions for Further Study .....                | 20 |
| Appendix .....                                     | 21 |
| Race and Sex comparison chart .....                | 21 |
| Nationality and Sex comparison chart .....         | 22 |
| Occupation and Sex comparison chart .....          | 23 |
| Occupation and Race comparison chart .....         | 24 |
| Coding Sheet Sample.....                           | 25 |
| Books used for study .....                         | 27 |
| Bibliography .....                                 | 29 |

## Chapter 1 Introduction

Collective biographies are an effective and immediate source of information for patrons writing concise communications about specific persons. The children's collection at Worthington Public Library has an extensive collection of collective biographies for use by their younger patrons. Worthington Public Library (WPL) is a medium-sized library in a northern suburb of Columbus Ohio. This library has above average funding available for material purchase and materials that are deemed important for the collection are often purchased on the recommendation of the library staff members. To discover which sources are worthy of purchase, the librarians read reviews from various reviewing journals and mark those which will most likely fit the needs of their various patrons. They also frequently discuss potential purchases with peers prior to purchasing. For these reasons, WPL is an ideal microcosm for a study about juvenile collective biographies.

Collective biographies are not frequently researched. In a study of the literature, no examples were found of studies of either juvenile or adult collective biographies. Biographies are not frequently studied at the juvenile level on the whole. Biographies are also frequently ignored at the adult level. The most eminent study involving juvenile biographies deliberately refrained from studying collective biographies due to time and resource constraints.<sup>1</sup> This study examined juvenile biographies for the year of 1978 and followed this article with an article update five years later.<sup>2</sup> Collective biographies at any reading level are not frequently mentioned or studied in the literature.

Reviews in journals are the primary source of information for library staff members regarding newly published books. A national survey in 1984 of public libraries revealed that "libraries still use review media as their first choice in materials

selection.”<sup>3</sup> Therefore, those volumes that are reviewed in publishing journals are most likely to be purchased by public libraries. This point was also made by Charles Busha when he stated :

“ Most public library book selection policies are grounded in the review method: reviews of newly-published books in magazines, professional journals, and other serials form the backbone of public library acquisition work.”<sup>4</sup>

Therefore, those publishing houses that are granted review space in journals are most likely to have items purchased by the public library population. These publishing houses dictate the subject matter published and thusly dictate what is available for the general population to read in a library.

#### Purpose of the Study

Various old and dusty reference volumes index collective biographies, but WPL had nothing to steer the patron to the wealth of information in the collection of juvenile collective biographies that were written in the last twenty years. Some of the volumes containing collective biographies were very archaic (one actually published in 1958, which is very old for a children’s collection) yet there was no move for its’ removal from the collection. When asked, the answer given from the staff was that nothing has been published about these people after that time in history. Naturally, a study of publishing trends would stem from a conversation of this nature. Therefore, this study attempts to uncover what trends are happening in collective biographies with regards to gender, race, occupation, and nationality of individuals in these volumes.

To study the collective biographies in a collection, one must have a complete listing of each of these volumes. As a result of a practicum, a database has been

created of the collective biographies in the children's section of the Old Worthington Library branch of Worthington Public Library. This database contains the titles, persons listed in each title, date of each publication, and at least one subject heading given to each person. This study will result from the items listed in this database that fall into the twenty year span given for study. The twenty year span was chosen for the currency of these years and that the library was well funded during these years. The years the study will cover fall from 1977 to 1997. (1998 was not included as the year is not complete.) Also, any sources ordered after the study began were excluded as a library staff member may be thinking that an area is lacking for a study and an item is therefore purchased to fill a gap.

#### Limitations, delimitations, and significance

As this is the study of solely one library (Worthington Public Library) , limits are not only a possibility but a given. Some items published in the time frame of the study were not purchased while others may have been lost in the day to day workings of the library. Yet another possibility of a limitation will be items removed as new works were published on the subject. Therefore, the study will be limited to those items that have lasted as a regular portion of the collection.

#### Definitions

A biography is, by definition, an account of a person's life that is written or produced by another individual or a group of individuals. A collective biography, therefore, is a collection of these biographies assembled as a whole. This study will research collective biographies that are written at a level appropriate for those who read juvenile material. The areas to be researched within these collective biographies include gender, nationality, occupation, and race. Gender can be defined as a sexual



category; males or females as a group. Nationality is the status of belonging to a particular nation by origin, birth or choice. The term occupation may be defined as the activity that serves as one's regular source of livelihood or primary interest. Finally, race is described as a group of people distinguished by genetically transmitted physical characteristics.

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

Very few studies are available on juvenile biographies. Searching Library Literature and ERIC via OCLC FirstSearch, no studies about collective biographies at the juvenile level were found and only a limited number of adult biography studies included collective biographies. No studies in either database covered collective biographies solely. Therefore, the literature review for this research will primarily be covered by adult biography study and not about adult collective biographies.

The collection at WPL is well funded and not lacking for space, so it is assumed that this collection can be considered an accurate microcosm of a medium sized library collective biography collection. Even the placement on the shelves of biographies indicate the importance they have in the juvenile collection as the biographies are on the shelves directly to the left as a patron approaches the librarian's desk. The importance of biographies to a library collection and therefore, the patrons is confirmed frequently in the literature. A quote from Oates states: "Biography is currently enjoying immense popularity in the United States. The number of biographical titles published each year has virtually doubled since the 1960s." <sup>5</sup>

Reasons given for the popularity of biographies are varied as one reads the literature, but the general consensus from literature indicates that the population on the whole has less time available to read and research an individual or an individual idea. With the limited amount of time available, the patron also wants to be entertained. Gilkes captured this perception when he stated:

"Biography is rescuing minds and lives from the social sciences... People want to know about the meaning of individual lives rather than all the depressing theories about the meaninglessness of life. They want to know the 'story' and the story implies meaning ." <sup>6</sup>

Those who work with the children's collection in a public library are the among the first to clarify that the juvenile collection is not strictly for the children who come to the library. As the first room that patrons can enter from the outside, many patrons find the children's room a convenient location to find materials. As noted by Walker, anyone can come in to use the collection. She states:

"Most librarians who work with childrens sources know that, regardless of the educational level of the customer, the best way to become familiar with any new area of study is to first approach it through the juvenile collection. There a reader can gain the basic understanding of the topic before moving on to more advanced sources in the adult collection. " <sup>7</sup>

The juvenile collection of a public library, therefore, should have a wide variety of information available for their patrons. Collective biographies should be a strong part of the collection because this section of the collection gives the patron a short yet concise foundation of information before extending the study of an individual to include of a large number of facts and figures. In a recent article about the Library of America, it was stated the the Library of America was attempting to refrain from a great number of biographies being published because the material becomes outdated. <sup>8</sup> While this is possible for subjects that are still alive, there is no indication about why new sources of information about historical figures is rarely published. The facts generally remain the same for individuals that are no longer living. In the library of this study, the majority of the older volumes are about persons that no longer grace the Earth. When these sources of information are too dilapidated for use any longer by the patrons of this library, where will patrons turn for this information?

A wide variety of subjects need to be available in the collective biography section of the children's area in library. Children need to know that people of other races, gender, nationalities, and occupation occur outside of their own neighborhood. If a child does not understand this at an early age, bigotry may occur later in life. We

have come a long way from the report in 1917 when “Sophy H. Powell reports that girls were admitted to the Youth’s Library in Brooklyn for one hour a week.”<sup>9</sup>

Patrons of all races and gender are allowed now in the public library for any and all of the hours the library is open. Therefore, it would follow that the collection should reflect the wide variety of individuals that grace the doors of the public library. Some indication is obvious that others believe in this theory and that publishing trends have changed to reflect this. An article from Larsen shows that studies indicate a conversion in at least the area of gender study. She states:

“A valuable outgrowth of the Women’s Studies movement has been the renewed interest in the achievements of women in all fields, including science... In response, the last few decades have seen an explosion in scholarship concerning women in science, just as there has been an effort to uncover the achievements of African American Scientists.”<sup>10</sup>

A concern that should be noted, however, is the lack of studies about those persons who are not in the mainstream. While there is indication that the population of sources of information in biographies has changed to include those who are not white males in trail blazing fields, have the newer biographies discovered the persons that are not front and center in fields such as sports, science, and entertainment? Neglecting certain categories of individuals is still a pertinent problem as not every individual who plays an important part of history falls into the most visible of subject headings. When an individual from any race or gender accomplishes great things, others need to know about what they have accomplished. Successes of others are the building blocks to gaining important knowledge. When those successful people are ignored by the publishing world, all individuals suffer.

“ According to the Council on Interracial Books for Children, the foremost pattern in publishing is the ‘racism of omission’ in which “ third worlders are invisible or next-to-invisible when in fact they are there ... Such unjustifiable omission tends to promote the idea that racial minorities are tolerable so long as they come in small quantities (or not at all)”<sup>11</sup>

Studying the publishing trends of juvenile reference sources will show the patterns of the thinking of those in the adult world. The adult world directly reflects how children view the world as adults are primary sources of information for children. Children exemplify directly how the adults view their world. The importance of having a wide variety of information available is necessary for children, as these publications are their foundation of the world where they will grow and learn and become productive adults. This is indicated in an article from Engle and Futas when they state:

“The degree to which societal, sexist stereotyping is either reinforced or negated by commonly used reference sources not only affects children but also serves to either reinforce or negate the same in the general adult population.”<sup>12</sup>

Publishers have the ability to change the views of a large number of individuals by beginning at the children's level. As Nilsen indicates in her article,<sup>13</sup> females question where they fit in. Publishers have an obligation to show not only females, but everyone where they fit in society. This goal can become reality by changing the publishing trends and finding writers about a wide variety of subjects.

## Chapter 3

### Methodology

This study stems from a project created for a practicum in the children's department at Worthington Public Library and from various discussions that emanated among the staff from the same project. Staff members indicated a curiosity about patterns arriving from the project. Staff already knew the patterns of historical figures in previous generations from American History and publishing as the last sources available for these persons come primarily from the 1970s. An exception to this rule is the collection of books about the Presidents of the United States and their First Ladies as this is a popular item for reports and is therefore renewed frequently - often as frequently as there is a new president. The staff indicated an interest to discover other patterns that occur. Creating a database with Microsoft Access granted the ability to classify each of various areas in columns. Therefore, the actual notes of information for the sources are readily accessible in each of the following areas : date of publication, title, subject, availability within the two branches, publisher, and author. Each column can be put into alphabetical or chronological order. There is a query option that will allow an individual to specify one subject and retrieve a listing of the juvenile collective biographical sources available on that subject matter.

The sources used for this study are the collective biographies that have been status available during the calendar year of 1998 at Worthington Public Library in the children's collection. These items may or may not have circulated during this time but they are all part of the current collection. These items were selected by their placement on the shelf (Dewey number 920) or from their indication that they are a member of a series of collective biographies that could be under any Dewey number. These were found by entering the series name into the Discovery Place computer (the catalog

available to the Worthington patrons and staff) and searching the shelf for said items.

The final results of this study indicate trends in publication of juvenile collective biographies by decades. The two decades in question will stem from 1977-1987 and 1987-1997. These decades have been chosen for their currency foremost, but also for the trends expected of women studies (1980s) and minority study (1990s). As the study will show any pattern of race, gender, occupation, and nationality, these two decades show specific trends. The termination of the study at the end of 1997 occurs so that any discussion of this subject matter with staff members about this project will not be reflected with new ordering. Existing collections are used and no new items acquired after this project began will be used for this study. As this is not a study of the persons actually ordering information but rather the materials available for the staff to choose from, only existing collection material would be valid for study.

The purpose of this study is to discover publishing trends about various aspects of juvenile collective biographies in two different decades. These two decades are the years from 1977 to 1987 and from 1988 to 1997. The objective of this paper is to discover the patterns in these decades in terms of race, gender, occupation, and nationality of the persons who are the subjects of the biographical essays in these sources.

## Chapter 4

### Data Analysis

The purpose of this study is to analyze the current items available for public libraries in the area of juvenile collective biographies. The data will be analyzed with regards to race, gender, occupation, and nationality. Comparisons may also be indicated with combinations of each of these if significant findings warrant further study. An example of a combination may be comparisons of Hispanic males in the field of medicine versus white males in the field of medicine as shown in frequency in the literature. Quantity, not quality of entries will be indicated by the results of this study.

A total of 130 print sources were used to create the Microsoft Access database. These sources include items that do not fit within the timeframe of this inquiry as well as the items used in this paper. Frequently, the print sources had persons from multiple nationalities, races, and occupations. Also, there were books that had one or two females listed and these items are listed as having both sexes represented, even though the majority of the source was about males in the roles indicated as the subject matter. In the same manner, sources from early dates in this study did the same for races, as the writer or publisher would include one or two black persons so that their books have more than one race indicated.

Fourteen sources were used for study from 1977 through 1987. Sixty-six sources were found in the collection from 1988-1997. Twenty of the sources from 1987-1997 are from a series called Biography Today. Each of these books from this series include people that are involved in current events. Each of the Biography Today books include both males and females, cover multiple nationalities, and have at



least two races covered. Due to this series, however, this study is askew in numbers as there are far more sources with multiple races and both genders due to this series. Because this is a study of quantity, and not quality, these items were left in the study.

In addition to the books that have multiple subjects as a part of their content, various subjects were covered individually also. Subjects for the juvenile collective biographies for the years 1977-1987 include animal care, aviation, explorers, famous kids, first ladies, history of the country (United States), politics, presidents (2 books), and three books about sports figures. Subjects for the years 1988-1997 include artists, astronomers ( 3 books), authors, aviation ( 7 books), business (2 books), civil rights (3 books), explorers ( 6 books), first ladies, history of the country (United States), inventors, medicine (3 books), poets, politics (2 books), presidents, sports (3 books), war, and world leaders.

The items in the juvenile collective biography collection at Worthington Public Library that are dated from 1977-1987 cover male figures exclusively in five cases, females exclusively in seven cases, and include both sexes three times. From 1988-1997, the number of sources that covered male figures exclusively are thirteen. Females were covered exclusively in sixteen cases. The volumes that cover both sexes number forty-five. As indicated before, twenty of these sources with both sexes belong to a series.

The items in the juvenile collective biography collection at Worthington Public Library that are dated from 1977-1987 that cover black individuals exclusively are nonexistent, while whites exclusively sources numbered eight. There were six items that covered both races. From 1988-1997, sources about blacks exclusively ran

eleven times, whites exclusively were found twelve times, Asians exclusively once, and multiple races occurred forty-nine times.

Nationalities discussed in these sources were primarily American (United States) or books that incorporated multiple nationalities into one source. From 1977-1987, ten books covered Americans from the United States, and four covered multiple nationalities. From 1988-1997, occasional books about other nationalities began emerging. Two books about Hispanic-Americans, one about Romans, one about various Asians, and one about Scottish-Americans were found in the collection. Thirty three of the collection were about Americans from the United States exclusively, and thirty three covered multiple nationalities.

### Comparisons

The most conspicuous change in publishing trends from these two decades are revealed in the statistics of races covered. When looking at the collection on the shelf as a whole, it is not immediately evident of the gap in coverage of the various races, as there is coverage from the current purchases. When capturing the statistics on paper from the decades, though, it is evident that there were few, if any, available sources about single races other than Caucasian between the years of 1977 and 1987 for the juvenile collection. Four sources were found with only white males covered, and two books revealed white female information exclusively. Many sources at this point in publishing history included other races, but no sources in the collection at this time had other races separately depicted. In comparison, a total of ten sources (one sixth of the sources) in the collection that were published between 1988 and 1997 are exclusively about black individuals. Three of these sources were about black males exclusively while seven included both sexes. In addition to the black entries that

occurred during this decade, four sources included other races, including one source about Asian persons, two books depicted Hispanic individuals, and one source was about historic Roman individuals. Charts regarding race and sex of individuals in both of these decades are on page 21 of this paper.

As far as nationalities of individuals depicted within these sources, a slight trend towards adding those who are not from the United States has emerged. Ten out of fourteen sources from 1977 to 1987 rendered Americans from the United States. In the decade from 1988 to 1997, thirty-one of the sixty-six sources revealed Americans exclusively. In both cases, those sources restricted to a single sex were almost equal with twelve American sources and thirteen sources from multiple nationalities. Charts comparing nationality and sex of individuals in these sources are on page 22 of this report.

Segregation of the sexes was prevalent in the sources from 1997 to 1987. Only four of the sources allowed both sexes to occupy the same book. In cases such as sources about the presidents or about the first ladies of the United States, the need is obvious for the deletion of the other sex as a primary subject. In comparison forty-six of the sixty-six sources covering the years 1988 to 1997 included at least a mention of the opposite sex. Popular in the latter decade were sources found about multiple occupations. These sources follow the pattern of having both sexes covered in most cases. They also include more than one race and even occasionally offer multiple nationalities. Charts revealing the differences of the sexes with regards to their occupations are on page 23 of this report.

A large number of sources from 1988 to 1997 are exclusively about aviation. With these seven sources, one of these sources represented multiple races. Five of these sources are exclusively about white people in aviation, and one is exclusively about black persons in aviation. Another area where one race predominates is in the area of civil rights. Four sources showed that only black persons have done something about civil rights to the children patrons of this library. Because there are no sources about black individuals from 1977 to 1987 in this collection, there is no information about which one can compare about occupation and race from this decade. This phenomenon can be read in the charting on page 24 of this report.

### Dependent Variables

Human judgment and error are the basis behind the dependent variables of this study. One example of human judgment is the omission of items that were reviewed but not purchased. Another example of human judgment that would cause question from these choices used for study would be items removed from the collection due to deterioration in the juvenile collective biography section. An example of human error would be the items not found and therefore considered lost due to misshelving and misplacement on the shelves.

### Independent Variables

Independent variables in this study are books not written or published within the timeframe of this study.

## Chapter 5

### Summary

Studying the publishing trends of the juvenile collective biographies as seen from the collection at Worthington Public Library (WPL) has been unpredictable. The primary things that were predicted did not necessarily happen. A large influx of historical information from the time period around the bicentennial of the United States was predicted. While there were a few new books at this time, the majority of the subjects and people involved in America's history are still being revealed to the reading public at the children's level in sources that are more than twenty years old. History is a severely lacking subject area in this area of the collection. Assuming the ability of this library to purchase what is necessary to fill the gaps in the collection in other areas, there is obviously a lack of information available for purchase about American History. Information about World History does not exist on the juvenile collective biography shelves. There is no trend in publishing about world history except for the trend of it not ever occurring. Current world figures (from this generation) appear occasionally, but historical figures only appear in sources if they have some connection with the United States.

Recently, a tendency to write about politics has become popular according to the sources available to the patrons of the juvenile collection at WPL. The ever popular President books are beside the books about First Ladies as they always have been. In addition to these volumes, though, are sources about others in politics. World leaders and women in governmental positions are showing up in multiple occupation sources in the collection and they even have some individual books about the subject.

A bit surprising was the lack of books in the collection that are exclusively about sports figures. In both decades of this study, there are three books about sports. As the popularity of sports figures rise with their incomes, the general consensus was that there would be more sports exclusively books available to patrons. Percentage-wise, this is the subject that has lost the most ground. In several of the multiple occupation sources, sports figures appeared, but individual sources about sports figures is lacking in availability. It is almost impossible to find information about minor players and players in sports that are not televised in these biographies.

An area that was not surprising was the growth in astronomy sources following the Challenger disaster. With three sources in the latter decade (versus one in the previous decade), and seven aviation sources, coverage was strong for a subject that captivated young minds for that period of time.

There is a lack of books about authors, illustrators, and artists in the juvenile collective biography section at Worthington Public Library. With a total of two such books available in the later decade of this study, perhaps writers should ponder delivering information to the younger generation about their profession.

Business was another area of surprise. With a total of two sources in the latter decade, the trend to follow adult interests to children was stunted. Hundreds and hundreds of books were published for adults in the 1980s about business for adults. It would seem that the trend would follow that the juvenile collection mirror adult collections in this area, but a lack of information (and therefore, role models) came from this period of time for juvenile readers.

A trend that was not surprising was the larger percentage of specific race sources available to the patrons in this collection as the years progressed. The sources about Hispanics, Asians, and Scottish-Americans all came from the last five years of the study. The source about Romans was a reprint of a book from the 1960s and was reprinted in 1992.

Medicine and inventors were popular topics in the early 1970s, but all but disappeared from the collection during this study. The science related fields (with the exception of astronomy) are lacking for information in newer volumes. It was expected that there would be some science and math related sources due to the popularity of computers, but it was not the case.

Existing collection was used for the sake of accuracy. Items that had been pulled off of the shelf were not used for this study as there was not a possibility that the patrons had access to the material and therefore they would not have access to the knowledge. This study was to show the publishing trends of juvenile collective biographies. If an item was set aside for any reason, the public did not have access to the information. If the public did not have access to the information, it was like the item never existed for the patron, perhaps having never being published.

As predicted, studies of women as a gender grew later in the study. As women began to share the spotlight with men, the amount of information about women grew. In this case, the juvenile collection replicates the adult sources. As there are more sources in the later decade that are both sexes, it would follow that the publishers and

writers have begun to view women and men as equals or at least as persons that should share equal space.

Limitations to the study were existent, but not strong. The Worthington Public Library has relatively few losses of books due to strong security and a community that respects the library. Therefore, the number of sources available would reflect minimal loss. Budget is not a problem at the Worthington Public Library and if a source was available that did not have coverage before, there is evidence that purchasing that item would not be a problem. The library staff reads reviews on a regular basis from several sources and would most likely not miss any new item available. The community has populations of several nationalities and every effort to purchase materials for these groups is made.

Collective biographies are an effective and immediate source of information for patrons who are writing concise communications about specific persons. Juvenile collective biographies have a limited scope subject-wise. Often, the sources available to children in this format promote bigotry, or at least a lack of understanding about persons who have lives that are different than their own. As the world grows smaller with technological advances, children need a firm foundation of understanding to work with the people they will encounter in the future. The trends of publishing in the cases of collective biographies are not keeping up with the need. While some cases occur of biographies about people who vary from middle class white Americans, these are the rarities. As this subject is not frequently studied or written about in the literature, it becomes a growing problem with no end in sight. Acclaimed authors should produce a wider variety of materials for children as an attempt to open the market for change.



## Suggestions for Further Study

As with any subject, there is room for additional study. The most likely way to continue this study is to include other libraries' holdings in the study. This would compare and contrast the listings, as there would most likely be different sources involved. Another way one could continue with this study would be a study of reviewing magazines. Some of the smaller publishing houses might not be represented well with this study, but one would see the subject trends of the major publishers. A longer term study is another option. The database created for the children's department contained a total of forty years of sources. In another library, older sources might still be on the shelf, and could be studied. One could also continue to study the trends in the future as an option. There are ways to change the study slightly and continue scrutiny of the publishing trends of juvenile collective biographies.

## Charts

The first two charts list race and sex and how they collaborate from the sources available from 1977-1987 and 1988-1997.

1977-1987 race/sex chart

| race          | male | female | both sexes |
|---------------|------|--------|------------|
| black         |      |        |            |
| white         | 4    | 2      | 1          |
| multiple race | 1    | 4      | 3          |

1988-1997 sex/race chart

| race          | male | female | both sexes |
|---------------|------|--------|------------|
| asian         |      |        | 1          |
| black         | 3    |        | 7          |
| hispanic      |      |        | 2          |
| multiple race | 1    | 11     | 35         |
| romans        | 1    |        |            |
| white         | 6    | 3      | 1          |

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

## Charts

The second set of charts correlate nationality and sex in the sources available from 1977-1987 and 1988-1997.

1977-1987 nationality/sex chart

| nationality            | male | female | both sexes |
|------------------------|------|--------|------------|
| American (US)          | 4    | 3      | 3          |
| Multiple Nationalities | 1    | 3      | 1          |

1988-1997 nationality/sex chart

| nationality            | male | female | both sexes |
|------------------------|------|--------|------------|
| American (US)          | 5    | 7      | 19         |
| Multiple Nationalities | 6    | 7      | 25         |

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

## Charts

The third set of charts demonstrate how the factors of occupation and sex coincide in the sources available from 1977-1987 and 1988-1997.

1977-1987 occupation/sex chart

| occupation           | male | female | both sexes |
|----------------------|------|--------|------------|
| Animal Care          |      | 1      |            |
| Aviation             |      |        | 1          |
| Explorers            |      |        | 1          |
| Famous Kids          |      |        | 1          |
| First Ladies         |      | 1      |            |
| History - USA        |      | 1      |            |
| Politics             | 1    |        |            |
| Presidents           | 2    |        |            |
| Scientists           |      | 1      |            |
| Sports               | 1    | 2      |            |
| Multiple Occupations | 1    |        | 1          |

1988-1997 occupation/sex chart

| occupation           | male | female | both sexes |
|----------------------|------|--------|------------|
| Artists              |      |        | 1          |
| Astronomers          |      |        | 3          |
| Authors              |      |        | 1          |
| Aviation             | 4    | 1      | 2          |
| Business             |      |        | 2          |
| Civil Rights         | 2    |        | 1          |
| Explorers            |      | 4      | 2          |
| First Ladies         |      | 1      |            |
| History - USA        |      |        | 1          |
| Inventors            |      |        | 1          |
| Medicine             | 1    | 1      | 1          |
| Multiple Occupations | 2    | 3      | 28         |
| Poets                |      |        | 1          |
| Politics             |      | 2      |            |
| Presidents           | 1    |        |            |
| Sports               |      | 1      | 2          |
| War                  |      | 1      |            |
| World Leaders        | 1    |        |            |

## Charts

The fourth set of charts show how occupation and race factor in the sources from 1977-1987 and from 1988-1997.

1977-1987 occupation/race chart

| occupation           | black | white | multiple race |
|----------------------|-------|-------|---------------|
| Animal Care          |       |       | 1             |
| Aviation             |       |       | 1             |
| Explorers            |       | 1     |               |
| Famous Kids          |       |       | 1             |
| First Ladies         |       | 1     |               |
| History - USA        |       | 1     |               |
| Politics             |       | 1     |               |
| Presidents           |       | 2     |               |
| Sports               |       | 1     | 2             |
| Multiple Occupations |       |       | 2             |

1988-1997 occupation/race chart

| occupation           | black | white | hispanic | romans | aslans | multiple race |
|----------------------|-------|-------|----------|--------|--------|---------------|
| Artists              |       |       |          |        |        | 1             |
| Astronomers          |       |       |          |        |        | 3             |
| Authors              |       |       |          |        |        | 1             |
| Aviation             | 1     | 5     |          |        |        | 1             |
| Business             |       |       |          |        |        | 2             |
| Civil Rights         | 4     |       |          |        |        |               |
| Explorers            |       | 1     |          |        |        | 3             |
| First Ladies         |       | 1     |          |        |        |               |
| History - USA        |       |       |          |        |        | 1             |
| Inventors            |       |       |          |        |        | 1             |
| Medicine             | 1     |       |          |        |        | 2             |
| Multiple Occupations | 1     | 3     | 2        | 1      | 1      | 21            |
| Poet                 |       |       |          |        |        | 1             |
| Politics             |       |       |          |        |        | 2             |
| President            |       | 1     |          |        |        |               |
| Sports               |       |       |          |        |        | 2             |
| War                  |       |       |          |        |        | 1             |
| World Leaders        |       |       |          |        |        | 1             |
| .                    |       |       |          |        |        |               |

### Coding Sheet Sample

| ID  | Author                      | Title                                      | Date | Publication Information    | Call number   | OWL | NWL |
|-----|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------|------|----------------------------|---------------|-----|-----|
| 53  | Gleasner, Diana C.          | Women In Sports : Track and Field          | 1977 | Harvey House               | J920 GLE      | YES | NO  |
| 52  | Facklam, Margery            | Wild Animals, Gentle Women                 | 1978 | Harcourt Brace Jovanovich  | J920 FAC      | YES | NO  |
| 109 | Ault, Phil                  | By the Seat of Their Pants                 | 1978 | Dodd, Mead & Co.           | J629.13AUL    | YES | NO  |
| 96  | Williams, Brad              | Legendary Women of the West                | 1978 | D. McKay Co.               | J920 WIL      | YES | NO  |
| 85  | Pizer, Vernon               | Shortchanged by History                    | 1979 | G.P. Putnam's Sons         | J920 PIZ      | YES | NO  |
| 54  | Gutman, Bill                | Modern Soccer Superstars                   | 1979 | Dodd, Mead and Co.         | J920 GUT      | YES | NO  |
| 83  | Noble, Iris                 | Contemporary Women Scientists of           | 1979 | Julian Messner             | J920 NOB      | YES | NO  |
| 87  | Oliver, Carl R.             | Plane Talk                                 | 1980 | Houghton Mifflin Co.       | J920 PLA      | YES | NO  |
| 64  | Jones, Betty M.             | Wonder Women of Sports                     | 1981 | Step-up Books Random House | J920 JON      | YES | NO  |
| 59  | Blumberg, Rhoda             | First Ladies                               | 1981 | Franklin Watts             | J920 BLU      | YES | NO  |
| 57  | Hoopes, Ray                 | The Changing Vice - Presidency             | 1981 | Thomas Y. Crowell          | J920 HOO      | YES | NO  |
| 55  | Freidel, Frank Burt         | Presidents of the United States of         | 1982 | White House Historical     | J923.1 FRE    | YES | NO  |
| 56  | Miers, Earl Schenck         | America and its Presidents                 | 1982 | Grosset and Dunlap         | J923.1 MIE    | YES | NO  |
| 1   | Brown, Walter & Anderson, N | Rescue! True Stories of the winners of the | 1983 | Walker and Co.             | J920 AND      | YES | NO  |
| 130 | Aaseng, Nathan              | Peace Seekers: The Nobel Peace Prize,      | 1987 | Lerner Publications        | J327.172 AAS  | YES | YES |
| 71  | Drimmer, Frederick          | Born Different                             | 1988 | Atheneum                   | J920 DRI      | YES | NO  |
| 100 | Hudson, Wade and Wesley,    | Afro-bets book of Black Heroes from A      | 1988 | Just us Books              | J920.009 HUD  | YES | YES |
| 124 | Boughton, Simon             | Great Lives 1st ed.                        | 1988 | Doubleday                  | J920.02 GRE   | YES | NO  |
| 62  | Turner, Glennette Tilley    | Take a Walk in their Shoes                 | 1989 | Cobblehill Books           | J920.009 TUR  | YES | YES |
| 104 | Berliner, Don               | Before the Wright Brothers                 | 1990 | Lerner Publications        | J629.1333 BER | YES | YES |
| 110 | Williams, Brian             | Twenty Names in Space Exploration          | 1990 | M.Cavendish                | J629.45 WIL   | YES | NO  |
| 105 | Aaseng, Nathan              | Midstream Changes: People who started      | 1990 | Lerner Publications        | J331.702 AAS  | YES | NO  |

Books used for study. (primary author listed)

- 11 African American Doctors by Robert C. Hayden (1992).
- Afro-bets Book of Black Heroes from A to Z by Wade Hudson (1988).
- America and its Presidents by Earl Miers (1982).
- American Astronomers by Carole Ann Camp (1996).
- American Frontier, the 1st edition by Patricia Calvert (1997).
- American Heroes of Exploration and Flight by Anne Schraff (1996).
- At the Control: Women in Aviation by Carole S. Briggs (1991).
- Aviation: Reaching for the Sky by Don Berliner (1997).
- Before the Wright Brothers by Don Berliner (1990).
- Biography Today quarterly series (January 1992- December 1997).
- Biography Today Author Series volume 1 (1995).
- Biography Today Environmental Leaders volume 1 (1997).
- Biography Today Sports Series volume 1 (1996).
- Black Explorers by Catherine Reef (1997).
- Black Stars in Orbit: NASA's African-American Astronauts by Khephra Burns (1995).
- Born Different by Frederick Drimmer (1988).
- By the Seat of Their Pants by Phil Ault (1978).
- Champions of Equality [Dynamic Women Leaders] by Laurie Lindop (1997).
- The Changing Vice-Presidency by Ray Hoopes (1981).
- Civil Rights Leaders by Richard Rennert (1993).
- Contemporary Women Scientists of America by Iris Noble (1979).
- Extraordinary People with Disabilities by Deborah Kent (1996).
- Famous Asian Americans by Janet Morey (1992).
- Famous Firsts of Scottish-Americans by June Sawyers (1997).
- Famous People of Hispanic Heritage volumes 5 and 6 by Barbara Marvis (1997).

First Ladies by Rhoda Blumberg (1981).

First Ladies: Women Who Called the White House Home by Beatrice Gormley (1997).

Flying Free: Americas' First Black Aviators by Philip S. Hart (1992).

Great African Americans in Business by Pat Rediger (1996).

Great Lives 1st edition by Simon Boughton (1988).

Great Lives: Medicine by Robert Curtis (1993).

Incredible People: Five Stories of Courage by Frederick Drimmer (1997).

Is There a Woman in the House--or Senate? by Byrna Fireside (1994).

Just like me: Stories and Self-Portraits of Artists by Harriet Rohmer (1997).

Leaders and Movements by Hayward Farrar (1995).

Legendary Women of the West by Brad Williams (1978).

Lives of Famous Romans by Olivia Coolidge (1992).

Lives of the Athletes by Kathleen Krull (1997).

Medical Technology by Robert Mulcahy (1997).

Midstream Changes: People who Started Over by Nathan Aaseng (1990).

Modern Soccer Stars by Bill Gutman (1979).

Mr. President A Book of U.S. Presidents by George Sullivan (1997).

My First Book of Biographies by Jean Marzollo (1994).

One More River to Cross by James Haskins (1992).

Peace Seekers by Nathan Aaseng (1987).

People Who Changed the World by Philip Wilkinson (1994).

Plane Talk by Carl Oliver (1980).

Political Leaders by Laurie Lindop (1996).

Presidents of the United States of America by Frank Freidel (1982).

Rescue! True Stories by Walter Brown (1983).

Scholastic Encyclopedia of Women in the United States by Sheila Keenan (1996).



Scientists and Doctors [Dynamic Women Leaders] by Laurie Lindop (1997).  
Shortchanged by History by Vernon Pizer (1979).  
Speaking of Poets: Interviews with Poets by Jeffrey Scott Copeland (1993).  
Statesmen Who Changed the World by Philip Wilkinson (1994).  
Superstars of Women's Figure Skating by Pohla Smith (1997).  
Take a Walk in Their Shoes by Glennette Tilley Turner (1989).  
They Had a Dream by Jules Archer (1993)  
Twenty Names in Space Exploration by Brian Williams (1990).  
U.S. Space Camp Book of Astronauts by Anne Baird (1996).  
Wild Animals, Gentle Women by Margery Facklam (1978).  
Women Explorers in Africa by Margo McLoone (1997).  
Women Explorers in Asia by Margo McLoone (1997).  
Women Explorers in Polar Regions by Margo McLoone (1997).  
Women Explorers in South America by Margo McLoone (1997).  
Women in America's Wars by Silvia Anne Sheaffer (1996).  
Women in Sports: Track and Field by Diana Gleasner (1977).  
Women of Peace: Nobel Peace Prize Winners by Anne Schraff (1994).  
Wonder Women of Sports by Betty M. Jones (1981).

## Bibliography

1. Witucke, Virginia. (1981). Trends in juvenile biography. Top of the News, 37 (2). 58-67.
2. Witucke, Virginia. (1985). Trends in juvenile Biography: Five years later. Top of the News Fall 1985. 45-53.
3. Futas, Elizabeth, ed. (1984). Library Acquisition Policies and Procedures Oryx Press, Phoenix, 1984. xxix.
4. Busha, Charles. (1968). Book selection in public libraries: An evaluation of four commonly-used review media. Southeastern Librarian, 18 (2), Summer 1968. 93.
5. Oates, Stephen. (1986). Biography as High Adventure: Life-Writers Speak on Their Art .University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst, Mass. 1986. ix.
6. Gilkes, Edwin as quoted in John Y. Cole (1984) , Biography: A Symposium at the Library of Congress. LC Information Bulletin, 43:116 . 118.
7. Walker, Barbara. (1994). Frame of Reference. School Library Journal, October 1994. 56.
8. Frank, Jerome P. (1989). Library of America considers publication of biographies. Publishers Weekly, 235 . May 19 ,1989. 15.
9. Vandergrift, Kay E. (1996). Female Advocacy and Harmonious Voices: A History of Public Library Services and Publishing for Children in the United States. Library Trends , Spring 1996. 687.
10. Larsen, Kristine. (1997). Women in Science: Bringing Their Contributions to Light. Choice, July/August 1997. 1767.

11. Council on Interracial Books for Children. Guidelines for Selecting Bias-Free Textbooks and Storybooks. Council on Interracial Books for Children, New York. (1980). 10.

12. Engle, June L. and Futas, Elizabeth. Sexism in Adult Encyclopedias. (1983) RQ, 23 (Fall 1983). 29-39.

13. Nilsen, Aileen Pace. (1987) Three Decades of Sexism in School Science Materials. School Library Journal, 34. September 1987. 118.



**U.S. Department of Education**  
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)  
National Library of Education (NLE)  
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)



## **NOTICE**

### **REPRODUCTION BASIS**



This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket) form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.



This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").