

Letters *from* the Editor: Anne Emery's Correspondence (1947-1975) and the Rise and Fall of the Junior Novel Genre

In 1942, the publication of Maureen Daly's *Seventeenth Summer* ushered in the genre of the junior novel: post-war/Cold War adolescent girl romance novels aimed at the newly-minted teen girl consumer. Following Daly came the main junior novel writers of the next three decades: Betty Cavanna, Anne Emery, Rosamond du Jardin, and Mary Stolz (among others). This paper focuses on Anne Emery's correspondence with her editors (1947-1975) to trace the rise of the junior novel from 1940s "girls' books" to its demise against post-1967 young adult fiction.

While the editors' comments regarding the content of Emery's plots demonstrate the shifting nature of "good" and/or "realistic" fiction for teenage girls, it is the minutiae of the correspondence—references to external readers, book events, librarian meetings, and casual lunches—that demonstrate the degree to which the content of Emery's novels was tied to a formidable network of women who produced and distributed them.

As one of the longest-publishing junior novelists, Emery's texts and correspondence with editors illustrate the genre's (and the network's) rise and fall: they reveal her early days helping to develop the genre; her relationships with specific editors/publishing houses and decision to act as her own agent; her status as the biggest name in the field; and, finally, the retirements of her editors, her inability to get a new agent or to publish any further novels, and the cutbacks in her royalties as independent publishing companies were swallowed by corporations. The letters thus trace not only changing tastes as they relate to young adult literature, but specifically how those tastes were created/developed by the network, and how the demise of that network ushered in post-1967 canonical young adult literature.