



Amy Pattee

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

B.A., University of North Carolina, Greensboro

M.L.S., Rutgers University

Ph.D., University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Teaching/Research Areas

Young adult literature; children's literature; library programs and services for children; girls' series fiction; girls' magazines

SIMMONS

Graduate School of Library
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Amy Pattee: Kid Lit Subversive

“Children’s librarians get the short end of the stick,” says Amy Pattee. “People think you’re just sitting around cutting out paper hearts with kids. But the truth is that children have unique information needs, and helping them with a reference question is sometimes more difficult than helping adults. And you’re teaching them how to use the library. Planning programs that keep the attention of up to thirty kids is tough! But fun!”

In this day of information technology, Pattee says, “The ‘old-fashioned’ children’s library — the reading room, the books, the little crafts — is something we need more than ever, as an alternate form of literacy. The library experience for children is so fundamental. You have to understand how to read to be able to accurately read what’s on the Internet; for example, to be able to separate advertising content from informational content.”

Girls’ popular literature and girls’ popular culture are her professional passions. “I’m not a sentimental sort. I like children’s literature that has a subversive element. For example, I love the work of Syd Hoff, the author of *Danny and the Dinosaur*, *Sammy the Seal*, *Captain Cat*, and dozens of others. What’s subversive about Hoff’s stories is the escape from the adult world and the journey of self-discovery . . . the attempts of children to act on their own.”