

March 25, 1971

Dear Mrs. Hart:

You asked me to write a letter to the children of Troy who will be utilizing the new public library, telling them what a library can mean to them.

I believe it can offer them a life-line. The public library in Colorado Springs, and later in Denver, did this for me when I was in junior high and high school. The library simply removed me from any confines--geographical, racial, religious, ethnic, national, etc.--and opened up the world to me. I could move into the past or future; other lands; the experiences of people utterly different from me in background and personal history.

I loved the life-line. Each Saturday, a high point of my week was the visit to the public library. I returned some half-dozen books (I had fully read some, browsed in others), spent a couple of hours looking at various books and periodicals, then checked out a new batch of books (or, sometimes, a single book if it were a major new project that would surely demand most of my spare time for the next few days). Often my name was on waiting lists for certain books, and it was a great thrill to find that the wait had not been in vain and the book was finally mine.

Librarians were helpful to me, especially, of course, the one or two of them who saw in the plain, somewhat shy youth who confronted them with myriad questions a human being with a developing mind and spirit--and went far out of their way to care deeply.

I have loved reading ever since. It informs me, opens up my mind to new concepts and ideas, lets my spirit soar--it is one of the things that transforms existence into life. I am delighted that the new public library exists in Troy; may it live.

All my best to you,

Malcolm Boyd

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