

# John Maitland Marshall



 John Maitland Marshall, n.d. Credit *ALA Direct*, 2 May, 2012

b. Aug. 5, 1919, Winnipeg, MB; d. Oct. 26, 2005, Toronto, ON

## Education:

1938 BA (University of Saskatchewan)

1939 Secondary school teaching certificate, Department of Education, Saskatchewan

1945 MA (University of Saskatchewan)

1952 BLS (University of Toronto)

## Positions:

1947–1952 Education Director, People's Educational Co-op, Winnipeg and 6 months as Assistant Editor, *The Westerner*

1952–1953 Children's Librarian, Fraser Valley Regional Library

1953–1954 Victoria Public Library bookmobile librarian

1954–1958 Yorkton, SK, Librarian rural school teacher-librarian

1958–1960 Kitimat Public Library, BC, chief librarian

1961–1965 Branch Librarian, Bathurst Heights, North York Public Library

1966–1971 Assistant Professor, Faculty of Library and Information Science, University of Toronto

1971–1983 Associate Professor, Faculty of Library and Information Science, University of Toronto

## Publications:

Marshall, John (1958). "The road to a true professionalism." *Feliciter* 3 (10): 18–20.

Marshall, John (1965). "Education for librarianship—challenge and response." *Ontario Library Review* 49 (4): 186–188.

Marshall, John (1966). "The search for status." *Library Journal* 91 (20): 5556–5563.

Marshall, John (1967). "Chapter Status: Solution to Our Problem." In *Proceedings of the Canadian Library Association 22nd Annual Conference, Ottawa, June 17–23, 1967*, 6–16. Ottawa: Canadian

Library Association.

Marshall, John (1969). "Collective bargaining: The McRuer report and the future of IPLO." *IPLO Quarterly* 11 (2): 41-45.

Marshall, John (1969). "Canadian Developments in the Training of Library Technicians." In *Proceedings of the Canadian Library Association 24th Annual Conference, St. John's, Newfoundland, June 7-13, 1969*, 55-58. Ottawa: Canadian Library Association.

Marshall, John M. and June E. Munro (1972). "Summary of a Survey of Library Technician Training Programs in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba and Ontario 1968-1969," *Feliciter* 17, no. 1-2 (Feb. 1971): 3-12.

Marshall, John (1973). *Summary of a Survey of Library Technician Training Programs in Canada*. 5th rev. ed. Ottawa: Canadian Library Association.

Marshall John (1973). "The community librarian and advisory counsellor: educating public librarians for new specialties." *IPLO Quarterly* 14 (3): 109-110.

Marshall, John (1975). *Library services for native people: a brief to the Ontario Task Force on the Education of Native Peoples*. Toronto: Faculty of Library Science, University of Toronto.

Marshall, John M. ed. (1984). *Citizen participation in library decision-making: the Toronto experience*. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press.

## Honours:

1998 British Columbia Association presented Marshall with a plaque and renamed the association's intellectual freedom award in his honour.

## Associations/Committees:

Institute of Professional Librarians of Ontario, President  
Freedom to Read, Chairman  
Canadian Library Association; Committee on Training Library Technicians

## Comments:

Teaching areas included: adult education, public libraries, community development, services to the disadvantaged, Canadian resources in the social sciences. Coordinated Course 1510 Social environment and libraries.

"All John Maitland Marshall wanted to do was help people get books from Victoria's new bookmobile, but in 1954, he found himself at the centre of a major controversy and a victim of the Red Scare that reached into Canada - and its libraries. Marshall was fired two months, before the mobile service even hit the road. He lost his job because of his past.

He was well qualified for the job ... with a Master's in English from the University of Saskatchewan and a Bachelor of Library Science from the University of Toronto." But these qualifications did not matter to the Victoria Public Library Board. What mattered was that "a group public-spirited citizens" as the board put it, "had uncovered some dirt in his past."

Prior to going to Victoria," Marshall had been educational director of the People's Educational Co-op in Winnipeg in 1947 and spent six months as assistant editor of the *Westerner*, a leftist paper. He had attended the Canadian Peace Congress in Toronto in 1949, 1950 and 1951- and the Congress many believed was a Communist front. Because of that Marshall was fired. He learned of his dismissal when it was reported in the *Victoria Daily Times*. Marshall appealed the firing saying that he was not, and never had been a card-carrying member of the Labour Progressive Party, which had been linked to the communists. He said that he had ceased any public connection with political matters when he decided to become a professional librarian." He also took aim at the "public spirited citizens" who had accused him saying that "groups or individuals which carry on secret investigations into a man's beliefs and past associations and put pressure on his employers to fire a fully qualified employee, without giving him the opportunity to defend himself, are undermining our democratic freedoms." The board stood its ground and held a review to "find and remove subversive pro-communist books from the library" and the mayor "declared that he would support the burning of any subversive literature." Others said that subversive literature should be removed and staff who belonged to Communist organizations "will go out behind the books." There was an outcry and supporters lined up on both sides. W.A.C. Bennett, the premier of the province at the time, said the book burning "would be a bunch of foolishness" and threw his support behind Marshall. Further support came from *The Daily Colonist*, the *Victoria Daily Times* and the *Vancouver Sun*. The library staff association also defended Marshall. It so happened that as Marshall was fired only a few days were left in the library board's annual term. Ultimately, He was given a chance to argue his case before the new board the following week. Marshall made a valiant attempt but it failed and his firing was confirmed. The chief librarian resigned in protest and the BC Library Association held a meeting and wrote a letter of recommendation in support of Marshall and urged its members to refuse positions at the Victoria Public Library until a new board was in place. By May 1954, 6 of the 11 full-time professional librarians had resigned and the library had been unable to replace them. After his firing Marshall took his family to Yorkton, SK where he got a job with a rural school library service. After four years there, he spent two years as the first professional librarian in Kitimat, BC, moving to Toronto where he became head of a North York branch. This was followed by 17 years as a professor at the Faculty of Library and Information Science, University of Toronto. Forty-four years later, in 1998 the board of the Greater Victoria Public Library apologized to Marshall, flying him and his wife to Victoria so he could receive the apology in person and receive a plaque in his honour.

His obituary, written by his family, described him as "a passionate bibliophile and ardent supporter of social justice".

## Sources:

"[Red Scare ensnared city's first bookmobile librarian.](#)" *Times Colonist*, Sunday, April 29, 2012.

"Planned library 'purge' meets storm of protest." *Victoria Daily Times*, Wed. Jan 21, 1954. (an insert in the *Times Colonist* Article).

"Library board apologizes to man fired for beliefs". *The Globe and Mail*, Nov. 21, 1998.

"[The John Marshall Case](#)," *British Columbia Library Association Bulletin* 17, no. 4 (April 1954): 7-11.

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