What and How We Teach Now: A Survey of Youth Services Faculty

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Youth services faculty in LIS programs have seen significant changes in the last ten years in the content they teach and the variety of methods by which they deliver instruction. However, youth services education continues to be understudied and this study takes a first look at several gaps in the LIS education literature: youth services faculty voices speaking directly about what and how they teach; information about the interaction between youth services coursework, professional competencies, and standards; and the impact of technology and popular culture on LIS youth services coursework. Results indicate that technology plays a major role in both course content and delivery.

Keywords: children's services, technology, curricula, survey, competencies, young adults' services

Introduction

Youth services faculty in LIS programs have seen significant changes in the last ten years in the content they teach and the variety of methods by which they deliver instruction. However, youth services education continues to be understudied, as evidenced by the lack of articles on the subject post-2000. This study is a first look at several gaps in the LIS education literature: faculty voices speaking directly about what and how they teach; whether there are connections between youth services coursework and professional standards; and the impact of technology and popular culture on LIS youth services coursework.

Terminology is an ongoing issue for anyone teaching or researching youth. Designations such as "child" and "childhood" have changed over time, as has the accepted term for a person between ages 10 and 20. The age ranges currently used by the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), divisions of the American Library Association (ALA), have been used for this study. "Child" or "children," according to ALSC, refers to anyone from birth through age 14. "Teen" or "YA" or "young adult," by the YALSA definition refers to anyone from age 12 through age 18, a population segment that has also been labeled "adolescents/adolescence" and "young people" in library literature. These ages are functionally elastic in practice, with some YA librarians having responsibility for clients through age 21, and some children's units assigning responsibility for 11, 12, and 13-year-olds to their YA departments. The broader term is "youth," which for this paper includes children and YA, the whole spectrum from birth through and including age 18. By these definitions, "youth services" includes both children's services and young adult services.

There is also an ongoing evolution related to the image of the "teen." Brain research (Giedd, 2008) combined with youth development advocacy efforts (Yohalem and Pittman, 2003) and the dominance of the teen consumer (Moses, 2000) have changed programming and collections for teens. Although public libraries and institutions such as the Institute of

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Museum and Library Services still regularly conflate children and teens in their statistics, teens have become a distinct client group. According to the latest data, the 2007 Public Library Data Service Report (PLDS) on public libraries, teens average 11.28% of the constituents of a public library service area, nearly 50% have at least one full-time equivalent (FTE) librarian for young adult services, and close to 90% offer some type of teen programming (American Library Association, 2007).

Youth services curricula typically include elements similar to adult services: collection development, reference services, programming, outreach/collaboration, advocacy, management, and technology. However because of societal concerns about the vulnerability and innocence of youth these subjects may be treated differently. Youth services librarians must be prepared for materials challenges, since the majority of book bans and challenges target children's and YA literature; be grounded in developmental issues and brain research in order to explain—and sometimes defend—client behaviors; and know specific physical and emotional requirements for programming to create successful educational and recreational programs for a range of users from prewalkers to newly licensed drivers. Within youth services curricula, there is also a difference between literature-related and services courses. Literature courses are usually concerned with media (print and non-print) familiarity and collection building, while service courses address information seeking behaviors (reference work), programming and outreach.

Among the shifts and moments that have affected the practice of children's and young adult librarianship since 2000 are the emergence of user-created content and social networking applications such as Facebook and Twitter. The growth of electronic media—including gaming, book apps, and other Internet-based materials—have affected both literature and services for this group. Not only have the products themselves been integrated into budgets and programs, but their use (or misuse) has added a protocol/etiquette dimension (cyber-bullying, cyber-safety) that libraries and librarians now routinely include in information literacy instruction.

ALA's youth divisions have acknowledged the shifts, moments, and definitions indicated above in their competencies, which have all been revised at least once since their creation in the 1980s. Each group has at different times characterized the changes in their standards and/or guidelines in terms of changes to the field and expectations in their work environments. For example, ALSC updated its competencies in 1999, and a 2001 article noted that the update "stemmed mainly from the impact of the electronic revolution on librarianship and the need to ensure that the competencies reflected the current skills and knowledge base needed" (ALSC, 2001). ALSC's competencies were updated again in 2009 when the organization's Education Committee determined that, among other things, "a technology component was lacking and needed to be included" (A. Strittmatter, ALSC Executive Director, email, July 30, 2012). YALSA updated its 2003 competency statement in 2010 to "ensure it reflect[ed] current trends in YA librarianship as well as YALSA's current mission, goals and philosophy of service" (YALSA, 2009). In 2007 AASL updated its guidelines because, according to Executive Director Julie Walker, there were changes in the K-12 environment as a result of No Child Left Behind Act accountability requirements, the impact of distance education, and the rising popularity of homeschooling (Whelan, 2007).

Has education for youth services librarianship been responsive to these environmental shifts? We lack research that connects the changes in the environmental landscape of youth and the practice of youth librarianship, but plenty of anecdotal evidence suggests collections, services, and programming routinely change because of changes to the current inter-

ests and practices of the client group. Examples include the growth of anime and manga collections, integration of technology into children's and young adult programming, and the use of social networking software as a way to reach out to new service groups.

In addition to changes on the client side, there have been substantive changes in LIS education as well. The growth of distance education demands new ways to teach traditional children's services classes. Because of the unique nature of some of the youth services skills requirements, moving content to online classes can be difficult and key elements may be lost in translation; for example learning storytelling, or conducting successful storytimes or lap-sit programs (for babies who are six months to a year old), or even learning how to hold a picture book when presenting it to an audience of preschoolers. Online classes call for innovations to overcome the limitations of time and distance.

Literature Review

The literature review was based on a search of more than thirty terms and phrases in Library Literature and Information—Full Text, Library & Information Science Abstracts (LISA), and ERIC, in order to establish published articles since 2000 that were written specifically about educating youth librarians. Search terms included general phrases such as "library education," "youth services education," "education for librarians—evaluation," as well as more specific search terms such as "young adult librarianship—education," "media specialist—education," and "children's services education." Articles that addressed international youth services education or training conducted outside of the United States and Canada were excluded from this study in order to be consistent with the sample, which was focused on ALA-accredited agencies in the United States and Canada.

Although the LIS literature on youth services education is limited in amount and scope, there are articles about curriculum, school librarianship, and youth librarians' job readiness. Separate editorials in *School Library Journal* in 2001 and 2008 call attention to the fact that major initiatives within the library profession itself give short shrift to youth services. In 2001 editor-in-chief Julie Cummins commented on a presentation made by a representative of the University of California—Berkeley at the American Library Association's second Congress on Professional Education (COPE), in which Library Human Resources Director Janice Dost explained the decision to drop the word "library" from the UC-Berkeley program's name and to transition from L-school to I-school. Said Cummins:

> As an advocate for youth services, I was curious about how the new [information] focus and change of name was reflected in the courses offered by this graduate school. Upon checking its Web site, I found 42 graduate-level courses listed, not a single one of them pertinent to services to youth. . . . Where will we be in 2020? Children will still exist; schools will still exist; but will librarians trained to provide library services to young people? (Cummins, 2001, p. 9)

Seven years later editor-in-chief Brian Kenney's April editorial was subtitled, "ALA's Stab at Defining our Core Knowledge Completely Ignores Youth." In the editorial he stated, ". . . let's face it, if you don't actually mention children's services, then the default in library education will always be adult services" (Kenney, 2008, p. 9).

Eight articles dealt with school librarian job training. Tilley and Callison (2001) noted that "general children's resource classes are still central to the prospective SLMS's [school library media specialists] education, but classes in multicultural resources are also emerging as important" (p. 225). Shannon (2004) addressed issues

related to distance education, internships, and recruitment at both ALA and non-ALA accredited schools.

Three articles indicated concerns about a lack of leadership and advocacy skills in the SLM curriculum (Shannon 2008; Tilley & Callison 2001; Vansickle 2000). However, three other articles reported on the results of a 2006 IMLS project known as Project LEAD: Leaders Educated to Make a Difference (Everhart & Dresang 2007; Smith 2010; Smith 2011), that seem to indicate that leadership continues to receive research and publication attention for preservice school librarians.

In 2008 Shannon surveyed graduating students and their internship supervisors as part of a pre-accreditation (NCATE) self-study and found that both groups felt the students needed more time on "daily duties that a librarian faces—the practical, hands-on things" (Shannon, 2008, p. 36). Shannon commented, "this focus on "the practical" may be a reflection of the longstanding tension between what students and practitioners expect from their professional education and the vision that library school faculty has for graduate level education in a university setting" (p. 36). It is worth noting that this tension is also reflected in the literature about general (non-youth) library education (Chow, Shaw, Gwynn, Martensen, & Howard 2011; Reeves & Hahn, 2010; Stoffle & Leeder, 2005). Mulvaney and O'Connor (2006) commented that "academics relentlessly push the profession toward theory and abstraction, practitioners pull with equal might toward day-to-day relevance" (p. 38).

The next largest number of articles (seven) related to concerns about what might be missing or understudied in the curriculum: children's and young adult literature (DeCandido, 2002; Veit & Osada, 2010), leadership (Winston & Fisher, 2003), "at-risk" populations (Katz, 2000), multicultural materials (Alexander, 2008) and "cultural competence," (Hill & Kumasi, 2011; Kumasi & Hill, 2011) defined by Hill and Kumasi as "one's ability to understand the needs of populations different from their own" (p. 123). Two articles discussed distance education; one spoke generally about the online experience (Jenkins, 2000), and the other focused on a specific multicultural materials class (Alexander, 2008). Pedagogy was also the focus of an article by Kay E. Vandergrift (2004), who warned, "we need to embrace new ideas about teaching as well as new directions in librarianship to encourage library school students to engage in a dialogue that will empower them in their work with young people" (p. 3).

There were articles that took a different approach to analyzing youth services preparation while still alluding to tensions between practitioners and the academy. Employing economic terms, the articles fell into supply-side (academy) and demand-side (employers and students) perspectives. The supply side, represented by faculty writing their own experiences, appeared in an editorial (Vandergrift, 2004) or focused on particular courses (Alexander, 2008; DeCandido, 2002; Katz, 2009) or pedagogy (DeCandido, 2002; Jenkins, 2000). Demand-side views from employers and students consisted of analyses of job ads and syllabi (Adkins, 2005; Adkins & Esser 2004; Veit & Osada 2010; Winston & Fisher, 2003).

Finally, AASL, ALSC, and YALSA all updated their competencies in the last ten years[1], and some publications discussed how or whether these professional guidelines were part of curriculum planning. Lester and Van Fleet (2008) saw competencies and their use in curricular planning as an "indication of the strength of the ties between education and practice,"

[1]See *ALA/AASL Standards for Initial Preparation of School Librarians* (2010), www.ala.org/aasl/sites/ala.org.aasl/files/content/aasleducation/schoollibrary/2010_standards_with_rubrics_and_statements_1-31-11.pdf; *Competencies for Librarians Serving Children in Public Libraries* (2009, ALSC), www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/alsc/edcareeers/alsccorecomps/index.cfm; *Competencies for Librarians Serving Youth: Young Adults Deserve the Best* (2010, YALSA), www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/yalsa/profdev/yadeservethebest_201.pdf

and their use by local practitioners as creating strong connections "between professional formulations and actual practice in the field" (p. 44). Tilley and Callison (2001) reported results from a survey of LIS school library programs that indicated that some programs incorporated "state or local certification standards," or national guidelines when planning their curricula (p. 221). Winston and Fisher (2003) used the competencies to support their argument for including leadership training in youth services education programs.

Problem Statement

Other than these few articles, youth services faculty voices are missing from conversations about how future children's and young adult librarians should be trained. An online survey was created and administered in fall 2010 in order to discover more about their particular issues and interests. The survey was designed to address the following questions:

- What is the relationship between youth services faculty priorities and practitioner priorities?
- How has technology affected the content and pedagogy of youth services education?
- What do youth services faculty see as the biggest challenges and opportunities in preparing next generation librarians?

Research Design

The online survey, which included both closed and open-ended questions, was emailed as a link to 259 youth services educators in October 2010 and a reminder was sent two weeks after the original email. Email addresses were gathered from the official institutional web sites of all ALA-accredited LIS schools in the United States and Canada, and included tenured, tenure-leading and adjunct faculty. If the faculty directory was unclear about teaching responsibilities, individual faculty and adjunct pages (where available) were examined to target all possible youth services instructors. The survey was successfully delivered to 246 individuals and completed by 67 (27%). Of the 67, 31 identified as tenure line; 28 as adjunct; and eight as retired or "other," pointing to the multiple titles possible within academic departments, including clinical faculty, teaching academic staff, and full-time non-tenured teaching.

The survey included general questions about job title, longevity, size of academic unit, and teaching responsibilities, as well as questions about course content, pedagogy, and technology and its impact on course delivery and content. There were also open-ended questions inviting respondents to name the most important things taught to aspiring youth services librarians, what course-related things bored or surprised faculty, and how they perceive their students to have changed over time. The full range of library services for youth includes children's and YA collection development as well as reference and programming, but for purposes of this survey and study, services were separated from the literature and survey questions were asked about each individually. Also, as noted in the introduction to this paper, whenever the general term "youth services" is used in this study, it includes ages 0–18 and excludes collection building or promotion.

Closed-ended questions were analyzed using SPSS software. Open-ended questions underwent content analysis by a single coder, who took a grounded theory approach to developing categories based on the competencies generated by ALA's youth divisions (AASL, ALSC, and YALSA), as well as current issues and concerns in the field of children's librarianship such as advocacy, child/YA development, and diversity. Other categories were suggested by the teaching process; e.g. pedagogy, delivery method, or class community/rapport.

Demographic Results

Sixty-seven people responded to the survey: 31 full-time tenured/tenure-leading faculty, 28 adjuncts, and seven who identified themselves as doctoral students, retired faculty, and administrative individuals. Sixty-five of them currently teach youth services classes, defined as any class where the focus or client group is under the age of 18. There were 51 people who shared their years of teaching experience, which ranged from less than a year to 30 years: 13 have taught for less than five years; 18 have taught for 5–10 years, 9 between 11–15 years, and six have been teaching for over 20 years. The survey could be completed anonymously, but 36 participants voluntarily provided contact information that indicates a minimum of 25 of the 55 ALA-accredited library schools contacted are represented in the survey results.

In an effort to gain more information about the depth and breadth of courses available to LIS students, respondents were asked specifically about what they taught in 2010. The results are tabulated in Figure 1 (Faculty may teach more than one of the courses indicated, so the total percentage may exceed 100%). Youth services specialists often teach outside the youth services area, and the survey results indicate that 47 respondents did so in 2010. In addition, eight respondents indicated they were the sole youth services tenure-stream faculty member in their program.

Competencies, Current Practices and Curriculum Development

Professional organizations' guidelines and competencies represent best practices and desired skills/knowledge in the field so they can be used as a basis for comparing practitioner and educator priorities. As previously mentioned, Lester and Van Fleet (2008) found that LIS schools did utilize standards and competencies as they construct curriculum and their results are somewhat confirmed by the responses from youth services faculty, although only 18 of 67 survey takers specifically named ALA's youth organizations or made reference to an initiative (Every Child Ready to Read, Teen Read Week), or set of standards or competencies. Table 1 provides the three divisions'

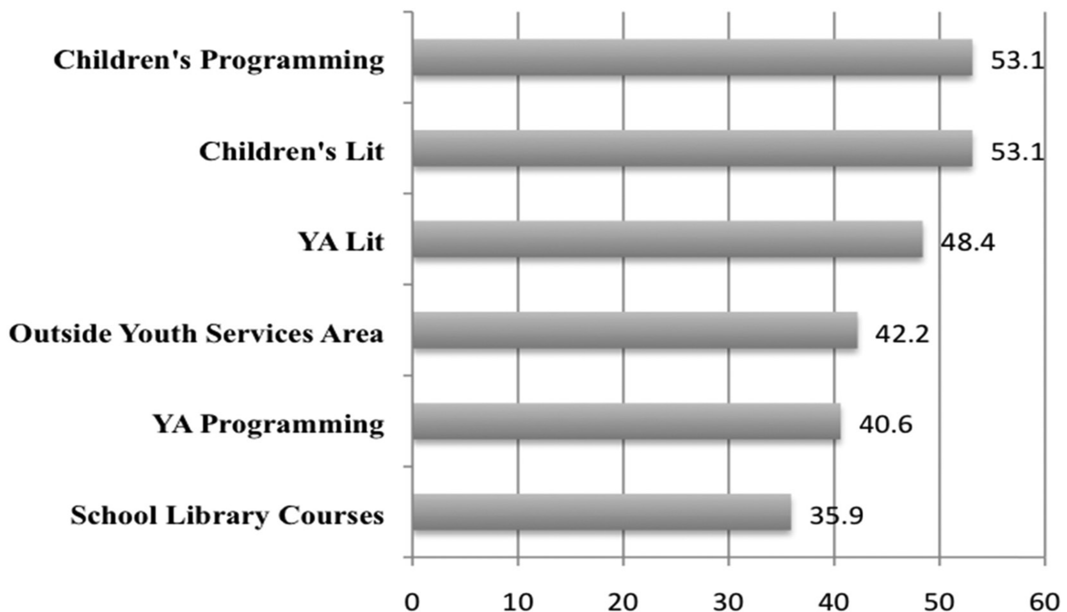

Figure 1. Survey Respondents' Teaching Responsibilities, Fall 2010.

Table 1. Standards/Competencies for Youth Librarians and Related Survey Responses[2].

AASL	ALSC	YALSA	Top 3 Things Taught
Teaching for Learning	Knowledge of Client Group	Knowledge of the Client Group	"understand the unique needs of youth" "to address the broad spectrum of YA needs—including ELIS, developmental, social, emotional, academic, etc." "critical thinking" "cultural and gender differences that have an impact on literacy and school readiness"
Literacy and Reading	Knowledge of Materials Programming Skills	Knowledge of Materials Services	"prepare them to evaluate literature regardless of form/format" "readers advisory and information services for youth" "program design cycle: assess need, engage service group in process, design, implement, evaluate" "how to teach information literacy" "censorship issues"
Information and Knowledge	User and Reference Services	Access to Information	"its all about bringing the customer together with the materials and resources to meet their needs and satisfy their interests in the most efficient and effective ways" "evaluation of web sites" "information literacy" "encourage responsible ethical use of technology"
Advocacy and Leadership	Advocacy, Public Relations, and Networking Skills Professionalism and Professional Development Communications Skills	Communication, Marketing & Outreach Leadership and Professionalism	"children and teens have the same rights of freedom of information that adults do" "learn to be proactive leaders in their schools and communities" "to advocate for equitable services and resources allocation for young people in libraries" "know and use multiple resources for keeping current in the field . . ."
Program Management and Administration	Administrative and Management Skills Technology	Administration	"critical teamwork" "best practices in service to children & teens: "adaptation to varying budget/administrative circumstances" "to seek partnerships with professionals and organizations who share similar goals in order to make the best use of scarce resources, reach beyond the young people to whom we have easy and/or regular access, and pool expertise"

[2]The survey design precludes any statements about how widespread this inclusion may be; see limitations for more about this.

competencies/standards statements and the fourth column consists of comments that appear to align with them, selected from more than just the 18 respondents who specifically indicated connections. The differences in language illustrate the differences in the various organizational missions, although they serve a common clientele (birth through age 18).

Curricular connections to current practice can also be seen in respondent comments about changing curriculum in response to "major new trends in children's or young adult literature," "trends in youth services," or, more comprehensively, "changes in trends, new discoveries in developmental psychology, additional awards for literature and/or programming, changes in information/news delivery from print to Web, better resources on the Web, new technologies . . . social networking."

What were the major changes to syllabi? Changes and updates to children's and young adult literature prompted 36 respondents to adjust their syllabi, followed by 26 instructors who altered their courses because of changes in the field such as new client group information or development of national best practices (standards/competencies), 21 who modified classes based on changes to pedagogy (usually because of a shift to a distance teaching format), and a like number who made changes because of technology (e.g. social content creation and networking applications). Twelve made changes based on student comments, six because of university or accrediting body requirements, and four indicated that they made changes based on their own or other research.

Respondents were asked to list the three most important things taught to aspiring librarians and 24 indicated that customer service, e.g. courtesy, respect, and remembering to "focus on what youth want and need and not what librarians think they should want and need," was the most important thing they could teach.

Next on their list, 20 indicated client knowledge, i.e. "contemporary, accurate, developmental information." There was a tie for the third position; programming and "nuts 'n bolts" (management) information were equally important to 19 respondents, a result which speaks to the very practi-

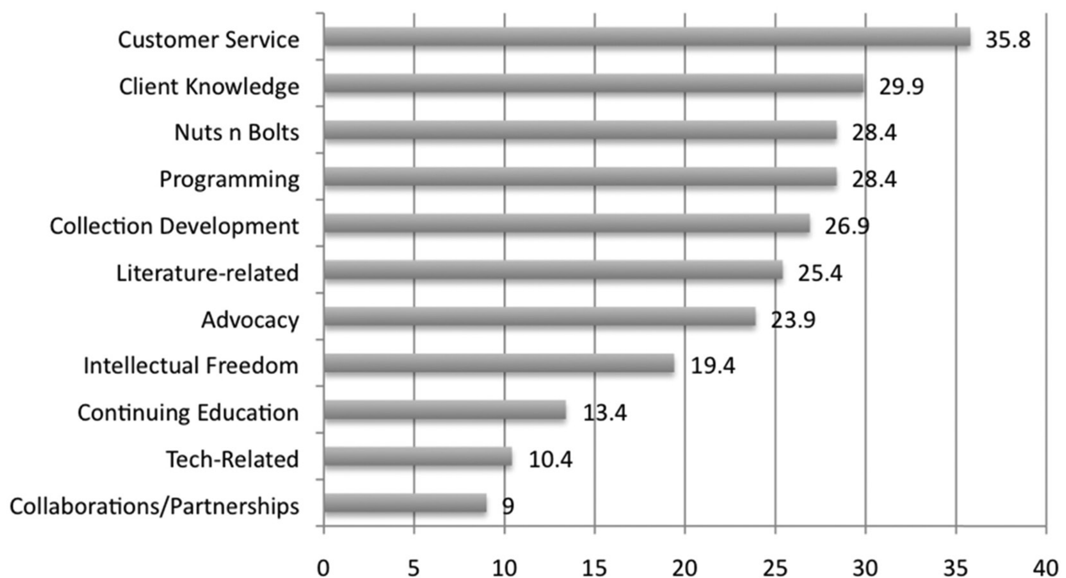

Figure 2. Top 3 Things Taught Aspiring Youth Services Librarians (n = 67).

cal skills that continue to be important to youth librarianship, such as the ability to program "for a span of ages from babies to teens," to conduct "program assessment and evaluation," and to address information literacy, intellectual freedom, and storytelling. Other respondents included goal-setting and planning as important skills, or learning to be "technology and literacy leaders."

In addition to traditional skills and knowledge, 18 responses to the "top 3" question were more along the lines of advice, i.e., "success is the presence of excellence, not the absence of mistakes," "work smarter, not harder! Don't reinvent the wheel, " or "love what you are doing or get another job." An additional 13 responses described desirable attributes for youth services librarians: flexibility, creativity, compassion, and the ability to "follow their internal voice about what to do and when to do it, so as to remain true to their vision of youth services."

Impact of Technology

Technology is now an integral part of the LIS education landscape and influences mode of delivery (Figure 3), educational priorities, and specific content (Figure 4). Survey respondents acknowledged the pervasive impact technology has had on these aspects of youth services education.

There were mixed feelings about teaching online. Some embraced the transition, indicating that technology allowed them to "incorporate a variety of tech tools into each course so they develop fluency over time, as well as the ability to keep learning/trying new things." One respondent noted that it made her job "so much easier; my classes so much richer. I can scan books at home, not lug dozens to class; project artist's work for examinations; connect students to vibrant websites." Others noted the challenges. "Harder to develop the same rapport with the students when I never see them f2f . . . miss that. MUCH harder to have ROBUST literature discussion via webstream and Blackboard [content management software] than f2f [capitalized emphasis in the original]. Also harder to teach literature via DE because it is much harder to expose students to the books, esp. the wonders of illustration when you can't control for variations in color projection, etc."

Technology has affected the teaching process, the *how*, in a number of ways: pedagogy, classroom rapport, instructional materials formats, and facilitating teaching and learning. Half of all respondents spoke to differences in their teaching styles, with one commentator noting that technology "significantly affects de-

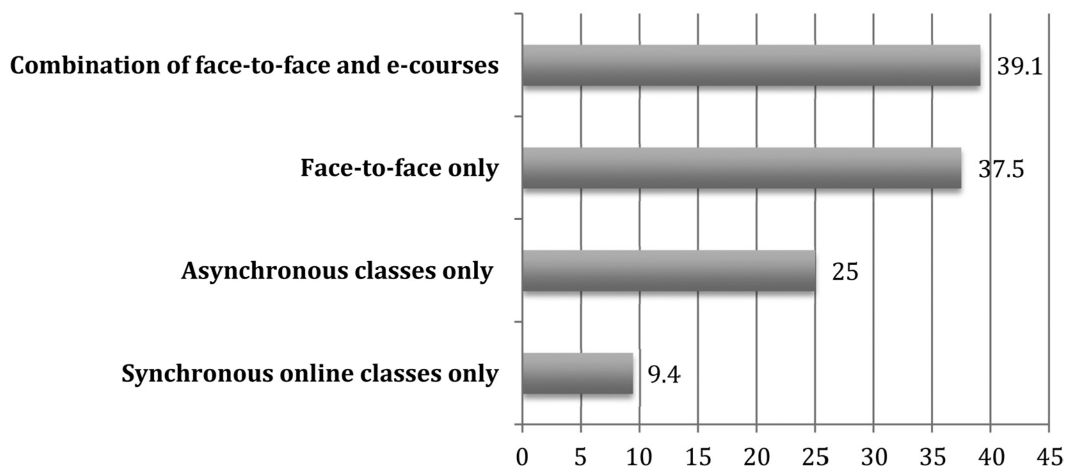

Figure 3. Respondents' Delivery Method for Youth Services Classes (n = 64).

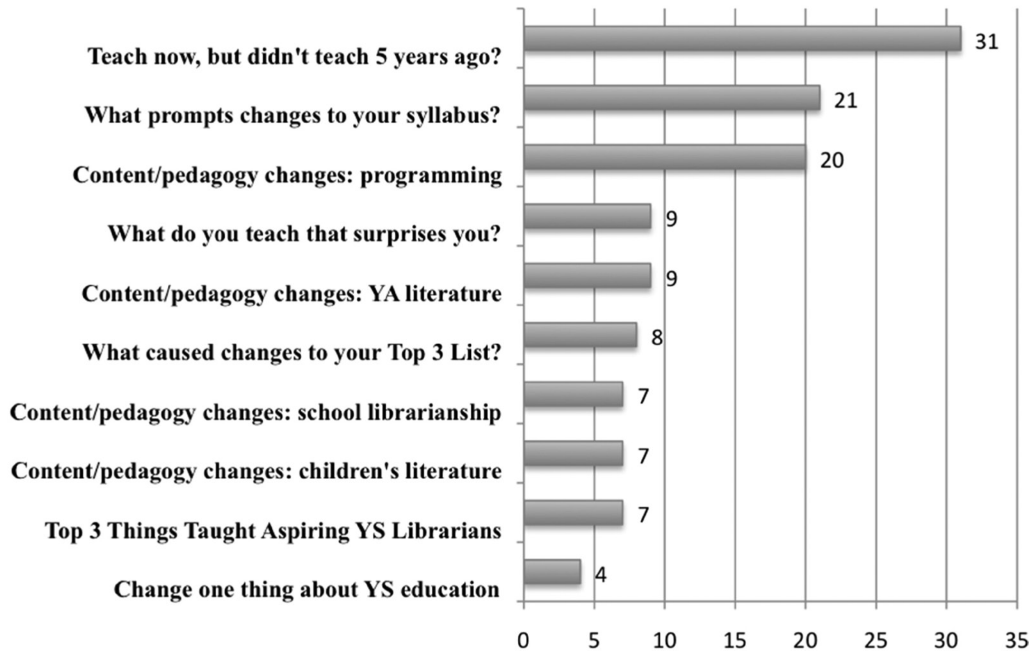

Figure 4. Technology as a Factor in What and How We Teach.

sign, delivery, and evaluation of instruction." Another respondent indicated that "the need for discussions in online courses has forced me to create discussion questions that lead the students to learning, rather than providing information directly . . . require every student to participate in discussion forums, which does not always happen in f2f classes." Respondents indicated that they make full use of technology to engage students and enliven classes, to address different learning styles, and to "better support student needs and to demonstrate how to support youth successfully in libraries."

Technology has also affected "what" is taught in youth services courses and now includes specific technology tools—such as social networking and media creation applications—as well as instruction and discussion on privacy and intellectual freedom issues in the digital world. Other new topics included the ethical use of technology, digital books and libraries, social networking applications, the digital divide, and even ADA-compliance issues. However, two respondents indicated that technology is "a tool, not knowledge," and that it is important to "present a wide array of possibilities and then teach my students to critically evaluate how effectively any given technology will serve the purposes of the library."

Rather than depend on textbooks or articles, teaching tools have expanded to include web sites, blogs, podcasts, and social networking applications. One respondent uses "more multimedia because all of us like it (students and instructor); [and] more digital materials in general." This same person also noted that there is "increasing pressure to produce slick slideshows and the tendency to apologize for any lecturing." Other applications named on the survey were glogs (graphics-heavy blog), Skype, Prezi, YouTube videos, webcams, and web sites such as Tumblr, Posterous, GoodReads, and the International Children's Digital Library (ICDL).

What Surprises Youth Services Faculty?

Some of the most interesting results came from the open-ended questions about what surprised or bored faculty about their teaching. These questions called for personal reflection based on individual experiences over time, and summative content analysis revealed four broad areas of response: student-related, subject matter, technology, and pedagogy.

Students surprised 14 respondents with their level of dedication to the field, "how much they want to stretch beyond the kind of librarianship they grew up with," and "their willingness to delve in even when things were new or strange to them, to pose interesting questions, to think creatively, and to push to produce work that shows a high-quality understanding and a desire to know more and to work effectively with young people." Another respondent commented on students' "wit, humor, dedication to libraries and young people." There were two negative responses: "pre-service teachers who do not read, or have any interest in materials for children . . ." or students "who think they just have to 'show up' to get a grade." A third respondent found it surprising that "standard children's books are still brand new to many students."

In terms of subject matter, 14 faculty found themselves surprised to be teaching—or teaching so much—about advocacy, marketing, evaluation, writing skills and "the importance of not cutting and pasting content," and the importance/impact of reading to children. A few respondents commented on teaching outside their primary field, "I never thought I'd teach cataloging but I do every semester." Another teaches "evaluation of library and information services (a non-youth services required course for all students in my program)." One respondent with a long view of the field commented, "everything about school librarianship has changed over the past 20 years."

Comments about technology came from nine respondents, and addressed teaching technology as well as teaching *with* technology. Faculty expressed excitement about technology content, saying, "I'm always coming across new ideas and on-line tools or learning about these on listservs and in the trade journals. That makes me excited and I want to share the new tool I've learned about!" Another respondent commented on the wide array of possibilities; "I'm constantly amazed and excited about investigating new tech tools and figuring out how they can be used in a school/library setting."

Using technology as an instructional tool led respondents to comment that they "never thought about how much my online students can do with a webcam" (in a storytelling class), and to acknowledge that "[t]he capability for online teaching and the relationships with my students are amazing. . . ." Respondents expressed mixed feelings about comfort with technology; one person indicated that "I never thought I'd be teaching using current web-based methods but I'm very at home with that now," while another confessed that "social networking scares me a little." One respondent noted the students' wide range of technical expertise, "I'm constantly surprised by my students: sometimes by what they don't know. For example, "last week only one person out of 35 really had any idea about RSS feeds, and only one person used a news aggregator."

Pedagogy was named in four instances and three of the comments circled back to technology, for instance, the impact of online teaching on simple things like giving directions, the ability to "break down geographical barriers," and "how using the webcam in the synchronous class really changes the class dynamic. We all feel closer/connected when we can see each other via the webcam." One respondent said simply, "I never imagined I would spend so much of my time involved in media of all sorts."

Twenty-eight faculty responded to a

question about what bored them, but 14 of them indicated that "very little" or "nothing" bored them and two noted that if they reached that point, they would proactively change the material or assignments. Otherwise, they cited apathetic students, "budgets, standards, and grant writing," and "the whole genre organization." However, the genre respondent went on to say that "it's my teaching techniques that are boring or lively; I can't blame the material."

Limitations of the Study

The survey targeted tenure-stream and adjunct faculty teaching youth services classes at ALA-accredited programs. Because of concerns about spam filters, a decision was made to email the survey directly to any of these faculty who had an individual email address listed on the institution's official web site. Eventually the survey went to 246 faculty at 49 ALA-accredited schools in the United States and Puerto Rico, and 6 ALA-accredited library schools in Canada. At the time the survey was active, San Jose State University (US) provided only a general contact email for all faculty, and McGill University (Canada) did not identify any faculty on its web site, so faculty at these two schools did not receive the survey. Future iterations should take a much more comprehensive approach, augmenting web information with member lists from organizations such as ALISE (Youth Special Interest Group), and listservs such as Child_Lit (children's literature), PUBYAC (public library youth services), TEACH-YAL (young adult services faculty), and LM_NET (school librarians). Although the listservs may be practitioner-focused, it is likely that youth-services faculty subscribe to at least a few of them.

As noted in the demographics section, tenure-stream (31) and adjuncts (28) were equally represented, and the median teaching experience was 5–10 years. Respondents had the option of remaining anonymous or providing contact information, and an analysis of the email addresses voluntarily provided indicate that at least 25 of 55 schools contacted provided responses from either tenure-stream or adjunct faculty. However, the anonymous responses preclude knowing exactly how many ALA-accredited programs are represented. Because of the survey design and focus there is insufficient data to conclude anything about whether the institutions represented are research- or teaching-focused. The same is true for any geographic distribution.

As a result of these factors, the survey results are not necessarily representative of the whole population of youth services educators, but they do have value as insights into the nature of contemporary youth services education. They also point to areas for further research and exploration.

Competencies from AASL, ALSC and YALSA were mentioned in the exiting literature and have been used in this article as a framework for discussing how practitioner and educator priorities match, but there are other approaches to establishing parameters or expectations for service. In 2006 YALSA collaborated with the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) of ALA to create *Guidelines for Library Services to Teens, Ages 12–18*, a sort of cross-training document for adult services librarians who encounter teens at the general reference desk. The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) also developed or updated "guidelines" statements during the first decade of the new millennium for babies and toddlers, children, and teens.[3]

[3]The IFLA documents are *Guidelines for Library Services for Babies and Toddlers,* created in 2007, http://archive.ifla.org/VII/d3/pub/Profrep100.pdf; *Guidelines for Children's Library Services,* revised in 2003; www.ifla.org/files/libraries-for-children-and-ya/publications/guidelines-for-childrens-libraries-services-en.pdf; *Guidelines for Library Services for Young Adults,* revised in 2010, www.ifla.org/files/libraries-for-children-and-ya/publications/ya-guidelines2-en.pdf. AASL also publishes guidelines, updated in 2009, known as *Empowering Learners: Guidelines for School Library Programs,* and where the focus is on the student and environment rather than the service provider.

It is possible, by extension, to move from these other guidelines to the competencies required by professional personnel to meet the service standards outlined in them, but those documents have not been considered here.

As indicated above, the professional competencies and guidelines are used here as a way to approach a comparison of practitioner and educator priorities, but they were not in themselves a focus of the survey. It is possible, as in Table 1, to present educator comments alongside practitioner priorities as expressed in the competencies/guidelines to get some idea of whether educators are aware of and may be using them, but the survey does not indicate specific ways or how pervasively faculty use them in constructing syllabi or course content. That work remains to be done in a future survey or by other researchers, who can build on these results and the work of those cited in the literature review.

The literature review excluded articles written about youth services education outside the United States and Canada, but there is a growing body of literature that addresses the training in other parts of the world and has value for expanding research in the area of youth librarianship education.

Discussion

The 2010 survey was intended to begin to document current practices for training future youth services librarians. Youth services educators contribute a unique perspective to discussions on LIS education and this survey is a snapshot of what and how they teach now. Survey results indicate that respondents monitor changes in youth services work practices and also pay attention to popular culture. They integrate the content if not always the language of national guidelines into their coursework. They are committed to integrating technology into coursework, and modeling it as a practice for future professional development for their students. As a group they are generally satisfied with what they are teaching. One survey respondent commented, "I don't teach anything that bores me. I find a way to make anything I teach interesting or my students will be unengaged and that is unacceptable."

Faculty were able to name their three most important topics, but indicated that coursework changes often, as a result of changes in youth librarianship, the wider society in which we live, experience in the field, and the research they may do in this area. In terms of what they teach, the focus has shifted from specific skills to broader treatments, e.g. from books to multiple content platforms, from "a focus on libraries as discrete institutions to conceiving libraries as part of the broader youth development/literacy community." The reference course is now focused on "how to make good decisions, *process* [emphasis added] rather than focus[ed] on specific resources."

Titles and positions appear to be in flux. In addition to traditional tenure-stream and adjunct positions, there are clinical faculty and other personnel with administrative duties related to teaching or directing youth services students, e.g. practicum or student teaching coursework. Said one respondent, "I wish your survey made allowances for those of us who are clinical faculty or professors of the practice. There are more of us than you might imagine . . . and we are full-time . . . I had to put "zero" down for "years as full-time tenure-track faculty" because although I'm full-time, I'm not tenure-track."

Technology, not surprisingly, has affected every aspect of youth services education. Changes in literature formats, a plethora of electronic resources, social networking, and other applications have expanded the range of subjects with which youth librarians in schools and public libraries must be familiar—and which survey respondents feel compelled to cover. Rather than reluctance, survey respondents indicated a willingness and even excitement to embrace technical tools while

not losing sight of their role in youth work. "I have to be at least marginally aware of recent technologies so that I may share information with my students about them. The students need to know so that they can better provides services to their patrons." There are conceptual changes due to technology as well, for example, "privacy, intellectual freedom, censorship, and access have been expanded to include issues related to the digital world. Definition of information literacy has been expanded to include digital literacy." Respondents still face challenges as they transition more specialized skill sets (e.g. storytelling, small-child programming), but their comments indicate a willingness to explore technical options and view such transitions as modeling experiences for their students, a mirror to what they will face after graduation.

More research is needed in this area, to address the extent to which the respondents capture the concerns and attitudes of the large youth services educator cadre; and to examine in more depth the content and/or pedagogy of youth services education, particularly in an online environment. There is also work to be done looking at differences and similarities of North American and international youth services education and training.

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