LIS Youth Services Education: An International Perspective
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Introduction
While there has been considerable study of LIS youth services (i.e. youth-oriented) faculty and some study of curriculum, few studies have focused on the curriculum actively given to students. Further, many studies of youth services curriculum have focused on one element and have not studied the array of youth services courses available.

This paper looks at the provision of youth services education in five English-speaking countries: the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand. Youth services courses, or youth-oriented courses, are defined as those courses dealing with children's or young adult literature, library services to youth, and school librarianship.

Three research questions
1. To what degree are youth services courses available in each of the above-named regions?
2. What youth services content is taught in each of these regions?
3. Is there a substantive difference in courses and course content between these regions?

Previous reports give some indication of the types of courses taught in these five countries. Youth literature was by far the most emphasized. Other course topics included non-print youth materials, programming, reading guidance, storytelling, booktalking, child psychology, child development, service promotion, youth information needs, and management of youth services. [1] Nonetheless, these reports have not been systematic in their coverage, and in 1999, Eliza Dresang indicated that the content of youth services LIS education in the U.S. had not been systematically studied.[2] This report addresses that lack by providing a systematic look at youth services curriculum internationally.

Method
This project used a Web-based survey to elicit course information from instructors from the five aforementioned countries. Questions asked about course titles, course description, content coverage, and instructional goals for each course, as well as whether the course was oriented toward school or public library service. Most instructors provided this information by copying it from their syllabi or course outlines.

Two methods were used to identify youth services instructors. For schools accredited by the American Library Association (schools in the United States and Canada), an e-mail invitation to participate in the Web survey was sent directly to the instructor. A total of 191 instructors from U.S. and Canadian schools were identified, of whom 168 were reached and 71 responded, for a 42% response rate. Seven of the 15 identified Canadian instructors responded, for a 47% response rate. For the United States, 176 instructors were identified (including adjuncts). Of those, 64 responded, for a 36% response rate.

For schools in the United Kingdom (17), Australia (6), and New Zealand (1), an invitation to participate was mailed to the schools' directors with the request that they forward it to the appropriate faculty member. Fifteen responses were received, for a 63% response rate; 11 responses were from the UK, 3 from Australia, and 1 from New Zealand. Because of the small number of respondents from each country, Australia and New Zealand are combined into one "region" in all subsequent references.

After survey administration, course information was content-analyzed. Each course was considered a separate unit of analysis, and each unit was analyzed for the appearance of specific content. Dictionary-type indicators were used instead of unique components, as the researchers sought commonalities between regions. Because syllabi tend to be direct and succinct, the assumption was that inclusion of a topic was an indicator of intensity, and there was no example of any course content being presented as negative or neutral. In final data analysis, we have computed the frequency with which indicators appear in course descriptions, and we interpret that data in light of the philosophies of LIS instruction.

Categories were negotiated between researchers during the coding process. A final coding scheme emerged which contained 100 codes in five overarching categories, 1) Youth as Persons, 2) The Youth Services Librarian, 3) Managing the Youth Services Library, 4) Youth Materials, and 5) Library Services to Youth.

Results
Respondents provided course titles for 139 youth services classes. (See Table 1.) Of those, 106 were from United States respondents, 22 from Canadian respondents, 7 from United Kingdom respondents, and 4 from Australia/New Zealand respondents. An analysis of course titles suggests that "children" get significant coverage in the U.S., U.K., and Canada; "young adults" get significant coverage in the U.S. and some coverage in Canada; and "children and young adults" are combined in the curriculum of the U.K. and Australia/New Zealand.

If course titles indicate specific locations, they are much more likely to indicate schools than public libraries. Almost a third of course titles in the U.K. and Canada, and a fourth of U.S. course titles indicated a school orientation. Course content, as indicated by course titles, was overwhelmingly dominated by materials (literature, non-print, and electronic media). Almost half of course titles in each region suggested a materials orientation. Library services to youth made up the second-largest content area suggested by course titles. This area made up 25% of courses in Australia, and approximately 15% of courses in all other regions. "Materials and services" were combined in 11 courses, most in the United States.

Respondents provided descriptions for 124 youth services classes. In Table 2, course descriptions were analyzed for the presence of coding variables signifying the five categories. Slightly more course descriptions mention children than mention young adults. However, in the United States and Australia/New Zealand, young adults get slightly more attention in the course description. School libraries get more attention in the course descriptions than do public libraries, except in Australia/New Zealand.

When broken down to the five youth services education categories, differences in emphasis become apparent. Almost three-quarters of all youth services courses deal with some sort of literature or materials for children. This total includes standard youth literature courses as well as courses which feature electronic or multimedia resources for youth, digital libraries for children, and toys. Regional literature makes an appearance as well, with some countries and areas of the United States emphasizing works created by authors from the area. This strong emphasis on materials occurs across the board in LIS youth services education, though less frequently in the United Kingdom.

Well over half of all classes include some mention of library services to youth, both public services (programming, reference, reader advisory) and behind-the-scenes services (outreach, cataloging, and web page development). Library services to youth were highly emphasized in all regions, though less so in Canada.

Another strongly emphasized topic was youth as persons. Codes included in this category were child/adolescent development, the culture of youth, youth needs and interests, and special groups such as multicultural or learning disabled youth. As indicated by course descriptions, well over half of all classes touch on the issue of youth as persons, though this is slightly less frequent in Canada and the United Kingdom than in Australia/New Zealand and the United States.

Just over half of all courses included some content about the role of the Youth Services Librarian. This category dealt largely with what role the youth services librarian played with youth and in the library. Youth advocacy, censorship, professional development, and the development of youth services research were included in this category. National distribution suggests that these courses are slightly more emphasized in the United States than in other areas.

The category that received the least coverage in all regions was Managing the Youth Services Library. This category included such codes as budgeting, staff development, developing policies, and setting goals and objectives for library services to youth.

Figure 1 presents youth services curriculum content measured by frequency. Descriptions were measured by the frequency with which various coding variables appeared, and that frequency reported for the coding category. It was assumed that concepts with higher frequencies would suggest topics particularly emphasized in the course. These pie charts demonstrate that youth materials comprise approximately 50% of the curriculum in each region. Services to youth make up 20-25% of the curriculum, and "youth as persons" takes up another 9-17%. The remainder of the youth services curriculum is divided between the study of the librarian and management of the youth services library.

Discussion
To what extent are youth services courses available in each of these regions? In the United States, 89 courses were offered, and repeat offerings of these courses were frequent. Canada had the next highest number of reported courses, 12, but it also had the lowest frequency of repeat offerings. The United Kingdom reported 6 courses being offered slightly more often than once per year, and Australia/New Zealand reported four courses, repeated fairly regularly.

North American schools seem to offer a greater variety of youth services courses than schools in other countries. This may be related to the greater number of options for LIS education in North America, with 50 American Library Association-accredited LIS schools in the United States and 7 in Canada. In the UK, 18 universities have courses recognized by the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP); 12 universities have courses recognized by the Australian Library and Information Sciences Association (ALIA); and only one program recognized by the Library and Information Association of New Zealand (LIANZA). It is also likely due to heavier reliance on adjunct and temporary instructors in the United States:

What youth services content is being taught in these regions? This question speaks to the issue of how youth services librarians are being prepared for their professional duties. In all regions, Youth Materials forms the backbone of youth services education. The majority coursework focuses on youth literature; however, there is additional emphasis on non-print materials, audiovisual materials, electronic and Web resources, and toys. Given a philosophy of libraries as storehouses of materials waiting for users, the educational focus on youth materials makes sense.

A competing philosophy of librarianship is that libraries exist to connect users to information, and that information is mediated through the library's materials and services. The educational support for this philosophy can be seen in the relatively strong emphasis on Library Services to Youth: programming, reader advisory, youth reference, outreach, and so forth. These services are generally provided with the intent of connecting young people to libraries. The emphasis on young people as individuals in their own right also supports this view, by encouraging librarians to look at children's needs and accept those needs as valid. In all areas, the emergent emphasis of Youth as Persons reflects the idea that librarians respect and recognize children and young adults. This respect echoes back to children's librarians and authors of the early 20th century and their belief that children needed important literature.

In all regions, there is considerably less emphasis on the study of the Youth Services Librarian and Managing the Youth Services Library. The Youth Services Librarian category consisted of codes such as "youth advocacy," "intellectual freedom/censorship," and "professional development," as well as categories on the history and philosophy of youth services. The lack of attention to youth services librarians in Australia/New Zealand and the United Kingdom may well be due to the dearth of courses available. With a limited number of contact hours between students and faculty, those precious hours need to be devoted to the topics deemed most important. In the United States, with over twice as much weight in this category as in Australia/New Zealand or the United Kingdom, the study of intellectual freedom and censorship drives a large part of this curriculum.

Codes such as developing library policies, setting goals and objectives, and budgeting were included in the Managing the Youth Services Library category. Despite a flurry of articles illustrating the strong management component of youth services librarianship, management is a topic little addressed in youth services education.[3] An educator at the University of Toronto suggested that students do not see the need for management-type courses until they are out in the workplace.[4] Additionally, students may receive management instruction geared toward a general audience. Given the strong need for management skills in youth librarianship, however, it is unfortunate that this aspect of the curriculum is so neglected.
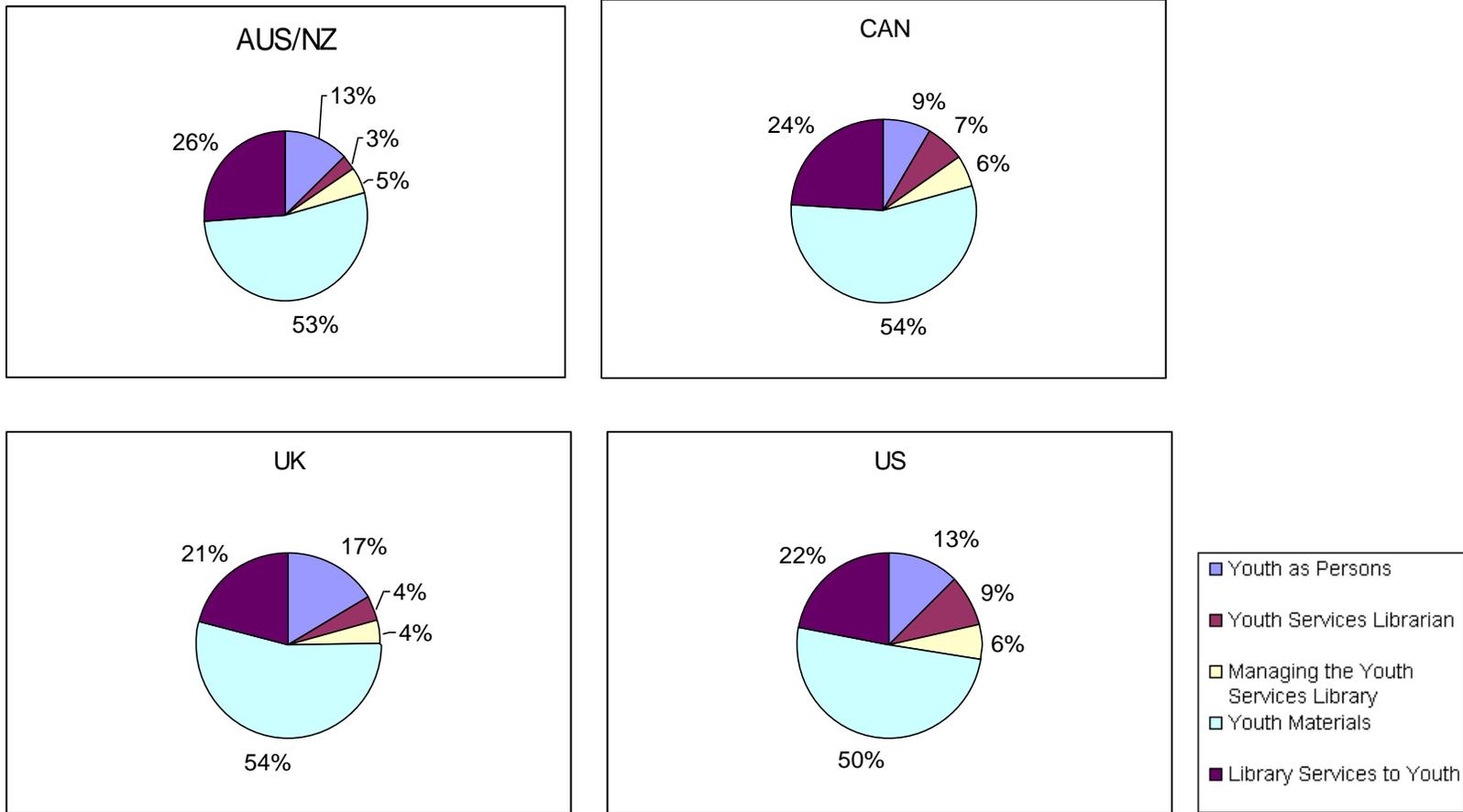
Table 1. Instructional concepts, as found in 139 youth services course titles.

Concept	AUS/NZ		CAN		UK		US		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Audience										
Children			7	32%	2	29%	25	24%	**34**	**24%**
Young Adults/Teens/Adolescents			2	9%			25	24%	**27**	**19%**
"Children and Young Adults"/ Youth	2	50%	5	23%	2	29%	19	18%	**28**	**20%**
Venue										
Public Libraries			2	9%			4	4%	**6**	**4%**
School Libraries			6	27%	2	29%	26	25%	**34**	**24%**
Course Content										
Youth as Persons							1	1%	**1**	**1%**
The Youth Services Librarian										
Managing the Youth Services Library							5	5%	**5**	**4%**
Youth Materials	2	50%	10	45%	3	43%	50	47%	**65**	**47%**
Library Services to Youth	1	25%	3	14%	1	14%	15	14%	**21**	**15%**
"Materials and Services"	1	25%	2	9%			8	8%	**11**	**8%**
Information Literacy	1	25%	1	5%	1	14%	2	2%	**4**	**3%**
TOTAL NUMBER OF COURSES	**4**	**100%**	**22**	**100%**	**7**	**100%**	**106**	**100%**	**139**	**100%**

Table 2. Instructional concepts, as found in 124 youth services course descriptions.

Concept	AUS/NZ		CAN		UK		US		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Audience										
Children	1	25%	10	50%	2	40%	39	41%	**52**	**42%**
Young Adults/Teens/Adolescents	2	50%	5	25%	2	40%	40	42%	**49**	**40%**
Venue										
Public Libraries	2	50%	1	5%	1	20%	21	22%	**25**	**20%**
School Libraries	1	25%	7	35%	3	60%	37	39%	**48**	**39%**
Course Content										
Youth as Persons	2	50%	9	45%	2	40%	62	65%	**75**	**60%**
The Youth Services Librarian	1	25%	9	45%	2	40%	52	55%	**64**	**52%**
Managing the Youth Services Library	1	25%	5	25%	1	20%	28	29%	**35**	**28%**
Youth Materials	3	75%	15	75%	2	40%	71	75%	**91**	**73%**
Library Services to Youth	3	75%	9	45%	3	60%	62	65%	**77**	**62%**
TOTAL NUMBER OF COURSES	**4**	**100%**	**20**	**100%**	**5**	**100%**	**95**	**100%**	**124**	**100%**

Figure 1. Pie chart comparisons of youth services content (by frequency of appearance) in all four regions.

AUS/NZ
- 13%
- 3%
- 5%
- 53%
- 26%

CAN
- 9%
- 7%
- 6%
- 54%
- 24%

UK
- 17%
- 4%
- 4%
- 54%
- 21%

US
- 13%
- 9%
- 6%
- 50%
- 22%

Legend:
- Youth as Persons
- Youth Services Librarian
- Managing the Youth Services Library
- Youth Materials
- Library Services to Youth

[1] Lynda G. **Adamson**, "Results of the Children's Literature Assembly's Survey of Teaching in U.S. Colleges and Universities," Bookbird 25 (1987): 11-15; Debbie **Denham**, "Children's Literature: A Reflective Approach to Learning," International Review of Children's Literature and Librarianship 9, no. 2 (1994): 88-103; Judith **Elkin**, "Children's Modules," Library Association Record 96 (January 1994): 33; Frances **Gagiero**, "In-Service Training for Children's Librarians at the Camberwell-Waverley Regional Library," Orana 18, no. 1 (1982): 23-25; Elizabeth H. **Gross**, "The Teaching of Children's Literature," Wilson Library Bulletin 42 (1967): 199-205; Elizabeth F. **Howard**, "Teachers of Children's Literature Discussion Group: Networking in Action," Top of the News 43, no. 2 (1987): 189-92; Ronald A. **Jobe**, "Teaching Children's and Young Adult Literature in Canada," International Review of Children's Literature and Librarianship 5, no. 2 (1990): 71-85; Mildred **Laughlin**, "Approaches to Teaching Children's Literature," Journal of Education for Librarianship 23 (1982): 23-28; Ray **Lonsdale** and John Spink, "Children's Books in the Education of Librarians at the College of Librarianship Wales, Aberystwyth," Signal 54 (1987): 203-9; Anne H. **Lundin** and Carol W. Cubberley, Teaching Children's Literature: a Resource Guide, With a Directory of Courses (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 1995); Helen **Pain**, "Professional Education and Children's and School Librarianship," Library Association Review 89, no. 3 (March 1987): 131-135; Lissa **Paul**, "Teaching Children's Literature in Canada," Signal, no. 58 (1989): 39-50.

[2] Eliza Dresang, Education for Youth Services Specialization in Librarianship: Background Paper (April 1999). Accessed on March 25, 2004 from http://www.lis.fsu.edu/Includes/Content/Faculty/dresang2.html.

[3] For instance, Mae **Benne**, "Children's Librarian As Manager," in *Principles of Children's Services in Public Libraries* (Chicago, IL: American Library Association, 1991), 30-65; Leslie Edmonds **Holt**, "Dream Jobs: a Career Guide for the Ambitious Children's Librarian," *School Library Journal* 43 (1997): 29-31; Barbara A. **Ivy**, "Developing Managerial Skills in Children's Librarians," *Library Trends* 35 (1987): 449-61.

[4] Ann Curry, "Canadian LIS Education: Trends and Issues," *Education for Information* 18, no. 4 (2000): 325-337. (332)