On Ethical Assessment
Locating and Applying the Core Values of Library and Information Science

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UX & Assessment Librarian
Montana State University

Library Assessment Conference 2020
Online
Hi there!

I’m Scott Young

Today’s talk is about values-based decision-making in the practice of library assessment

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scottwhyoung.com
Slides, video recording, and transcript available here:

scottwhyoung.com/talks/ethical-assessment-lac-2020

or

cutt.ly/lac2020
Research Questions

Which values matter to LIS professionals?

Which values matter to library assessment practitioners?

How do values support ethical decision-making in library assessment?
Professional Identity
Marking the characteristics of a profession

Professional Values
A history of LIS professional values

Values-in-Action
Practical applications of values
Professional Identity
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Values in Action
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Professional Identity
Professional Identity

Greenwood (1957) outlines five basic attributes of a profession:

- Systematic theory
- Authority
- Community sanction
- Ethical codes
- Culture
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- Systematic theory
- Authority
- Community sanction
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- Culture
“I believe that a measure of a profession’s development is its understanding of the values that govern its practice.”

— Preer, 2008
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“The values of a profession are the beliefs of the group.”

— Seminelli 2016
For practitioners in Library and Information Science, "understanding these values improves our ability to recognize ethical situations and to make ethical decisions."

— Rubin & Froehlich, 2010
Professional Values

A brief history of LIS professional values
Professional Values

A brief history of LIS professional values

- Five Laws of Library Science (Ranganathan, 1931)
Professional Values

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- Five Laws of Library Science (Ranganathan, 1931)
- Infrequent attention for subsequent decades
Professional Values

A brief history of LIS professional values

- Five Laws of Library Science (Ranganathan, 1931)
- Infrequent attention for subsequent decades
- Rise of automation and information technologies in the 1980s and 1990s prompts renewed interest in values
The challenge that we face in trying to embrace technology without losing our basic values and how technology can alter those values.

— ALA President Summers, 1989
“The challenge that we face in trying to embrace technology without losing our basic values and how technology can alter those values.”

— ALA President Summers, 1989
Professional Values

ALA Core Values

Access
Confidentiality/Privacy
Democracy
Diversity

Education and Lifelong Learning
Intellectual Freedom
The Public Good
Preservation

Professionalism
Service
Social Responsibility
Sustainability
<table>
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<th>Professional Values</th>
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| **LIS Values as represented in published literature 1931-2003**
<p>| 1. | Service |
| 2. | Access |
| 3. | Intellectual Freedom |
| 4. | Literacy and Learning |
| 5. | Professionalism |
| 6. | Stewardship |
| 7. | Privacy |
| 8. | Social Responsibility |
| 9. | Individual Autonomy |
| 10. | Democracy |
| 11. | Preservation |
| 12. | Justice |
| 13. | People |
| 14. | The Public Good |
| 15. | Truth |
| 16. | Scholarship |
| 17. | Honesty |
| 18. | Equality |
| 19. | Survival |
| 20. | Care |
| 21. | Integrity |
| 22. | Humaneness |
| 23. | Fairness |
| 24. | Excellence |
| 25. | Excellence |
| 26. | Diversity |
| 27. | Passion |
| 28. | Minimal Well-Being |
| 29. | Protection from Injury |
| 30. | Recognition for One’s Work |
| 31. | Tolerance |
| 32. | Beauty |
| 33. | Rights |
| 34. | Intellectual Property |
| 35. | Neutrality |
| 36. | Rationalism |</p>
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Values are “continually produced and reproduced in the library discourse” and are “ideas to be struggled over in both discourse and practice.”

— Drabinski, 2016
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Professional Values
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Values in Action
 Practical applications of values
Values in Action
Values in Action

Practical Ethics  Stabilizing Force  Vocational Awe
### Practical Ethics

“Values are strongly held beliefs that serve to guide our actions.” (Rubin 2016b)

Practical ethics is seen as values in action (Buchanan & Henderson, 2009)

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### Stabilizing Force
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### Vocational Awe

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Ethical Assessment — LAC 2020
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<td>LIS values are complicated when they become:</td>
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| Practical ethics is seen as values in action (Buchanan & Henderson, 2009) | |  ○ Canonized  
| | |  ○ Idealized  
| | |  ○ Weaponized |
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Future Directions

- Continued research related to values that are relevant for decision-making in the practice of library assessment
  - Common ethical dilemmas
  - Existing ethical responses and actions
  - Developing a new framework or decision-aid to support a values-based assessment practice
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- To get involved: contact me or complete this brief form: cutt.ly/assessment-survey
~THANK YOU~

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