



Next Generation Librarianship: Where Do We Go from Here?

Rachel Singer Gordon

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Today's multigenerational library workforce faces a number of both internal and external challenges. To meet these challenges, we need to learn how to work together effectively, keep connected and current, and draw on individuals' unique strengths. In a graying profession, we also need to pay attention to succession planning, passing on institutional wisdom, and recruiting, retaining, and mentoring the next generation.

Program Overview

1) Introduction

Rachel Singer Gordon and *The NextGen Librarian's Survival Guide*

2) Generational issues

- a. What is the real deal?
- b. Why do people get so upset by generational generalizations?
- c. Vignette One

3) Effectively managing nextgen librarians

- d. How creating an environment where all can succeed (and that benefits all generations of librarians) takes care of problem
- e. Succession planning
- f. Vignette Two

4) What we can learn from each other?

- g. Mutually beneficial mentoring relationships
- h. Taking advantage off our multiple strengths

5) How to be successful 21st century librarians

Speaker Biography: Rachel Singer Gordon

Rachel Singer Gordon is Consulting Editor, Information Today, Inc., Book Publishing Division, and webmaster, LISjobs.com. She publishes the electronic newsletter Info Career Trends, blogs at The Liminal Librarian (<http://www.lisjobs.com/liminal/>), and coauthors *Beyond the Job* (<http://librarycareers.blogspot.com>), a professional development weblog for librarians. Rachel is the "Computer Media" review columnist for *Library Journal*; she is also a frequent contributor to LJ's "NextGen" column, coauthor, with Michael Stephens, of *Computers in Libraries'* "Tech Tips for Every Librarian," and the author of Emerald's "Publish, Don't Perish" Library Link column. Her published work includes *The Librarian's Guide To Writing for Publication* (Scarecrow, 2004), *The Accidental Library Manager* (ITI, 2005), and *The NextGen Librarian's Survival Guide* (ITI, 2006). Rachel holds an MLIS from Dominican University and an MA from Northwestern University.



Resources

Annotated Bibliography

Next Generation Librarianship: Where Do We Go from Here?

Abram, Stephen and Judy Luther. "Born With the Chip." *Library Journal* May 1 2004.

<http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA411572.html>

The authors talk about dealing with the "next generation;" people who have grown up with technology in a different way.

Bennis, Warren G. and Robert J. Thomas. *Geeks & Geezers: How Era, Values, and Defining Moments Shape Leaders*. Boston: HBS Press, 2002.

The authors talk about the qualities of "geeks" and "geezers" -- generally leaders under age 30 and over 70.

Berry, John N. III. "Memo to Baby Boomers." *Library Journal* June 1 2004.

<http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA421023.html>

Library Journal's John Berry talks to Baby Boomers about "learning to let go."

Gordon, Rachel Singer. *The NextGen Librarian's Survival Guide*. Medford, NJ: ITI, 2006.

Ms. Singer addresses both Millennial and GenX librarians and their managers/administrators, and provides strategies for surviving and working together effectively.

Houghton, Sarah. "Are You Sure You're a Librarian?"

<http://librarianinblack.typepad.com/librarianinblack/files/Areyoure.pdf>.

Ms. Houghton talks about people's perceptions of her as a younger librarian.

Lancaster, Lynne C. "The Click and Clash of Generations." *Library Journal* Oct. 15 2003.

www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA325060/

Ms. Lancaster talks about the four generations currently working together in libraries and how to avoid conflict and reach across the generational divide.

Lancaster, Lynne C. and David Stillman. *When Generations Collide: Who They Are, Why They Clash, How to Solve the Generational Puzzle at Work*. New York: HarperBusiness, 2002.

The authors talk about the four generations currently in the workforce, about understanding the reasons for generational conflict in workplaces, and how to get past those conflicts.

Lynch, Mary Jo, Stephen Tordella, and Thomas Godfrey. "Recruitment and Retirement, a Deeper Look." Chicago: ALA, 2005. www.ala.org/ala/ors/reports/recruitretire/recruitretire-a-deeperlook.pdf

The authors update older reports with 2000 Census statistics on librarians.

Newhouse, Ria and April Spisak. "Fixing the First Job." *Library Journal* Aug. 15 2004.

www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA443916/



Newhouse and Spisak surveyed a number of new librarians and report on their experiences in their first job and desires from their employers.

"NextGen." Library Journal. 2004-

Library Journal's monthly "NextGen" column reflects a variety of viewpoints and topics.

Steffen, Nicolle, et al. *Retirement, Retention, and Recruitment: The Future of Librarianship in Colorado*. Denver, CO: Library Research Service, Sept. 2004.

www.lrs.org/documents/closer_look/RRR_web.pdf

Although Colorado-specific, the authors provide an interesting in-depth look at the truth behind the recruitment and retirement hype.

Sweeney, Richard T. "**Reinventing Library Buildings and Services for the Millennial Generation.**" *Library Administration & Management* V. 19 (4), Fall 2005 pp. 165-176.

Whelan, Debra Lau. "**The Only Young School Librarian?**" *School Library Journal* May 2003.

www.schoollibraryjournal.com/article/CA294386.html

This is the story of a 23-year-old school librarian and her experiences in a profession that skews much older.

Young, Arthur and Steve Casburn. "**Gen X Bites Back.**" *American Libraries* Sept. 2004: 43-5.

The authors provide a response to the article below; a "conference call" between a GenX librarian and one of the study's authors, talking about some concerns.

Young, Arthur, Peter Herson, and Ronald Powell. "**What Will Gen Next Need to Lead?**" *American Libraries* May 2004: 33-5.

The authors report on a study they did of upper management at very large public and academic institutions, asking their views on the qualities that will be needed by "the next generation of library managers and leaders."

Questions

1. Do you believe generational differences are a factor in today's library workplace? Why or why not?
2. What steps could libraries take to recruit a new generation of library workers? Why do we need to think about this today?
3. How do you see libraries changing over the next few years? How do you see younger and/or newer library staff being involved in these changes?
4. What steps can libraries take to create a healthy work environment for all staff? Why is this particularly important in a 21st Century library?

