



Staffing Library Services to the Aging

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A CHILLING indictment of the failure of the library profession to absorb and implement the insights of social gerontology is contained in Elliott Kanner's doctoral thesis, "The Impact of Gerontological Concepts on Principles of Librarianship," submitted to the University of Wisconsin in 1972. Using content analysis of library literature from 1946 to 1969, Kanner documents that the median transfer period of an idea from gerontological literature to its first mention in library literature is 5.5 years.¹ Some ideas took from 6 to 11 years. In several significant areas of research, such as studies of age and social status, the role of the aged in society, psychosocial theories of aging and personality, the potential of mass communications and the mass media for reaching the aged, and aging and the political process, Kanner found no evidence of transfer into the library consciousness.² Although Kanner feels that the formation of a committee on library service to an aging population by ALA's Adult Services Division in 1957 marked a turning point on the part of the profession toward service to the aged,³ he nevertheless believes that the public librarian's view of aging and his attitudes toward the aged correspond to those of the public at large, that public libraries still tend to ignore older citizens in their allocation of resources, and at best are inclined to deny that the aged have special needs which require special facilities and programming.⁴

Kanner's research also documents that, after a flurry of interest and activity in library service to the aged in the late 1950s, there was a decline after 1961, with emphasis being placed instead on service to the urban disadvantaged and ethnic minorities. One hopes that Kanner is correct in his theory that this decline in concern for the aged is only temporary and that the profession's awareness of its social responsibility will eventually include concern for the aged, as a discrete, differentiated group.⁵

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Kanner's assumption that there is a direct correlation between interest in service to the aged as reflected in library literature and actual service provided in libraries would appear substantiated by the *National Survey of Library Services to the Aging*, initiated in July 1971 under a grant from the Higher Education Act, Title IIB to the Cleveland Public Library and conducted by the firm of Booz, Allen and Hamilton. This study, both in its preliminary phase,⁶ which was completed in the fall of 1971 in time for the White House Conference on Aging, and its second, more comprehensive, phase which was completed in the fall of 1972, has been described as an important "landmark in library development."⁷ The purpose of the study was "to determine the scope of library service rendered to persons over 65 by public libraries and libraries at state and federal institutions." Library services were defined to exclude routine services such as book lists, and also routine services offered to individual adults who happened to be over 65, but without special regard to their age, location or physical characteristics. Included were programs and services which are offered specifically for the aging population or in which at least 50 percent of the participants were 65 years of age or older.

Although the ultimate purpose of the full study has been to provide a comprehensive inventory of library services to the aged which can serve as a benchmark for future planning and development, the researchers faced serious strictures of time and money in their preliminary phase since one of their goals was to create a brief statement for distribution at the White House Conference on Aging.⁸ Therefore, rather than query directly all 1,300 U.S. public libraries serving over 25,000 people (which was accomplished in the second phase), the preliminary study drew its universe by asking the fifty state libraries to identify the public libraries within each state which were known to be providing specific library programs for the aged. The public libraries thus identified, as well as those which had received grants for service to the aging under the Library Services and Construction Act and the Older Americans Act, those recognized by state administrations on the aged, by U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare regional program officers, and by selected knowledgeable librarians were then surveyed by questionnaire and/or field visit. Although the emphasis of the study was on services provided by public libraries, state libraries as well as institutional libraries operated by state and federal governments were also included. Questionnaires were also mailed to deans of graduate library schools to determine the extent to which services to the aging were in-

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cluded in the graduate school curriculum. Returns were received from forty-six state library agencies, forty-one state administrations on the aged, thirty-nine graduate library schools, nine LSCA regional program officers and twenty state health, welfare and correctional agencies. Based on these sources, questionnaires were sent to 390 public libraries and 80 institutional libraries. Responses were received from 266 public libraries and 33 institutional libraries.⁹

The period selected for the study was the decade from 1961, the year of the first White House Conference on Aging, through 1971, the year of the second conference.

A complete inventory of all library services to the aging, vital for intelligent future planning, was completed in 1972, and confirms the findings of the preliminary study.

What does the *National Survey* reveal about library services to the aging in the 1960s? In summary:

Library services to the aging have not developed at a pace consistent with the increase in the number of 65+ persons in the nation and commensurate with the increase in national interest in the needs and problems of the aging.

About two-thirds of the state library agencies and public libraries gave the aging the lowest priority for program development compared to other age groups in the population.

Funds for services to the aging, as defined by this study, constitute less than 1% of the budgets of state libraries and public libraries.

Less than 1% of the federal funds available for support of public libraries is allocated to services for the aging.

Considerably less than 1% of the available staff time of both state libraries and public libraries is devoted to providing library services to the aging.

Few libraries at state and federal institutions provide comprehensive service to aging residents.¹⁰

When one considers that this preliminary picture was drawn from public libraries "considered to be relatively advanced in providing services for persons 65 years and older,"¹¹ the situation is bleak indeed, and bears out Elliott Kanner's projection.

Negative evidence that public libraries are *not* planning to serve the aging is also contained in the preliminary study of goals for the public library, for which Allie Beth Martin served as project coordinator.¹² To learn how major public libraries perceive their present development and future priorities, and how these perceptions may have changed during the last twenty-five years, the sixty public libraries studied in

the Public Library Inquiry¹³ in 1948 were repelled. Asked what their major service developments had been since 1948, not one library mentioned service to the aging, although patrons over 65 may have been included in such categories as outreach to inner-city residents, new services to institutions and handicapped, and improved adult and children's services.¹⁴ Asked what services and priorities they saw for their libraries in the future,¹⁵ again, not one of the sixty libraries mentioned the aged, although there was emphasis on service to the blind, institutional service, service by mail and model cities programs, all of which might reach substantial numbers of patrons over 65. One of the major recommendations of the study, however, was "to develop new patterns of service to meet the needs of the disadvantaged, the handicapped and the institutionalized, minorities *and the aging* (author's italics)."¹⁶

In summary, these three current major studies, Kanner's on "The Impact of Gerontological Concepts on Principles of Librarianship," the Booz, Allen and Hamilton *National Survey of Library Services to the Aging*, and Allie Beth Martin's *Strategy for Public Library Change . . . Goals—Feasibility Study* document that public library service to the aging is not receiving the priority it deserves. This lack of service, and more serious, lack of awareness of the needs of the aging became apparent as planning got underway for the 1971 White House Conference. Ira Phillips, executive secretary of ALA's Association of Hospital and Institution Libraries had to report that "few librarians were involved in White House Conference planning at any level" and that no state agency on aging responded to efforts on the part of ALA to identify local delegates to the conference.¹⁷ It is not surprising that "there were no recommendations . . . growing out of the Education Task Force deliberation."¹⁸

What is the reason for the indifference on the part of libraries to the aging who constitute 10 percent of the present population, and whose number and percentage are generally believed will increase in the future? The *National Survey* theories that "the absence of special programming for the aging is a result of the traditional philosophy of library service held by most librarians—namely, that the library should provide services of universal scope and appeal. The result of this approach has been to submerge the needs and requirements of a particular group or segment of the population that might have a unique claim on the resources of the library."¹⁹ If one assumes that this "traditional philosophy" is no longer adequate, and that the public library, if it is to remain a viable institution, must develop "new patterns of service,"

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then the key must lie in the training and retraining of library staff at all levels—administrative, professional, paraprofessional, even volunteer. In this conclusion, the three studies cited above are in agreement.

The *Strategy for Public Library Change* study identified, among the twelve critical problems facing libraries today, the library staff's inflexibility and lack of service orientation, the ineffectiveness and irrelevance of preservice education as it is practiced in most library schools, and the lack of adequate opportunity for continuing education.²⁰

The *National Survey* concludes: "Librarian interest and motivation are primary factors in the development of service to the aging. . . . Research and training programs need to be strengthened and broadened to familiarize librarians with needs and opportunities to serve the aging. . . . Furthermore, expanded pre-service and in-service training opportunities need to be provided to acquaint and equip librarians with opportunities and techniques for service to the aging."²¹ The survey proposes the following steps as vital to enhancing opportunities for motivating and training librarians in providing services to the aging:

Expanded course offerings in graduate schools of library science.

Provision on a regular basis, of seminars and institutes dealing with library services to the aging. Sponsorship may be by universities, federal and state library agencies, and library professional associations.

Establishment, within the public library, of specific staff responsibility for developing, coordinating and evaluating in-service training opportunities for library professional staff, paraprofessionals and volunteers. This responsibility could be combined with the staff function of older-person program coordination.²¹

Elliott Kanner underscores the need for widespread preservice and inservice education in library service to the aging by reference to a curious statistic. He found that nearly 35 percent of all references on service to the aging in library periodicals between 1946 and 1969 were either written by or concern the work of four librarians: Fern Long, Eleanor Phinney, Orrilla Blackshear and Rose Vainstein.²² These are the people, he concludes, who have kept in close touch with gerontological developments through conferences, workshops and institutes. Anyone knowledgeable in library service to the aging could expand Kanner's list to approximately a dozen leaders who are responsible in great measure for most of the imaginative, innovative, effective library services to the aging. No matter how strong these giants are, they cannot be expected to be responsible for service to the 20 million aged people scattered all over the United States. We must develop new lead-

ers and broaden the base of competence throughout the whole library profession.

In considering the present state of preparation for service to the aging we need to consider both preservice and inservice education, and education on the professional and paraprofessional levels, and for both paid and volunteer staff. In all these areas, what is the present state of affairs?

PRESERVICE PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

The preliminary *National Survey* asked deans of forty-three graduate library schools to identify formal training programs held since 1960 specifically for serving the aging, or for persons with handicaps which generally befall the aging—e.g., poor eyesight, reduced physical coordination, etc., as well as other programs such as lectures or seminars, any studies conducted on the characteristics or library needs of the aging and how such studies were being used in planning library programs or services to the aging. The deans were then asked three additional questions: “(1) What library programs or services are needed by the aging but are generally unavailable? Why? (2) What can be done to expand and extend library programs or services for the aging? (3) What are the major barriers or constraints to expansion of such services?”²³ Thirty-nine of forty-three graduate library schools responded to the survey questionnaire. Twenty of the schools cited a total of thirty-six courses which touched upon library services to the aging—usually introductory courses in librarianship and courses on serving minority or disadvantaged groups.²⁴ That this amount of course infusion is too little and too late is evident from the low level of development of services throughout the country.

Two library schools, North Texas State University and Wayne State University, conduct programs combining library science with courses in gerontology, leading to a master's degree in library science with a specialty in library service to the aging. North Texas began its program in 1969/70, and Wayne State in 1970/71. At the time of the study only nine students had graduated and six were currently enrolled. While no records on the current occupations of graduates are maintained, faculty at both schools believe that the majority enrolled in the program are now working in public libraries where at least part of their work assignment is to serve the aging. One Wayne State graduate is working as institutional consultant and librarian for the blind and physically handicapped in the Virgin Islands, while another is working as librar-

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ian for the Institute of Gerontology, a University of Michigan-Wayne State University interdisciplinary agency established by the Michigan legislature in 1965 for training, research and service.

At both Wayne and North Texas, candidates are awarded fellowships under the Older Americans Act which provide university tuition for the length of the graduate program plus a stipend of approximately \$250 per month, depending upon the candidate's experience, dependents and educational level. Traineeships are awarded only to full-time graduate students and only to citizens of the United States or aliens having a permanent visa. Effort is made to recruit people personally fitted and genuinely committed to serving the aged.

At both schools, candidates participate in the regular core graduate library science curriculum, with library science electives relevant to their special interest, such as "Public Library Services and Systems" and "Reading Interests of Adults." They are also required to enroll in a gerontology sequence which, at Wayne State, includes courses in The Psychology of Aging, The Sociology of Aging, and Income Maintenance in Retirement. Other gerontology courses are available which students may take as electives. Since the University of Michigan and Wayne State University have an arrangement of reciprocity of credit, students may elect courses on either campus without regard to the University in which they have matriculated. A proseminar in aging, held periodically in the academic year, brings together gerontology students from the various colleges of the university such as social work, political science, education, and medicine.

The students do supervised field work in public libraries having special strength in service to the aged. Wayne State University students have been placed in the Detroit Public Library, Cleveland Public Library, the Nassau Library System, and the Library of Congress Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Small sums of money to cover necessary travel costs to out-of-town field placement and attendance at gerontological conferences are also available in the program.

As a part of their academic requirements for a degree, Wayne State University students also engaged in a research project about some aspect of library service to the aged. In 1971/72, the gerontology fellows, plus a few students from the regular program, conducted a series of case studies about library service to the aging in ten exemplary libraries.²⁵ The case studies had been proposed by the ALA Committee on Library Services to an Aging Population. Among the questions which this committee hoped would be answered were:

1. What special services do public libraries offer the aged?
2. To what extent do libraries serve shut-ins, nursing home residents, residents of housing projects and apartment hotels?
3. Are the aged people served satisfied with library programs?
4. Are older adults involved in the planning and operation of the library programs as advisory committee members, as paid assistants, as volunteers?
5. Are adequate materials available for aged users in American public libraries?
6. Are special programs for the aged necessary? Is it desirable to plan services which segregate the aged from other adult library users?
7. What is the relationship between library programs and programs of other agencies serving the aged?
8. Does the library provide any unique services for the aged?

In summary, the committee hoped that the case studies would result in: stimulation of more effective library services for elderly people; provision of more objective information for librarians about how existing programs are actually operating and what they are accomplishing; stimulation of elderly people to become aware of the opportunities in library programs for either volunteer or paid positions; and development of closer working relationships with representatives of other disciplines. This project proved to be not only an excellent tool for informing students about the potential and actuality of public library service to the aged, but also a stimulation to the libraries being surveyed. Experience with the case studies was helpful in shaping the survey instruments for the *National Survey*.

The gerontology specialist programs at Wayne State and North Texas have many advantages:

1. They are truly interdisciplinary, and manage to avoid the confusions often concomitant with team teaching. The required gerontology courses, at least at Wayne State, are planned to provide an orientation for students from many different disciplines.
2. They are feasible programs which are relatively economical of the time of the library science faculty. In order to succeed, the program needs only a library science faculty member interested in and knowledgeable about service to the aging, strong programs in the psychology, economics, and sociology of the aging (provided by other university departments), and fairly close good public libraries which are willing to provide students with opportunity for field experience. An interdisciplinary institute, such as Michigan's

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Institute of Gerontology, located in the university of which the library school is a part, greatly strengthens the program.

3. They are small enough so that graduates in this new field can be absorbed into positions. The major problem in professional preparation for any new field is the familiar dilemma of how to balance the number of candidates with the number of positions. If too few candidates are prepared, the field cannot grow. If too many are prepared, they cannot be placed. Public libraries feel that lack of funds is one of the major reasons that they have not offered library services to the aging.²⁶ Especially during the last two years, many public libraries have been unable to expand services, and it has not been easy to place even the small number of specialists in service to the aged. It is urgent that recruiting for the program be done on a national or at least regional scale so that local "markets" are not flooded.

The programs at Wayne State and North Texas State can be studied as models for future development of preservice education. They provide preparation for both direct service and research, and are concretely possible. It may be that a few more such programs should be undertaken, perhaps in the southeast and the east. One of the findings of the *National Survey* was that there is no correlation between geographic concentration of the aging and the number of providers of services for this group among the states.²⁷

CONTINUING EDUCATION

What is the picture regarding continuing or inservice education for library service to the aged? While the number of new specialists which the public libraries of the country can absorb may now be open to question, there is no doubt that the present workforce needs to be upgraded. Responsibility for inservice professional education is divided among the graduate library schools, state library agencies, state, regional and national library associations, and large public library systems.

The *National Survey* was able to identify five short training courses conducted by library schools to give librarians special skills for service to the aging. Approximately 100 public librarians and state library personnel attended these institutes. Sponsors have been: University of Wisconsin, for librarians serving readers in hospitals and institutions, July 1968 (thirteen days); Wayne State University, for librarians in a position to conduct training opportunities in their own communities, states or regions, October 1969 (five days); University of Michigan, for

librarians serving the noninstitutional handicapped, July 1969 (five days); and University of Oregon, two two-day institutes in May 1969, and May 1971.

At the Wayne State University institute, participants developed a seventeen-point statement of guidelines including four statements relating directly to personnel, staffing and training. These are:

9. The total library staff should be trained to serve the aging as adult individuals with special needs and characteristics.
10. Every library should designate a staff member with special responsibility for coordinating services to the aging.
11. Appropriately trained volunteers with clearly defined responsibilities may supplement the professional staff in serving the aging.
.....
13. Training for librarianship should include, in the curriculum recognition of the special needs of the elderly.²⁵

It seems obvious that many more short institutes on service to the aging should be conducted by library schools in all regions, if not in all states. Such institutes could benefit from coordinated planning and cooperative production of instructional materials. They should be aimed at trainers of trainers and should focus on implementing the best insights of social gerontology as well as on the needs of the aged as summarized by the White House Conference on Aging.

Because there is little evidence that all library schools have faculty interested in and equipped to provide such continuing education, it would be profitable to hold at least one short institute for graduate library school faculty in the ALA-accredited library schools. Michigan's Institute of Gerontology holds regular one- or two-day faculty seminars on various elements of aging to which community college faculty and faculty from all schools of the universities are invited. Because the universe of library schools is a manageable one, it seems feasible to conduct one national training institute for library science faculty. Documents from the White House conference and reports on the *National Survey* would provide excellent instructional material for such an institute.

The *National Survey* also uncovered evidence that "some state library agencies report that they provide training opportunities."²⁸ Staff development and training were cited by the state libraries as the third most important activity they perform in supporting library services to the aging. Data were not available, however, on the number of participants in state library training programs, or their impact upon local li-

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brary service. At least two state library agencies, New Jersey and Massachusetts, conducted workshops for public librarians of their states and offered LSCA incentive grants to them after they attended Wayne State University Trainers-of-Trainers institute in 1969.

A three-day institute for the public librarians of Kansas, held in the Spring of 1972 by the Kansas State Library under Title I, LSCA, may be typical of the state training institutes. Participants were introduced to major insights of social gerontology—who the aged are, what special needs they have, what public libraries are doing to meet these needs, and how Kansas libraries might plan together to better serve the aged in the state. The focus of the program was on concrete, immediate and long-range planning for Kansas library service. Specifically, the institute was aimed at preparing libraries to apply for grants for service to the aging which were being offered as a part of the state's plan for library development under Title I, LSCA. Contact between librarians and other professional people in public and private, state and local agencies in Kansas was structured into the institute.

It would be useful if more institutes could be scheduled in two time segments, so that participants could begin to plan services in the first segment, and then return to report progress and share experiences and problems for a day or two after a year or six months. In 1966, the New England Center for Continuing Education at the University of New Hampshire offered a pilot institute on *Education for the Aging* for personnel in local or state public agencies on aging, hospitals, institutions, churches and schools. The institute was arranged in this pattern:²⁹ the first part of the working institute lasted ten days, in which it was expected that participants would develop specific projects with which to experiment for six months. Institute staff offered counseling and other kinds of practical assistance. In the three days of the second part, scheduled six months later, institute participants were expected to describe their projects and assess objectively the degree of success attained and the major factors associated with the success or failure. This pilot institute, with its structure for practical implementation and evaluation, might well be used as a model for continuing education on library service to the aging by universities and state library agencies.

The *National Survey* also discovered that "few public libraries train their staff for work with the aging." The forty-seven public libraries which offered such training represent 20 percent of the public libraries which reported service to the aging, but less than 0.1 percent of all the public libraries and public library systems in the United States.²⁸ Ex-

emplary among public library inservice training programs is that conducted by the Nassau Library System for its member libraries under the direction of Muriel Javelin, then Coordinator of Adult Services, and one of the leaders in this field.³⁰ It may be that as more training opportunities become available through graduate library schools and state library agencies, the role of most public libraries will focus on training paraprofessional and volunteer staff. Large library systems might be able to provide better training if they had access to instructional materials and packaged programs tested and perfected by graduate library schools.

CONTENT OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

The White House conference made it clear that most old people are primarily concerned with what Ira Phillips described as "survival issues"—health, income maintenance, housing, etc., rather than with recreation, or reading for its own sake.³¹ In its 1970 report, the President's Task Force on the Aging emphasized that "even if the income, health, and shelter problems of older persons were resolved, or at least ameliorated . . . significant barriers would still exist to the involvement of the elderly in the life of the community. . . . Frequently community services are fragmented, dispersed and confusing. Consequently, many elderly do not take advantage of such resources . . . communities must more actively insure that older persons are informed of and helped to utilize the resources to which they are entitled."³² The public libraries reporting to the *National Survey* universally offered some form of library service to aged people who are institutionalized or shut in, and usually maintained some group activities for well-aged people living in the community, but not one of them reported full-scale information-referral service for old people and their families and the agencies which serve them. The closest thing to information service uncovered in the first phase of the *National Survey* was a special issue of the *Dallas Times Herald* which carried a directory of resources for senior adults prepared by the Dallas Public Library.³³ The fact that this directory required only eight pages, and that it was almost certainly out of date in some particulars the day it was published indicates that while the Dallas project is worthwhile it still is not a genuine information-referral center.

Although librarians are accustomed to organizing information files, information-referral centers require a new set of skills not always considered central to librarianship. Among these are skills in coordination with other social agencies, in making information readily available, in

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publicizing services, in training nonprofessionals for the initial contact with clients, and in surveying the needs of the aged community. A bibliography entitled *Information and Referral Centers: A Functional Analysis*, prepared by the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies under a grant from the Administration on Aging,³⁴ documents the dimension of the problems which must be faced in the reliable transfer of information.

Since access to information on community resources is such a vital need for the senior citizen, and since funds are now available for information centers through the Social Security Act, and since a full-scale information-referral center is a new area for most, if not all, public libraries, course content which will aid in developing these skills should be emphasized in both preservice and continuing education. Emphasis should also be given to the insights of social gerontology and to information on the fund sources whereby programs and services for the aged can be supported.

THE ROLE OF THE AGING IN LIBRARY STAFFING

All authorities writing about programming for the aged emphasize that aged people should have a share in planning services and in implementing programs, either as paid or volunteer workers.

The ALA's *Guide to Library Cooperation*, prepared for the 1971 White House Conference on Aging, indicates in a nine-point statement on the library's responsibility to the aging that libraries should serve their communities by (1) utilizing the potential of the older person as a volunteer to reach his peers; (2) employing the older adults in programs designed specifically to serve the elderly; and (3) involving the elderly in the planning process when designing special services and programs for older adults.³⁵

The *National Survey* lists as one of the study's major recommendations that "*the use of the aging as paid employees for work with their peers should be substantially expanded.*" The researchers argue that "many aging persons possess special understanding of the needs and interests of older persons and skills and abilities in interpersonal relations that could benefit many organizations. Retirement on an arbitrary age deprives society of these skills and often creates a loss of personal worth and identity in the life of the aging person. Furthermore, many among the aging would benefit from additional income, to supplement their current resources."³⁶

Milwaukee Public Library's use of five community aides—all over 65

with one over 80—can be a model for other libraries. The aides work twelve hours each week and perform such tasks as “investigating and evaluating potential bookmobile stops, developing materials to shut-ins and verifying eligibility of potential shut-in service customers.”³⁷ The community aides received initial training in interviewing techniques and community resources during a seven-week, 60-hour course offered by the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee under a grant through the Older Americans Act. Subsequently, they were trained in library techniques and objectives by the “Over-Sixty” staff of the Milwaukee Public Library.³⁸ Although the aged library users interviewed during a Wayne State University case-study project declared universally that they judged the librarians who served them in terms of their professional skill and warmth of personality, and that they were indifferent about whether the staff was young or old, Milwaukee’s experience is that community aides who are themselves senior citizens helped to reassure insecure older people and encouraged them to make the effort to remain active and outgoing.³⁸

Boston Public Library has six elderly staff members who work part-time in the library under a federally funded city program.³⁹ The Detroit Public Library uses residents of Eventide, a home for the aged, to maintain library services for the institution.⁴⁰ In the public library in Monticello, Illinois the aging in local nursing centers do reviewing of children’s books. Although the program was designed to provide encouragement for the reading of children’s material without offending the readers, both the readers and the library derive benefit from the project. The Monticello Library has also involved patients at one nursing center in repairing and maintaining books, to the mutual advantage of both library and patients.⁴¹ Both Boston and Cleveland Public Libraries involve volunteers from their elderly group to assist in planning, evaluating and implementing the programs.

In general, most libraries report that most older people are resistant to helping plan or administer the programs offered to them. The Wayne State University case studies found the aged users “emphatically inclined to let the library do the work and make the choices for them.”³⁸ However, lest librarians abandon the concept of involving aged users in planning for themselves, Robert Kastenbaum, professor of psychology at Wayne State University, warned a group of librarians in 1968 that “we cannot formulate a final and definitive description of the personality of the older person. . . . Different people are becoming old all the time . . . and in a society that is continuing to change its

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technologies and values within as well as between generations."⁴² Kas-tenbaum anticipated that the new aged may be better educated, native born with good health, receiving an adequate income, accustomed to a high standard of living, prepared for aging and retirement, less guilty about retirement and leisure time, more interested in continuing education and in creative, recreative and civic activities, more likely to accept programmed assistance, and more aware of themselves as a social force.⁴³

The *National Survey* found that libraries rarely hire aging persons, but that some libraries utilize aged persons as volunteers. Libraries who use volunteers generally report success, especially when volunteers have received formal training before beginning their duties.⁴⁴ There is need for a study of how libraries recruit, train and utilize volunteers and how their service might be evaluated.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFFING PATTERNS

A discussion of personnel for library service to the aged would not be complete without a comment on the wide variation in current staffing patterns. The *National Survey* found that "staffing of services to the aging is minimal."⁴⁵ Many libraries divide administrative responsibility for service to the aged between an extension and outreach unit, main library and branch personnel. Milwaukee Public Library has drawn much of the library's services into a single over-sixty unit, as has St. Louis. In Nassau County service to the aged is considered an important part of the responsibility of the coordinator of adult services. The state and public librarians who participated in Wayne State University's Institute on Services to the Aging recommended that "every library should designate a staff member with special responsibility for coordinating services to the aging."²⁵ The *National Survey* found divided responsibility for service to the aging the rule in both state and public libraries.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It must be granted that education for library service to the aged at all levels has been deficient and that library schools and state library agencies responsible for professional preparation of librarians are responsible, at least in part, for the low level of public library service to the aged. The following recommendations seem reasonable:

1. Following the model provided by Wayne State University and North Texas University, a few additional graduate library schools

- should offer joint library science-gerontology programs leading to a master's degree in library science with a specialty in service to the aging.
2. Graduate library schools, in cooperation with the Bureau of Libraries and Learning Resources, should offer many short (five-day) institutes in all the geographic regions of the nation to prepare trainers of trainers employed in state library agencies and large public library systems. These institutes should be cooperatively planned by the graduate library schools and should develop instructional materials usable in local training institutes.
 3. At least one institute should be planned to prepare library educators in the graduate library schools to better teach services to the aging at preservice and continuing education levels.
 4. State library agencies should take the initiative in offering continuing education to the public librarians of each state, leading to a coordinated, statewide plan for services to the aging.
 5. Guidelines should be developed for the recruiting, utilization and training of paraprofessional and volunteer personnel to work with the aging. Such guidelines might grow out of a survey of present practice.
 6. Public libraries should experiment with new organizational structures for service to the aged, including a position of coordinator of service to the aged.
 7. Content of professional preparation for library service to the aging should include education for service to handicapped, institutionalized and shut-in persons, group activities with the well aging, maintaining liaison with professional people from other disciplines and the establishment and maintenance of information-referral centers.

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