

The book contains no recognition or discussion of the need for library or support services for distance learning students. Librarians have been on the forefront of working with information technologies to provide remote services to students, and some of this information would have been a valuable contribution to this book.

Librarians and others interested in the use of technology to provide distance learning opportunities would be better served by looking elsewhere. This burgeoning field has sprouted many fine publications, both books and journals. People interested in the field of distance learning, or teaching in general, would be better served by the resources available through the Distance Learning Clearinghouse at the University of Wisconsin (<http://www.uwex.edu/disted/>) or Educause (<http://www.educause.edu>). Listservs such as DEOS-L keep practitioners and theorists alike abreast of new developments and issues while providing novices with advice and guidance. Within the library field, information on issues pertaining to library service and use in distance learning can be obtained through the *Journal of Library Services for Distance Education* (<http://www.westga.edu/~library/jlsde/>), as well as the January 2000 issue of the *Journal of Academic Librarianship*. The OFFCAMP listserv is dedicated specifically to the discussion of library-related services to remote students and provides an excellent forum for librarians engaged in these activities. Finally, the Distance Learning Section of ACRL is currently compiling a list of resources and other information to be included on its Web site.—*Barbara J. D'Angelo, Arizona State University, West.*

**Mates, Barbara T., with contributions by Doug Wakefield and Judith Dixon.**

*Adaptive Technology for the Internet: Making Electronic Resources Accessible to All.* Chicago: ALA, 2000. 192p. \$36 (ISBN 0-8389-0752-0). LC 98-31936.

"For people without disabilities, technology makes things convenient, whereas for

people with disabilities, it makes things possible . . . [this] fact brings with it an enormous responsibility because the reverse is also true. Inaccessible technology can make things absolutely impossible for disabled people . . ."

Could Helen Keller or Stephen Hawking use your electronic indexes, journals, or catalogs? Could they access your library Web page? There are an estimated 12 million visually handicapped individuals, 11.7 million physically handicapped people, and 39 million individuals with learning disabilities in the United States alone. With passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, it is incumbent upon academic and public libraries to make electronic resources available to all, including the disabled.

In *Adaptive Technology for the Internet*, Barbara Mates (Cleveland Public Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped), Judith Dixon (National Library Services for the Blind and Physically Handicapped), and Doug Wakefield (U.S. Access Board) offer a blueprint for electronic resource access through the design of universally accessible Web pages and the provision of adaptive computer workstations in libraries.

An introductory chapter, entitled "Could Helen Keller Use Your Library?" offers an overview of the issues of universal access and assistive technology. It contains a useful chart of disabilities and the types of accessibility solutions available for assisting persons with visual impairments, blindness, mobility impairments, deafness, or learning disabilities.

Chapter two, "Click (W)Here(?)!—Basic Document Design," describes how to design Web pages that are accessible to the disabled through adherence to guidelines set by the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). It is one thing to ensure that our own library Web pages are accessible, but what about the commercial databases and full-text sources to which our libraries subscribe? "[Librarians] should avoid subscribing to commercial sites that present obstacles to patrons us-

ing adaptive computer equipment. Who would pay to access a cardiology database written only in cuneiform? Why pay for databases that screen readers can't access?" As librarians, we need to think about holding the vendors responsible for providing accessible products.

Subsequent chapters cover large-print, voice, and Braille access to the Web; adaptive technology for the hearing impaired; adaptive hardware and software devices for persons with physical or learning disabilities; and stand-alone OCR reading computers. Individual products (almost exclusively for PCs) are described and often illustrated. Macintosh users will need to check listings in the vendor appendix. Additional chapters explain how to obtain funding for adaptive technology, train staff, publicize assistive technology to the wider community, and plan for, and phase in, adaptive technology. The authors conclude with "Begin somewhere and begin now. If all you can do is purchase a set of large print overlays, do it. If you cannot afford those, at least develop a list of accessibility features from products you have. Everyone is entitled to information and education. Do your part to help them acquire both!"

The book has several appendices. Appendix A, "Websites Helpful for Information on Accessibility," is an annotated list of URLs of more than eighty organizations, vendors, government programs, and resource centers pertaining to accessibility, disabilities, and adaptive technology, as well as digital library sites. This section has the potential to be extremely valuable for readers seeking additional information. Unfortunately, readers will find access to many of these URLs unavailable without resorting to searching by organization name in a search engine. In addition to the handful of URLs that have changed or disappeared, many are garbled. It is evident that this section of the book was not proof-read. Appendix B is an annotated list of selected vendors, manufacturers, and consultants. Both the PC and Macintosh platforms are included. Appendix C describes

six academic and public libraries in various stages of providing adaptive technology programs. Appendix D is a useful seven-page glossary containing definitions for accessibility and adaptive technology terms such as *membrane keyboard* and *Alt attribute*.

There is a six-page bibliography of articles, Web documents, books, and conference papers. Of the three dozen documents with URLs, however, approximately three-fourths were erroneous, incomplete (requiring additional clicking or searching), or incorrect (usually due to garbled URLs). The bibliography is followed by a two-page annotated list of resources for continuing education, consisting of journals, magazines, newsletters, and directories. The volume concludes with a detailed index.

Despite the occasional typographical mistake in the text of the book, and the staggering number of sloppily entered URLs in the appendices and bibliography, *Adaptive Technology for the Internet* is an important read for librarians and library administrators in academic, community college, and public libraries. The book also would be useful for campus administrators, campus disability center officers, and public library trustees.

For academic librarians, there are two additional useful publications on this subject. *Accessible Libraries on Campus: A Practical Guide for the Creation of Disability-Friendly Libraries* (ed. Tom McNulty; reviewed in *C&RL* 61:3), published in 1999 by ACRL, covers similar ground in terms of adaptive technology, Web access, and staff training, within the wider context of providing physical access to libraries and library services to the disabled. In addition, ARL SPEC Kit 243 (Apr. 1999), *Services to Users with Disabilities*, profiles provision of services to patrons with disabilities in thirteen university libraries. ALA Editions has made the entire text of the book (incorrect URLs and all) available free online at <http://www.ala.org/editions/openstacks>. —*J. Christina Smith, Boston University.*