that uncovers a prominent professor’s infidelity). Berger has decades of experience, and his notes do much to bring what students may view as dry material into the real world; they are often amusing and always interesting.

For all its humble claims, this work attempts to be the first definitive work on the subject of rare books and special collections librarianship, and it largely succeeds. The information within it can be found quickly, and those providing reference services at libraries supporting an MLIS program will benefit from the extensive listing of additional resources. The implication of this work could be the standardization of education across the special collections librarianship field. Berger’s work provides a strong framework for teaching, and a thorough reading of it—if ever a student is compelled to read it from cover to cover—would indeed provide the knowledge base to make “… anyone who works with rare books able to speak with authority, using the accepted vocabulary, and not perpetuate the errors that have been canonized over the centuries.”

As an introduction and jumping-off point, this work fills a vacuum in the special collections library canon; but, in a field that expands and evolves constantly, it remains to be seen how long a work like this can go without needing a revised edition. Rare Books and Special Collections will be a valuable resource for special collections librarians and students hoping to join their ranks. — Dana E. Hart, Metropolitan Museum of Art.


Elsie A. Rogers Halliday Okobi presents a thorough introduction for how libraries can meet the needs of individuals over the age of eighteen in Library Services for Adults in the 21st Century. As a member of the teaching faculty at Southern Connecticut State University’s Department of Information and Library Science, Okobi has written an overview that not only does cover important basics, it also points readers toward other current resources for further study. Guest author Professor Mary E. Brown, also of Southern Connecticut State University, contributes an excellent chapter on assessment of services.

Okobi’s book is divided in four sections, beginning with three chapters on the need for library services to adults, and the history and development of these types of services and programming. Most of this historical summary reflects on public library services to adults since the beginning of the American Library Association, and the author neatly summarizes the ALA committees, divisions, and projects that have reflected on or contributed to this aspect of library work. While Okobi is correct to point out that other private libraries, especially prior to the establishment of the ALA, functioned mainly as social clubs for adults, it would have been interesting in this section to reflect on how organizations such as Mechanics’ Institutes’ libraries across the United States originated to fill a gap in adult education for the general public through libraries. Many of these institutions were later absorbed by public library systems, and their impact on the development of library services for adults should not be ignored.

Following this introductory section, the second major part of this volume looks at how to plan for and assess this type of library service. Okobi does an excellent job of highlighting the importance of community analysis and assessment, examining the history of community assessment in public libraries and contextualizing the development of various assessment methods. While this book is not advertised as a “how to” manual for assessment, the thorough reflection on why, when, and how to conduct community assessment makes it an excellent point of reference.

Following this, Professor Mary E. Brown’s chapter on assessment of existing adult services explains the need to develop objectives for library services and, following this, to assess services against these objectives. Brown provides excellent guidelines on how
to develop objectives and outlines why libraries should aim to set up programs that will meet a wide variety of objectives. This chapter also provides an introduction to a variety of evaluation tools.

The bulk of Okobi’s book focuses on the third section, which lays out types of services for adults. Chapters focus on readers’ services, library services for the business community, lifelong learning, services to diverse populations, and special populations. Okobi includes tips for effective readers’ advisory, as well as an introduction to the long history of various types of business services in libraries. The chapter on lifelong learning examines the growing importance of ESL and literacy programs, services to immigrants, and citizenship services. The author stresses the fact that libraries should adapt to target an evolving adult population and looks at the importance of library support for “serious leisure” within today’s increasingly aging population. Discussion here of support for technology literacy is valuable but brief; it would be interesting to reflect on the growing role that libraries can play for online learning, such as serving MOOC learners.

Okobi’s chapter on services to diverse populations includes not only suggestions on how the library can serve a variety of racial and social groups, but also how the library can connect with these groups outside the library and collaborate with community organizations. This recommendation is valuable. The author highlights the importance of libraries to immigrant and LGBT populations and pulls in ideas of the library as placemaker, as participant in the public sphere, and as cultural heritage institution. The role of libraries in breaking down social exclusion is given token mention; this concept could have strengthened the chapter by playing a larger theme throughout. Frameworks and guidelines for serving diverse populations are mentioned for the reader to explore further, and an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of these frameworks would make an excellent addition.

Following this, a separate chapter on special populations looks at library services for the poor, homeless, aging, and physically handicapped. Okobi provides an excellent overview of ADA requirements that all librarians should be familiar with. The separation of chapters on services to diverse populations and special populations was mildly confusing; a close reading of these chapters makes it appear that this distinction exists simply because separate organizations have created distinct standards and frameworks for serving these populations, and thus it has become easiest for the library community to speak of services for racial and social groups separately from those for economically and intellectually disadvantaged users. This is unfortunate, and no fault of the author’s. Okobi’s separation of chapters for these populations inadvertently highlights a gap in the library community’s approach to social inclusion for the populations it serves.

The fourth and final section of this book looks at competencies for librarians who work in adult services, tying these back to the themes of previous chapters. Professional development opportunities and resources for this field are also outlined.

While this book focuses from the outset on public libraries, wider application for all types of libraries, including academic libraries, can be found especially in the section on community assessment and evaluation of existing library services. Additionally, while the author focuses on services to adults in public libraries, it must be noted that academic librarians are also in the business of serving adults; some of Okobi’s reflections on the changing demographics of adult populations will prove useful to college and research librarians today.

As a textbook for library and information professionals, Library Services for Adults in the 21st Century is thorough and clearly organized. Okobi draws well on the existing literature, and library school students will be grateful that the author makes sure throughout to point the reader toward other relevant and authoritative resources. The


If you have been waiting to find a comprehensive strategy before starting a volunteer program at your library, your wait is over. While volunteerism has not been a top priority in many academic libraries in the past, the current state of college budgets may make recruiting volunteers a more attractive prospect. Leslie and Glen Holt’s book, Success with Library Volunteers, offers an extensive look into the past, present, and future of volunteers in all types of libraries. The book is clear and concise with many practical examples. Each chapter is accentuated with comprehensive notes and contains a case study of a successful volunteer program in the King County Washington Library System.

The Holts begin with four chapters laying the foundation for a successful volunteer program. In chapter 1, “The Basics,” the authors discuss the changing face of the library volunteer as well as the necessity of setting a solid infrastructure. Chapter 2, “Hidden Volunteers,” and chapter 3, “Popular Types of Volunteers,” define the various types of library associates. First are those whom we do not generally call volunteers such as library founders and advocates. Interestingly, the Holts also identify volunteerism as a significant way to reach out and add to cultural diversity. Volunteers can lend experience and provide instruction, as well as providing assistance and direct special projects. Chapter 4, “Planning,” addresses constructive advice for management including a list of practical questions (“Can you define a needed volunteer project in a clear and realistic way?”) and leadership advice.

The final five chapters of the Holts’ text will take your volunteer program forward and into the future. Chapter 5, “Recruitment, Retention, and Recognition,” discusses three very important stages in the volunteer program process. Recruiting and keeping the best volunteers are key to the success of your volunteer program. Tips on where to look for volunteer recruits are extensive. The text also contains information about applications, communication, and volunteer recognition.

Chapter 6, “Evaluating Your Volunteer Program,” is one of the hot topics in higher education recently, and the Holts cover every aspect of evaluation as it pertains to a volunteer program. Assessing costs and benefits of any program is important, and the Holts thoroughly explore how to evaluate a volunteer program. Subjects in this chapter include training and supervision of volunteers, outcome planning and evaluation, measuring impact, and reporting results and outcomes. The last section of chapter 6 takes up the matter of problem volunteers. They stress training and positive reinforcement.

Chapter 7, “Volunteers That Require Special Attention,” addresses specific types of volunteer groups aimed mostly at public libraries: Friends of the Library, youth, and agency partnerships. Of particular interest is a brief section on working with volunteers with disabilities. Though aimed at public librarians, the information about working with volunteers from different populations is interesting for all librarians.

The Holts continue to take us forward in their discussion of “Volunteer Management Information Systems” in chapter 8 and, in chapter 9, “The Future of Library Volunteerism.” Although using an electronic information system to track volunteer service may seem excessive, library systems have benefitted from the ability to automate their program tracking. The authors include descriptions of some volunteer management information systems along with a considerable list of suggested information categories. The final chapter begins with the statement that the text has been about three things: libraries, librarians, and volunteers. Chapter 9 anticipates the trends and

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