DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 376 855   IR 055 334

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TITLE   ADA Compliance: What Are We Doing?
PUB DATE   Jul 94
NOTE   36p.; Master's Research Paper, Kent State
                University.
PUB TYPE   Dissertations/Theses - Undetermined (040)

EDRS PRICE   MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS   *Accessibility (for Disabled); *Access to
                Information; *Assistive Devices (for Disabled);
                *Compliance (Legal); Library Facilities; Library
                Funding; Library Planning; *Library Services; *Public
                Libraries; Surveys; User Needs (Information)
IDENTIFIERS   *Americans with Disabilities Act 1990; Ohio

ABSTRACT
                The purpose of this study is to identify strategies,
policies, and practices of Ohio public libraries in complying with
the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Small to medium
public libraries were surveyed to gather information about the ways
libraries are providing equal access to materials and services for
patrons with disabilities. One hundred and four libraries responded
to questions about their planning for compliance; physical access to
the building; alternative materials and services such as audiotapes
and large print books; attempts to solicit patron input concerning
ADA compliance; funding for adaptive equipment; and creative
solutions for providing equal access such as delivery and retrieving
materials for patrons, installation of bells, additional lighting,
and computer terminals with larger screens. The results of the survey
indicate that libraries are trying to provide quality services to
their public. The strongest areas of compliance are with physical
access to the building and provision of materials in alternative
formats. Areas of concern include the fact that 40% of libraries have
not performed the mandated self-evaluation of ADA compliance, some
libraries' perception that they have no disabled people in their
communities and their anger at being mandated to comply with the law.
The appendix contains the questionnaire and cover letter. (Contains 8
references.) (DGM)

ED 376 855

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ADA COMPLIANCE: WHAT ARE WE DOING?

A Master's Research Paper submitted to the
Kent State University School of Library Science
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Master of Library Science

by

Albert Scheimann

July, 1994

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Master's Research Paper by

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B.A., Kent State University, 1992

M.L.S., Kent State University, 1994

Approved by

Adviser _____ Date_7-10-94_

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Abstract

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is
thought by many to be the most important civil rights
legislation of the past two decades. This study attempts to
identify strategies, policies and practices of public
libraries in the state of Ohio to comply with the letter and
spirit of this act. By means of a survey of the medium to
small size public libraries in the state, information has
been gathered to show what means and methods, both standard
and innovative, are actually being used by these libraries
to provide equal access to materials and services for
patrons with disabilities.

The results suggest that although work is being done to
serve patrons, planning, funding, library perception of the
community, and perhaps attitudinal barriers may be creating
problems.

The findings of this study have been offered to
interested participants in the hope of enhancing public
library services throughout the state.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Public libraries in the United States are currently
obligated to comply with the Americans with Disabilities
Act(ADA) of 1990, Public Law 101-336. The purpose of this
study was to gather, by means of a voluntary survey, data
from public libraries concerning their current planning for,
evaluation and provision of services to patrons with
disabilities. The gathered data were then analyzed in order
to identify common trends as well as unique solutions
concerning the problem of compliance. The results of this
study have been offered to interested survey participants
for comparison with their practices as well as to allow them
to discover practices of other libraries that they may wish
to implement.

The ADA was signed into law on July 26, 1990 and was
designed to end discrimination against persons with
disabilities and bring them into the economic and social
mainstream of American life. The law applies to all
publicly funded entities and libraries are specifically
mentioned. The ADA requires that by January 26, 1992,
public entities shall have designated a person to coordinate
compliance activities and that by January 26, 1993 they

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shall have completed a self-evaluation of current policies, practices and services in order to make necessary modifications. If complaints are filed against an entity for not being accessible, these are to be treated as civil rights issues. The public library tradition of equal access to materials and services is surely grounds for expecting that these libraries agree with the spirit and intent of the ADA and are attempting to achieve compliance.

One major stumbling block to this compliance may be the cost. Although ADA does not require that a public entity take actions that would cause undue financial burdens, it is the responsibility of the entity to prove the problems created to be unmanageable. The law states that barriers to accessibility must be removed if "readily achievable." The United States Department of Justice defines this as "easily accomplished without much difficulty or expense." However, if the initial means are not deemed "readily achievable" then, it is the library's responsibility to make its services and materials available through alternative methods.

It has been the objective of this study to identify what evaluation and planning procedures Ohio public libraries are using for the provision of services and materials to patrons with disabilities. It was also intended to help to identify what accommodations have been put in place to serve those patrons' information needs. It

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is expected that this report of these strategies and methods will provide participating libraries with a benchmark against which to compare their own practices as well as a collection of alternative methods they may wish to implement toward ADA compliance.

Since most of the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act have only recently become effective, this study is designed to be a preliminary one and descriptive in nature. Due to the limited population that this project has surveyed, any suggestions of methods of ADA compliance have certainly not exhausted the possibilities. Although ADA defines disability as

> ...with respect to an individual a physical or
> mental impairment that substantially limits one or
> more of the major life activities of such
> individual; a record of such an impairment; or
> being regarded as having such an impairment(s
> 12102)

for the purposes of this study, 'persons with disabilities' has been limited to include only those with mobility impairments, hearing impairments, or visual impairments.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The need for compliance with ADA by public libraries
has been well represented in the literature. A fine
overview of the law by Lewis and its ramifications for
public libraries has been written (Lewis 1992). The author
outlines the four titles contained in ADA and how they
impact the areas of employment, public services and
entities, public transportation, and telecommunications.
His article examines the requirements of physical access to
facilities as well as the demands placed on libraries to
provide access to services either by means of assistive
devices or through aides. Lewis strongly emphasizes the
need for librarians to be leaders in providing equal access
to persons with disabilities.

There has been work done showing the practical and
legal need for libraries to institute a planning process for
ADA compliance (Pack and Foos 1992). Full compliance with
the law demands elimination of all discrimination against
persons with disabilities in all aspects of an entity's
operation. This, they argue, can best be done by becoming
familiar with the text of the law itself, appointing a
library employee as ADA coordinator for the library,

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evaluating current practices and policies, implementing
changes needed to allow persons with disabilities to access
all library programs and services, providing training for
all library staff and related personnel, and soliciting
feedback from library users with disabilities. Their
article includes a descriptive list of sources to aid
libraries in this undertaking.

Several works have offered definitions and specific
answers and suggestions for the planning process and the
elimination of architectural and other barriers (Natale
1991, Gunde 1991, Gunde 1992). Natale provides an extensive
list of modifications that are considered to be readily
achievable such as installing ramps and repositioning
telephones. Gunde addresses not only specifics such as what
accommodations might be considered adequate for serving a
patron who is blind, but the need for being proactive rather
than reactive in these provisions.

One of the first steps required by ADA of publicly
supported libraries was to have developed and completed a
self-evaluation by January 26, 1993. Although the rules for
ADA specify this procedure, the Federal government did not
design a self-evaluation form. Natale has prepared and
presented a model self-evaluation that can be used "as is"
or modified to fit a library's specific needs in evaluating
the accessibility of their services (Natale 1992).

In this same article Natale (1992) reports on the only

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surveys of library accessibility this researcher has found.
In 1985 and again in 1990, the University of Illinois
Library Research Center analyzed data from public libraries
in the state of Illinois to determine their accessibility.
The information collected dealt largely with architectural
accessibility and supported the hypothesis that at least
half of the public library facilities in the state of
Illinois were not fully accessible to the disabled. This
researcher found no reports of practices in current use by
libraries to accommodate access to materials and services by
patrons with hearing or visual impairments.

CHAPTER 3

Method

This study surveyed medium to small size public
libraries in the state of Ohio in order to determine what
measures are being taken to evaluate and plan for provision
of services and materials to patrons with disabilities as
well as to determine what accommodations are currently in
place to serve those patrons information needs. This
researcher finds two strong reasons for having limited the
survey to these smaller institutions: the large and very
large libraries in the state may have strategies and
solutions that are not readily applicable to the smaller
libraries, and the smaller libraries, with the ability to
know a larger percentage of their patrons, may have a
unique, personal understanding of the needs of members of
their community. It was expected that this information
would not only allow the participants to evaluate their
policies and procedures relative to those of their
colleagues, but to also act as an aid to creative solutions
to the problem of equal access to library facilities and
services.

The directors of the 183 public libraries with an FTE
staff of twenty-five or less as reported in <u>Statistics of</u>

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Ohio Libraries 1993 (State Library of Ohio 1993) were
invited to participate. Branches of these facilities were
not contacted for two reasons. First, this would have
increased the size of the population to a rather
unmanageable dimension and second, the possible overlap of
responses between connected main and branch facilities might
have led to duplication in responses.

The instrument that was used in this survey is a
questionnaire consisting of 20 closed-ended questions, three
semi-open-ended questions and one completely open-ended
opportunity to expand upon any of the questions or to
describe alternative methods of providing accessibility to
patrons with disabilities (see appendix A). The instrument
was developed, in part, using Natale's ADA self-evaluation
(Natale 1992) as a model along with suggestions derived from
the sources mentioned above in the literature review as well
as conversations with interested consumers and
professionals. The closed-ended questions are grouped in
five areas and may all be answered yes, no, or not
applicable, while the three semi-open-ended questions
attempt to elicit descriptions of creative or innovative
methods of compliance.

The first three questions deal with specific ADA
planning objectives. Questions four through eleven address
accommodations for patrons with mobility impairments.
Questions twelve through sixteen are concerned with visual

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impairments. Seventeen through nineteen deal with accommodations for those with hearing impairments while question twenty is concerned with overall planning.

This instrument was sent to those invited to participate along with a cover letter explaining the project (see appendix B). After two weeks, those not responding were sent a follow-up letter along with an additional copy of the instrument.

Collected data were summarized and analyzed and implications of the results have been discussed. This researcher feels that some of the most valuable and interesting information has been derived from the semi-open questions and the open-ended opportunity for participants to describe what their library has done to provide equal access to services and materials for patrons with disabilities.

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CHAPTER 4

Results

The instrument was sent to the 183 libraries identified
above. After two weeks, 94 completed questionnaires had
been returned. At this time, follow up letters and an
additional copy of the questionnaire were sent to the non-
respondents. This resulted in ten additional responses for
a total of 104 or a 57 percent total response. The
responding libraries ranged in size from 24.4 to .57 FTE's
with a mean of 9.4 employees and a median size of 8.8.

Although the questionnaires contained no identifiers so
as to maintain the anonymity of the respondents, the return
envelopes were coded in order to determine who had responded
and facilitate the distribution of follow-up letters. This
allowed for the ordering of the responses according to the
relative size of the library before the instruments were
removed from their envelopes. This was done in order to
identify any trends in responses in relationship to the size
of the responding library.

Planning for Compliance

The four questions concerned with planning for ADA
compliance produced some rather surprising results (see

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Table 1).

TABLE 1

PLANNING FOR COMPLIANCE

	Y #/%	N #/%	N/A #/%
Named ADA Coordinator	38/37%	66/63%	
Self-evaluation Completed	65/63%	39/37%	
Awareness and Training Prog.	16/16%	88/84%	
Board reviewed Policies	61/59%	43/41%	

Sixty-three percent of the respondents indicated that their

library had performed a self-evaluation for ADA compliance

and 36 percent had appointed a staff member as ADA

coordinator. Only six of the libraries (16%) who had named

a coordinator had not yet completed a self-evaluation.

Sixteen libraries (16%) indicated they had a disability

awareness and training program for their staff in place and

all of these libraries were in the top half of the

respondents in terms of the relative size of the library.

Fifty-nine percent of the libraries reported that the

library board had reviewed the procedures and policies

intended to ensure equal access to services and materials by

persons with disabilities.

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Physical Access

The largest number of positive responses came in answer to the questions concerning physical access to the building itself (see Table 2).

TABLE 2

PHYSICAL ACCESS

	Y #/%	N #/%	N/A #/%
Accessible Parking	90/87%	13/12%	1/ 1%
Accessible Walkway	100/96%	4/ 4%	
Entrance at least 32 in.	99/95%	5/ 5%	
Doors easily opened	77/74%	27/26%	
Appropriate aisle width	74/71%	30/29%	
Appropriate desk and counter height	38/37%	66/63%	
Ramps/Elevators	49/47%	21/20%	34/33%
Braille/Raised letter elevator controls	28/27%	31/30%	45/43%
Braille/Raised letter signage	27/26%	77/74%	

Nearly 87 percent reported availability of parking spaces large enough to accommodate a van equipped with a wheelchair

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lift (one respondent answered 'not applicable' as the library had no parking that they controlled). Over 95 percent indicated that the walkway into the building was at least 36 inches wide and in good repair and that the entrance door was at least 32 inches wide. Seventy-four percent of those surveyed answered that the entrance door could be easily opened with one hand (six libraries had automatic door openers).

Once the patron had made their way into the building however, accommodations were not as common. While 71 percent of responding libraries had aisles that were all at least 36 inches wide, less than 50 percent had catalogs, displays, reference materials, and service counters at appropriate heights. Of the seventy libraries (67%) that had more than one public level, forty-nine (70%) had them connected by ramps or elevators and only fifty percent of those with elevators indicated that the elevator controls included Braille or raised lettering at appropriate heights.

Nine of those surveyed (9%) reported that they had made inexpensive physical modifications to their facilities. The most common modification was to lengthen the legs on reading and computer tables in order to accommodate wheelchairs. One library had removed the skirting from several existing tables in order to provide required knee and foot room. There was one report of cutting the legs off of a standing-height card catalog in order to make it accessible to

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patrons using wheelchairs.

Alternate Materials and Services

Approximately ninety percent of the respondents reported that audio taped and large print materials were available for persons with visual impairments but, only twenty-two libraries (21%) included any materials in Braille in their collections (see Table 3).

TABLE 3

ALTERNATE MATERIALS/SERVICES

	Y #/%	N #/%	N/A #/%
Audio tapes	92/88%	12/12%	
Large print	99/95%	5/ 5%	
Braille	22/21%	82/79%	
Reading machine	13/13%	91/87%	
Staff will read documents	82/79%	22/21%	
TDD	18/17%	86/83%	
Closed caption video	58/56%	46/44%	
ASL literate staff	20/19%	84/81%	

Twenty-six percent of those surveyed stated that directional signs in their facilities were well lit and included Braille and raised lettering. Although only 13

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percent of the libraries had some sort of adaptive reading machines available for the use of persons with visual impairments, 79 percent said that staff members were available to read documents for those who might need assistance.

Concerning accommodations for persons with hearing impairments, the libraries reported as follows. Fifty-eight libraries (56%) had closed caption video tapes available and thirteen of these (13%) had made this a searchable item in their OPACs. Twenty libraries (19%) had at least one staff member who could speak American Sign Language, although all but two of these commented that these individuals were only minimally fluent. Eighteen libraries (17%) had telecommunication devices for the deaf (TDDs) and fifty-two percent of the remainder mentioned that with the availability of Ameritech's statewide Ohio Relay Service, library based TDDs were no longer felt to be necessary.

Patron Input

An open-ended question inquired as to the library's attempts to solicit patron input concerning ADA compliance. Seven libraries (7%) responded that they had, in fact, done this. Four libraries (4%) indicated that they had formally included one or more patrons with physical limitations on their ADA evaluation committee. Another library had invited members of the local "Handicapped Society" to tour the building and to make suggestions. This same respondent

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reported that the library was able to implement many of their suggestions. The remaining two libraries (2%) had distributed evaluation forms to several patrons with various physical impairments. One of these respondents reported that none of the evaluations were returned although some verbal comments were received. These comments seemed to indicate that patrons realized that many physical space limitations could not be easily solved and that they preferred additional materials and services to wider aisles and signage.

Funding

Ten libraries (10%) responded that they had solicited donations of adaptive equipment or funds to purchase such equipment and all of those so responding stated that donations were readily forthcoming. Local and national foundations, fraternal organizations and social clubs, as well as local societies for the blind were named as sources of donations. One respondent wrote that this seemed to be a good idea and that her or his library would try to implement it as soon as possible.

Creative Solutions

Thirty-one of the responding libraries (30%) took advantage of the opportunity to expand upon or describe alternative measures their libraries were taking to help

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provide equal access to information for persons with disabilities. Several respondents also used this opportunity to comment on the Americans with Disabilities Act and public library responsibility to accommodate patrons' needs.

Eleven respondents (11%) commented that after evaluating their facilities it had been determined that a new facility or a remodeling and renovation of the existing one would be required to comply with ADA and that they had either recently rebuilt, were in the process of doing so, or were in the planning phase. All but one of these respondents indicated that an architect familiar with ADA regulations had been consulted. One reporter indicated that their library had had their building project partially funded through a LSCA Title II grant designed specifically to help meet ADA guidelines.

A popular strategy was home delivery of library materials. Twenty five libraries (24%) reported either a formal or informal practice of taking requests for materials by phone and then arranging for those materials to be delivered to the patron. This notion of informal arrangements for accommodating patrons' needs occurred in other comments as well.

A number of the respondents reported that the library staff was available and willing to retrieve materials for patrons not able to do so on their own. Others felt that

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standard inter-library loans would allow them to obtain
specialized materials for their patrons with special needs
and that automation projects would allow for access to their
collections by persons who might otherwise not be able to
use the catalog. Five respondents (5%) expressed the
thought that libraries, with their service orientation,
should find no particular difficulty serving the needs of a
patron regardless of their limitations; phrases such as
"equal standard of quality", "simple kindness and
consideration", and "provision of necessary services no
matter their limitations" characterized these responses.

Other individual responses included the following. One
library has installed a sign and a bell at the door
informing any one who needs assistance to please ring and
staff will respond. A lift has been installed in a
bookmobile and staff trained to operate it at one location.
Two libraries reported particular attempts to accommodate
patrons with hearing impairments, one by making sign
interpreters available for workshops, and another has
acquired "hearing assistance mechanisms" for persons in the
audience in their meeting room programs. Other attempts at
accommodation included adjusting closures on doors so that
they close more slowly, installation of additional lighting,
computer terminals with larger than normal screens and
characters, and inviting patrons with disabilities to
address the board concerning library accessibility.

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Some responses concerning ADA and library compliance were, however, less positive. One respondent wrote "Libraries as a whole have always tried to include disabled people, however I have a $50,000 elevator that is used by less than six people! People must soon learn that a lot of things in life aren't fair. There just are not enough resources to provide every individual and every group with everything he, she, or it desires. It seems to me, library staff does more and more to serve laws and less and less to serve people." Another stated "I truly believe that libraries and other public buildings should be accessible to all people. However, I also believe it is unrealistic to issue unfunded mandates given the fiscal restraints facing state funded institutions nationwide." Along this same vein a third wrote "We simply can't afford it so we are ignoring it."

Lastly, some other responses questioned the need for library services for those with disabilities. One respondent stated "We have one child in a wheel chair in town. He has no trouble getting around here. We've not had a need for adaptive equipment." Another wrote "No one has ever been into the library that could not see and also no one in a wheelchair. We have had no problems." Finally, one response said "In the eleven years I've been director of this library no one has ever come in in a wheelchair and I doubt that they ever will." The individuals making these

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last three statements were from libraries spanning nearly the entire size range of those surveyed; none of these three reported having performed a self-evaluation for ADA compliance nor had they named an ADA coordinator.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The results of this survey seem to indicate that the
libraries responding are, in general, trying to provide
quality services to their public. Many responses point out
that this is due to the fact that is what libraries do and
it is not merely an attempt to comply with federal law.

With ten participants reporting soliciting donations,
eleven reporting plans for renovation and remodeling, and
other individual mentions of financial concerns, the funding
for providing accommodations may be seen as a legitimate
concern. With the success that some libraries have had
soliciting contributions to offset some of the expenses
incurred, it is hoped that more might pursue this option.
Some have reported inexpensive modifications to existing
equipment and furnishings and this too may offer a way to
lessen the financial burden.

The responses have indicated that these libraries'
strongest area of compliance is in the area of physical
access to the building. Since the library has traditionally
been a place to which people come, this is an understandable
first step. Provision of materials in alternative and
additional formats coupled with a willingness and

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availability of staff for assistance seems to be another area in which the reporting libraries are strong, although this is still not a universal accommodation.

Concern may be appropriate though in considering the libraries attempts at planning for ADA compliance. The Americans with Disabilities Handbook clearly states that although public entities with less than fifty employees are not required to appoint an employee as ADA coordinator, all public entities were required to have performed an evaluation of each program and service for ADA compliance by January 26, 1993 (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and U.S. Department of Justice 1991). This requirement has been frequently reported in the professional library literature as well (Natale 1991, Natale 1992, Pack and Foos 1992). One must wonder then what has happened at the nearly forty percent who responded in the study that their libraries had not as yet performed a self-evaluation. Perhaps ignorance of this requirement is at fault. If this is in fact the case, one might wonder if having a staff member responsible for coordinating ADA compliance efforts, even though this is not mandated for these smaller institutions, might be to everyone's benefit.

Another area of concern may be the perception by some respondents that their service community is without persons with disabilities. While this might in fact be the case, it may also be the case that persons with disabilities are

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simply not using the library. As is always the case,
community surveys of non-users as well as users of the
library are neccesary in order to be proactive rather than
reactive to the community's needs. It may be fair to be
concerned with the library administrations' acceptance of
the status quo rather than adequately planning for the
future.

Although they were not predominant, some responses seem
to show an anger toward the mandates of the law. The source
of this apparent anger may be a concern. If the perception
is that these libraries are being mandated to accommodate a
nonexistent portion of the community, what is being done may
be more to comply with the law than to serve the community.
With the many advances being made in medicine and
rehabilitative practice, it is likely that persons with
disabilities will be even more prevalent in our society.
Providing quality library services and materials for a
diverse community can indeed be a daunting task but, one
must hope that government regulations do not create an
environment in which the desire to achieve this quality will
suffer.

Future research may do well to inquire into these
areas. As in all areas of library operation, planning is
essential. It would be helpful to know if the libraries who
have not done a self-evaluation are unaware of this
requirement, ignoring it, or of the belief that it somehow

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doesn't apply to their institutions. The data seem to suggest that the libraries who had named an ADA coordinator were also likely to have performed an ADA self-evaluation. Perhaps a working knowledge of the ADA can be enhanced by having an individual responsible for the institution's compliance.

Inquiry into library perception of the community served may also provide valuable information. While it is always difficult to identify and profile non-users of the library, it may be critical to the goal of equal access addressed by the ADA. The three respondents that suggested that there were no disabled individuals in their communities were from libraries who had not performed an ADA self-evaluation nor had they appointed a coordinator. Once again, it may be suggested that an individual made responsible for compliance may become more familiar with the law's requirements and in turn, the strong and weak points of the library's services and those who may use them.

A final suggestion is that of researching the attitudes of librarians toward government regulation of library operation. It would be very valuable to understand whether it is the regulations themselves that are perceived as the problem or the interference of non-librarians in the business of libraries. This researcher would like to think that accommodating the needs of patrons is foremost in the minds of librarians. If this is indeed the case, it may be

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that the law is seen as overwhelming. This again may be a
problem that can be alleviated by means of an ADA
coordinator. Familiarity with the act may allow for the
development of a better understanding of its spirit and may
facilitate attempts at compliance.

This report is not intended to provide generalizable
information, but merely to identify some suggestions and
problems that libraries and librarians may have in trying to
comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. I thank
those who have participated and hope we can all continue to
help one another boldly go where everyone should have been
able all along.

Instruction: Please answer the following questions as they apply to your main library facility by marking yes(Y), no(N) or not applicable(N/A) and return in the enclosed envelope. If you have comments concerning your branches, include them at the end of the survey. Returning this questionnaire implies that you have consented to participate in this study.

	Y	N	N/A
1. Has your library appointed a staff member as ADA coordinator?	_	_	_
2. Has your library completed a self-evaluation for ADA compliance?	_	_	_
3. Is a disability awareness and training program provided for library employees?	_	_	_
4. Are accessible parking spaces (16 feet wide with an 8 foot access aisle) available?	_	_	_
5. Is the walkway into the library at least 36 inches wide and in good repair?	_	_	_
6. Is the opening of the entrance door at least 32 inches wide?	_	_	_
7. Can doors be opened easily with one hand?	_	_	_
8. Are all aisles at least 36 inches wide?	_	_	_
9. Are catalogs, material displays and reference materials located no more than 54 inches high?	_	_	_
10. If service counters are higher than 36 inches, is additional space no higher than 34 inches provided?	_	_	_
11. If there is more than one public level, are they connected by ramps or elevators?	_	_	_
12. Do elevator controls have Braille and raised lettering mounted 35 to 54 inches above the floor?	_	_	_
13. Are directional signs well lit and do they include Braille and raised lettering?	_	_	_
14. Does your library have materials available in the following formats:			
taped texts?	_	_	_
large print?	_	_	_
Braille?	_	_	_

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                                                                    Y   N   N/A

15. Does your library have a reading machine   __   __ __
available for persons with visual impairments?

16. Are staff available to read documents for   __   __ __
persons with visual impairments?

17. Does your library have a telecommunication   __   __ __
device for the deaf (TDD)?

18. Does you library have available closed caption   __   __ __
video tapes?

19. Is any member of the library staff able to speak   __   __ __
and interpret American Sign Language?

20. Has your library board reviewed procedures and   __   __ __
policies to ensure that persons with disabilities
have access to library services and materials?

21. Some libraries have solicited consumer input   __   __ __
concerning ADA compliance by means of creative
signage such as "Accommodation Spoken Here" and the
use of ADA suggestion boxes. Has your library used
these or similar techniques? If yes, please
explain.

22. Some libraries have modified table and carrel   __   __ __
heights by affixing boards to the bottoms of the
legs in order to raise them. Has your library tried
this or any other creative architectural means? If
yes, please explain.

23. Some libraries have solicited donations of   __   __ __
adaptive equipment or funds to purchase such
equipment from organizations such as the Lions Club.
Has your library tried this or similar strategies?
If yes, please explain.

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Although the Americans with Disabilities Act does not
specify compliance by any of the methods possibly suggested
by the preceding questions, it does mandate that public
libraries as public entities must reasonably accommodate all
persons with disabilities. Please use the following space
to expand upon any of the above or to describe alternative
methods your library is using to provide equal access to
information to persons with disabilities.

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Re: <u>ADA Compliance: What Are We Doing?</u>
April 15, 1994

Dear Director:

I am a graduate student in the School of Library and
Information Science at Kent State University. As part of
the requirements for my master's degree I am conducting a
study about compliance with the Americans with Disabilities
Act (ADA). Enclosed, please find a questionnaire concerning
equal access to information for persons with disabilities.
This information is being gathered from public libraries in
the State of Ohio to determine what steps they are taking to
comply with the act.

Confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed as you do not
need to sign your name to the questionnaire. Although the
return envelopes are coded in order to determine who has
responded, the questionnaires contain no identifiers and
will be retained separately from the envelopes; only the
investigator has access to the survey data. There is no
penalty of any kind if you should choose to not participate
in this study or if you would withdraw from participation at
any time. Although your participation is extremely valuable
to this research, it is completely voluntary. A copy of the
results of this study will be available upon request.

If you have any further questions, please contact me at
(216) 454-1774 or Dr. Richard Rubin, my research advisor, at
(216) 672-2782. If you have any further questions regarding
research at Kent State University you may contact Dr. Eugene
Wenninger, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, at
(216) 672-2851.

Thank you very much for your cooperation. Please return the
completed questionnaire within two weeks in the enclosed
self-addressed stamped envelope to me at the following
address:

Albert Scheimann
1238 15th Street NW
Canton, Ohio 44703

Sincerely,

Albert Scheimann
Graduate Student

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