



# **Poor People and Library Services**

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In 1996, nearly 40 million United States citizens were reported to be living in poverty. This enormous number set in conjunction with the rapid growth in demand for more information technology presents librarians with a wrenching dilemma: how to maintain a modern facility while increasing services to the economically disadvantaged. Karen Venturella has gathered a diverse group of librarians and facilitators-including Khafre Abif, head of Childrens Services for the Mount Vernon Public Library in New York; Wizard Marks, who directs the Chicago Lake Security Center in its mission to improve the area; Lillian Marrero, who has concentrated on providing services to the Spanish speaking population; Kathleen de la Pena McCook, director of the School of Library and Information Science at the University of South Florida; and 15 others--to find strategies for dealing with the current crisis of disparity. These writers address both the theoretical issues of ensuring access to information regardless of ability to pay, and the practical means for meeting the needs of low income populations. Appendices include the ALAs Policy on Library Services to Poor People, The Library Bill of Rights, and a listing of poverty-related organizations.



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