

SOURCES

Taylor and Francis, 2004). Although a decent work in its own right, the single volume contains only 120 entries, far fewer than the work reviewed here. *Women in the American Civil War*, with its crisp black and white photographs, highly readable text, and pleasing layout, would be an appropriate purchase for any public or academic library.—Mike Bemis, Assistant Librarian, Washington County Library, St. Paul, Minnesota

Professional Materials

Karen Antell

Editor

A Good Match: Library Career Opportunities for Graduates of Liberal Arts Colleges. By Rebecca A. Watson-Boone. Chicago: ALA, 2007. 432 p. \$125 (ISBN 978-0-8389-0941-6).

In *A Good Match: Library Career Opportunities for Graduates of Liberal Arts Colleges*, Rebecca A. Watson-Boone traces the connection between a liberal arts education and a subsequent career in librarianship. The work is based on an extensive survey of 431 librarians who graduated between 1962 and 2000 from eight liberal arts colleges (Carleton, Denison, Earlham, Grinnell, Kalamazoo, Lawrence, Macalester, and Swarthmore). The alumni report on their undergraduate experiences, their decisions to become librarians, their graduate school experiences, their perceptions of the profession, and their service orientations. Responses are presented for the group as a whole, by undergraduate institution, and by cohort.

According to the author, anecdotal evidence suggests that nationally, liberal arts colleges tend to send a larger percentage of their alumni to library schools than do universities. Though this is likely true, it is probably due to the fact that many students at universities have chosen a professional path (business or nursing, for instance). It would be interesting to know whether students graduating from liberal arts programs at universities enter the library profession at a similar rate to those from liberal arts colleges. Based on a sample of the alumni in the study that took the Myers-Briggs Type Inventory, the author notes that the librarians from the liberal arts schools are quite similar in profile to the librarians who took the same test in a large national study, and that the results of this study may be generalized to the profession as a whole.

Watson-Boone's data allow her to make a range of observations, many of which are not particularly surprising. For instance, critical thinking skills and a respect for diverse opinions—both of which are stressed in liberal arts education and librarianship—are seen as important aspects of their undergraduate experience by all respondents. In tracing the respondents' view of librarians, Watson-Boone notes that the percentage with a positive perception generally increases as they enter graduate school, but that the percentage with a

mixed view also increases: as they become more familiar with the profession, some become more critical. In responding to questions about their satisfaction with the career path they had chosen, most of the respondents indicate that they are generally happy. Though respondents indicate that the service aspect of librarianship is important to them, their answers to questions about civic engagement show that this service orientation does not generally reach beyond their professional lives. Watson-Boone does a good job of relating her analysis to studies of librarianship, liberal arts schools, and higher education in general. Two appendixes include the data sets broken down by college and cohort for those who want to explore the figures in more detail.

Watson-Boone believes that there are several audiences for this book: liberal arts students interested in the field and their career counselors; library administrators and human resources officers; library and information science programs that are interested in recruiting liberal arts students; liberal arts colleges that may wish to use it as a tool for analyzing their success in developing students for careers; and those interested in studying professions in general. Because of this range of audiences, the book includes details about the profession that most librarians will find fairly basic. Most liberal arts students, even those seriously considering a career in librarianship, will find the book too detailed. It seems more useful for the other audiences. This is a fine study that will fit well into Library and Information Science and higher education collections.—Michael Levine-Clark, *Collections Librarian*, University of Denver, Denver, Colorado

Is Consulting for You? A Primer for Information Professionals. Ulla de Stricker. Chicago, ALA, 2008. 101 p. \$40 (ISBN-13: 978-0-8389-0947-8).

Librarians and information specialists typically possess excellent organization, listening, and knowledge management skills. As it happens, these skills are also highly relevant to a successful career in consulting. Whether a librarian is looking for a career change away from the reference desk or wishes to begin a consulting career after graduate school, Ulla de Stricker's primer *Is Consulting for You?* offers a wealth of information in a slim, enjoyable, easy-to-read volume.

The author, a library management consultant for more than thirty-five years, provides timely and useful information for librarians considering a move into the consulting field. She examines both the pros and the cons of starting an information-based consulting business. She also provides guidance on how to develop an effective business plan and how to build and maintain a successful consulting business.

One useful and unique feature of this book is the prevalence of helpful tips found boxed throughout the chapters. Throughout the book, de Stricker, writing with a clean, concise style, stresses the importance of gathering adequate information to determine whether information-based consulting would be an appropriate and rewarding