Kane, Laura Townsend. *Working in the Virtual Stacks: The New Library and Information Science*. Chicago: American Library Association, 2011. 184p. ISBN-13: 978-0-8389-1103-7. Softcover, $47.00

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The somewhat recently coined term, "thingamabrarian*,"* refers to devotees of "Library Thing," a social networking site which allows bibliophiles to catalog all sorts of works in all sorts of ways. To this reviewer, "thingamabrarian*"* might also amusingly refer to the growing trend of newly-minted technology and information roles to which librarians and information professionals now aspire. Laura Kane Townsend describes this career pliability in her recent book, *Working in the Virtual Stacks: The New Library and Information Science*, her sequel to *Straight from the Stacks: A Firsthand Guide to Careers in Library and Information Science,* American Library Association, 2003. To wit, the roles and boundaries of librarians have expanded beyond the strict library types Kane discussed in her earlier work. She explains in her preface:

> While *Straight from the Stacks* was organized by traditional library *type* (public libraries, academic libraries, special libraries, etc.), *Working in the Virtual Stacks* uses emerging roles as categories. The boundaries of library positions have somewhat dissolved—thanks in part to technology—so that it is no longer practical to discuss the profession in terms of traditional library type. To illustrate, a web services librarian can likely be found in a public library, a special library, an academic library, a corporate library, and in online businesses like Amazon.com.

Thus, librarians are witnesses not only to emerging technologies but also to completely unique, emerging roles for librarians ("thingamabrarians") to keep up with the emerging technologies.

Working in the Virtual Stacks addresses the current relationship and opportunities between librarians and technology in five broadly titled chapters: "Librarians as Subject Specialists," "Librarians as Technology Gurus and Social Networkers," "Librarians as Teachers and Community Liaisons," "Librarians as Entrepreneurs," and "Librarians as Administrators." The five chapters contain a total of 34 interviews with librarians or information professionals, as some prefer to be called, from all over the United States. The interviewees discuss how they utilize their information and technology skills in fields that range from astronomy to marketing to veterinary medicine, and in roles that range from community technologist to library consultant to user experience librarian, plus much more. Many of the 34 professionals spotlighted in *Working in the Virtual Stacks* were culled from traditional library arenas, yet their work duties and philosophies are innovative and impressive, having been influenced and shaped by current information technologies.

In each chapter before the interviews, Kane provides recurring sections of structured information to give readers brief but effective snapshots of the background required to launch such careers. All of the five chapters contain introductory sections titled "Environments," "Skills," "Education and Training," and "Professional Associations." Kane also provides additional structure where applicable. For example, two chapters deal with emerging roles in more traditional library settings (e.g. academic, public, etc.), and thus each chapter contains a section titled "Responsibilities" because traditional institutions still tend to have standardized job duties, albeit nowadays with an eye toward adaptability and the leading edge. Accordingly, the chapter titled "Librarians as Technology Gurus and Social Networkers," contains a section titled "Social

Networking," briefly covering the uses of social media in various library environments, and to note that those who are technology gurus also tend to be natural social networking experts.

Kane's prose style is friendly, clean, and informative. *Working in the Virtual Stacks* includes an index and notes for each chapter, but the work is more a relaxed sampling of other possibilities for budding librarians or those in mid-career, rather than a comprehensive professional guide or scholarly work. Before the start of each account, she provides a graceful standout quote from the interviewees, related to their particular professional milieu that captures the essence of the individual's work philosophy. I found the interviews in this slim volume to be a comfortable length while offering meaningful content. A list of favorite or recommended web resources is a recurring feature at the end of many of the interviews, although it doesn't appear for all.

Prices for *Working in the Virtual Stacks,* an American Library Association publication, vary by format. I reviewed the soft cover edition and it is $47.00. The ALA eEditions e-book price is better at $38.00, and the print/e-book Bundle costs $55.00. In these budget-constrained times, I prefer a lower price for what appears to be only slightly more than a basic paperback, yet the quality of the content, style, and its currency make *Working in the Virtual Stacks: The New Library and Information Science* a useful addition to the collections of both academic and public libraries.