Leading the Historical Enterprise: Strategic Creativity, Planning, and Advocacy for the Digital Age. By Bruce W. Dearstyne. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2015. 186 pp. Bibliographies, index. Softcover. $35.00.

Bruce W. Dearstyne begins his book *Leading the Historical Enterprise: Strategic Creativity, Planning, and Advocacy for the Digital Age* by outlining the numerous challenges facing the historical enterprise in the United States. He defines the historical enterprise as "historical societies, history museums, historic houses, state historical agencies, archives, and similar programs" (p. 5). These organizations are the keepers of the nation's history, and they care deeply about that history. However, as Dearstyne points out, that passion is not enough to keep these organizations afloat. Creative leadership is needed if they are to successfully navigate the challenges confronting them, and *Leading the Historical Enterprise* is meant to provide leaders of the historical enterprise with tools to enable them to provide that creative leadership.

Bruce W. Dearstyne brings a wealth of experience to the task he has assigned himself. He is an adjunct professor at the University of Maryland teaching graduate courses on management. Previously, he was a professor at the University of Maryland and directed the university's graduate History and Library Science Dual-Degree Program. He has also worked as a program director at the New York State Archives and is the author of numerous articles and several books, many of which focus on the challenges of management and leadership.

Leading the Historical Enterprise can be used in multiple ways. It can be read as a narrative overview describing the challenges facing the historical enterprise as well as a description of potential solutions to those challenges. The majority of the individual chapters can also be read as mininarratives describing specific tools that can be used to address particular challenges that may face a historical organization. The book can be divided into three sections. The first outlines the current state of the historical enterprise and the challenges facing it as well as discusses the importance of leading the historical enterprise as opposed to managing it. The second section describes a set of tools that historical organizations can use to effectively meet the challenges confronting them. The final section presents examples of successful historical organizations and discusses why those organizations have succeeded.

The first section of the book (chapters 1 and 2) provides important background on the current state of the historical enterprise in the United States and advocates for the importance of leadership over management. Chapter 1 highlights many of the challenges facing historical organizations including declining attendance and budgets. It points out that one of the most challenging issues facing many historical organizations is that of diversity. The clientele that many historical organizations were established to cater to has changed, and these organizations need to provide more diverse programming to meet the needs of a diverse population. Chapter 2 underscores the importance of leadership in meeting the challenges facing historical organizations. Dearstyne argues that historical organizations are well managed but that they do not typically practice good leadership. The bulk of this chapter examines what it means to be a leader and some of the steps that should be taken to ensure good leadership of historical organizations. This is one of the most important chapters in the book, and those in charge of

historical organizations should read it carefully—good leadership will enable these organizations to succeed.

The second section of the book (chapters 3 through 7) provides a set of tools for meeting challenges in today's rapidly changing environment. Dearstyne begins his discussion of tools by focusing on people. Chapter 3 examines the importance of creativity and innovation. Dearstyne challenges leaders of historical organizations to enable the creativity of their staffs. Providing space for creativity opens the door for tackling challenging problems in new ways. It also builds staff morale, enabling them to take on these problems.

Dearstyne then turns his attention to the importance of developing strategic connections, engaging with the digital world, and the power of advocacy. Chapter 4 explains that strategic connections are made both locally and nationally. Dearstyne highlights the power that these connections can have when a historical organization faces challenges. Chapter 5 examines the importance of engaging with the digital world. Historical organizations need to figure out how to leverage the possibilities of the digital world to draw in new patrons and engage existing patrons in new ways. Dearstyne points out that this is now a necessity for historical organizations and not just a nice bonus. If organizations want to remain relevant, they must have some sort of digital presence. Chapter 6 stresses the importance of advocacy. Dearstyne states that historical organizations need to be looking constantly for ways to promote themselves to their funders and their patrons. They must demonstrate the impact they have on their communities in meaningful ways. Then they need to advertise that impact to those communities.

Dearstyne concludes his review of tools by looking at the importance of strategic planning in chapter 7. Historical organizations need to understand what they are trying to accomplish and carefully plan how they are going to fulfill their missions and goals. They must also build flexibility into those plans so that they can respond to changing circumstances. These chapters are the heart of the book and provide a solid set of tools for tackling the challenges facing historical organizations.

The last section of the book (chapter 8) provides a series of examples of historical organizations that have utilized the tools described to effectively meet the challenges they face. This is a particularly helpful section as it provides concrete examples of how these different tools (for example, advocacy and strategic planning) can make a real difference to the success of a historical organization. Each of the examples highlights how an organization struggling with a challenge was able to successfully reinvent itself and demonstrate its worth to its constituency. Collectively, these examples make the compelling point that, with good leadership, the historical enterprise in the United States can, and should, thrive.

Leading the Historical Enterprise is a valuable resource for its intended audience—individuals charged with leading historical organizations. It provides them with practical tips on how to successfully navigate the challenges they confront and offers compelling real-life examples of historical organizations that have effectively re-invented themselves in the quest to remain relevant. Everyone involved with the historical enterprise should read this book—especially those tasked with leading historical organizations.

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