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Book Review of The Insider's Guide to Law Firms

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582. **The Insider's Guide to Law Firms.** 2d ed. Sheila V. Malkani and Michael F. Walsh, eds. Boulder, Colo., Mobius Press, 1994. 734p. \$79.95; \$48.95pa. ISBN 0-9637970-3-4 (hardcover and paperback).

The Insider's Guide to Law Firms consists primarily of 3-page profiles of more than 200 large law firms in a dozen large cities: Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, New York City, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C. The editors constructed the firm profiles primarily from information received from law students who had clerked with the firms, and to a lesser extent from associates at the firms.

The editors' concede that the firm profiles provide an anecdotal snapshot of the firms, rather than a scientific study. Still, the *Guide* serves as an invaluable aid to law students interested in working in large firms. The profiles provide a revealing portrait of the atmosphere of each firm: work environment; professional development for entering associates; management; practice areas; pro bono policy; social interaction between associate and associate, and associate and partner; ethnic and gender diversity; and facilities. The 2d edition adds a short chapter on the hiring process, as well as some rudimentary interviewing strategies that will probably benefit only students in law schools without professionally staffed placement offices or an adequate law placement library.

The statistical summaries for each firm—which for the most part contain information current to 1994—include the number of firm partners and associates, women and minority lawyers, and attorneys in each of the firm's practice areas. The editors also furnish salary information for both summer clerks and associates; the number of hours a year a young associate might expect to work (which appear low) and bill; and the percentage of entering associates who eventually make partner. Law students understand it has been a "buyer's market" for the last few years, and most students who yearn for a job with a big name firm would delight in receiving an offer from any of the firms profiled. However, students wishing to target—or avoid—firms with a certain atmosphere would definitely benefit by looking through the *Guide* first, and those who receive multiple offers will find the profiles enlightening.

The *Guide* offers unique information that should be available in every law school placement office. The editors acknowledge that much of the information represents the views of a small number of people. They even suggest that those who read something in this guide that does not appeal to them should get additional opinions. Even so, the profiles are fun to read, and provide some inside information about the firms read about in *Legal Times*, *National Law Journal*, or *American Lawyer*. The work under review is a steal for the paperback edition, but libraries should be advised to put it on a chain, or it may disappear quickly.—**James S. Heller**