other diet-related illnesses. Often both phenomena can occur in the same country. From Famine to Fast Food examines access to food in countries across the world.

The five-page introduction provides an overview of the many issues related to food distribution and how hunger persists despite increased capacity for food production. It describes the economic, climatic, agricultural, political and environmental factors influencing people’s ability to access sufficient sustenance or their food choices, providing the reader with an understanding of how, in many areas, obesity is not simply a consequence of overindulgence but the result of a lack of access to healthful food options.

Following the introduction, entries are arranged by continent and then alphabetically by country. Each entry begins with a data table that includes the percentage of the population that has access to safe drinking water, the percentage of children who are underweight, the percentage of adults who are overweight, the average daily caloric intake and other data. The charts itself provides an informative and often startling snapshot of the inhabitants’ access to food and water. Though the provided data could likely be found in the U.S. World Almanac, a note to the reader about where the information came from would have been beneficial.

In addition to the data table, entries include explanatory text that provides further contextual information the country's patterns of food production and consumption or lack thereof. The chart depicts the nutritional health of the population while the text outlines the cause behind the statistics. In a few instances, the text does not provide sufficient insight into the reasons behind the data but merely describes the population's food preferences as well as the cultural and religious beliefs that influence those preferences. Most entries, however, offer more analysis of the population's health.

A recipe for a representative dish is included for many of the countries. While this is a fun addition, it also serves to demonstrate ingredients and cooking methods typically used in a particular country.

Over one hundred contributors supplied the entries in this book. They often included statistics that illustrate their assertions. Though many of the authors cited the source of their statistics, many others did not. This might diminish the book’s usability for some readers. Though not necessary, a map depicting where in the continent a nation is located would have been helpful as well.

This book would be a suitable addition to public and college libraries.—Susan Trujillo, Librarian, West Los Angeles College, Los Angeles


Understanding where the modern world came from is a difficult task; John Hinshaw and Peter Stearns seek to make the task easier for college and high school students. The authors of this two volume work seek to “situate the Industrial Revolution into the context of World history” (xxix), meaning both historically and politically. Hinshaw and Stearns seek to achieve their ambitious goal, with an alphabetical listing of the various people, places, events, and other topics about the Industrial Revolution. These entries range from explain the “emancipation of the serfs (Russia)” to other things like explaining the IMF (international monetary fund) (243, 149). The authors also include people that had an impact on the period like James Hargreaves (214). Also, the authors include many primary source documents relevant to this area of history. The addition of these documents helps in setting the work apart from others. The scope of these entries and primary sources range from the origins of Industrialization to the dawn of the internet. Some of the documents included are ones like Mark Weisbrot’s “Time to take a second look at our ‘free trade’ agreements” (619). Also, included are speeches made by world leaders about technology and the impact on society.

These entries tend to be short, most are around a couple to three paragraphs in length, however some of the large theme entries are a page or more; such as the entry on the “Cold War.” At the end of each descriptive listing the author provides the reader with a ‘further reading’ recommendation. These sections help set the work apart from others, however there are not many books that take on the scope of information proved in this work. There are plenty of books that cover the many individual topics contained in Industrialization in the Modern World, as noted in the ‘further reading’ section, however there are few that cover such a wide range of in one title. In addition to the ‘further reading’ section these two volumes also include quality color photos for many of the entries in the book. These photos do a nice job of helping set apart this work from others, such as the Encyclopedia of the Industrial Revolution in America. Industrial Revolution in America, focuses only on the Industrial Revolution period from 1750 to 1920, and includes little photos and no color photos.

Overall, these two volumes provide the reader or researcher with good quality information about a wide variety of topics related to the Industrial Revolution and beyond. The additional primary sources included in this work set it apart from other similar works in the same field. These sources do well to supplement the information contained in each of the alphabetical listing. With the addition of this section, the book is suitable for college and university library collections. It also makes a great addition to any high school library as well.—Michael Hawkins, Library Associate, Kent State University, Kent, Ohio


The 4th edition adds roughly 100 new items as well as revisions and updates to previously published entries. By and large, the entries are well researched and easy to follow,
exceptions noted below. Islam’s rituals, doctrines, early history, sects, and key figures in its development are covered thoroughly, as are the later scholars, philosophers, and rulers. From this standpoint the work is a straightforward ready reference source on the religion. There are however major omissions in this work. Namely, inadequate coverage of the modern era and non-Middle Eastern Muslim communities. Furthermore, Mr. Glasse is obviously partial to philosophical topics, which is not an issue in and of itself, but when other areas are neglected it becomes problematic.

An example of the book’s Middle East focus is the cursory coverage of the rich Islamic history in Sub-Saharan Africa. There is a brief mention of the Sokoto Caliphate in West Africa, but the Tukulor Empire is absent. It seems inconceivable that events that had as dramatic an effect and geographical spread as the West African jihads would have been ignored if they occurred in Turkey or Syria during the same time period of the nineteenth century. Likewise, there is no mention of Timbuktu, Songhay, and either Mali the empire or the modern country. A similar exercise could be repeated with South and South East Asia. Often the refrain from authors of encyclopedias is that not everything can be included and something will be neglected. True indeed, however Glasse undermines this argument by seeing fit to write a curious 22 ½ page entry on the topic of Manicheism, which happens to be four times longer than the entries on Muhammad and Islam combined. An odd choice, and one that no doubt pushed many important topics to the wayside.

Glasse could be given a pass for continuing the tradition of ignoring large swaths of non-Middle Eastern Islamic history; an unfortunate common attribute of general encyclopedias of Islam. However, it is perplexing that he chose to ignore so many current topics within the Muslim world. For instance, there is very little on modern extremist movements or their development, save an entry for the Taliban and a couple of short entries on the Muslim Brotherhood, Al Qaeda, Sayyid Qutb, and even shorter mention of groups such as Abu Sayyaf. It is true that these groups are mere blips in the long history of Islam, yet, they are basic starting points of research for many students today and this work simply falls short in this regard. It would be difficult to recommend this book for any researcher looking for information beyond the early history and development of Islam. Serious scholars would eschew this work for an edition of the voluminous Encyclopaedia of Islam (Brill, 1960-2007; 2007-) and beginning scholars are likely to be confused by the dearth of entries on contemporary topics.

This encyclopedia has value, including an extensive chronology, maps, and early empire genealogies, but it does not otherwise stand out in any particular way from similar works that have proliferated in recent years. Its shortcomings are many and it may be benefiting from the reputation of its first edition (1989), which was widely praised and respected. The world has changed dramatically in 25 years and that is not fully captured in this edition. –Brent D. Singleton, Coordinator for Reference Services, California State University, San Bernardino, California