

psychology.—Robin N. Sinn, *Librarian for Science and Engineering, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland*

Encyclopedia of Evolution. By Stanley A. Rice. New York: Facts On File, 2007. 469p. acid free \$75 (ISBN 0-8160-5515-7).

Publishers must agonize over how they can handle the development and marketing of a reference work dealing with a topic such as evolution. In the United States it is clearly a hot-button issue, with half of the American people claiming they don't "believe in" evolution, as if evolution were not a set of facts and theories that have been carefully worked through by multitudes of scientists for more than a century. In our culture, scientific appreciation is generally so low that acceptance of evolution as a process is seen as outright rejection of the predominant Christian dogma. It is within this conservative religious and political environment that Facts On File has created the *Encyclopedia of Evolution*. The choice of author Rice, an academic evolutionary ecologist, outspoken opponent of intelligent design, and practicing Christian, was inspired.

Rice manages to make this encyclopedia both scientifically accurate and culturally sensitive. It consists of 215 main entries arranged alphabetically covering the main concepts and issues relating to the evolution of life on earth. Its scope keeps the entries within the domain of science; Rice acknowledges that other types of evolution (art, culture, music, and so forth) are not dealt with in this work. Biographies of fifty important scientists who have contributed to the understanding of evolutionary processes are included. Black-and-white illustrations, maps, and charts are very well-done, appropriate, and plentiful without seeming like filler. Entries tend to be one to three pages in length (sometimes longer), and are written in very clear, accessible language. Each entry is followed by a list of further reading. These lists of suggested references are uniformly excellent, making these sections a considerable strength of this work. Rice includes five feature essays in the encyclopedia, elucidating topics important to the general reader: "How Much Do Genes Control Human Behavior?," "What Are the Ghosts of Evolution?," "Can an Evolutionary Scientist Be Religious?," "Why Do Humans Die?," and "Are Humans Alone in the Universe?" These topics are all accurately discussed, yet Rice does not shy away from viewing the topics through the Christian lens. In fact, that lens is gently and subtly employed in his treatment of many of the encyclopedic entries and thus clearly defines the primary, general market for this work.

The *Encyclopedia* joins three other works of seemingly similar scope. Mark Pagel's *Encyclopedia of Evolution* (Oxford, 2002) is an academically rigorous, two-volume work of evolutionary biology that covers both genetics and population biology in significant detail. Franz Wuketits and Francisco Ayala published the two-volume *Handbook of Evolution* (Wiley-VCH, 2005), which treats all kinds evolution through challenging review articles synthesizing the literature. *Life on Earth: An Encyclopedia of Biodiversity, Ecology, and Evolution* (ABC Clío, 2002), edited by Niles Eldredge, has entries

contributed by numerous experts in the field. It is broader in scope, focusing less on just evolution, and is not as user-friendly as Rice in book-in-hand terms.

Rice's *Encyclopedia of Evolution*, because of its scientifically accurate and culturally sensitive treatment of this controversial topic, is an essential acquisition for all high school, community college, and public libraries. It is useful in the general reference collection of academic libraries, but perhaps less useful in specialized science libraries serving upper-level or graduate students in the sciences.—*Deborah Carter Peoples, Science Librarian, Hobson Science Library, Ohio Wesleyan University, Delaware*

Encyclopedia of Italian Literary Studies. Ed. by Gaetana Marrone. New York: Routledge, 2007. 2 vols. \$495 (ISBN 1-57958-390-3).

This two-volume reference source ambitiously encompasses the canon of Italian literature while covering a wide range of literary trends and cultural developments. A collaborative work of international scholarly representation, the 591 bio-bibliographical, critical essays address themselves to an English-speaking audience. The signed articles are substantive in describing the rich history and evolution of Italian literary expression and culture. Contributors' expert and diverse perspectives aptly weave historical and cultural backdrops in the treatments, which are so well-woven as to make good and informative reading.

The core of the set constitutes major Italian authors from the thirteenth century to the present and an informed selection of their works. In addition to blending a balance of women's voices, the canon is generously extended to include noteworthy historians, critics, actors and actresses, filmmakers, playwrights, dramatists, mystics, and some rediscovered humanists. Topics go beyond a survey of important movements, schools, genres, and subgenres to include interdisciplinary subjects that are elemental in contemporary and popular Italian culture. For instance, readers will find thematic essays on French and German influences, "Migration Literature," and "Fumetti" (comics) among a multitude of nonliterary threads in such categories as cinema, fashion, animation, and "The Culture of Food."

Although Italian literature and culture is treated in a score of notable dictionaries, historical surveys, and companions, no other source compares in scope to *Italian Literary Studies*. This is a much-needed reference tool. Its extended essays give biographical and critical treatment with historical tracings and enumerative bibliographies. In comparison, Hainsworth and Robey's *The Oxford Companion to Italian Literature* (Oxford Univ. Pr., 2002) is essential as a starting point for students, researchers, and Italianists, with its concise articles, maps, and chronology of Italian literature. Yet now readers can go beyond that base to elaborative contexts that include lesser literary figures, subgenres such as "Romanzo Rosa," and critical treatments of influential works, such as Dario Fo's denounced *Mistero Buffo*. Unequal in quality to the Oxford dictionary, yet useful for its summative articles,