

Reference Books

Carolyn J. Radcliff

Editor

The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Stars. By James B. Kaler. New York: Cambridge Univ. Pr., 2006. 324p. \$60 (ISBN 978-0-521-810803-2).

This handsome, large-format (9" by 11") book contains nearly all you ever wanted to know about stars, including what is known and what is not known. Although called an encyclopedia, it has a nontraditional, nonalphabetical format that consists of fourteen sectioned chapters, each of which begins with a short explanation that touches on the history, importance, and placement of the chapter subject matter in the overall study of stars. Each chapter's logical progression treats one aspect of stellar astronomy and, with backward and forward references, stands alone. The book contains beautiful color images and clear, informative graphs and charts. The first chart is a four-page list of information about the known constellations.

The book begins with star knowledge of ancient times and proceeds through constellations, star names, location, magnitude, distance, spectra, types of stars, and stellar evolution. Background and peripheral material is placed throughout the text in blocked sidebars. The appendix contains the Messier Catalog, lists of brightest and nearest stars, and chemical composition of the sun.

This encyclopedia is authored, not edited, by Kaler, professor emeritus of astronomy at University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Throughout his career, Kaler has been awarded medals and fellowships, and has had an asteroid named after him for his outreach work. He has written several books on astronomy and has a long-standing interest in science education. Based on the author's expertise, a page of further reading substitutes for a bibliography, followed by an extensive index.

Its uniqueness as well as its quality make this a useful reference book. There exist numerous dictionaries and encyclopedias on astronomy, but no recent one of stars alone. The more recent encyclopedias include Patrick Moore's *Astronomy Encyclopedia* (Oxford Univ. Pr., 2002), Joseph Angelo's *Encyclopedia of Space and Astronomy* (Facts On File, 2006), and Paul Murdin's four-volume *Encyclopedia of Astronomy and Astrophysics* (Institute of Physics, 2001). All have the usual alphabetical format. There also are a few encyclopedias targeted toward secondary schools, but none that resemble this work.

The preface to *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Stars* does not specifically target an audience except to declare that there is useful material for both beginners and the more advanced. There are parts that can be enjoyed by the layperson or the beginner. However, this is a complicated subject that can be made available to the casual reader only up to a point. Then a knowledge of mathematics and physics becomes essential.

To his credit, the author does not attempt to dumb down the subject matter, but rather challenges the reader to delve deeper. Exploring the author's STARS Web site (www.astro.uiuc.edu/~kaler/sow/sowlist.html) is one way to do this.

This outstanding and unique star encyclopedia is a reference work that should be a part of every academic library. It would be a rich addition to public and secondary school libraries as well.—Nancy F. Carter, *Math/Physics Librarian Emeritus, University Libraries, University of Colorado, Boulder*

The Encyclopedia of American Law Enforcement. By Michael Newton. New York: Facts On File, 2007. 432p. alkaline \$75 (ISBN 978-0-8160-6290-4).

"Numbers running." Law enforcement agencies, officers, practices, programs, failures, and successes are briefly described in Newton's *The Encyclopedia of American Law Enforcement*. This work contains "profiles of 149 law enforcement agencies, short biographies of 362 significant individuals, 20 descriptions of famous or notorious incidents, and 119 essays on general subjects" (vi).

"To serve and protect." The 654 entries range in length from a paragraph to two pages. They are factual, well-written, and arranged alphabetically by name or topic. No topic is addressed extensively in a single entry. The two-page Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) item only scratches the surface. Fortunately, the index brings together all FBI references and does the same for other entities and topics.

"Internal affairs." Black-and-white photographs and illustrations—many from the author's collection—are scattered throughout the volume. A state-by-state directory of police academies and a list of federal, state, and selected local police department Web sites serve as appendixes. The five-page bibliography identifies more than 250 books, including ten of Newton's own works.

"Just the facts, ma'am." Topics do not stray far from the real world. Dick Tracy, Andy Taylor, Sgt. Joe Friday, Cagney and Lacey, and their colleagues from *Hawaii Five-O*, *NYPD Blue*, *The Streets of San Francisco*, and the like are The Unmentionables.

"Repeat offender." Newton is a prolific author. His encyclopedic knowledge of crime has produced encyclopedias on conspiracies, FBI, high-tech crime, kidnapping, the Ku Klux Klan, serial killers, and unsolved crimes published by Checkmark Books, Facts On File, Garland, McFarland, Writer's Digest Books, and others. He also writes true crime books, action adventure novels, and westerns.

"Book 'em, Danno!" The absence of subject-specific sources limits this encyclopedia's use as a reference work in larger academic and specialized collections. Broader coverage, greater depth, and scholarly treatment by a wide range of experts and educators are found in Joshua Dressler's *Encyclopedia of Crime & Justice*, 2d ed. (Macmillan Reference USA, 2002) and *The Encyclopedia of Police Science* (Routledge, 2007).

"Cut to the chase." *The Encyclopedia of American Law Enforcement* delivers concise information on key and lesser-

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known whos, whats, and wheres in a reasonably priced, ready-reference package.—Cheryl Rae Nyberg, *Reference Librarian, Gallagher Law Library, University of Washington School of Law, Seattle*

Encyclopedia of American Urban History. Ed. by David Goldfield. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2007. 2 vols. acid free \$300 (ISBN 0-7619-2884-7).

The purpose of this two-volume encyclopedia is “to expose the leading scholarship by both prominent and up-and-coming academics and practitioners as not only a state-of-the-art summary of American urban history but as a valuable reference work to guide future researchers” (xxxv). Edited by Goldfield, Robert Lee Bailey Professor of History at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte, this reference work provides an inclusive and accessible digest of United States urban history.

The encyclopedia opens with an alphabetical listing of entries, reader’s guide, list of contributors, and introduction that describes the editor’s approach in constructing the work. The main text follows and includes more than five hundred clearly written, informative entries arranged alphabetically. Articles range in length from a few paragraphs to several pages. Essays are composed primarily by historians; however, there is representation from other academic disciplines, such as geography, economics, and urban planning. In addition, practitioners from government, not-for-profit organizations, and corporations also contribute to this volume and provide a valuable perspective. Articles are signed and include a helpful list of further readings and cross references.

The encyclopedia is extensive in scope. It focuses on the past 150 years of American urban history, “when the American city came into its own” (xxxvi). Moreover, as stated in the “Reader’s Guide,” the work covers eleven diverse subject areas, including “Biographies,” “Education and Schools,” “Finance and Commerce,” “Housing,” “Theories,” and “Transportation.” In addition, the term “urban” is broadly defined. For example, in addition to coverage of such major cities as New York and Los Angeles, the work examines other geographical entities (“Edge Cities,” “Penurbia”), and urban-related concepts (“Baseball and Ballparks,” “Slums”). Finally, the work effectively appraises the dimensions of race, class, and gender as they relate to urban history (“Racial Zoning,” “Working Class in Cities and Suburbs,” “Women’s World Fairs”).

Another reference work that studies urban history is *Encyclopedia of Urban America: The Cities and Suburbs* (ABC-Clio, 1998), edited by Neil Shumsky. Shumsky’s edition contains more than five hundred entries, many of which cover topics similar to Goldfield’s work, yet there is notable variation. For example, both encyclopedias include entries on such major cities as New York, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C., but differ in their coverage of other urban centers. Goldfield’s work includes articles on Atlanta, Austin, and Detroit, which Shumsky excludes; however, Shumsky includes items on Nashville and Jacksonville, which Goldfield does not. More-

over, although both reference books contain pieces on the Housing Acts of 1934 and 1937, the Goldfield work also contains articles on the Housing Acts of 1949 and 1954. Both works effectively discuss the diversity of urban centers, but Goldfield’s work comprises a number of entries not covered in the Shumsky work, including articles on Native Americans, Islam, gays, and lesbians. Finally, Shumsky’s work contains a nine-page bibliography and black-and-white illustrations; the Goldfield text does not have these supplemental features.

Encyclopedia of American Urban History provides a solid overview of urban history and will be a valuable research tool for students and scholars. It is recommended for academic and large public libraries but is optional for libraries that own *Encyclopedia of Urban America: The Cities and Suburbs*.—Michelle Hendley, *Reference Librarian, State University of New York, College at Oneonta*.

The Encyclopedia of Autism Spectrum Disorders. By Carol A. Turkington and Ruth Anan. New York: Facts On File, 2007. 324p. acid free \$75 (ISBN 0-8160-6002-9).

While there are many books about autism and associated disorders, there are few reference works dedicated just to this group of developmental disabilities. Most of the available books are about coping with a family member diagnosed with one of these disorders. Many reference works about developmental, educational, or psychological disorders contain information about autism, but reference works focused upon autism seem to be rare.

Turkington and Anan’s *Encyclopedia of Autism Spectrum Disorders* increases the number of currently available autism encyclopedias to two. The alphabetically arranged entries are well-written and well-researched. The authors have tried to make the information as accessible as possible to the layperson. The entries are supported by a glossary and a long list of suggested reading divided into subject groups. The six appendixes provide lists of national organizations associated with autism, Web sites, state autism organizations, autism resources by state, ongoing autism studies, and ongoing clinical trials. The entries themselves make up only 165 of the 324 pages of this work.

Neisworth and Wolfe’s *Autism Encyclopedia* (Brooks Pub, 2005) is similar in scope and layout to *The Encyclopedia of Autism Spectrum Disorders*. The contributors liberally refer to the professional literature in the entries, creating one long reference list located at the end of the entries. The entries in the Neisworth and Wolfe volume use more professional language and don’t provide quite as much explanation for the layperson as Turkington and Anan’s work. There are only two appendixes, autism organizations and screening tools and curricula.

Given the increasing attention that autism is receiving, and the increasing rate of autism diagnoses, larger public libraries should purchase this title, especially if they don’t have the Neisworth and Wolfe work. College libraries should purchase this if they support programs in special education or developmental