

SOURCES

bibliographies, and comparative timeline of Western and Italian literature, is Bondanellas' *Dictionary of Italian Literature* (Greenwood, 1996, 2002). Humanities reference shelves also will have such historical surveys as Panizza and Wood's *A History of Women's Writing in Italian* (Cambridge Univ. Pr., 2000); Brand and Pertile's *The Cambridge History of Italian Literature* (Cambridge Univ. Pr., 1996); and Wood's *Italian Women's Writing, 1860–1994* (Athlone, 1995). Noteworthy are *Italian Women Writers* (Greenwood, 1994), a helpful bi-bibliographical companion focused on women writers, and, of course, alternative sources on the Renaissance, particularly *Encyclopedia of the Renaissance* (Scribner, 1999).

One oddity about *Italian Literary Studies* is that the Catholic Church, papacy, and patristic influences are not thematically represented as a main entry. These topics of major social and cultural consequence are instead treated in the thematic entry of "Religion and Literature." Unfortunately, the index fails to point the reader to the thematic entry, but instead directs to embedded treatments of Catholicism in other topics, writers, and works, thereby diffusing its importance. Similarly, eroticism and pornography, with their close ties to Italian comedy and literary expression, and as represented in many influential classic and traditional works by the likes of Ariosto, Boccaccio, and Belli, are not found by theme or in the index.

The set is nicely structured, following a familiar template used in other Routledge volumes. The arrangement is logical and helpful—readers will benefit from alphabetical and thematic lists and a comprehensive index, duplicated in both volumes. Bibliographies of authors' works are sorted by genre. Author entries are supplemented with biographical sketches; bibliographies of selected works sorted by genre that constitute important editions in Italian, with English translations as available; and a substantial list for further reading. These readings include journal articles and monographs, including, notably, works in English that can be found in most academic libraries. Selected works of early major writers (Dante Alighieri, for example) are sorted by works in vernacular and in Latin. In addition, articles on many major authors are followed by critical, one- or two-page summaries of selected works. These supporting entries are completed by a listing of editions, translations, and further readings.

Encyclopedia of Italian Literary Studies is an appreciable addition to Italian and Renaissance literature reference sources. It is useful both to those beginning their studies and to those who are well-versed in the subject. It is an essential purchase for all academic and large public libraries.—Katharine A. Webb, Librarian, The Ohio State University, Columbus

Encyclopedia of the Modern World: 1900 to the Present. Ed. by William R. Keylor and Michael McGuire. New York: Facts On File, 2007. 3 vols. alkaline \$250 (ISBN 0-8160-4872-X).

This set builds on the foundation of its predecessor, John Drexel's *Facts On File Encyclopedia of the 20th Century* (Facts On File, 1991), a single-volume work. An earlier version of *Encyclopedia of the Modern World: 1900 to the Present* was published

in 2005, according to OCLC WorldCat. The database lists the same ISBN for both publication dates, so it's not clear what the differences are between the 2005 and the 2007 versions.

The scope of the set avoids any North American bias you might anticipate by covering a wide variety of entries about people, events, and places outside of the developed world. More than eight thousand entries in this set are not available in similar publications, according to the publisher. Chronically the wide range of changes in the world since 1991 in this new set is a challenge the author discusses at length in the introduction, mentioning, among other topics, the disintegration of the Soviet bloc and the explosion in worldwide communications facilitated by the Internet.

Entries included in these three volumes address cities and other significant geography; country profiles; scientists; technology developments; world political figures; events and movements; descriptions of artists, actors, athletes, musicians, and writers; art movements; and other artifacts of popular culture. This set concentrates on brief entries; very few exceed a half-page (exceptions include the entries for the three most recent United States presidents). The writing is concise enough to appeal to higher grades in high school, but there is enough detail and depth for use by college students. Cross-references for acronyms such as AFL-CIO are included in the text and the index. Topic references in an entry are always capitalized.

The scope of the set is admirable: on the same page as the entry for e-mail, you will learn about an English composer, a river in Germany, a United States jazz musician, a city in Israel, a former president of Iceland, a Middle East diplomat, and a Greek communist resistance movement. Almost all entries for countries include a map, and a timeline of the country's significant twentieth-century events is included on the adjoining page. All illustrations and maps are black-and-white. A one-page bibliography of the twenty sources used to compile entries in the set is included at the end of the third volume, before the index. In the introduction, the author also acknowledges the contributions of several outside specialists for entries in the natural sciences, music, and mental health. The index uses italicized page numbers to note illustrated entries.

My research indicates that *Encyclopedia of the Modern World: 1900 to the Present* has few, if any, competitors. There were several single-volume encyclopedias of modern history published around the turn of the century, but most of these seem more appropriate for the living room table than the collections of an academic or school libraries. Even the most recent of these was published in 2003—Brenda Ralph Lewis's *Modern History: A Sourcebook* (Flame Tree, 2003)—and thus is already four years out of date. In addition, many encyclopedias of modern history are devoted to a specific subtopic, such as politics, or devoted to one particular country or region of the world.

Libraries have an ongoing need for encyclopedias that appeal to a broad audience. This set is a great supplement to larger, multivolume encyclopedias you may only be able to replace every couple of years, and offers excellent value in

three volumes. *Encyclopedia of the Modern World: 1900 to the Present* is recommended for public, high school, and undergraduate library reference collections.—*Michael A. Rose, Public Services Librarian, Rockingham Community College, Wentworth, North Carolina*

The Facts On File Encyclopedia of Health and Medicine: A Comprehensive and Concise Guide to the Human Body and Modern Medical Practices. New York: Facts On File, 2007. 4 vols. alkaline \$265 (ISBN 0-8160-6063-0).

Each of the first three volumes in this four-volume set focuses on major systems of the human body. The first volume covers the sensory and structural systems; the second volume covers the circulatory, pulmonary, and immune systems; and the third volume covers the rest of generally accepted body systems as well as presents information about psychiatric disorders and psychological conditions. The fourth volume furnishes information about health topics that can affect overall health and well-being, such as preventive, alternative, and complementary medicine, and genetic and molecular medical techniques. Additional chapters are devoted to lifestyle factors, including drug use, nutrition and diet, exercise and fitness, smoking, obesity, and substance abuse. The capstone chapter presents emergency and first aid procedures. The fourth volume also furnishes many specialized appendixes and a cumulative index to volumes one through four.

Written under the direction of a thirteen-member medical advisory review panel representing many fields of medicine, this reference claims to be comprehensive and offer an integrated approach to understanding medical information. However, coverage of each topic is brief, and the presentation of concepts seems fragmented and disjointed rather than interconnected. For instance, each chapter that addresses either a major body system or health topic begins with an overview, which is usually only a few pages long. Entries for topics associated with the chapter theme follow, and many of these entries are only one or two paragraphs in length. Some article entries are further subdivided by relevant subheadings, such as those for health conditions and diseases, surgery operations, medication classifications, and diagnostic procedures. Despite the additional sections created by these further subdivisions, the overall entries are only slightly longer because each additional subsection is only one or two paragraphs in length.

Cross references are supplied for each entry, but usually just a few per entry. Unlike the *Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine* (Thomson Gale, 2006), this reference does not introduce and define key terms related to the entry topic or offer other features to aid the reader with comprehension. There are few diagrams, photos, and informational sidebars in this set of books. Furthermore, unlike the *Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine*, this encyclopedia's individual entries do not furnish resources for further reading, bibliographies, or contact information for relevant organizations. This encyclopedia simply lumps this information in two separate appendix sections titled "Selected Bibliography and Further Reading" and "Resources,"

making it challenging and time-consuming for individuals to continue researching their topics of interest. Because bibliographies lend support to the credibility and authoritativeness of the information presented, the lack of individual article bibliographies indicates that this encyclopedia may not be of the highest quality.

Although this reference has a few good entries, such as the entry about cultural and ethnic healthcare perspectives, the treatment of medical topics seems very light in nature, and the relationships between medical topics are difficult to infer. Users must continually rely on volume four's cumulative index to locate information on topics, especially for unfamiliar topics and those for which body system affiliations are unknown. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that instead of purchasing this set, public, school, and university libraries should consider purchasing some of the higher-priced, quality titles published by Thomson Gale, such as *Gale Encyclopedia of Alternative Medicine*, 2d ed., 4 vols., 2005; *Gale Encyclopedia of Cancer*, 2d ed., 2 vols., 2006; *Gale Encyclopedia of Children's Health: Infancy through Adolescence*, 4 vols., 2006; *Gale Encyclopedia of Genetic Disorders*, 2d ed., 2 vols., 2005; or the aforementioned *Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine*. Alternatively, libraries may benefit from using free, high-quality Internet resources such as *MedlinePlus* (www.medlineplus.com) from the U.S. National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health.—*Caroline Geck, Librarian, Kean University, Union, New Jersey*

Great Lives from History: Notorious Lives. Ed. by Carl L. Bankston III. Pasadena, Calif.: Salem, 2007. 3 vols. alkaline \$252 (ISBN 978-1-58765-320-9).

Salem Press's *Great Lives from History: Notorious Lives* augments their *Great Lives* titles by adding more than six hundred new names. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines notorious as "of a criminal, sinner, etc.: noted or well known in that capacity; infamous" (<http://dictionary.oed.com>, accessed April 13, 2007), and most of the names covered fit this definition. The coverage is very broad and includes figures from the Bible as well as contemporary names. The entire world is considered, although American ne'er-do-wells receive a majority of the attention. Not included are young people and the living who "might be considered victims of circumstance as well as of poor judgment," according to the publisher's Web site. This explains why Joey Buttafuoco is included but not Amy Fisher.

Entries are of moderate length, between 700 and 1,200 words, and make for interesting reading. All entries include a list of quick facts, such as name, aliases, dates and places of activity, major offenses, and sentencing information. A pronunciation guide is given for the main entry of the name, and some, but not all, of the entries are illustrated. The signed entries are slightly more in-depth than those found in other encyclopedias of crime, but that varies with the fame of the personage. Each entry also includes an impact statement that explains why this particular person was included. Annotated