

SOURCES

alphabetical, cross-referenced essays range in length from 250 to 3,000 words and are signed by nearly 150 scholars in multiple disciplines. More than half of the articles include further reading lists, and the most extensive ones (those with more than 2,000 words) offer annotated reading lists. Photos accompany most biographical entries, and tables and charts illustrate arcane data and concepts (for example, “levels of judicial scrutiny”). An extensive annotated bibliography, timeline of Court events, and glossary of key terms complete the large appendix section.

The U.S. Supreme Court is a mid-priced source (about \$200) of very current, authoritative Supreme Court information for public, high school, and university libraries. Less expensive ready reference titles (under \$100) include recent editions of Kermit Hall’s *The Oxford Companion to the Supreme Court of the United States* (Oxford Univ. Pr., 2005) and Kenneth Jost’s *The Supreme Court A to Z* (Congressional Quarterly, 2007). Hall is a prominent legal historian, and his small-print volume (updated prior to Chief Justice Rehnquist’s death) includes more than a thousand alphabetically arranged entries signed by three hundred experts. *The Supreme Court A to Z* is similar in arrangement and topics to *The U.S. Supreme Court*, but the articles are unsigned and less rich in content. On the more expensive end (\$370) is David Savage’s *Guide to the U.S. Supreme Court* (Congressional Quarterly, 2004), which is updated through 2003. Savage covers the Supreme Court for the *Los Angeles Times*, and this theme-based Congressional Quarterly guide is a good supplement to the other sources for larger public and university libraries.—Jane Thompson, Assistant Director for Faculty Services, William A. Wise Law Library, University of Colorado, Boulder

World and Its Peoples: Middle East, Western Asia, and Northern Africa. Ed. by Paul Bernabeo. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Marshall Cavendish, 2007. 11 vols. acid free \$499.95 (ISBN 0-7614-7571-0).

The first set in a series that “will eventually include every region and country of the world,” (5) the eleven-volume *World and Its Peoples: Middle East, Western Asia, and Northern Africa* is a photograph-rich reference work on an important yet poorly understood region of the globe. Encompassing thirty-seven countries extending from Mauritania to Kazakhstan, this set is geared toward high school and public library audiences, but is accessible to middle school patrons as well.

Two countries, Egypt and Iran, merit individual volumes. The remaining thirty-five countries are arranged in geographic groupings of two to six countries. Afghanistan and Pakistan are paired, and the Arabian Peninsula countries share a volume. Volumes begin with an extensive geographical and historical overview set off by tinted pages—beige for geography and climate, green for history and movement of peoples. Readers will come away with a general understanding of a region or country’s geography, geology, climate, and history. These essays are augmented by color photographs, maps, chronologies, and charts. As an example, the volume covering Iraq, Kuwait, and Syria devotes more than forty pages to

history, ranging from the Sumerians, Assyrians, and other ancient peoples through the end of Ottoman rule in 1918. Sections for individual countries begin with an introductory profile, followed by essays on government, modern history, cultural expression, daily life, and economy. Particularly interesting in the “Daily Life” sections are profiles of individual cities such as Esfahan, Gaza and Ram Allah, and N’Djamena. The discussion of cities is especially welcome for Africa, where village life is more commonly portrayed. Although readers will gain an understanding of circumstances leading up to the current unrest in such places as Afghanistan, Iraq, and Sudan, they will need to seek other sources for most events occurring after 2005.

Articles are signed. Individual writers and their affiliations (mostly academic, with some unaffiliated) are listed in the front of each volume. Each volume contains a further research list of books, periodicals, and electronic sources. The bibliography for the stand-alone Iran volume was inexplicably omitted (despite its being listed in the table of contents) and this reviewer hopes that a reprint of the volume will appear with the missing pages. In comparison to the bibliographies in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of the Nations* (Thomson Gale, 2007), where the oldest title in the five-item Afghanistan source list is 2005, *World and Its Peoples: Middle East, Western Asia, and Northern Africa* includes more than twenty titles spanning from the 1950s to 2004 for Afghanistan. Each volume concludes with an index. Volume 11 is titled “Indexes,” but the first forty pages include comparative tables, an A (“abaya”) to Z (“ziker”) glossary, and a bibliography. The comprehensive index is complemented by six thematic indexes, including place-name, cultural-artistic, and economic indexes.

For libraries on a tight budget, up-to-date factual information regarding these thirty-seven countries (and the rest of the world) can be obtained at a lower cost from such venerable sources as *The CIA World Fact Book* (CIA, Annual), *The Europa World Year Book* (Routledge, 2006), and *Worldmark Encyclopedia of the Nations*. Where *World and Its Peoples: Middle East, Western Asia, and Northern Africa* stands out is in its readability; visually rich content; extensive coverage of geography, history, and daily life; and profiles of individual cities. Recommended for middle school, secondary school, and public library reference collections.—J. Christina Smith, *Anthropology/Sociology Bibliographer, Boston University*

Professional Materials

Karen Antell

Editor

The Blue Book on Information Age Inquiry, Instruction, and Literacy. Daniel Callison and Leslie Preddy. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2006. 660 p. \$45 (ISBN 1-59158-325-X).

The need to provide effective information literacy instruction in primary and secondary education, as well as at the