

modern world. Not isolated to any one geographic region, these formative events took place in all corners of the world. *Events That Formed the Modern World: From the European Renaissance through the War on Terror* highlights 62 significant events from across the globe, each of which contributed to the modern world. A five volume thematic reference set, *Events That Formed the Modern World* provides readers with introductory and interpretative essays for all of the 62 events each with a bibliography and shorter entries detailing significant people or occurrences related to the major event. Each volume also contains a glossary of terms and a timeline. Edited by Frank W. Thackeray and John E. Findling, professor emeriti of history at Indiana University Southeast, this reference work is intended for the general public and high school and undergraduate students.

*Events That Formed the Modern World* represents a novel and noteworthy approach to the encyclopedia. Arranged chronologically, each volume covers approximately one century, with the first volume being an exception as it begins with an entry on the Reconquista (c.711) and ends with the Spanish Armada (1588). The events covered in this set of volumes are characterized largely by a top-down approach with relatively standard historical periodizations. While following an easy to comprehend chronological layout, this set diverges from the traditional encyclopedia formula, which often provides an overview of a topic with little critical analysis or interpretation. Thackeray and Findling's work provides readers with a brief introductory essay for each event grounding the reader in the event's historical context. However, the strength and distinctive feature of this reference work rests with the interpretive essays, each written by experts and averaging about eight pages in length. These highly accessible essays provide thought provoking analyses and examine the reasons why the event has had a lasting impact on the modern world.

While not limited to covering topics of the past 500 years, other works approaching Events subject matter include Hardy McNeill and Jerry Bentley's *Berkshire Encyclopedia of World History* (Berkshire, 2005), Alfred J. Andrea's *World History Encyclopedia* (ABC-CLIO, 2011), and, to a lesser degree, William Keylor and Michael McGuire's *Encyclopedia of the Modern World: 1900 to the Present* (Facts on File, 2007). However, with the exception of Andrea's *World History Encyclopedia*, these works are more traditional, have little thematic structure, and provide only basic, fact-driven, entries. *Events That Formed the Modern World* is a relatively unique reference work and stands out for its critical, yet accessible analysis, which makes this a useful and important work. Although *Events* is targeted to the general public and students, it can be a valuable asset for high school teachers and college professors assigned to teaching the second half of world history courses. Not only can the interpretive essays in these volumes work well as assigned readings, they can also serve as a much needed resource for history instructors new to teaching world history.

Thackeray and Findling's *Events That Formed the Modern World* stands alone among the world/global history

encyclopedia landscape and represents a new type of encyclopedia that promotes critical thought and comprehensive understanding. While some readers may not be used to this work's format and interpretive essays, there are plenty of traditional reference works on the shelves of libraries with basic entries that cover many themes in this set. This reference work is designed to promote broad historical understanding and achieves this goal in ways that are unmatched by most encyclopedias. *Events That Formed the Modern World* is recommended for high school and public libraries as well as academic libraries at institutions that offer world history courses.—Joseph A. Hurley, *Data Services, Geosciences, Gov't Info, Maps and GIS Librarian, Georgia State University Library, Atlanta, Georgia*

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***Icons of the American Comic Book: From Captain America to Wonder Woman.*** Ed. by Randy Duncan and Matthew J. Smith. Greenwood Icons. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2013. 2 vols. acid free \$189 (ISBN 978-1-313-39923-7). Ebook available (978-0-313-39924-4), call for pricing.

*Icons of the American Comic Book: From Captain America to Wonder Woman* gives a comprehensive look into the world of comics that even the non-comic book lover can appreciate. As the editors state in the preface, this book "...explores how these significant characters and creators, these icons of our culture, reflect the American experience out of which they sprang and how they have achieved relevance by adapting to, and perhaps influencing, the evolving American character" (xiii).

Set up in two volumes, the book lists each of its one hundred icons alphabetically. From Neal Adams to Zap Comics, each entry is comprised of the history of the icon, the impact on the comic genre, the impact that icon has had on American culture and a summary of all of the information listed. Many of the entries also include a list of materials for further reading. The entries themselves range from two to ten pages. Some entries do include images however; all are in black and white.

When reviewing this title, a few things caught my attention. I enjoyed the break-down of each entry into categories. If the reader was only looking for the impact of the icon on comics, he or she could go directly to the labeled passage. However, I would have liked to have seen the icons themselves categorized by date instead of alphabetically. I think it would have given the reader an interesting look into the evolution of comics over time. Another thing that caught my attention was that all the images were in black and white. In Ron Goulart's *Comic Book Encyclopedia: The Ultimate Guide to Characters, Graphic Novels Writer's and Artists in the Comic Book Universe*, the author chose to use color images which I feel enhanced the readers experience especially when discussing aspects of the genre related to costumes and illustration (It Books, 2004). Goulart's comic book encyclopedia is also condensed into one volume and includes not only comic book icons, but icons from the world of graphic novels as well. When comparing the two texts, it would seem that although

## SOURCES

Goulart's book is in color, Duncan and Smith's book seems better suited for the academic library with its in depth descriptions of the characters impact on culture and not just background information.

*Icons of the American Comic Book: From Captain America to Wonder Woman* explores the world of the comic book industry introducing us to not only to the characters we know and love but to their ideals and what they represent to us in our society. Recommended for public and academic libraries.—*Jasmine L. Jefferson, First Year Experience Reference and Instruction Librarian, Kent State University, Kent, Ohio*

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***Immigrants in American History: Arrival, Adaptation and Integration.*** Ed. by Elliot Robert Barkan. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2013. 4 vols. acid free \$415 (ISBN 978-1-59884-219-7). Ebook available (978-1-59884-220-3), call for pricing.

The bulk of this four-volume set comprises essays describing the experiences of specific immigrant groups, an approach commonly employed by reference works on immigration. The twist is the chronological focus. Rather than the standard A-Z arrangement, each volume covers immigrants during a specific time period; Volume 1 covers immigrant populations before 1870. Volume 2 covers 1870-1940 and Volume 3, 1940 to present. The fourth volume addresses broader issues such as the "Economic Impact of Immigration," and "Nativism." There is no attempt at comprehensive coverage. For each time period, the most numerous or historically significant populations are profiled. As with any selective work, there are occasional surprises – the volume on immigration after 1940 does not include Afghani, Iraqi, or Sudanese immigrants, groups which although numerically small had significance beyond their numbers. Volumes 2 and 3 contain substantially more essays, reflecting the changing face of American immigration.

The segmentation by time period can take some getting used to—initially the content felt needlessly chopped up. To get a full accounting of German American migration users need to consult three volumes which can be unwieldy. After a period of adjustment, the benefits of a chronological arrangement became more apparent. Focusing on a specific time period allows the authors to explore in detail topics that might be omitted or overshadowed in an essay covering a broader time span. Each author is able to focus on temporally specific context—an important aspect of immigration history. A Chinese migrant in 1890 faced a different legal, social, and political landscape than a Chinese national contemplating immigration after World War II. The stated goal of the chronological arrangement is to facilitate group comparisons and shed light on immigrant opportunities and conditions at similar points in time. There is some merit to this approach—a perusal of the essays can reveal themes. As one example, in later volumes the essays for established (largely European) ethnic groups tell similar narratives of efforts to retain ethnic identity in the face of dwindling numbers. These stories reinforce and complement each other, while starkly contrasting

with experiences of the rising immigrant populations originating from Latin America.

This work is recommended primarily for libraries receiving significant inquiries relating to immigration history. What separates this work is the analysis by time periods which adds some valuable insights, but outside of the chronological arrangement the work does not offer much new. The same basic information can be found for many immigrant groups in recent reference works such as *Multicultural America: An Encyclopedia of the Newest Americans* (Greenwood Press, 2011) or the *Encyclopedia of American Immigration* (Salem Press 2010). The encyclopedia would have been more valuable if the goal of cross-comparison had been more fully implemented. A standard format would have further encouraged cross-group comparisons. Each author is left to explore different aspects of their topic—one essay might focus on Americanization or residential patterns, while another examines family dynamics, benevolent societies, or political participation. Some entries contain data tables, many do not. Given the diversity of immigrant experiences it is only natural that there would be some divergence, but a set of common core elements would have furthered the goal of comparing the experiences of different ethnic groups. Additional cross-references between essays would have also encouraged this goal. A second edition that more explicitly compares immigrant experiences would be welcome.—*Eric Novotny, Humanities Librarian, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania*

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***Military Robots and Drones: A Reference Handbook.*** Ed. by Paul J. Springer. Contemporary World Issues. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2013. 297 pages, acid free \$58 (ISBN 978-1-59884-732-1). Ebook available (978-1-59884-733-8), call for pricing.

*Military Robots and Drones: A Reference Handbook* proves a versatile and balanced resource. While Vincennes University's collection houses very few materials specifically focused on military robotics, we do own many general robotics-based resources as a result of our robust advanced manufacturing programs. However, a review of available materials via outlets such as YBP GOBI3 and Amazon.com demonstrates the unique nature of this resource. Most published materials in this area demonstrate a somewhat narrow focus. Ethics or specific technical information often encompasses the focus of most resources on military robotics. This book goes well beyond by offering history, ethics, technological developments, a detailed chronology, and worldwide perspectives on the use of robotics in the military.

The historical perspective and chronology included in this book are remarkable, and Springer's background as a military historian certainly contributed to this. Springer goes well beyond the advent of military usages of robotics and into the origins of the concept of robots themselves—beginning with Homer. He also traces the evolution of ethics-based thinking in connection with robots. In this way, *Military Robots and Drones* will prove useful for research on the historical