

Almanac of American Military History. By Spencer C. Tucker. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2012. 2524 pages, 4 vols. acid free \$415 (ISBN 978-1-59884-530-3). Ebook available (978-1-59884-530-1), call for pricing.

The *Almanac of American Military History* provides a comprehensive chronology of events that are part of American military history. Although the author makes a brief reference to the Viking settlement of Newfoundland circa 1000 CE and to other historical elements of the development of warfare as needed, the work functionally covers the period 1492-2011 with specific geographical and political focus on what is now the United States. Each era is represented by a high-level overview narrative; a day-by-day timeline interspersed with supplementary material; a short selection of excerpts from primary source documents; summarizing statistics for the military events of the era; and a bibliography.

Each date or date range first refers to the overarching conflict and campaign, if appropriate, and then provides a short narrative interspersed with cross-references to other dates. For battles and other complex events, the narrative follows the action chronologically and indicates the disposition of the armies before and after battle. A familiarity with battle maps is helpful for interpreting the diagrams, but they are easy to read and fairly well annotated.

While the organization of the work by era is generally successful, this decision has a negative impact on the utility of the bibliography sections, which are alphabetized within the section rather than organized by subject. The statistical content suffers from a lack of documentation; in particular, statistics compiled through 2011 are not consistently labeled as such. The index by year is outmoded given the ease of determining the year and date of events using freely-available resources on the Internet, and content access would be improved by a more comprehensive topical index, particularly geographical indexing.

The value of the *Almanac of American Military History* is in its comprehensive day-by-day approach to presenting military action. Many military history almanacs found on library reference shelves present an encyclopedic level of content for only one conflict, while others present a substantially condensed view of military campaigns and battles, more in the fashion of a dictionary than an encyclopedia. Reference guides typically provide narrative entries for campaigns, major battles, and military leaders, but do not provide a relative sense of when events take place. Military history overviews are essential for understanding the broad forces that affect military actions, but lack consistent day-by-day information about the events that have taken place.

Rather than replacing reference guides and histories, the *Almanac of American Military History* is a useful supplemental resource for answering basic questions and starting research on American military history. It has particular value for users who are initially unfamiliar with research-level military history resources, and for users who want to learn more about the context in which military actions take place. This work

also provides comprehensive coverage of the periods between wars, and as such would supplement a collection of conflict-specific military history almanacs.—*Shari Laster, Government Documents/Reference Librarian, University Libraries, The University of Akron, Ohio*

Climate Change: An Encyclopedia of Science and History. Ed. by Brian C. Black. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2013. 4 vols. acid free \$399 (ISBN 978-1-59884-761-1). Ebook available (978-1-59884-762-8), call for pricing.

The first indication of the mixed message of this encyclopedia is the first sentence in the publisher's announcement: "Climate change is a controversial topic." It may have once been controversial but modern science has determined that climate change is real and definitely not controversial. It seems that one of the purposes of this work is to keep the climate pot boiling, rather than to provide unambiguous explanations of the science, environmental changes, and social impacts. The history of that science and the causes and contributors to climate change are many and important and what one would expect from the title.

Climate change is more than an environmental issue. It is a social, political, scientific, personal, national, and global reality. Science can only report what changes have happened, what is currently happening, and what is likely to happen as conditions change. It may not be able to say precisely what will happen, where, or exactly when but does predict based on facts. The contributors come from many disciplines with interests in the social environment around the causes and effects of climate change. Only a few appear to be climate scientists or experts.

The editor states that there is "more than enough data on how to keep the Earth robust and fit" and that this encyclopedia is dedicated to that aim (xx). "Robust and fit," which usually describe athletes, are odd terms to describe an ecologically safe and sustainable environment. This encyclopedia could have served its purpose better by emphasizing that the only current controversies are on the alternate plans and efforts to mitigate the highly probable outcomes. Political and public relations controversies should have been identified as such and factual information provided.

Many of the brief, scientific, wide-ranging biographies put faces on important ideas. Some of them are undermined by the juxtaposition of inserts that may be irrelevant or seemingly designed to cast doubt on the main idea or credibility of the entry. For example, the first page of the entry on James Hansen, a leading climate scientist, includes a quote from Hugo Chavez of Venezuela at the Copenhagen climate meeting in 2009. Chavez spoke of the need for socialism to save the planet and the evils of capitalism. This sensationalism seems placed to minimize the serious science that Dr. Hansen represents.

People seeking clear definitions of terms like: climatic determinism, fracking, geoengineering, greenwashing, hydrokinetic, methane, and tipping point, will find them. Along the