

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

way they may be confused by inserts that are as long as several pages. These inserts serve as sidebars, sometimes of questionable merit, usually by their locations. They are indicated by bold black lines above and below and by pale clip-art (large quotation marks for statements, a magnifying glass indicating a “Climate-History Connection,” and a sun to indicate a “Hot Spot”). The Chavez quote is one of the more blatant inserts.

The term “Hot Spot” is a geographical location about which there is a social, environmental or climate change issue. The term “Hot Spots” is in the index, as are the geographic locations separately. Their placements do not always relate directly to the adjacent entry or are the connections explained. Interspersed in the entry “Balance of Nature” are the “Hot Spots” Vanuatu and Venice, Italy. Vanuatu’s wide ranging environmental problems are listed, as is Venice’s long flood history. The “Balance of Nature” entry itself deals with defining the two words, balance and nature, separately and together pulling in ideas from ecologists, philosophers and physicists.

In the middle of the entry “Medieval Warm Period” is a signed “Climate History Connection” about “The West African Great Warming” by another contributor. These often interesting climate change connections would be better as examples within an appropriate entry or as separate entries, rather than disrupting the readability and importance of particular entries.

Sometimes rather silly descriptions divert from the entry topic. The introductory paragraph to the “Christian Response to Climate Change” describes the advertisement by the Alliance for Climate Change featuring Newt Gingrich and Nancy Pelosi on the need to address issues of climate change. Before getting to the content of the ad, it is noted that they are seated on a small couch—“often referred to as a love seat” (231). The insert block sharing this page is by climate change denier, Senator James M. Inhofe (R-OK) on the failure of what he called eco-doomsayers.

The entry itself does mention the growing number of Christian leaders who espouse Earth stewardship. Two other block quotes are from Pope Benedict XVI and the Reverend Sally Bingham, with no context provided. The text then returns to Gingrich’s politics and ends with his regret for participating in the advertisement. A photograph of biologist, E. O. Wilson, appears with this entry, with only the caption that he leads in “efforts to team with evangelical Christians to fight global warming” (237). As religious organizations are important opinion leaders, one would expect that the topic would be well researched and covered. The “Further Reading” for this entry includes a letter to the editor from a climate scientist with no mention of religion.

Most of the topics in the table of contents do factually describe an issue, organization, activity, or concept. The organization “350.org” is one of those, as is the “Precautionary Principle.” The essay “Environmental Thought in the 19th Century” offers brief descriptions of approximately 20 significant people, events and ideas that contributed to modern understanding of human-nature interactions and preservation, but does not address their relationships to climate change.

Examples of the wide ranging essays are the: “European Union Climate Policy,” “Paleoclimatology,” and “Food and Nutrition Security.” “Renewable Energy” is a good introduction to a number of types of renewables. However, it included a brief note on carbon tax, which probably deserved its own entry, though it is mentioned in “Cap and Trade Economics.” Some renewable energy types also have their own entries.

While providing interesting information about their topics, some entries fail to stress their connection to climate change. The “North American Free Trade Agreement,” describes what it is, but does not discuss what it has to do with climate change. A person reading “Oil Drilling in the Gulf of Mexico” will learn about the extent, some of the difficulties, technologies, and politics around this activity. Then the entry ends by stating that the 2010 BP/Macondo Oil spill was not as great an ecological disaster as originally feared. No factual scientific information is provided for this statement, nor is the very fact that drilling and flaring wells are known contributors to climate change.

Skeptics are defined in several ways in this work. In the entry “Climate Change Skeptics and Public Policy,” skeptics are defined as persons “who generally do not believe that humans are accelerating, or causing global climate change” (255). In “Skeptics, Naysayers, Anomalies, and Controversies,” the skeptic is defined as “a person who objects to scientific results for reasons that can be recognized as good science by the [scientific] community under challenge” (1229). The key difference in these definitions is belief versus reason. A better term for the first type could be climate change denier, which was rarely mentioned throughout and does not occur in the index. In the second definition, the person doubting for specific reasons that can be verified as correct or incorrect.

The appendixes are 200 pages of excerpts from many major meetings and documents including the Copenhagen, Kyoto, and Cancun agreements. There are major speeches, United Nations documents, court decisions, and assessment reports. These are only found by title in the table of contents and are not indexed.

Most entries have further reading suggestions, as do some of the appendixes. There is a 42-page general bibliography including online resources. The bibliography could benefit from topical headings with more consideration to relevancy with the subject. The further reading lists usually include highly reputable sources and appear to be relevant to the topic.

Discerning readers, browsing and reading entries that catch their attentions, will acquire many facts, interesting ideas, bits of history, and some new concepts. Those using it to find introductory information on a wide range of topics sometimes connected to climate will do so. However, this is not an encyclopedia that helps general users and students connect the content to the reality of climate change. The design, the presentation, and the inclusion of some questionable content reduce its utility. The double messages and irrelevant inclusions may confuse some readers. These flaws cast a wide shadow over the entries with otherwise credible information.

SOURCES

With many other choices for resources on climate change, this is an optional purchase for most libraries.—*Linda Loos Scarth, retired reference librarian, Cedar Rapids, Iowa*

Debating Issues in American Education: A Sage Reference Set. Ed. By Charles J. Russo and Allan G. Osborne. Los Angeles: Sage Reference, 2013. (ISBN: 978-1-4129-8978-7).

The editors' ambitious endeavor to capture as many of the important debates in American education is well achieved throughout well-developed volumes that miss very little in capturing the contemporary educational landscape in America. Each volume has an extensive introduction in which the main issues are discussed with historical, legal, and cultural foundations provided so the reader can better contextualize the individual topics. There is also a good amount of useful examination of issues across multiple volumes. For example, charter schools have sections in four of the volumes, with each providing a different understanding of the issue. There are some issues covered that may not be useful to a wide audience, such as "Should Teachers Be Subject to Drug Testing," and "Should Students Be Required to Engage in Fund-Raising Activities as a Condition of Participating in Certain Activities or Events?" However, the series manages to cover all major issues in more than adequate depth.

The structure of *Debating Issues in American Education* provides roughly 15 topics per volume with 3 essays per topic: overview, point, and counterpoint. Issues covered are relevant to students and educators, and cover a wide range of topics. In general, the overview essays summarize the issues and emphasize the interplay between the point/counterpoint essays. As the point/counterpoint essays are brief (4–5 pages each) and reference each other, the overview essays occasionally seem unnecessary. The list of contributors includes an impressive collection of education faculty, practitioners with extensive academic credentials, school administrators, and other specialists such as attorneys specializing in education law. Series Editor Charles J. Russo, of The University of Dayton, has a wealth of relevant experience and publications in the field of education. Russo has also edited several education related encyclopedias, including *Encyclopedia of Law and Higher Education* (Sage, 2010). The other series editor, Allan G. Osborne, has a wealth of experience as a principal, and has published widely on special education and education law.

Debating Issues in American Education is a needed addition to the reference literature on American education, as there are no encyclopedias that provide the same contemporary and comprehensive overview while also providing the legal, cultural, and theoretical backgrounds of current issues in American education. Recent encyclopedias that cover similar ground are Sage's *Encyclopedia of the Social and Cultural Foundations of Education* (2009), which provides some similar entries, but is much more historical in nature. *Encyclopedia of American Education* (Facts on File, revised edition released in 2007) does not offer the same focus on debating issues,

and offers more material on historical development than contemporary topics. The 2003 *Encyclopedia of Education* (MacMillan) is also a title with many similar entries, but the decade after its publishing has been extremely important as the effects of No Child Left Behind legislation have become clearer. Although there are no recent encyclopedias with the focus on framing the debates in the United States about educational issues, there are "reference-like" series, such as Gale's *Opposing Viewpoints* that purport to offer the same treatment of educational issues as *Debating Issues in American Education*. However, the essays in *Debating Issues in American Education* are much more scholarly. But, the research-based writing in the essays contained in this encyclopedia does not hinder the readability and accessibility for a variety of audiences, from college freshmen to graduate students to the interested parent. The scholarly yet highly accessible writing makes this work highly valuable for busy practitioners who need broader context or a student seeking more background on an issue for a presentation or paper. Individual volumes from the *Debating Issues in American Education* can be purchased separately (for a small premium), with all volumes of high quality and worthy of purchase if libraries cannot afford the series. In sum, even libraries with most recent education reference sources mentioned above will find significant value in this important series. Highly recommended for all libraries. Libraries not able to purchase the entire series are highly encouraged to consider individual volumes.—*Shannon Pritting, Access and Resource Sharing Librarian, Syracuse University Libraries*

An Encyclopedia of American Women at War: From the Home Front to the Battlefields. Ed. By Lisa Tendrich Frank. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2013. 2 vols. Acid free \$189 (ISBN 978-1-59884-443-6). Ebook available (978-1-59884-444-3), call for pricing.

Lisa Tendrich Frank, whose previous works include *Civil War: People and Perspectives* (ABC-CLIO, 2009) and *Women in the American Civil War* (ABC-CLIO, 2008), presents an interesting and thorough investigation of the various roles women have played in and around conflicts throughout American history in *An Encyclopedia of American Women at War: From the Home Front to the Battlefields*. The intent of this encyclopedia is to "examine the various ways that women have participated in military life" (xxi). The entries focus on topics such as "specific professions, organizations, court cases, military policies, wars, branches of the military, American ethnic and racial groups, and individuals" (xxi), with the bulk of the entries focusing on individuals. The entries are succinct, entertaining, and well-written. One of the more valuable aspects of this work is its inclusion of entries dealing with topics on the periphery of war, for example the pacifist "Jane Addams" and "Victory Gardens." These types of entries help to paint a fuller picture of women's interactions with American wars than would be achieved by simply profiling women who directly served in the wars.