

Reference Books

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Editor

America in World History. Ed. by Susan Crean and Tom Lansford. Armonk, N.Y.: Sharpe Reference, 2010. 4 vols. alkaline \$299 (ISBN 978-0-7656-8171-3).

Long before globalization created a new international dynamic, the United States has reacted to or influenced world history. This four-volume general reference set addresses America's influence on world history from early settlement to the contemporary era by highlighting American events in an international context. Attempting to break away from treating America in isolation, this work handles the nation's past with the consideration to international reactions, outcomes, and consequences. This approach is important because "fusing U.S. and global history provides a more thorough appreciation of the past and view of the present" (vi).

The volumes are arranged in chronological order and cover first encounters to 1776, 1776 to 1898, 1898 to 1965, and 1965 to the present. Combined, the volumes include 122 entries. Each entry is accompanied by photographs, color illustrations, and maps that provide a visually pleasing layout. Quotes, shorter essays and biographies, and chronologies appear in inset boxes as well. Guided reading bibliographies are included at the end of each entry, which include popular and scholarly sources. A glossary is provided with each volume, and a master chronology can be found at the end of the fourth volume.

While some entries are not surprising, like "The Louisiana Purchase" and "The Truman Doctrine," others provide a fresh analysis of how American events had an international impact. For example, "Jamestown and Tobacco" and "California Gold Rush" cover localized events which had global reverberations. Contemporary issues like globalization, free trade, and terrorism are covered with entries like "North American Free Trade Agreement," "Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol," and "War on Terror."

Several American history reference sources do provide a degree of overlap with *America in World History*. The second edition of Stanley Kutler's *Dictionary of American History* (Scribner, 2003) has expanded to include cultural and demographic elements, seeming to acknowledge the nation's rapid transformation over the past twenty years. However, this authoritative source still gives the majority of coverage to the internal history of America. Alexander DeConde, Richard Dean Burns, and Fredrick Logevall's *Encyclopedia of American Foreign Policy*, 2nd ed. (Scribner, 2002) directly handles America's international connections with 121 in-depth essays, covering the first alliances to ethnic cleansing and terrorism. Specific information about policy statements, decrees, and

charters are included that help define the diplomatic and political stances of America. *America in World History* does stand on its own, however, because of the original concept of the work. This collection would be appropriate for public and school libraries building collections regarding international relations and globalization, or as a timely addition as a reference source in American history collections.—Emily Cox, Graduate Student, School of Information and Library Science, UNC-Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina

America's Natural Places. Ed. by Stacy Kowtko. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Greenwood, 2010. 5 vols. alkaline \$380.00 (ISBN 978-0-313-35088-7). E-book available (ISBN 978-0-313-35089-4), call for pricing.

The established link between education and conservation is frequently mentioned in the new reference title *America's Natural Places*, and it serves as a reminder that it is especially important that library communities have access to resources that explain the issues surrounding the protection of unique environments and ecosystems throughout the United States.

General Editor Stacy Kowtko has gathered researchers and academic writers to contribute individual volumes that cover five geographic regions of the United States: "East and Northeast," "The Midwest," "South and Southeast," "Rocky Mountains and Great Plains," and "Pacific and West." Each title is prefaced by an individual introduction to the region, and a glossary and bibliography complete each volume. Entries (of one to three pages) for habitats or natural places are listed alphabetically by state, complimented by black and white photography and maps, and concluded by a further reading section.

The goal of *America's Natural Places* is "to present representative challenges faced across the country, providing information on historical and ongoing preservation efforts" (ix), and it achieves its goal by educating the reader on diverse ecosystems, threats to their future, and efforts to protect them that will stimulate further research and discussion. Readers will also be engaged on broader societal issues such as climate change and encroaching development and how they are impacting individual ecosystems and natural sites.

In comparison, the most recent reference title to address endangered habitats in the United States is Crawford's *Habitats and Ecosystems: An Encyclopedia of Endangered America* (ABC-Clio, 1999), which details special habitat sites by state with only a short paragraph devoted to each site. Crawford's older work may offer more comprehensive lists of habitats for ready reference; however, *America's Natural Places* offers in depth analysis of fewer representational ecosystems in a current context.

The intended audience for this five-volume encyclopedia is listed as "high school and undergraduate students as well as hobbyists and nature enthusiasts" (xii); however, this reviewer suggests that any library community would benefit from acquisition of this title. Also, it should be noted that volumes