

Reference Books

Tammy J. Eschedor Voelker

Editor

The American Beauty Industry Encyclopedia. Edited by Julie Willett. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Greenwood, 2010. 338 pages. Acid-free \$85 (ISBN: 978-0-313-35949-1). E-book available (ISBN: 978-0-313-35950-7), call for pricing.

Billed as the first encyclopedia exclusively about the beauty industry, this compilation is indeed the first to gather the industry's complex blend of trends, entrepreneurs, marketing, and the occasional troubling practice. The volume explores the industry according to the idea that "it is the intersection of culture and society, beauty and business, that fosters the industry's multimillion-dollar reach into pocket books and headlines" (xv). The 115 or so entries cover a wide range of topics and assume no prior knowledge of the industry. Julie Willett, an associate professor of history at Texas Tech University, edited the volume. The contributors are professors, doctoral students, researchers, and journalists.

As the first encyclopedia on this topic, the volume occupies a unique space among beauty industry books. Many previous books have explored the industry using an exposé or "insider reveal" style. The closest, most recent comparison is Geoffrey Jones's *Beauty Imagined: A History of the Global Beauty Industry* (Oxford, 2010). The book covers the industry's global history from a decidedly business perspective (Jones is a Harvard Business School professor). Willett's encyclopedia focuses on the late nineteenth- and twentieth-century American beauty industry and offers a more sociological perspective.

This volume maintains a broad focus that amounts to a summary of the contemporary industry. A list at the beginning organizes the entries by topics: Clothing, Companies, Hair, Health, Industry, Institutions, Magazines, Male Beauty, Media, Movements, People, Products, Professions, Television, and Treatments. The entries are a worthy cross-section of today's American beauty industry as the intersection of culture, business, and personal value.

The entries are concise, straightforward, and well written. The majority of entries maintain an encyclopedic tone. But some go beyond the publisher's statement that the volume makes "analytical use of categories such as gender, race, sexuality" and come across as judgmental. For example, the entry about the television show *What Not to Wear* concludes, "WNTW teaches women to value themselves through their appearance and that they must appropriately care for their appearance in order to move ahead at work and attract a good (middle-class) man" (304). Entries such as this one read not as an analysis of the industry but as an indictment.

Although the entries are concise, each contains a further readings section. Furthermore, the volume's selected bibliography is of great value, especially the thorough list of books. The included photographs are sparse and not in color, a

disappointment for such a visual industry.

This encyclopedia is an admirable overview of the modern American beauty industry. It is also a valuable reflection of the multidisciplinary nature of the industry and should attract the interests of those in diverse fields, such as cultural studies, gender studies, sociology, history, marketing, media studies, art, and fashion. It is recommended for academic libraries serving these and related departments. Since the layout of the printed volume is not especially integral to the content, libraries might also consider the e-book. This volume is also recommended for public libraries, where even the casual reader will likely have an interest in the topic.—*Michele Hadburg, MSLS Candidate, School of Information and Library Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina*

The Concise Encyclopedia of World War II. By Cathal J. Nolan. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Greenwood, 2010. 2 vols. Acid-free \$195 (ISBN: 978-0-313-33050-6).

A momentous and global war, World War II had far-reaching consequences. A subject of significant historical importance and of intense interest for many, there remains a nearly endless supply of new works devoted to World War II. In this deluge, Boston University military professor Cathal J. Nolan's *The Concise Encyclopedia of World War II* stands out for its global treatment, but it also contains several weaknesses. A two-volume set, this reference work contains encyclopedia entries, maps, and a select bibliography.

World War II encompasses myriad historical approaches, and Nolan's encyclopedia focuses primarily on military aspects while also addressing diplomatic and political subjects. Although narrowly focused on military matters, Nolan's work provides a remarkably even coverage of military issues for each country involved in the war. While other volumes of this size tend to have a slight Western or United States focus, Nolan's work excels in its comprehensiveness and contains many entries not commonly found in similar works. This work's success in achieving broad global coverage is its greatest strength. In addition to its outstanding worldwide account, this set provides more than twenty detailed yet easy-to-understand maps depicting troop movements across nearly all fronts.

A useful work for those seeking basic information about military issues during the war, Nolan's set has several notable weaknesses. Although a concise encyclopedia, this set is more similar to a desk reference or a subject dictionary. While Nolan's encyclopedia strives for succinctness and often succeeds, many entries offer exceedingly limited information and are often a single paragraph in length. However, not all entries conform to the principle of conciseness, such as the "Barbarossa" entry, which spans nearly twenty-one pages. A major weakness of this two-volume set is the notable lack of a suggested readings list for the majority of entries. Only lengthy entries such as "Barbarossa" and the "Sino-Japanese War" provide suggested readings. Nolan does supply the

SOURCES

reader with a beneficial select bibliography in the second volume. However, a more useful approach would have been to also include relevant sources at the end of each or nearly all entries.

This encyclopedia does provide the reader with sound information on the military and political happenings of World War II. A well-researched reference work, it would certainly be useful for the casual seeker of World War II military information. However, as a reference work for a research starting point, this publication contains several deficiencies that render its usefulness less than desirable. With the omission of suggested readings for most entries, this work is not useful for readers wishing to further explore a given topic.

Reference works on World War II abound, and a recent comparable work, the *Encyclopedia of World War II, 2-Volume Set* by Alan Axelrod (Facts on File, 2007) serves as a good alternative and includes suggested readings for most entries. Spencer Tucker's five-volume set, *Encyclopedia of World War II: A Political, Social, and Military History* (ABC-Clío, 2005), continues to be the standard for World War II encyclopedias and, although more expensive, remains a better value. Although Nolan's accessible set includes military information that may otherwise be difficult to find, the dearth of suggested readings makes *The Concise Encyclopedia of World War II* best suited for high schools or medium-size public libraries.—Joseph A. Hurley, *Data Services Librarian, Georgia State University Library, Atlanta, Georgia*

Encyclopedia of American Immigration. Edited by Carl L. Bankston III. Pasadena, Calif.: Salem, 2010. 3 vols. Alkaline \$395 (ISBN: 978-1-58765-599-9). Online access included with purchase of print.

This collection is aimed at high school and undergraduate students seeking context on issues relating to immigration, both historical and contemporary. The stated goal in the introduction is “to answer all the questions about immigration in American history that students are likely to ask” (ix). Each essay begins with a brief definition, a date (when appropriate), and a statement of significance before the topic is discussed in detail. This format is helpful for students who want to quickly determine the “what, when, and why” before deciding whether to read further.

The 525 entries are concise (ranging from three hundred to three thousand words), easily comprehensible, and largely jargon-free. About one-third provide overviews of broad subjects such as “Art,” “Labor,” or “Television.” These topical essays highlight immigrants' experiences and contributions within these fields. There is also treatment of specific national groups (Cambodians, Italians, Haitians, etc.), histories of U.S. states, and discussions of significant laws, treaties, and court cases. In choice of content, the volumes under review are hardly groundbreaking: many of the same topics appear in *Immigration in U.S. History*, also edited by Bankston (Salem, 2006). The present work is both more up-to-date and better written. The writing style reflects the goal of anticipating and

answering questions. The authors have done an admirable job distilling complex topics so as to make them readily understandable. Every essay concludes with a selective bibliography for students who wish to explore the topic further. Useful appendixes include an annotated list of U.S. Supreme Court rulings, a chronology of federal laws on immigration up to 2009, and descriptions of federal government agencies concerned with immigration.

Salem Press is offering purchasers of the print set free access to the online version through December 31, 2011. Libraries that purchase the print and wish to use the online can do so via IP authentication, a referring URL, or username/password access. Access outside the library can be granted with a remote access password. After 2011, there is a \$100 annual hosting fee that is waived for libraries that purchase a new title in the Salem History collection. Additional details about Salem Online is found at http://salempress.com/Store/pages/salem_online.htm.

The online version includes all the content of the print, with the obvious advantage of full-text searching. The topical categories from the print index are reproduced allowing users to scan for essays grouped under broad headings (Court Cases, Health, Economics, or Politics, for example). The helpful appendixes and indexes are included and the cross-references are conveniently hyperlinked.

While no single work can possibly answer all questions about immigration, the editors have succeeded in compiling a collection that meets student needs. The inclusion of online access increases the appeal to students who may be reluctant to consult print reference works.—Eric Novotny, *Humanities Librarian, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania*

The Encyclopedia of Christian Literature. Edited by George Thomas Kurian. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow, 2010. 2 vols. Alkaline \$180 (ISBN: 978-2-810-86987-5). E-book available (978-0-810-87283-7), call for pricing.

The Encyclopedia of Christian Literature seeks to “identify the canon of Christian literature, the core books that have fertilized, irrigated, and nurtured the Christian mind over the centuries” (xv). Unlike other collections of Christian writers that serve as collection development or readers' advisory tools, this two-volume set focuses on the authors and texts in Christian literature's staggering scope that the editors deem essential. The work seeks to “call attention to historic texts of quality and influence, the ideas and lives of those instrumental in their creation, and those who in practice and print have embraced this legacy as a gift” (xi). Because Christian literature is so vast, and there are no other reference sources that specifically address Christian literature in this manner, the *Encyclopedia of Christian Literature* is a worthy addition to the world of reference.

Volume 1 contains essays on genres and types of Christian literature, arranged alphabetically—“Apocalyptic” through “Women's literature”—as well as the first half (A–G) of the