

Encyclopedia of Consumption and Waste: The Social Science of Garbage. Ed. by Carl A. Zimring and William L. Rathje. Los Angeles. Sage Reference, 2012. 2 vols. \$320 (ISBN: 9781412988193).

The *Encyclopedia of Consumption and Waste: The Social Science of Garbage* is a two-volume reference work which addresses a multitude of subjects about garbage from what we consume, the products we purchase and put in our waste streams, and the disposal services and methods used to deal with the trash. General Editor Carl A. Zimring, now an Associate Professor of Sustainability Studies at the Pratt Institute, states in the introduction, “What we classify and dispose of as wastes provides rich insight into our behavior, social structures, and treatment of our environment” (xxv).

There are 391 entries arranged alphabetically that have all been written and signed by 196 international contributors. Anthropology, archaeology, environmental studies, history, and sociology are a number of the fields represented, making this an interdisciplinary source. Articles are written for the general reader, and a reader’s guide in volume 1 organizes the essays into eleven broad categories; some of these include “Archaeology of Garbage,” “History of Consumption and Waste,” and “Issues and Solutions.” This encyclopedia is useful for its currency of issues, and readers can find entries on such topics as “Downcycling,” “Freeganism,” “Junk Mail,” “Mobile Phones,” and the “Pacific Garbage Patch.” There are also articles on each of the US states, many other countries, and international cities which discuss the consumption, waste collection, and disposal practices in each territory.

Each entry concludes with a further reading list and cross-references to other topics. Volume 2 provides a glossary, index, and resource guide that consists of books, journals, and websites. One of the more unique features of this encyclopedia is the eighty-seven-page appendix “Garbology 101” in volume 2, written by Consulting Editor William L. Rathje. Rathje was one of the movers and shakers in the field of Garbology, which is “the scientific study of the refuse of a modern society” according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*. He founded the Garbage Project in 1973, and this initiative has studied the contents of hundreds of landfills across the United States to gain an understanding of consumption and waste patterns. Unfortunately, Rathje passed away shortly after this encyclopedia was published. The “Garbology 101” section along with the entries on the “Garbage Project” and “Garbology” allow readers to learn more about Rathje and his remarkable research and ideologies.

Jacqueline Vaughn’s *Waste Management: A Reference Handbook* (ABC-CLIO, 2009) is a single volume work that presents information on the history, problems, controversies, and solutions relating to waste management. It provides many more biographical sketches including one about Rathje, but in general is much smaller in scope and is no comparison to the *Encyclopedia of Consumption and Waste: The Social Science of Garbage*.

The “Books” entry dismally states that “the majority of books sooner or later end up in the landfill” due to many

factors, one being the overproduction of books (76). I hope the *Encyclopedia of Consumption and Waste: The Social Science of Garbage* never does though and it looks as though SAGE has also made it available electronically for those libraries who are concerned it may someday end up in the waste stream. Highly recommended for both academic and public libraries.—Megan Coder, Associate Librarian, State University of New York at New Paltz

Encyclopedia of Gender in Media. Ed. by Mary Kosut. Los Angeles: Sage Reference, 2012. 493 p. \$115 (ISBN: 9781412990790).

While reference works discussing the media are nothing new, recent changes in how people interact with media, coupled with the unique perspective gender studies lends to the topic, make the *Encyclopedia of Gender in Media* an insightful overview of a complex and developing field of study. The intent of the work is to “explore the complexity of media across diverse platforms, technologies, and cultural, economic, and political landscapes” using the specific lens of gender (xx). Given the stated expansiveness of the topic, the coverage in this work is suitably wide-ranging. Kosut liberally defines media as a “multifaceted rubric that includes not only forms of media—from cable television and college radio to multi-user online video games—but also the production, consumption, and creation of media content” (xix). Kosut argues successfully that this work is needed because the ubiquity of media due in large part to pervasive technology in everyday lives has made the topic an “increasingly salient subject within the last few decades” (xx).

In addition to the novelty and comprehensiveness of the volume, it also benefits from good writing and organization. The encyclopedia’s introduction helps tease out this complex field of study by framing the sometimes seemingly disparate entries that follow and by fully describing the gendered lens through which they should be read. The entries are concise and highly readable. Overarching theories and paradigms that might be difficult reading in other volumes are distilled well. The entries themselves fall into a few broad categories. Many entries focus on “examining the role of media in enabling, facilitating, or challenging the social construction of gender in our society” (xxi). Other types of entries include those covering theorists, contemporary scholars, and alternative media (for example the Riot Grrrl movement). Some of the more interesting entries in the encyclopedia focus on new media, alternative media and user generated media, for example “Blogs and Blogging” and “Hacking and Hacktivism.” Special features of the volume include a rich chronology that outlines major milestones from 1792 (the publication of the first women’s magazine) to the present (recent legislation concerning same-sex marriage), a thematic reader’s guide, and a glossary.

This work is recommended for any academic library which supports gender studies or media studies programs.—Emily Dill, Executive Director, University Library of Columbus, Columbus, Indiana