

## SOURCES

notorious rather than inspiring lives. The essays in this set are similar in format to those in *American Heroes*, albeit shorter, with each subject getting a one- to three-page signed essay. The final volume of the set contains indexes of subjects by time period, by category, and by name, and potentially useful websites that can be used to further research these subjects and other criminals are also listed. The most noteworthy aspect of *American Villains* is the subject matter. Many of the subjects, especially the more recent and the less noteworthy, will not be found in more traditional biographical sources. The essays in this set, along with the information offered on further resources, will be valuable to high school students researching notorious personages.

Both *American Villains* and *American Heroes* are recommended for high school and larger public libraries, although a library that owns *Great Lives from History: Notorious Lives* probably doesn't need to add *American Villains* to its collection.—Sharon E. Reidt, *Library Clerk, Brooks Memorial Library, Brattleboro, Vermont*

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***Blood on the Stage: Milestone Plays of Crime, Mystery, and Detection: An Annotated Repertoire, 1900–1925.*** By Amnon Kabatchnik. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow, 2008. 417p. alkaline \$100 (ISBN 978-0-8108-6123-7).

*Blood on the Stage* describes eighty-four plays (not eighty, the number specified on the back cover) dealing with a wide range of criminal acts, including spying, political intrigue, and chicanery. Author Amnon Kabatchnik eschews comprehensiveness, instead drawing from plays written and produced in the English language from 1900 through 1925. He believes that his selections, made on the basis of literary worth, historical significance, innovative nature, and so on, mirror the “history and trends of world theatre” (xi). The resulting range of choices is surprisingly broad, and includes not only expected genre pieces but also such mainstream standards as *Desire Under the Elms* by Eugene O’Neill and *The Adding Machine* by Elmer Rice.

The work is arranged chronologically by date of original production. A typical entry summarizes the plot of the play in some detail, discusses its production history, and offers a biographical sketch of its author or authors. Yet Kabatchnik seldom stops here. For instance, his entry for *The Scarlet Pimpernel* by the Baroness Orczy and Montagu Barstow also describes the play’s inspiration, Orczy’s development of the material into a series of novels, the dashing Pimpernel’s subsequent appearances in motion pictures and on television (including the 1999–2000 A&E series), and Orczy’s many other works. Several short appendixes extend the chronological and thematic range of the book.

The work’s only obvious technical fault lies in its lack of “see” and “see also” references. Thus the reader of the entry on *The Secret Woman* by Eden Phillpotts is not led to the separate entry for *The Shadow* by the same author. Having to fall back on the work’s table of contents or index for such an obvious piece of information should not be necessary.

Kabatchnik has enjoyed a distinguished theatrical and academic career. He clearly finds the byways of his subject as interesting as the plays themselves, and the sheer readability of his work exceeds that of many reference books. There do not appear to be any comparable works available, and while its rather steep price may put it beyond the reach of small theatre collections, *Blood on the Stage* is warmly recommended for purchase by all that can afford it.—Grove Koger, *Albertsons Library, Boise State University, Boise, Idaho*

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***Climate Change: In Context.*** Ed. by Brenda W. Lerner and K. L. Lerner. Detroit, Mich.: Gale, 2008. 2 vols. \$245 (ISBN 978-1-4144-3614-2).

As global warming and related climate changes become accepted as scientific fact, it is increasingly important for libraries to have resources that inform and engage their communities on these serious global issues. However, there are few reference titles currently available that address the topics of climate change and global warming. *Climate Change: In Context* is a new title in Gale’s In Context reference series that offers a cross-curricular approach to understanding this important environmental and societal issue. In response to the reports of the 2007 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) editors Brenda W. Lerner and K. L. Lerner have gathered eighteen contributors to create a two-volume reference work of 250 signed entries on the scientific causes and global consequences of climate change.

*Climate Change: In Context* provides topical entries in alphabetical order that vary in length from three to six pages. Each entry includes an introduction, historical background and scientific foundations, impacts and issues, and bibliography. A highlighted sidebar, “Words to Know,” assists with understanding the scientific and technical terminology in each entry, and the text is complemented by color photographs and illustrations to create an attractive page design. The text in both volumes is prefaced by a glossary, an “IPCC Guide to Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Definitions,” and a chronology, and an extensive list of sources and an index complete the second volume.

*Climate Change: In Context* is an important work that fulfills its purpose “to help . . . students understand the essential facts and deeper cultural connections of topics and issues related to the scientific study of climate change and its impact on humanity” (xxvii). The contributors have written entries on scientific and science-related topics in language that is understandable to the layperson, and the appealing layout makes for easy browsing by the reader. The intended audience for this work is “high school and early college age” (xxvii), but this reviewer would recommend *Climate Change: In Context* for any academic, school, or public library.

In comparison, the only recent reference title that addresses global warming in a similar fashion is S. George Philander’s *Encyclopedia of Global Warming and Climate Change* (Sage, 2008); however, in breadth of coverage and presentation, *Climate Change: In Context* is far superior.—Paul MacLennan, *California State University, East Bay Library, Hayward*