

The new set is comparable to Allan Galloway's one-volume *Colonial Wars of North America 1512–1763* (Garland, 1996), but some of its battle articles are shorter while its coverage of “conflicts” is broader than just wars. Its coverage of society is not as comprehensive as is Jacob Ernest Cooke's *Encyclopedia of the North American Colonies* (Scribner, 1993), which includes a chapter on “War and Diplomacy” but addresses many other historical themes as well.

By providing entries written at a popular reading level along with original documents that are more challenging to read, the new encyclopedia aims to reach a varied audience. The prime market would be undergraduates learning to do research using original documents, but secondary school students would find the first two volumes useful, while scholars would appreciate the third.—Evan Davis, Librarian, Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Encyclopedia of Society and Culture in the Medieval World. Ed. by Pam J. Crabtree. Facts On File Library of World History. New York: Facts On File, 2008. 4 vols. acid free \$360 (ISBN 978-0-8160-6936-1).

Encyclopedia of Society and Culture in the Medieval World is one of the latest additions to the Facts On File Library of World History. Edited by Pam J. Crabtree, an associate professor of anthropology at New York University, this four-volume set contains seventy-one entries on aspects of the civilization of the world between the fall of the Roman Empire and the European Renaissance. Fourteen of these, considered “major” topics, are given more in-depth coverage and include subjects such as agriculture, empires and dynasties, and war and conquest. The volumes are arranged alphabetically by entry and contain a general introduction followed by signed articles on each topic from the perspective of different civilization centers in Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, and the Islamic World. The authors of the articles are academics and scholars specializing in history and medieval studies and come from a wide range of institutions in the United States, Canada, Europe, and the Middle East. Cross references to other articles in the volume as well as selected references are listed at the end of each entry, and excerpts from primary source documents, sidebars on related topics, illustrations, and maps accompany the text. A glossary, a general bibliography, a chronology, and an index round out the volume. The text itself is written in plain language and is easy to read, and foreign concepts are fully explained.

There have been a number of reference resources published in the last ten years or so on the medieval period, including the American Council of Learned Societies' *The Middle Ages: An Encyclopedia for Students* (Scribner, 1996), Streissguth's *Greenhaven Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages* (Greenhaven Thompson/Gale, 2003) and two earlier entries in the Facts On File World History series, *The Encyclopedia of the Medieval World* (Facts On File, 2005) and *Handbook of Life in the Medieval World* (Facts On File, 2008). With the exception of the last title, these references deal mainly with history and do not generally cover the same type of sociological and

cultural aspects of the medieval world discussed in this work. However, there are major overlaps in coverage between the *Handbook of Life in the Medieval World* and the *Encyclopedia of Society and Culture in the Medieval World*, and it is probably not necessary to purchase both. Although the cost is greater, the fuller geographical coverage in the *Encyclopedia of Society and Culture in the Medieval World* makes this a better option for high school and public libraries and academic institutions serving undergraduate students.—Amanda K. Sprochi, Health Sciences Cataloger, University of Missouri, Columbia

Encyclopedia of Stem Cell Research. Ed. by Clive N. Svendsen and Allison D. Ebert. Los Angeles: Sage, 2008. 2 vols. \$250 (ISBN 978-1-4129-5908-7).

The two coeditors of this encyclopedia work at the University of Wisconsin–Madison's Stem Cell Research Program. Their comprehensive reference source provides informative, well-written articles on all aspects of stem cells in a writing style that is understandable to the lay public. Overviews of research, researchers, their work, major institutes and universities, summaries of each state's laws and attitudes, stem cell development and uses, and the basic biological concepts contribute to make this title nearly universal in scope. Discussions of political, ethical, and moral issues furnish good brief summaries of the viewpoints of major religious groups.

More than three hundred articles appear, signed and with bibliographies of journal citations and websites. A chronology appears in volume 1, tracing briefly the historical high points in stem cell discovery and research. Three lengthy appendixes (spanning more than two hundred pages in volume 2) contain reports prepared for Congress and the president as well as transcripts of congressional hearings on stem cells and cloning. Additional material includes a glossary, a resource guide, and a list of scientists engaged in stem cell research.

The articles on major diseases emphasize how stem cells are or could be utilized to fight each disease, as well as basic descriptions. Detailed sketches on more than thirty researchers combine both biographical information and a summary of their current work. Pieces on nearly sixty research centers and institutions supply specifics on their programs, their areas of focus, and their scientists. Write-ups for every state and twenty-two other countries summarize each place's ideas, ideologies, and any current research.

Material on the actual growth and handling of stem cells is better sought in the primary literature, as the field changes so rapidly. Recommended for all libraries. Sage and the Gale Virtual Reference Library offer e-format availability of this encyclopedia by subscription.—Marion S. Muskiewicz, Science Librarian, University of Massachusetts Lowell

Encyclopedia of the Jewish Diaspora: Origins, Experiences, and Culture. Ed. by M. A. Ehrlich. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2008. 3 vols. alkaline \$295 (ISBN 978-1-85109-873-6).

Editor M. A. Ehrlich's *Encyclopedia of the Jewish Diaspora: Origins, Experiences, and Culture* debuts as the first encyclo-

SOURCES

pedia to address this topic. Other comprehensive reference sources on Jewish history discuss the Jewish Diaspora, but also cover areas outside the scope of this work. The twenty-two-volume *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Thomson Gale, 2007) has many editorial board members who are Jewish Diaspora scholars. Some duplication also exists with the single-volume titles *Encyclopedia of Jewish History: Events and Eras of the Jewish People* (Facts On File, 1986) and Amotz Asa-El's *The Diaspora and the Lost Tribes of Israel* (Hugh Lauter Levin Associates, 2004). Coverage of the Jewish Diaspora is less extensive in these single-volume sources, but their lush color illustrations put *Encyclopedia of the Jewish Diaspora* to shame. The richness of *Encyclopedia of the Jewish Diaspora*'s text may be a reason for fewer illustrations. The signed articles, many by professors (including Ehrlich, who is professor of Jewish Thought, Texts, and Culture at Shandong University in China), as well as the bibliographies at the end of the multipage articles, enhance the encyclopedia's authority and credibility.

In the preface, Ehrlich outlines the twofold purpose of this encyclopedia: to provide an overview of topics relating to "regions and communities of Jews around the world," emphasizing history and statistics, and to offer an "in-depth analysis" (xv) of how the Jewish Diaspora connects with regions, culture, religion, politics, and various disciplines ranging from sociology to the natural sciences. The layout of the encyclopedia reflects these goals. Arranged thematically instead of alphabetically, volume 1 focuses on themes of the Diaspora, and volumes 2 and 3 examine specific geographical areas. An extensive index in each volume guides readers to relevant pages.

The work covers every aspect of the Jewish Diaspora and highlights the "rare and eclectic elements" of this topic (xv). For example, Ehrlich includes articles on areas where the Jewish population is microscopic or even nonexistent, as is the case in Sudan. Other intriguing entries include "Jewish Women of the Early American West" and "Jewish Identity in Latin American Jewish Cinema."

Several things make this encyclopedia stand out. The articles are engaging and require no preexisting knowledge. Additionally, the survey articles provide consistent structure, including timelines and the use of standard subheadings, for example, "Demographic Movement and Emigration." Helpful statistical tables such as "Jewish immigrants from the Former Soviet Union in Germany, 1990–2004" augment the text, and the twenty-nine-page glossary in each volume enhances its usability.

Even though the *Encyclopedia of the Jewish Diaspora* is a pioneering work, several of its shortcomings should be acknowledged. For example, neither the preface nor the introduction define the term "Diaspora." Moreover, the introduction focuses too much on areas for further study and fails to provide background information on the content contained in the source. Also, there are some glaring grammatical and factual errors. For example, the article "History of Jews in Syria" cites the U.S. State Department's figure of 18.6 million as the general population, the Jewish population as 10,

and the percent of the Jewish population as "approximately 1 percent" (786). This percentage is conspicuously incorrect. Another error involving population is not as easy to rectify in "Jews in Slovenia," where the general population given is 2,004,3942.

Although *Encyclopedia of the Jewish Diaspora: Origins, Experiences, and Culture* meets the goals outlined in the preface, the editors should have read the text more closely. Libraries owning reference titles that offer some coverage of the Jewish Diaspora may wait to add this title until a second revised edition becomes available.—Elizabeth A. Young, *Research and Information Literacy Librarian, Washington College, Chestertown, Maryland*

Encyclopedia of the Social and Cultural Foundations of Education.

Ed. by Eugene F. Provenzo. Los Angeles: Sage, 2008. 3 vols. acid free \$425 (ISBN 978-1-4129-0678-4).

This uniquely browsable encyclopedia was created "to provide a comprehensive background for those interested in issues involving schools and society" (xxxv). It would be beneficial for undergraduates researching cultural aspects of education that correspond to several broad topic areas from which the encyclopedia's 404 entries (authored by 305 contributors) flow. These areas include equality and social stratification, law and public policy, religion and social values, school governance, and sexuality and gender. Editor Eugene Provenzo is best known for his research on video game violence, but also has edited or coauthored more than sixty books on the interrelatedness of education, society, and technology. Associate editor John Renaud is a University of Miami librarian.

Each volume contains a list of the encyclopedia's entries as well as a handy reader's guide, which lists the entries on the basis of topical areas. Most entries are less than three full pages in length, and content overlap across the signed entries is acknowledged by the editors. The list of entries reflects this source's unique coverage: "Company-Sponsored Schooling," "Gallup Polls," "Museums," "Social Impact of the Internet," and "Vending Machines in Schools," to name a few. Some entries require some basic educational knowledge to be recognizable ("Chautauqua Movement," "Dalton Plan," "Julius Rosenwald Fund"). Websites listed for additional information following a few of the articles appear useful (e.g., Temple University's National Center for the Study of Corporal Punishment's site is listed with the Corporal Punishment article). Volume 3 contains three components: Biographies of more than 120 important educational figures (mainly American plus a few Europeans), a 32-page essay defining the social and cultural foundations of education, and a visual history of American education (spanning colonial times to the Civil Rights era), created because "there is no comprehensive visual history of American education" (1005). Surprisingly, this appears to be correct according to a Worldcat search. The history includes annotated black-and-white drawings and photographs as well as a textual description. Indexing