

SOURCES

white photographs, maps, and other images complement the text. Nevertheless, the encyclopedia would have provided readers with an even richer experience if it contained additional supplementary material such as a general chronology or selected historical documents.

Other works examining American history that are aimed at young audiences include John A. Garraty's *The Young Reader's Companion to American History* (Houghton Mifflin, 1994) and David C. King's *Children's Encyclopedia of American History* (DK, 2003). These works differ significantly from the *U-X-L Encyclopedia of U.S. History*. King's one-volume book encompasses the years 1000–2002, which is less than the coverage in *U-X-L Encyclopedia of U.S. History*. Additionally, King's work is chronologically arranged into eighteen chapters that are further subdivided into visually striking two-page spreads that focus on specific historical themes and provide relatively brief treatment of topics in comparison to *U-X-L Encyclopedia of U.S. History*. Like King's encyclopedia, Garraty's work is a single-volume text. It is similar to *U-X-L Encyclopedia of U.S. History* in that it contains alphabetically arranged articles. There is some overlap in coverage between the two works; however, unlike *U-X-L Encyclopedia of U.S. History*, Garraty's text has articles dedicated to major sports such as baseball and basketball and social issues such as marriage and poverty. Finally, Garraty's work contains richer supplementary material, including the texts of the Constitution and Declaration of Independence. On the other hand, neither Garraty nor King's work is as current or wide-ranging as *U-X-L Encyclopedia of U.S. History*, which is recommended for middle and high school libraries.—Michelle Hendley, *Reference Librarian, State University of New York, College at Oneonta*

World and Its Peoples: The Americas. World and Its Peoples. New York: Marshall Cavendish, 2008. 11 vols. alkaline \$499.95 (ISBN 978-0-7614-7802-7).

This geographical encyclopedia is the third part of a series that will eventually provide coverage of all regions of the world. The current set of eleven volumes focuses on North, South, and Central America as well as the Caribbean Islands and Greenland. The volumes provide a very solid but general overview of the nations and territories of the Americas. For readers with a lower-level research need, it compares favorably to the *Worldmark Encyclopedia of the Nations: Americas* (Gale, 2004) as well as the *South America, Central America and the Caribbean* (Routledge, 2008) volume of the annual Europa Regional Surveys when the myriad maps and photos are factored into the analysis. However, the latter two works are more appropriate for scholarly, college-level research, providing more detailed data and categories of information. *World and Its Peoples* presents statistics in an easy-to-browse format and uses text effectively to make the subjects more approachable. Another feature that sets it apart from the others is its lengthy overviews of the region and subregions as well as the context for each nation's place therein.

Each of the first ten volumes (the eleventh is an index volume) represents a discrete subregion or closely related

grouping of countries, for example “Brazil and the Guiana Coast” or “Northern Caribbean.” Within the profile of each country there is an introduction (a basic statistical overview and brief chronology) and the sections “Government,” “Modern History,” “Cultural Expression,” “Daily Life” (including profiles of major cities), and “Economy.” The amount of information provided and additional subcategories vary widely between profiles.

The editors missed an opportunity to bring to light information on often neglected topics from lesser known countries, preferring instead to focus on economic behemoths such as the United States and Canada, which together make up nearly a third of the work. Similarly, a preference was shown toward territories under the dominion of the United States. Except for Puerto Rico and the other U.S. territories, territories that are dependents of sovereign nations received only brief overviews. These territories are all very distinct from their mother nations and should have been fully profiled in recognition of their unique cultures and histories.

An additional area that should have received proper attention was a true ethnic breakdown of populations, especially with regard to indigenous peoples. With very few exceptions, such as Guatemala, the editors chose to use the generic term Amerindian and European as opposed to identifying the specific groups or country of origin when describing ethnic populations. Once again, it seems a missed opportunity to educate and provide broader historical context.

Given the intended audience, this reference set is recommended only for high schools and public libraries.—Brent D. Singleton, *Reference Librarian, California State University, San Bernardino*

We are sad to announce the loss of David Fagerstrom, who passed away on December 10, 2008 at the age of 59. David was Faculty Director of the Science Library at University of Colorado, Boulder, and a regular reviewer for this column. His contributions to Reference & User Services Quarterly were recognized at the 2008 RUSA Awards Ceremony. He will be missed.

Professional Materials

Karen Antell
Editor

Answers to the Health Questions People Ask in Libraries. By Laura Townsend Kane, Rozalynd P. McConaughy, Steven Patrick Wilson, and David L. Townsend. New York: Neal-Schuman, 2008. 278p. paper \$65 (ISBN 1-55570-642-8).

For any reference book to be useful, good organization is vital, a task that is particularly difficult when dealing with consumer health information. The authors' intent is for this book to be useful anywhere that consumer health questions