

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-