

SOURCES

are also placed within literary, cultural, and historical contexts in the general and thematic articles. Entries are arranged alphabetically and range in length from a single paragraph to forty pages. Each is accompanied by at least one further reading suggestion, and some include black-and-white photographs. An eight-page bibliography and a general index are provided in the third volume, while an alphabetical list of entries and a guide to related topics are provided in the front of volume 1. Additional lists of authors by chronology and ethnic or national heritage would have been helpful, but are not included in this work.

The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Latino Literature provides much more cultural and historical information than its title implies. Articles cover a broad range of topics, entities, and events. For example, “Aesthetic Concepts of Latino Literature,” which concentrates on contemporary Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Cuban Americans, includes a discussion of not only literature but other art forms as well. Many other essays dealing with historical events and topics, including those on immigration, U.S. legislation, and various ethnic movements, enrich the reader’s understanding of the historical and cultural circumstances that have shaped the writing and lives of U.S. Latinos.

Two reference works devoted to Latino writers that have appeared in the last five years include *Notable Latino Writers* (Salem, 2006) and *Latino and Latina Writers* (Scribner, 2004). *Notable Latino Writers* provides entries on both Latino and Latin American authors and topics. Its author entries are of similar length and breadth to those in *The Greenwood Encyclopedia*, but the latter title provides essays on those Latino authors who are only listed, but not given an essay, in *Notable Latino Writers*. *The Greenwood Encyclopedia* also offers more in-depth coverage of historical and cultural events and topics that have influenced Latino authors. *Latino and Latina Writers* offers more in-depth literary criticism and selective bibliographies for the approximately sixty individual authors included in the two-volume set; however, the coverage of additional authors as well as the many scholarly topical essays provided in *The Greenwood Encyclopedia* make this set a worthwhile additional purchase for those libraries that already own *Latino and Latina Writers*.

School libraries and smaller public libraries may rely on *Notable Latino Writers*, while all academic and larger public libraries should purchase both *Latino and Latina Writers* and *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Latino Literature*.—Eileen Oliver, Librarian, San Antonio College Library, San Antonio, Texas

The Legislative Branch of Federal Government: People, Process, and Politics. By Gary P. Gersham. About Federal Government. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-Clio, 2008. 450p. alkaline \$95 (ISBN 978-1-85109-712-8).

Although the federal government is seemingly ubiquitous, many people have only an elementary understanding of how the legislature functions, how it interacts with the other branches of the government, or the extent to which it has evolved over the years. This timely new offering from

ABC-CLIO’s About Federal Government series will provide legal, public administration, political science, and history students as well as interested readers with a unique and in-depth examination of the daily operations of the legislative branch of the U.S. government within the context of its historical evolution.

Written by Gary P. Gersham, assistant professor of history and legal studies at Nova Southeastern University, the book provides a historical overview and focuses on the structure and process of the federal legislature, its functions and powers, politics, interaction with other branches of the federal government, and the people who serve. Gersham’s command of the subject is noteworthy and his narrative engaging. Key features include a glossary of concepts and people, bibliographies at the end of chapters, a comprehensive annotated bibliography, primary documents (including significant legal cases), and a generous supply of high-quality illustrations and photographs. Taken together with its companion volume in the series, *The Judicial Branch of the Federal Government: People, Process, and Politics* (ABC-CLIO, 2007), the two works offer to students a distinctive historical treatment and guide to the inner workings of the federal government from its inception to the present.

There are several interesting textbooks devoted to American government but few comprehensive reference encyclopedias. Two notable and classic works will serve as valuable companion volumes to *The Legislative Branch of Federal Government*. *Congress A to Z*, 5th ed. (CQ Pr., 2008), is an easy-to-use encyclopedic treatment of Congress consisting of more than 250 entries explaining nearly every key feature of the national legislature. Levy, Karst, and Winkler’s *Encyclopedia of the American Constitution* (MacMillan, 2000) furnishes a comprehensive guide to constitutional law in the United States. Written by an impressive list of constitutional scholars, judges, lawyers, and historians, it would be a fine addition to nearly any history collection.

Gersham’s book will fill an important gap in the reference literature and it will serve as a welcome addition to American historiography. Well written, thorough, and without rival in its coverage and scope, this will undoubtedly become the premier reference encyclopedia on the subject. As such, it is highly recommended for all undergraduate and large public libraries—Vincent P. Tinerella, Public Services Librarian, Arkansas Tech University, Russellville

The Old West: History and Heritage. Ed. by Edward Countrymen. New York: Marshall Cavendish, 2008. 11 vols. alkaline \$359.95 (ISBN 978-0-7614-7829-4).

Published to bring alive the American West to its readers, this multivolume encyclopedia chronicles the years from 1787, when the Northwest Ordinance defined how the western wilderness would be absorbed into the United States, to 1912, the year New Mexico and Arizona joined the Union. These 11 volumes contain 193 articles on about 1,200 pages by recognized scholars that explore the history of the West and its enduring social and cultural effect on the rest of the nation.

Not only does the work consider people, places, and events of their times, it also covers the legacy of the West in more contemporary years with essays on western movies, television programs, literature, and music, as well as the popularity of western clothing. Thus the volumes include information about Sitting Bull, Wyatt Earp, and the Lewis and Clark Expedition alongside information about John Wayne, Louis L'Amour, and Aaron Copland's "Appalachian Spring." As the editor notes in volume 1, "The Old West found in these pages is a place with a living past and a nostalgic present" (13).

Each signed entry has introductory remarks, the essay itself, captioned illustrations, and cross references to other entries. Many also include a note on chronology, brief excerpts from such other published works as period writings and poems, and biographical panels offering glimpses into the lives of individuals not separately covered in their own essays. All eleven volumes conclude with a list of research resources—printed and Internet—a glossary, and an index. The concluding volume features a timeline, comprehensive glossary, resources for further study, and indexes. Additionally, the publisher has released an accompanying website, *The Old West*, at www.marshallcavendishdigital.com.

Although it is an effective resource in conveying information about the American West to an audience of upper middle school students and higher, like most encyclopedias, this one does not break any new ground. As well, its bibliographical references for both mature and younger readers list writings, websites, and films largely known to readers interested in the topics of the volumes. There are always questions about why some things are covered while others are not. For example, why is there an entry for Dodge City, Kansas, but not one for Denver or San Francisco?

Summing up in the words of the editor and publisher in volume 1, "Whatever the West is—whether it represents the fulfillment of one people's dreams, the destruction of another's, or something else yet to be understood—the editors and publisher of this encyclopedia offer it in the hope that what is found in these volumes will entertain as well as inform" (12)—E. Richard McKinstry, *Interim Library Director and Andrew W. Mellon Senior Librarian, H. F. du Pont Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Delaware*

Organized Crime: From Trafficking to Terrorism. Ed. by Frank Shanty. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2008. 2 vols. acid free \$195 (ISBN 978-1-57607-337-7).

According to general editor Frank Shanty, the goal of this two-volume encyclopedia is to attempt "to address those aspects of global crime that presently challenge the capabilities of law enforcement and other international agencies and governing bodies" (xii). An additional goal is to present issues from a global perspective, although there are discussions from national and regional viewpoints as well. Volume 1 is a sobering and chilling work describing criminal and terrorist activities and their infiltration into legitimate businesses and the worldwide political arena. Volume 1 consists of primary

source documents that pertain to this subject. Page numbering is continuous.

A six-page introduction by Don Liddick, author of three books on organized crime, summarizes global current events, recent trends, and emerging patterns as of 2006. After the introduction, three sections make up the first volume. Section 1, "Organized Crime, Criminal Groups, and National and Regional Threats," covers the history and evolution of organized crime; definitions, theories, function, and structure; and country profiles of criminal activities from Africa to Turkey, including North America. Section 2 focuses on financial crimes and fraud, criminal enterprises, and sources of financing, while section 3 discusses the global effects of organized crime, smuggling and piracy, terrorism, and international efforts to combat crime. This final section includes descriptions of twenty-one national and international law enforcement and intelligence agencies. A twenty-page appendix describes forty-six major international crime groups, such as the Russian Mafiya, Sun Yee Kich, and the Colombian drug cartels. There are more than 140 entries in this volume. Each entry is followed by an average of eight to ten references, although the one titled "Has Al Qaeda acquired nuclear weapons?" has thirty-one references. Black-and-white photographs intersperse the text, varying from a hanged Captain Kidd and the Eliot Ness credentials to a portrait of Osama bin Laden.

Volume 2 contains the texts of multilateral and international treaties, conventions, protocols, and other legal documents that attempt to combat organized criminal and terrorist activities in the national, regional, and international arenas. These include a brief summary of the intent of the document, the URL for the original source, the date and place where it was signed, and also where and when it was amended, if it was. These reprints do not include tables; the reader is advised to view the original source document for these.

While the format of the volumes is pleasing, with plenty of photographs, good margins, and clear print, there are some problems. The organization of the text in volume 1 is confusing; it is not arranged chronologically or alphabetically but rather in the three large sections. Neither the preface nor the introduction discuss the rationale behind this organization. There is a good index that appears in both volumes, however, so specific topics are readily available. There is no complete bibliography, just references at the end of each entry. The table of contents of each volume pertains to that volume only. Although more than seventy-five persons contributed to the work, there is no listing of the contributors or their credentials. Editor Frank Shanty, in the preface, calls them top scholars in the field, but it would be good to know exactly what their credentials are. A listing would help with this problem as would a complete bibliography.

There are other works on both organized crime and terrorism, but this work combines the two in one place. *Encyclopedia of World Terrorism: 1996–2002* (Sharpe Reference, 2003) is a two-volume work that is now dated, as is *The Encyclopedia of American Crime* (Facts On File, 2001). Barry Rubin's *Chronologies of Modern Terrorism* (M. E. Sharpe, 2009) is just