

Reference Books

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Editor

Encyclopedia of Attention Deficit Disorders. By Evelyn Kelly. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Greenwood, 2009. 256p. acid-free \$85 (ISBN 978-0-313-34249-3).

This concise encyclopedia provides a comprehensive and unbiased overview of attention deficit hyperactivity disorders (ADHD). According to the author, ADHD is one of the most studied current neuropsychological diagnoses. ADHD diagnosis and treatment are controversial topics that require a broad and evenhanded resource to help navigate the issues.

Most recent titles on the subject are either meant for clinicians, like Steven Pliszka's *Treating ADHD and Comorbid Disorders: Psychosocial and Psychopharmacological Interventions* (Guilford, 2009); are resources for personal management, like Martin Kutscher's *ADHD: Living Without Brakes* (Kingsley, 2009); or have a strong subject bias, like Thomas Brown's *Attention Deficit Disorder: The Unfocused Mind in Children and Adults* (Yale Univ. Pr., 2006). This encyclopedia fills an important gap in materials related to this disorder and would be an excellent overview of the topic for beginning research.

Encyclopedia of Attention Deficit Disorders comprises 170 articles, in alphabetical order, that cover a wide variety of subjects related to the disorders. The article topics range from tools of diagnosis, medications used, alternative therapies, complications, other factors that affect the symptoms, and legal issues. Most articles are a page to a page and a half in length. Some of the broader topics, such as "Teaching Children with ADHD" or "Diagnosis of ADHD," have longer entries.

There is an extensive bibliography in this volume, providing an important resource for further research. Two appendixes provide a list of diagnoses related to ADHD and a directory of U.S. organizations for people seeking further information.

This single volume provides a strong resource for non-specialists, such as college students, teachers, and parents. Highly recommended for college and medium to large public library reference collections.—*Jessica Weitz, Brooks Memorial Library, Brattleboro, Vermont*

Encyclopedia of Communication Theory. Ed. by Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2009. 2 vols. acid free \$350 (ISBN 978-1-412-95937-7).

Encyclopedia of Communication Theory is the only encyclopedia of its kind to provide quick overviews of communication theories and traditions. Edited by the co-authors of the classic textbook *Theories of Human Communication*

(Thomson/Wadsworth, 2008), this two-volume set is a convenient reference source covering communication theories, including group and organizational, media and mass, and interpersonal communication. The entries are comprehensive, written by international scholars, and reviewed by an editorial board.

Encyclopedia of Communication Theory is geared to undergraduate students who have little or no knowledge of communication theory; however, communication scholars will find it useful as a ready reference source for research and teaching. The entries provide introductory information explaining communication theory in the simplest, jargon-free terms, transforming theoretical content into manageable concepts. The encyclopedia is extensive in its scope, covering communication theory from the classical period of Greece, Rome, and India up to the present day. In addition, the encyclopedia provides information on a variety of topics, such as theoretical concepts, traditions, paradigms, schools, metatheories, methodologies, inquiries, orientations, applications, and contexts.

Volume 1 includes a reader's guide that classifies the encyclopedia's entries into seventeen easily browsed, topical categories, such as "Critical Orientations," "Paradigms, Traditions, and Schools," and "Theory, Metatheory, Methodology, and Inquiry." In addition, volume 1 contains an alphabetical list of theorists and the corresponding entry titles that cover their scholarship, as well as a chronology of key events in the history of communication theory. Volume 2 features a forty-page selected bibliography of theoretical works by topic.

This reference work is unique because its sole focus is communication theory and tradition. Highly recommended for academic libraries. Available electronically.—*Colleen Lougen, Electronic Resources Librarian, State University of New York, New Paltz*

Gale Contextual Encyclopedia of American Literature. Ed. by Anne Marie Hacht and Dwayne D. Hayes. Detroit: Gale, 2009. 4 vols. \$495 (ISBN 978-1-414-43130-7).

This four-volume set is an ultracontemporary resource for teaching and learning. The editors state in the introduction that "by understanding the context of the writer's work, you are more likely to recognize key themes and stylistic traits as elements of larger trends in the literary world, as well as understand the impact of historical events from a new and unique perspective" (xxi).

Coverage spans centuries, cultures, and genres. It is not stated how the included authors were selected or what criteria was used. It is also not clear who authored the entries. Responsibility is given only for the project editors and an advisory board composed of four scholars. There is a good balance between classic and contemporary, well-known and lesser-known authors. Many authors of young adult and children's literature are included. Coverage of different periods is also represented fairly; the inclusion of many lesser-known and contemporary authors writing in the twenty-first

century brings a fresh twist to this set. The term “author” is given a very wide definition. Novelists, essayists, poets, and dramatists are included, as well as diarists, journalists, critics, columnists, scientists, historians, sports writers, radio and television script writers and political figures. Entries for 520 individuals run 2–3 pages each and are arranged in alphabetical order. Each entry contains major works and dates of publication, an overview, and a photographic portrait. The individual’s life and career is described in the section “Works in Biographical and Historical Context.” The literary devices used by the individual and brief summaries of their major works are discussed in the “Works in Literary Context” section. The “Works in Critical Context” section summarizes critical reception, quoting reviews from major sources.

There are many features that teachers may find useful in developing curriculum. The “Literary and Historical Contemporaries” sidebar lists five or six famous figures prominent during the author’s period of writing. Often, such figures bear no relation to the author whatsoever. For instance, under the entry for Dan Brown, author of *The Da Vinci Code* (Bantam, 2003), the following are listed as contemporaries: Barack Obama, Bret Easton Ellis, Courtney Love, Chris Rock, and J. K. Rowling. In general, however, this is a useful feature. Another sidebar, “Common Human Experience,” relates the author’s work to other authors whose writing follows a similar theme. Each entry is concluded with three to five discussion questions and writing activities, and a short bibliography of books and periodical articles pertaining to the author. A full list of works by the author is not included.

Each volume contains a list of contents and a chronology of major events in American history and literature from the exploration of the Northwest Passage in 1576 to the swearing in of President Barack Obama in 2009. Each volume is concluded with a glossary of literary terms used throughout the set, a detailed index, and a nationality/ethnicity index. The general index is an excellent tool for finding authors on the basis of theme, genre, or literary device, and for locating award winners.

This encyclopedia is a vibrant twenty-first-century resource that reflects the incorporation of critical thinking standards in the study of American literature. It will be very useful in support of teacher education programs and college-level literature courses for nonmajors, and as a resource for middle and high school teachers. Recommended for school libraries, large public libraries, and college libraries.—*Lisa Roberts, California State University, Sacramento*

Gale Contextual Encyclopedia of World Literature. Ed. by Anne Marie Hacht and Dwayne D. Hayes. Florence, Ky.: Gale, 2009. 4 vols. acid-free \$495 (ISBN 978-1-414-43130-7).

What might students learn from a comparison reading of R. K. Narayan’s *The Guide* (1958) to Jean Cocteau’s *The Infernal Machine* (1936)? How might students interpret the novels of Austrian writer Elfried Jelinek with the screenplays of American director David Lynch? World literature resists

definition and enriches understanding of our shared human condition. This first edition is designed for students and aims to provide “a comprehensive view of how an author’s work fits within the context of the author’s life, historical events, and the literary world” (xxi). It consists of multipage bio-critical articles on more than 450 selected authors whose work represents the ancient and modern world, from influential to lesser-known writers to writers whose works have only recent been translated into English. Readers will be introduced to the eighteenth-century haiku poetess Issa, the graphic novelist Satrapi, and the newly discovered Josephina Niggli, among writers from more than fifteen developing countries.

Ordered alphabetically by author, the encyclopedia consists of separate articles that incorporate the author’s essential biography and treat key themes in their most recognized works. Front matter of importance consists of an alphabetical list of authors by volume and entry page. Back matter includes a glossary of literary terms, comprehensive index, and nationality index that allows authors to be found by their host country. Access to content across the four volumes is aided by duplication of front and back matter in each volume.

Articles are laid out in consistent fashion. A picture or photograph of the writer is always included with the biographical introduction. Information is separated by clear headings and organized as “Works in Biographical and Historical Context,” “Works in Literary Context,” “Responses to Literature,” and “Bibliography.” Information written in each section boosts a contextual reading of the author’s life and work. Also useful are synoptic phrases that lead each paragraph, making it easy for students to note important facts. In addition, standout boxes draw the eye and note selected contemporaries as well as creative works that share a major theme. These help build contextual associations. Bibliographies consist of short listings of books, periodicals, and websites. The writing is readable and uniform.

World literature was only recently introduced in literary reference publications. Foremost is the *Encyclopedia of World Literature in the 20th Century* (St. James, 1999), valuable for its scholarly treatment of authors, inclusion of survey articles about national literatures, and attention to world languages. Its articles on national literature are cross referenced to languages and topical articles, pseudonyms are referenced as part of an author’s essential biography, and the titles of works appear in English next to their literal translation in the native language. The *St. James Reference Guide to World Literature* (2003) is useful in its focus on literatures of underrepresented languages and for its extensive bibliographical coverage of authors. The *Twayne Companion to Contemporary World Literature* (Gale, 2003) is heavy with authoritative scholarship. Text-dense pages and topical treatments are suited more to graduate students and faculty who can negotiate a literature’s cultural, political, and language complexities.

In sum, there is much here to encourage student appreciation of world literature. While the set deserves consideration for its coverage of many lesser-known writers, libraries must weigh in the fact that the larger portion consists