

## SOURCES

"Handicrafts" (volume three), and "Physical Environment" (volume four). In addition to these color photos there are also more than four hundred black-and-white illustrations.

Readers will also find volume four helpful with its glossary, general bibliography, index, and an added bonus of selections from various primary sources, such as the autobiography of Mahatma M. K. Gandhi, Hindu texts, and the Upanishads.

I have yet to come across any other reference work that explores India with such scope and depth. Patrons in all types of libraries will find *Encyclopedia of India* most resourceful. Highly recommended for public and college libraries.—*Megan Coder, Reference Librarian, State University of New York, New Paltz*

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***Encyclopedia of Prostitution and Sex Work.*** Ed. by Melissa Hope Ditmore. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2006. 2 vols. acid free \$225 (ISBN 0-313-32968-0).

If prostitution is indeed the world's oldest profession, a comprehensive reference source covering sex work has been a long time coming. *Encyclopedia of Prostitution and Sex Work* is well worth the wait. It proves to be an excellent starting point for learning about this universally fascinating and controversial topic.

This work is very clear in defining its scope and purpose. Because it represents one of the first real forays into collecting and condensing the body of research on sex work, it is meant to present an overview that can be built upon by future works. That being said, its coverage is expansive. Entries run the gamut chronologically (from antiquity to the present) and geographically (from all corners of the globe), though the stated focus of the work is "on the West and the past 250 years" (xxi). The contributors to this encyclopedia bring expertise from a wide variety of disciplines (for example, sociology, history, law, and gender studies) to their entries. This variety of perspectives reflects the multidisciplinary nature of sex-work studies and encompasses the myriad issues.

In addition to the thorough coverage, this work offers several features that add to its desirability as a reference source. Two such features are the "Topical List of Entries" and the "Timeline," which help readers build a holistic understanding of sex work. Another feature is the use of boldface type within entries to indicate terms that are themselves entries, making it easy for researchers to follow their interests from topic to topic.

*Encyclopedia of Prostitution and Sex Work* also contains a wealth of useful supplementary material. Sex-work research is rich in primary sources. This encyclopedia respects that aspect of the field by including an impressive 145 pages of these sources grouped under the headings, "Historical Accounts," "Poems and Lyrics," "Documents by Sex Workers," and "Legal Documents and Commentary."

Overall, this work is highly recommended for most any public or academic library. In addition to filling a void in the literature, it also strikes a balance between rigorous research

and readability.—*Emily Dill, Assistant Librarian, Indiana University-Purdue University Columbus*

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***The Facts On File Companion to the American Novel.*** Ed. by Abby H. Werlock and James P. Werlock. Companion to Literature Set. New York: Facts On File, 2006. 3 vols. alkaline \$195 (ISBN 0-8160-4528-3).

What makes *The Facts on File Companion to the American Novel* stand out among other reference works in literature is its focus on the American novel. Entries are either a bibliographic essay on an author or a synopsis of a particular work. Included are early authors like Charles Brockden Brown, considered to be America's first professional novelist, and Susanna Haswell Rowson, who wrote *Charlotte: A Tale of Truth*, the first best-selling novel in America. Here, too, are contemporary names such as Annie Proulx, Terry McMillan, and John Grisham. The selection of authors is made more inclusive by the editors' decision to include not only writers who have achieved literary praise, but also those who are important through their role in the historical development of American literature. Not every novel written by an included author merits its own entry; the selection is limited to those that have won a literary prize or that are commonly read in high school and college courses. Thus, Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*, *Cannery Row*, and *East of Eden* all have their own entries, while his *Sweet Thursday* does not. Numerous cross references within each entry lead the reader from an author entry to those that discuss the author's major works.

The selection of material is at the same time the strength and the weakness of this work. Other sources in literature are numerous, but none have the same focus as this one. General reference works on American literature, such as *The Oxford Companion to American Literature* (Oxford Univ. Pr., 1995) or *American Writers* and its supplements (Scribner, 1974–), cover all genres. More narrow works exist as well, covering a specific time period, a specific genre or ethnic literature, or a single author. Examples include *American Prose Writers of World War II* (vol. 316 of *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, Gale, 2005), *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of African-American Literature* (Greenwood, 2005), and *Langston Hughes* (vol. 315 of *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, Gale, 2005).

Students using a more general reference source risk finding a limited amount of information on any one author, while those faced with the myriad of specific sources may well miss a crucial one in the confusion. This *Companion* assembles a variety of information on an author and allows a student to concentrate solely on the single genre and national literature. However, gathering all relevant information on a particular author can be a bit awkward. Although the cross references do allow the student to locate all germane entries, doing so is a time-consuming process. In addition, because not all works of an author have dedicated entries, a student will have to look for commentary on those works in other entries, and will have to check the general index to verify whether a particular novel does indeed have a specific entry. It would have been