

“situated at the intersection of individual social identity and the very structure of society. It literally answers the question: Who are we?” (xivii).

This is a three-volume, hardback reference set geared towards post secondary social science researchers. There are six hundred entries and two hundred visuals. The books are striking in their meticulous citations and high level of research for a reference work.

There are sixteen pages of introductory and explanatory material in the front matter of volume 1. A significant number of these pages are used to present this as a scholarly work. The editors believe that “the strength of any reference work rests on its authorship” (xiviii) and to that end, there are lengthy biographies on the main editors and a detailed list of every contributor with their professional and university affiliations.

Included in the front matter of all three volumes are “finding aids” for the entire set: a “List of Entries” that provides an overall, alphabetical list of topics covered in all three volumes; a “List of Images” with page numbers listed for the images; and a “Reader’s Guide,” an overall list of topics organized around 18 subject headings.

Each individual, alphabetized entry in this encyclopedia is between five hundred and six thousand words. They are varied and include biographies and information about ethnic and racial groups. Further research is encouraged by “see also” references at the end of each entry for related topics within the three volumes. “Further Readings” is a list of authoritative books and scholarly articles included at the end of each entry. The index for the entire set is in Volume 3.

The black-and-white photographs within the text of the entries are very effective. There are three to five detailed, explanatory sentences with a citation under the photographs. The maps within the entries are small, labeled artistic renderings to give the reader a visual perspective.

The appendix materials are in two sections. Appendix A, “Data on Race and Ethnicity in the United States, 1820 to the Present,” has its own detailed introduction written by the editor. There are tables that track patterns of race and ethnicity from 1820 with projections into 2050. The next group of tables features analyses from the very important American Community Survey of the U.S. Census Bureau. This is a unique grouping of data sets that isn’t easily available elsewhere in print or electronically. Appendix B, “Internet Resources on Race, Ethnicity and Society” is a section of carefully chosen topical websites grouped into broad subject areas. A list of Internet resources has become an expectation with these types of reference books; the editors have chosen sites that will stand the test of time. For example, the website for the United States Administration on Aging is likely to be stable indefinitely.

Comparable works on this topic do not have the same breadth of coverage nor are they in reference book format. Joseph Healey’s *Diversity and Society: Race, Ethnicity and Gender* (Pine Forge Press, 2007) is a textbook analysis of minority groups and issues in the United States. Patricia Gagne’s *The*

Dynamics of Inequality: Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality in the United States (Prentice Hall, 2002) focuses on issues of social inequality at the individual level.

This set would be very appropriate for college undergraduates or advanced high school students involved in a research in the social sciences. It has the best qualities of print reference books and achieves its overall purpose: highly credible information and a clear roadmap for the reader to engage effectively in further research.—*Terry Darr, Library Director, Loyola Blakefield, Towson, Maryland*

The Encyclopedia of the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A Political, Social, and Military History. Ed. by Spencer C. Tucker. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2008. 4 vols. alkaline \$395 (ISBN 978-1-85109-841-5).

Spencer C. Tucker’s *The Encyclopedia of the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A Political, Social, and Military History* provides the most extensive coverage of the Arab-Israeli conflict to date. Other reference sources with the same subject heading include: Claude Faure’s *Dictionary of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Culture, History, and Politics* (Thomson Gale, 2005), Philip Mattar’s revised edition of *Encyclopedia of the Palestinians* (Facts On File, 2005), P. R. Kumaraswamy’s *Historical Dictionary of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Scarecrow, 2006), and Bernard Reich’s *Historical Encyclopedia of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Greenwood, 1996).

While Faure’s *Dictionary of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* boasts nearly double the 750 articles that appear in *The Encyclopedia of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, it dedicates less space to each article. An extensive chronology and 168 primary sources, over triple the number found in *Encyclopedia of the Palestinians*, add luster to *The Encyclopedia of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Despite the omission of an annotated bibliography, such as the one included in Mattar’s *Encyclopedia of the Palestinians*, *The Encyclopedia of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* provides references at the end of each article and a bibliography section in volume four that guides readers to other sources. Photographs, maps, and charts abound in Tucker’s four volume set; an illustration appears on nearly every other page, a feature that comparable sources lack.

Tucker’s aim is to explore the history surrounding the Arab-Israeli conflict, emphasizing events from World War I to the present day, and the articles and chronology clearly focus on this time frame. Another underlying goal as explained in the introduction is to present an exhaustive summary of the military history of this region in an attempt to spark ideas for peace. Articles that promote peace range from a three page “Peace Movements” article, to biographies that focus on peace activists, such as Hanna Siniura, to primary source materials like “James A. Baker, Five-Point Peace Plan, October 10, 1989.”

As the introduction indicates, there is a heavy emphasis on military issues, which is a little surprising given the subtitle. Articles discussing military issues account for approximately double the number of entries focusing on social and

SOURCES

political topics. Since there are roughly the same number of articles on political, social, and geographical issues, another fitting subtitle word would be “Geography.”

The nationalities represented in the biographical articles are wide-ranging and more balanced than the themes mentioned in the subtitle. Despite the slightly larger number of biographical articles on Israelis than Palestinians, a neutral tone pervades the text. This neutrality is especially evident in the entry on “Terrorism,” which discusses both Israeli and Palestinian terrorist groups.

The vast array of subjects covered in this encyclopedia is certainly a strength worth noting, along with the helpful charts and detailed maps. As well as supplementing the articles, the charts provide useful background information; for example, “Massacres in the Middle East,” “Decolonization of the Middle East and North Africa,” and “Selected Political Parties of Israel.” Maps serve a similar purpose, and those found within the text offer currency and detail that are lacking in the maps found at the beginning of each volume.

Despite its strengths, there are some areas for improvement. For example, including the detailed chronology in each volume rather than just in volume four would have improved the encyclopedia’s usefulness, especially because some entries, such as “Abu Sharah, Naif,” expect pre-existing knowledge. Another weakness involves irrelevant background information related to American politicians.

In conclusion, the strengths of *The Encyclopedia of the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A Political, Social, and Military History* far outweigh its weaknesses; it truly is one of a kind. It would be a welcome addition to any undergraduate collection. —Elizabeth A. Young, *Research and Information Literacy Librarian, Washington College, Chestertown, Maryland*

Encyclopedia of the Jazz Age: From the End of World War I to the Great Crash. Ed. by James Ciment. Armonk, New York: Sharpe Reference, 2008. 2 vols. alkaline \$199 (ISBN 978-0-7656-8078-5).

This encyclopedia chronicles one of the most colorful and influential periods of twentieth-century American history, encompassing an era that saw a significant rise in prosperity, women’s suffrage, organized crime, recreational activities, arts and cultural movements, and many other important aspects of society. The work presents a near comprehensive view of the Jazz Age, covering the major themes, movements, personalities, and events. This period has been well covered in the monographic scholarly literature; however, few reference books delve into the same level of detail as this encyclopedia. Excellent exceptions are volumes 2 (1910–19) and 3 (1920–29) of the *American Decades* (Gale, 1995) series. While non-encyclopedic, they rival this work in coverage and treatment of the subject.

The roughly six-hundred-page work contains several sections. There are five easy-to-read introductory essays that provide context and background on topics such as politics, economics, culture, and foreign affairs. There are more than

three hundred alphabetically arranged encyclopedia entries with interesting yet sporadic illustrations. As with the essays, the entries are well written and researched. The editor has made a laudable decision to include topics that have been historically ignored, including coverage of various ethnicities and women. However, there are a few glaring omissions. For example, horse racing is completely ignored as a topic despite its popularity at the time, and Man o’ War, arguably the finest thoroughbred to ever race, is not mentioned. The “Cultural Landmarks” section presents more than one hundred important items from art, literature, and the performing arts of the era.

Helpful features of the work include the “Topic Finder,” which breaks the entries into broad categories. As well, the cumulative index provides easy access to subtopics and personalities that do not have their own entries. The editor has also compiled an extensive bibliography. Although the work provides several access points for researching topics, one missing element is a chronology. Even though a very short period of time is covered, chronologies can often orient unfamiliar readers and provide a clearer context to events and how they may interrelate.

This reference title would be useful for all levels of undergraduate and graduate academic libraries as well as larger public libraries, but could be passed up if the library owns the *American Decades* books.—Brent D. Singleton, *Reference Librarian, California State University, San Bernardino*

Foyle’s Philavery: A Treasury of Unusual Words. Ed. by Christopher Foyle. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2008. 233p. \$15.95 (ISBN 978-0-550-10329-1).

There are dozens of lightweight, recreational dictionaries of unusual or enjoyable words. The reader may choose among dictionaries that are practical, elevating, entertaining, historical, etymological, whimsical, and humorous. Variations on this theme include dictionaries of exotic words derived from personal names, animals, nautical terms, or the writings of William F. Buckley Jr. *Foyle’s Philavery* occupies a place on the spectrum between diversion and self-improvement next to the dictionaries written purely for the enjoyment of word lovers such as *Gallimaufry: A Hodgepodge of our Vanishing Vocabulary* by Michael Quinion (Oxford Univ. Pr., 2006), *The Word Lover’s Dictionary: Unusual, Obscure, and Preposterous Words* by Josefa Heifetz (Citadel, 2000), *The Disheveled Dictionary: A Curious Caper through Our Sumptuous Lexicon* by Karen Elizabeth Gordon (Houghton Mifflin, 1997), and *The Grand Panjandrum and 2,699 Other Rare, Useful, and Delightful Words and Expressions* by J.N. Hook (Collier Bks, 1991). At the opposite end of this spectrum are dictionaries such as *100 Words To Make You Sound Smart*, by the editors of the American Heritage Dictionaries (Houghton Mifflin, 2006) and *The Words You Should Know: 1200 Essential Words Every Educated Person Should Be Able to Use and Define* by David Olsen (Adams Media, 1991).

Christopher Foyle is chairman of the family business that runs the famous Foyle’s bookshop in London. The term