

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