

Army in China lend a personal perspective to his scholarship. The “Contributor’s List” reveals that the authors all have solid academic and/or scholarly credentials.

Well researched, clearly written, and presenting a unique topic, this work is strongly recommended for purchase by larger public libraries and academic institutions supporting geography or history curricula, as well as China or Asia studies.—*Michael F. Bemis, Independent Reference Book Reviewer*

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***Cold War: The Essential Reference Guide.*** Ed. by James R. Arnold and Roberta Wiener. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2012. 443 pages, acid free \$89 (ISBN 978-1-61069-003-4). Ebook available (978-1-61069-004-1), call for pricing.

One of the ironies of modern history is that the “Cold War” was much hotter than the 24-hour-news-covered conflicts since that time. Millions of people died in Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Afghanistan and the many smaller clashes of the East-West stare down.

A new book about the Cold War is welcome if for no other reason than to put history in perspective since the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union. This single volume’s 85 interesting entries tell about a time when many world leaders rejected capitalism, and the possibility of nuclear war destroying civilization seemed much more likely than it does today. The Cuban Missile Crisis, the Berlin Airlift, the nuclear arms race, Josef Stalin, and other important subjects are included.

The guide suffers somewhat, however, in having so few entries, although it should be noted that the title does include the word “Essential.” Among the subjects not directly addressed are Iran, Nicaragua, Chile, Vo Nguyen Giap, Douglas McArthur, and Pope John Paul II. The index does help readers find references to many subjects that do not have their own entries. One of those is the Soviet Union itself, which has many indexed references, but none of them point to the decisive events of 1989-1991.

Besides the alphabetically organized entries about key individuals and events, there are 17 primary source documents and several essays, including one about whether Ronald Reagan brought the Cold War to its peaceful ending. A bibliography and a chronology are included, the latter of which does provide a terse review of those final years.

By comparison, the five-volume *Encyclopedia of the Cold War: A Political, Social, and Military History* (ABC-CLIO, 2008), edited by Spencer C. Tucker, has roughly 1,300 entries, scores of maps and 171 primary documents. Another work with which librarians may be familiar is *The Cold War, 1945–1991: Leaders and Other Important Figures* (Gale Research, 1992), edited by Benjamin Frankel. It focuses mainly on biographies but also has an extensive Cold War chronology. Having been published right after the Cold War ended, it no longer has the advantage of historical perspective.

Libraries that already own the Tucker encyclopedia probably do not need the Arnold and Wiener guide, but libraries that do not own Tucker and have tight space and tight

budgets should find the new book useful. It’s also worth having to update the Frankel work.—*Evan Davis, Librarian, Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana*

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***Daily Life Through American History in Primary Documents.*** Ed. by Randall M. Miller, Theodore J. Zeman, Francis J. Sicius, and Jolyon P. Girard. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Greenwood, 2012. 4 vols. acid free \$399 (ISBN 978-1-61069-032-4). Ebook available (978-1-61069-033-1), call for pricing.

Edited by four history professors, this multi-volume set purports to cover the grand sweep of American History, from the establishment of the Jamestown colony to the present. Yet the stated intent is not to give a grand, overall view, but rather a sharply focused one on “the daily habits and doings of people” (xiii). The primary resources used to present this angle are the usual suspects: letters, diaries, memoirs, newspaper articles, and speeches. There is great diversity in the voices heard here, including colonizers and colonized, immigrants and natives, slaves and free people, young and old, men and women. The four volumes are arranged chronologically, and within each volume there are chapters on domestic, economic, intellectual, political, recreational, and religious life. These chapters all contain a few pages of helpful background information before the excerpts from the featured primary sources. These source selections vary in size, but tend to be about a page in length, and are followed by a bibliographic citation for readers who may wish to further pursue investigation. Each individual volume also contains a “Historical Overview” of 15-20 pages that is well-written, accessible, and provides an excellent introduction to the time period covered.

A real strength of this set is the broad range of people, events, places, and time periods covered. Entries are quite entertaining as well as diverse. For example, the first volume, *The Colonial Period through the American Revolution*, contains “Dancing and Racial Mixing in the Taverns,” “Benjamin Franklin, ‘The Morals of Chess,’” “Arguments over a Smallpox Vaccine,” and “An Essay on Monarchy and Liberty.” The supplementary chronology in each volume provides a helpful context in which to place these wide-ranging entries. While there is no cumulative bibliography anywhere in the set, there is a rather extensive list of “Suggested Readings” at the end of Volume Four.

Although there are no glaring deficiencies with this set, some entries do appear in unexpected places. For example, while one would expect to find entries on cornhusking and sleigh rides in the chapter on “Recreational Life,” the entry on “A Public Execution of Pirates” in the same section is surprising. Also, the inclusion of some entries, such as the “Star Spangled Banner” and “Yankee Doodle” seems unnecessary. The sources themselves in this case are simply the words to these well-known songs, and the complete lyrics of each are easily accessible via an Internet search. The provided background material offered on these entries is scant and does not justify their inclusion here. Also, there are no cross references,