
Sources

Reference Books

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Individuals interested in reviewing reference materials should contact the "Reference Books" editor, Tammy J. Eschedor Voelker, Reference and Instruction Librarian, University Libraries, Kent State University, 1125 Risman Dr., Kent, OH 44242-0001; e-mail: tvoelker@kent.edu.

America's Heroes: Medal of Honor Recipients from the Civil War to Afghanistan. Edited by James H. Willbanks. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2011. Cloth \$85.00 (ISBN: 978-1-5988-4393-4).

The Medal of Honor is the highest military decoration awarded by the United States government. It is bestowed by the president on behalf of congress on members of the armed forces who distinguish themselves through "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his or her life above and beyond the call of duty while engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States" (xvii). Often it is erroneously referred to as the "Congressional Medal of Honor." More than half of the more than 3,400 medals have been awarded posthumously. One woman has won: Dr. Mary Walker, a surgeon in the Civil War, who was awarded the nation's highest honor by President Andrew Johnson. Thomas Custer, who died alongside his brother at the Little Big Horn, won two Medals during the Civil War. Eighteen others are double awardees. Recipients are titled to a pension above and beyond any other military benefit, more than \$1,100 per month as of 2011. Six medals have been awarded for gallantry during the Afghanistan war.

In this new edition by ABC-CLIO, the biographies of awardees are full of facts and engaging narrative. Edited by James H. Willbanks, General of the Army, George C. Marshall Chair of Military History and director of the Department of Military History at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, *America's Heroes* is unique in that it is one of the few true reference sources in the field. As such, it includes features expected in a reference encyclopedia: a general bibliography, a list of contributors, sidebars, photographs, tables, a general index, and appendixes. The biographies are arranged alphabetically and are selected for inclusion with the intent of providing a wide diversity of ethnic and cultural backgrounds and branches of service. Articles are written by a group of recognized scholars in the field, and the stories are often spellbinding. Each biography ends with a bibliography for further reading, and many of the narratives are accompanied by high-quality portraits of the subject.

This aspect of military history is a crowded field with dozens of books having been written about Medal of Honor recipients. Thus, several recent and noteworthy publications will serve as terrific companion volumes. Peter Collier and Nick del Calzio's, *Medal of Honor: Portraits of Valor Beyond the Call of Duty* (Artisan, 2006) is an inspiring depiction of bravery and sacrifice filled with del Cazio's photographs. *Uncommon Valor: The Medal of Honor and the Six Warriors Who Earned It in Afghanistan* (St. Martens, 2010) is an in-depth look at the most recent Medal recipients. Schwarzkopf, Adams, and Smith's, *Beyond Glory: Medal of Honor Heroes in Their Own Words* (Norton, 2004) is a compelling work that includes twenty-three interviews depicting gripping first-person accounts of the circumstances surrounding the events that earned each recipient their Medal.

America's Heroes pays tribute to the members of America's armed forces who have demonstrated uncommon bravery

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and sacrifice in the face of great personal danger. Many have risked or sacrificed their lives to save others. They are indeed heroic, and their stories should be preserved in a format conducive for serious researchers, students, and interested readers. It is a great contribution to the field of military history that a comprehensive and unique reference encyclopedia is now available. This encyclopedia is a first-rate effort produced with durable materials that is attractive and will last for many years. As such, it is easy to highly recommend for all undergraduate libraries and public libraries serving interested readers.—*Vincent P. Tinerella, Public Services Librarian, Arkansas Tech University, Russellville, Arkansas*

The A–Z Encyclopedia of Food Controversies and the Law.

By Elizabeth M. Williams and Stephanie J. Carter. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Greenwood, 2011. 2 vols. Acid free \$165 (ISBN 978-0-3133-6448-8). E-book available (978-0-313-36449-5), call for pricing.

Where in the constellation of food encyclopedias can you find information about trans fat, organic milk, free-range farming, or genetically engineered seeds? I did not find any, not at least in four or five titles that I checked, including Alan Davidson's *The Oxford Companion to Food* (Oxford Univ. Pr., 2006). The nearest relative to what Williams and Carter set out to create with this two-volume encyclopedia is the "CQ Researcher" (Congressional Quarterly, 1991), which covers emerging trends in many fields, including food. Had this project been better executed, it would have filled a niche in the existing literature.

In terms of format, I would say it is roughly comparable to *The Encyclopedia of Education Law*, edited by Charles J. Russo (Sage, 2008), the *Encyclopedia of United States Indian Policy and Law*, edited by Paul Finkelman and Tim Alan Garrison (CQ Pr., 2009), and Vicki R. Patton-Hulce's *Environment and the Law: A Dictionary* (ABC-Clio, 1995) in that they all try to present the current state of the law on a given subject in a way that is accessible to the average reader. Browsing through them, you might find an analysis of a pivotal legal case, an overview of a current trend, a biography of a leading player in that field, or an essay on a facet of the judicial system that helps the reader make sense of the other entries in the encyclopedia. What I found in sampling the entries in this food encyclopedia was that some of the entries about legal terms make no reference to food and some entries about food make no reference to law. In the others, the editors did a better job of keeping the focus on the subject in hand.

While the environmental dictionary noted above was written by a single author, the other two had a panel of contributors, and that was the format adopted by Williams and Carter. Looking at all four, this particular endeavor rates the lowest in terms of credibility. We aren't told much about the authors beyond the fact that they are administrators at the Southern Food and Beverage Museum. Including more information about this institution and the credentials of contributors would have been an important asset. While

some entries have further reading suggestions, they tend to be kind of skimpy.

Finally, I have to say that the appendixes are way out of bounds. One shouldn't include fifty-page Supreme Court cases full-text, but rather excerpt them. It's the editor's responsibility to select the portions of these judicial opinions that are most relevant to the reader's needs. All of the cases I reviewed in the appendixes of this food encyclopedia are available full-text from Google Scholar. Why pay to have hard copies? This source is not recommended.—*Dana M. Lucisano, Reference Librarian, Silas Bronson Library, Waterbury, Connecticut*

Contemporary World Fiction: A Guide to Literature in Translation.

By Juris Dilevko, Keren Dali, and Glenda Garbutt. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Libraries Unlimited, 2011. 526 p. Acid free \$85 (ISBN 978-1-5915-8353-0). E-book available (ISBN 978-1-5988-4909-7), call for pricing.

Even though the world is becoming more connected in many ways, it can still be difficult to find English translations of international literature. *Contemporary World Fiction* attempts to help readers discover works translated into English, so that they can gain a greater perspective of the world around them. As the introduction explains: "How do we get beyond the sometimes one-dimensional view of what has often been referred to as the Western gaze? One way is to sample some of the stories of other countries and cultures as told by those individuals who live in those countries or cultures and/or speak the language" (xii). This guide covers stories from over 1,000 authors that have been publishing from 1980 to the present.

The guide is arranged by language rather than geographic area. The authors explain the advantages (a shared language often reflects a shared culture) and shortcomings (books from the Caribbean have to be searched in both the Spanish-language and French-language chapters) of this choice in their introduction. Each chapter includes an introduction, a description of earlier translated literature, sources consulted, a bibliographic essay, selected references, and a list of annotations for translated books.

The bibliographic essays and the annotations provide the strength of this reference work. The bibliographic essays offer the reader the necessary context to understand the significance of these works. They also include suggestions of reference books and other relevant works. The annotations for the individual works of fiction are drawn from reviews and websites. They include the English title of the work, the name of the translator, the United States publisher, the genre/literary styles/story types of the work under consideration, a brief description, subject keywords, the original language, related titles by the same author, and the sources consulted. One weakness of the annotations is that the descriptions of the work include little information about the strengths and weaknesses of the translations and no details about the translators, but the works included in the annotations are quite diverse. Countries go beyond major European countries to include countries like Albania, Ecuador, Belgium, Israel, Korea, Armenia, and more.