
The compilation’s objectives are to advance knowledge and enhance family health by presenting a scholarly treatment of health and well-being from a family perspective. This well-designed reference was edited by Martha Craft Rosenberg, Professor Emeritus, University of Iowa College of Nursing, and Shelly-Rae Pehler, Associate Professor, Department of Nursing, St. Ambrose University. The editors conducted literature and database searches to identify top experts. This two-volume encyclopedia presents 350 two- to four-page articles written by these experts and prepared under the guidance of a ten-member editorial board.

Many entry titles reflect current national issues, such as “ Destruction of Family Home During Natural Disasters,” “ Disruptions [in] United States Military Families,” “ Job Loss Transition for Families,” “ Obesity, and Weight Problems, and Healthy Weight for Families,” “ Same-Sex Partner Rights,” “ Sport-Related Accidents and Injuries and the Family,” and “ War and Families.” Other titles reflect controversial problems, such as “ Homeless Families,” “ Illegal Alien Status and Family Health,” “ Immigration Status and Family Health,” and “ Refugees and Family Health.” Sensitive subjects, such as “ Incest in Families,” and “ Suicide in the Family” also are presented. Authoritative information is presented about frequently studied topics, such as the “ Influence of Close Relationships on Health”; trends, such as “ Grandparents Parenting”; and popular care-giving topics, such as “ Babysitting and the Family,” “ Bullying and the Family,” “ Child Beginning School,” “ Childproofing Medications and Dangerous Agents,” “ College Transition for Families,” “ Last Child Leaving Home,” and “ Moving Effect on Health.”

The reference is especially useful for higher education report writing, because of the superior design that provides quick topical access. Each essay has a paragraph-length introduction. The discussion layouts are fairly uniform. Most articles use subheadings in boldface to delineate discussion subtopics and summarize key points at the end and delineate them using the subheadings “ summary” or “ conclusion.” Entries have extensive cross-references, and most entries give succinct bibliographies and websites listed in “ Further Readings.”

Topics are organized under one of eleven umbrella categories. These categories are “ At-Risk Conditions and At-Risk Situations,” “ Education of Health Care Providers,” “ Factors Influencing Family Health,” “ Families Experiencing Acute Physical and Mental Illness,” “ Families Experiencing Chronic Physical and Mental Health Conditions,” “ Families Experiencing Transitions,” “ Family and the Health Care System,” “ Family Health Assessment,” “ Family Health Perspectives,” “ Family Interventions,” and “ Genetics and Families.” Users will like the reader’s guide classified by the eleven topical categories at the beginning of volume 1 and an alphabetical list of entries are supplied at each volume’s start.

Volume 1 provides sections with biographical information about the editors and a listing of the contributors’ academic affiliations. The introduction encourages readers to explore the background essays, “ Defining Family: An Overview of Family Definitions from Historical Perspective,” “ Family Health Perspectives,” and “ Families: The Basic Unit of Societies.” After the introduction is a single essay titled “ The Relationship of Family to Health: Historical Overview.” Because of its position at the beginning of volume 1, it is assumed that this essay is important and should be closely examined along with the Introduction.

At the end of volume 2 is an appendix that contains bibliographies for books, journal articles, reports, and websites and a listing of sixty-five journal titles. The resource guide will be useful for academic and professional libraries building print and digital library collections. The last section is an index. Main entries and entry pages are annotated in the index in boldface.

An electronic version is available through Sage Reference Online, and purchasers of the print encyclopedia can register for a free thirty-day online trial (http://www.sagepub.com/freetrial). Because of its specialized focus, the Encyclopedia of Family Health should be considered as a first purchase for higher education medical and social science collections.

—Caroline Geck, Somerset, New Jersey


This two-volume, 1,835-page reference set is the updated, “ post 9/11” edition of its predecessor, Human Rights in the United States: A Dictionary and Documents (ABC-Clio, 2000) by Rita Cantos Cartwright and H. Victor Condé. Including nearly 100 additional terms, Condé, now the sole named author, has drawn upon an additional decade of critical events, political developments, and legislation in producing this considerably improved and appropriately modernized product.

Divided into three main sections, its format is simple and straightforward: “ Terms” (also referred to as “the dictionary”), “ Primary Documents,” and appendix. Also worth mentioning is the 48-page introductory essay, which provides a well-written and clear overview of the broader themes to an extent that demonstrates the author’s prowess and understanding of the subject matter.

Terms are listed alphabetically and numbered in sequence. Entries are uniform in that each begins with a definition of the term followed by several paragraphs of commentary, outlining its historical, political, and legal significance within the context of the United States. If one or more of the documents included in the later section have relevance to a particular term, they are given mention here. Lastly, the customary “ see also” terms are listed, referencing each by number. With some entries listing well over 100 terms to “ see,” using numbers makes for a neat and compact list. The