

Reference Books

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Editor

American Revolutionary War: A Student Encyclopedia. Ed. by Gregory Fremont-Barnes and Richard Alan Ryerson. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-Clio, 2006. 5 vols. acid free \$485 (ISBN 1-85109-839-9).

[Ed. note: Also see the review of *The Encyclopedia of the American Revolutionary War: A Political, Social, and Military History*, ed. by Gregory Fremont-Barnes and Richard Alan Ryerson (ABC-Clio, 2006), page 87.]

All students in the United States study the American Revolution as part of their history or social studies curriculum. It is arguably the most important historical event and period in our country's history. While most reference texts dedicated to this topic have a college and adult audience, the editors of this encyclopedia aim to educate younger students about the war and this pivotal period in American and world history. *American Revolutionary War* covers the Revolutionary period from the end of the French and Indian War in 1763 to the birth of the United States and the ratification of the Constitution in 1789. Its scope includes coverage of topics that will allow students to view the Revolutionary period as a continuation of the disintegration of the British Empire and imperialism, the role of other nations in the American Revolution, and the part that Native American tribes played in the war.

Although the editors attempted to provide a balance to the military aspects of the war by providing entries on art and music of the period, for example, the encyclopedia consists mostly of military and biographical entries. With more than eight hundred individual entries, it is no surprise to find entries for "Benjamin Franklin" and "Battle of Trenton." However, many topics are included that go beyond the obvious, such as colonial doctor and soldier Edward Hand and African American poet Phyllis Wheatley. Every battle and campaign of the Revolution is included, as well as entries for dozens of officers. Two highlights are the longer essays included in the first volume, "Origins of the American Revolution" and "Military Operations of the American Revolutionary War, 1775–1781," which provide much-needed context. Each volume includes a comprehensive alphabetical listing of entries and several general maps; specific maps are also included in each volume.

American Revolutionary War also contains the requisite table of contents, cross references throughout, and cumulative index in the last volume, but the most unique aspect, which should appeal to students and teachers alike, is the more than 150 reprinted primary documents. There are the usual suspects such as the *Declaration of Independence* and the *Bill of Rights*. Students will also find letters from loyalists and patriots, as well as speeches from important figures such as George Washington and Benjamin Franklin. Each document includes a concise introduction for identification information

and context. Some of these documents are not hard to locate when conducting research at the college level, but having them in one place should be beneficial for younger students. Librarians and teachers alike will find a very well-written article entitled "How to Read Primary Sources" extremely useful for the instruction of historical research. Two other pieces, "How to Read Maps" and "How to Read Charts and Graphs," will also provide guidance. The encyclopedia is rounded out with almost nineteen pages of bibliography, a great place to start for any student of history.

American Revolutionary War: A Student Encyclopedia should be compared with another version of the same material, *The Encyclopedia of the American Revolutionary War: A Political, Social, and Military History*, also published by ABC-Clio and the work of the same editors (see review below). *American Revolutionary War* will be most useful for high school and public libraries, while *The Encyclopedia of the American Revolutionary War* may appeal to academic libraries. For a more compact reference work, academic, public, and high school libraries should consider the *Historical Dictionary of Revolutionary America* (Scarecrow, 2005).—Michelle S. Millet, *Information Literacy Coordinator, Trinity University, San Antonio, Texas*

Cities of the Middle East and North Africa: A Historical Encyclopedia. Ed. by Michael R. T. Dumper and Bruce E. Stanley. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-Clio, 2006. 425p. alkaline \$95 (ISBN 1-57607-919-8).

Cities of the Middle East and North Africa is a truly unique and fascinating resource for historical, socioeconomic, and cultural information on the major cities of the North African and Arab worlds. Including cities both ancient and modern, this volume discusses more than five thousand years of urbanization and development and facilitates research on individual localities as well as allowing comparative and cross-cultural analysis of the entire region. Given the great interest in the Middle East and North Africa today, this volume is both timely and prescient.

The overriding theoretical premise of this volume, in the words of editors Dumper and Stanley, is that "Cities need to be brought back into the analysis of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)" (xi). The editors contend that urban life "drives the economy, politics, and social development of this disparate region" (xi). Dumper and Stanley both specialize in urbanization and the Middle East, and their interest in these areas is apparent throughout the encyclopedia. They have relied on a limited number of expert contributors, authoring more than half of the articles themselves. This permits a certain uniformity of tone and yet allows flexibility in the contents of each section. While it might have been interesting to introduce diversity in the choice of contributors—particularly for the entries on ancient cities—the uniformity offers an opportunity for clear comparison of different cities, cultures, and regions.

The encyclopedia is arranged in alphabetical order by city. Each signed entry includes population information and a short summary of the article. The main text generally con-

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sists of a geographic description, the origin of the city name, and a discussion of its historical, political, and socioeconomic importance in the local area and the wider region. Articles do vary somewhat in content; and relevance, rather than a strict adherence to format, determines any given article's inclusion. A list of further readings follows each entry, and the volume includes basic maps, showing the location of each city included in the text. There is also a glossary of terms, a timeline, and an index, which aids comparative analysis.

There are other works that discuss cities and urbanization, including the *Encyclopedia of Urban Cultures* (Grolier, 2002), *Cities of the World* (Gale, 2002), and Emmanuel Ness's *The Encyclopedia of World Cities* (M. E. Sharpe, 1999). However, this is the sole resource concentrating exclusively on the cities of MENA and on the historical and socio-economic context in which they existed. The concise, yet thorough, articles are lively and well researched. They offer a solid, scholarly introduction to the cities of these regions, and even researchers familiar with MENA will find much of interest. Because a certain amount of basic knowledge about MENA is required before consulting this volume, *Cities of the Middle East and North Africa* is best suited for large public, college, and research libraries. It is highly recommended for these collections.—Amanda K. Sprochi, *Health Sciences Cataloger, J. Otto Lottes Health Sciences Library, The University of Missouri-Columbia*

The Crusades: An Encyclopedia. Ed. by Alan V. Murray. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-Clío, 2006. 4 vols. alkaline \$385 (ISBN 1-57607-862-3).

Given the abundance of existing popular and reference works written about the Crusades, any new entry must prove its worth against heavy competition. To that end, the editors of *The Crusades: An Encyclopedia* have created the best reference resource in existence regarding this critical historical event.

The aim of the set is “to reflect the state of knowledge in the crusade movement as it is understood in historical scholarship at the beginning of the twenty-first century” (vol. 1, xxxi). That scholarly approach is reflected in the list of almost 150 well-qualified contributors from around the world, and is evident in the entries themselves, which are written clearly and objectively. Despite the length of this set, there are few wasted words.

The entries are arranged alphabetically. Their scope covers five types of entries as defined by the editor: names of individuals, families and dynasties, anonymous works, places and countries, and subjects. The entries range in length from about a quarter of a page for lesser-known individuals to several pages for important people or topics. As an example of how thorough coverage of certain topics can be, the entry for “Art of Outremer and Cyprus” fills ten pages. Each entry is signed by its author, and is accompanied by a bibliography. Because many source texts are written in languages other than English, information on translations is listed when possible.

With more than one thousand entries, the scope of the encyclopedia may be its greatest strength. It's not surpris-

ing to find entries for the individual Crusades or critical figures such as Urban II, topics that are likely to be studied by many a general student or interested reader. However, it's the inclusion of individuals such as the author Baldric of Dol or the cleric William of Puylaurens—the quieter or less important figures—that separates this set from other works on the Crusades.

Besides an alphabetical list of entries at the front, each volume also includes a cumulative index and general bibliography. The final volume also includes a “Texts and Documents” section that contains documents written at the time regarding the Crusades, as well as some German Crusade songs.

There have been other first-rate recent works on the Crusades. In 2003, Greenwood published Alfred Andrea's excellent single-volume reference work, *Encyclopedia of the Crusades*, and Thomas Madden's updated *New Concise History of the Crusades* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2005) is an impressive general work on the topic. For those libraries looking for a thorough reference work on the topic, however, *The Crusades: An Encyclopedia* is a worthwhile purchase. This set should prove of value in high school, public, and college libraries, both for those new to the topic and those looking to further their knowledge.—Craig Shufelt, *Director, Fort McMurray Public Library, Alberta, Canada*

Encyclopedia of American Civil Liberties. Ed. by Paul Finkelman. New York: Routledge, 2006. 3 vols. alkaline \$595 (ISBN 0-415-94342-6).

As editor Paul Finkelman observes in the introduction to *Encyclopedia of American Civil Liberties*, concern with civil liberties has been a part of the nation's history from the time of the first colonists. In a period when the “war on terror” threatens many of our constitutional rights, it is important to be reminded of what a long and rich history these rights have held in the United States. With 1,423 clearly written entries ranging from 250 to six thousand words in length, this three-volume set provides a concise overview of the key issues relating to civil liberties throughout the country's history.

The articles fit into six broad thematic groups: “Biography”; “Cases”; “Historical Overview”; “Legislation, Legislative Action, Statutes, and Acts”; “Organizations and Government Bodies”; and “Themes, Issues, Concepts, and Events”; with cases and themes each making up about a third of the set. Articles are all signed, and each contains a list of references for further reading.

Navigation throughout the set is fairly easy, with multiple points of access to the alphabetically arranged articles. Blind entries throughout the set send users to the correct entry, with “Blue Laws” pointing to “Sunday Closing Cases and Laws,” for instance. Alphabetical and thematic lists of entries at the front of each volume make it simple to scan for topics. The index, too, is repeated in each volume, allowing users to take a single book from the shelf without needing to lug around a separate index volume. The tradeoff to this convenience is quite a few additional pages and likely a related increase in cost.

There are some weaknesses to the set. In the index, main