

Reference Books

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Editor

Art Song Composers of Spain: An Encyclopedia. By Suzanne R. Draayer. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow, 2009. 544p. Alkaline \$75 (ISBN 978-0-8108-6362-0).

Suzanne Rhodes Draayer's *Art Song Composers of Spain: An Encyclopedia* fills a major gap in the literature. Although categorized as an encyclopedia, the overall organization is historical with biographical entries for each historical period divided into groups of major and minor composers. Each entry comprises a biographical essay, a complete list of songs and other important works, a discography, and a bibliography. Many entries also include musical analysis and musical examples. Also noteworthy is an overview of the place of the arts in Spanish history and politics and an introductory chapter on Spanish song types and the "Spanish sound." There is a general bibliography, composer index, and index of song titles. One of the recurring themes in the author's discussion is the general lack of availability and poor distribution of printed editions of this repertoire. To help address this issue, the author has assembled in the appendix a list of currently available scores documenting the Spanish song repertoire. As an alternative, there is some coverage of this material in *The Spanish Song Companion*, devised and translated by Jacqueline Cockburn and Richard Stokes (Scarecrow, 2006), although this work is primarily devoted to English translations of song texts. Broader and more comprehensive coverage of Spanish music is provided by the *Diccionario de la Música Española e Hispanoamericana* (Sociedad General de Autores y Editores, 1999–2001). Although *Art Song Composers of Spain: An Encyclopedia* goes a long way to fill a major gap in the literature, it is nonetheless a specialized resource and recommended primarily for large music collections and collections that focus on Spanish culture and language.—Paul Cauthen, Assistant Music Librarian, University of Cincinnati, Ohio

Broadway Plays and Musicals: Descriptions and Essential Facts of More Than 14,000 Shows through 2007. By Thomas S. Hischak. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2009. 644p. Alkaline \$295 (ISBN 978-0-7864-3448-0).

Thomas Hischak knows his theatre—and anyone researching plays or musicals will certainly be well acquainted with his work. Hischak is the author of many significant reference sources, including *The Oxford Companion to the American Musical* (2008), *The Oxford Companion to American Theatre* (2004), and *American Plays and Musicals on Screen* (McFarland, 2005). While these previous works have been focused on either musicals or plays, his new work, *Broadway Plays and Musicals: Descriptions and Essential Facts of More Than*

14,000 Shows through 2007, erases that division and presents a comprehensive list of all Broadway productions from 1919 through 2007.

Hischak presents a chronicle of Broadway over the last eighty years, providing an alphabetical list of shows that includes premiere date, theatre name, number of performances, principal author and actor information, a brief plot summary of the show, and critical reception or other noteworthy information regarding the production. Productions are listed in chronological order in a later section. It is the combination of both factual and plot information for plays and musicals that makes this a unique resource. While standard reference books such as Richard C. Norton's *A Chronology of American Musical Theatre* (Oxford, 2002) or Samuel Leiter's *The Encyclopedia of the New York Stage* series (Greenwood, 1985–) contain some of the same information, neither present it with the same depth and breadth as seen here.

In defining the scope of his project, Hischak adheres to an established classification for Broadway theatres, noting that "contractually, a 'Broadway house' is one of some forty theatres in midtown Manhattan designated by the various unions for a 'Broadway contract'" (1). He uses 1919 as a starting date for two reasons: the increased number of theatrical productions following World War I, and after this date, "most of the theatre activity was finally centered in the Times Square area as new playhouses were built in the district and older, outlying theatres were considered Off Broadway (although that term would not be widely used until the 1940s)" (1). It should be noted that he has also included six hundred of what he has defined as "Notable Productions Before 1919"—these exceptions can be easily found in the chronological index.

The book has a steep price of \$295, but its all-encompassing presentation of both theatre and musical theatre productions distinguishes it from other reference books that may be owned already. It is recommended for all collections that support theatre and music programs, in addition to general reference.—Kristina Lampe Shanton, Music Librarian, Ithaca College, Ithaca, New York

Characters and Plots in the Fiction of Kate Chopin. By Robert L. Gale. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2009. 199p. Alkaline \$75 (ISBN 978-0-7864-4005-4).

Though Kate Chopin is now best known for *The Awakening*, she was a prolific writer. According to Robert L. Gale, she "wrote 114 fictional items—97 short stories, two novels, four fragments, one unfinished item, and 10 destroyed or lost" (2). Students and scholars will benefit from *Characters and Plots in the Fiction of Kate Chopin* because it will help them to gain familiarity with this large body of work. This reference work consists mostly of plot summaries and descriptions of characters.

Gale carefully presents all of Chopin's stories and characters in alphabetical order. The two novels are summarized chapter by chapter. In addition to the individual entries there is a chronology, an index, and a four-page bibliography. Though the focus of the book is on the characters and plots,

there are some surprising and useful additions. Along with characters in the stories, real people in Chopin's life are included. You'll find an entry about Guy de Maupassant right before an entry on the character Miss Mayblunt. There is a list of all of Chopin's works right between "Victor Chopin" and "Choppin," as well as entries for films and dissertations about Chopin. Some of these sections might have benefitted from being in an appendix so that readers could find them more easily.

One of the more helpful elements of this book is the information contained in the parenthesis listed after each term. The parenthesis informs the reader which story contains a character listed, and where the individual stories were first published, information that could help a reader locate the story later. Another valuable element is the summary of relevant criticism after each plot synopsis along with source information pointing to the bibliography. Important Chopin scholars like Emily Toth, Per Seystersted, and Nancy Walker are included.

Details included in entries are useful in understanding plots and characters, though the decisions of what to include and what not to include sometimes seems whimsical. For instance, in the entry for *The Awakening*, Gale includes details about the piano piece two little girls are playing in chapter 2, but he doesn't mention that Madame LeBrun now has to rent out cottages to maintain her former lifestyle. Still it is hard to summarize a hundred-page novel in a couple of pages, and the entries will help readers clarify important details about the works.

The reasonable price and the useful information in this book will make it a good addition to many libraries. It is recommended for large public libraries and most universities and colleges, especially those with a strong American literature collection.—*Arianne A. Hartsell-Gundy, Humanities Librarian, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio*

Civil Rights Movement: People and Perspectives. Ed. by Michael Ezra. Perspectives in American Social History. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-Clio, 2009. 300p. Alkaline \$85 (ISBN 978-1-59884-037-7).

The Civil Rights movement was a turning point in American history and continues to play a part in society, leading to the transformation of the American presidency and most recently, a Supreme Court decision on the Voting Rights Act of 1965. This book, one of sixteen titles in ABC-Clio's Perspectives in American Social History series, provides an excellent resource for students studying this period. *The Civil Rights Movement* is not an encyclopedia, but instead a collection of eight essays. Together these essays serve to link the varied facets of the civil rights movement: the "long civil rights movement" (xiii) which focuses on the period leading up to the era of the King years, which is the second, or "traditional recounting" of the movement and the "black power perspective." The contributors are all scholars, with established publishing records. The essays are of substantial length, provide a depth not found in other works, and make for fascinating, inspiring, and heart-rending reading.

In addition to the essays, there is a lengthy and detailed chronology beginning with January 1954 and the threatened boycott of the Memphis Street Railway Company. Small, but not insignificant, items are listed, such as when ministers in Atlanta were arrested for sitting in the white section of a public bus in 1957, as well as more publicized events as Hank Aaron breaking Babe Ruth's homerun record in 1974. A nearly twenty-page reference section serves as a glossary, providing information on events, people, organizations, and court cases that shaped the movement. In addition, there is an offering of a few relevant primary documents. The selection is very small, and for the two court cases only an excerpt is provided, although there is a summary of each. As would be expected, there is a complete bibliography and an index.

The Civil Rights Movement: People and Perspectives compares favorably with and complements earlier works, such as Sanford Wexler's *The Civil Rights Movement: An Eyewitness History* (Facts on File, 1993) and Patricia and Fredrick McKissack's *The Civil Rights Movement in America: From 1865 to the Present* (Children's Press, 1991). Wexler's book makes great use of personal accounts, as the subtitle suggests, and the McKissacks' work is aimed at the middle school reader. These earlier works provide the facts, photos, and accounts of events in the civil rights movement, while Ezra's text provides more of a critical analysis of events. For example, the Montgomery Bus Boycott is covered by all three, but Jennifer A. Lemak's essay "Women" in Ezra's *Civil Rights Movement* speaks more to the role of women in the movement and provides a larger context for their roles. Women leaders such as Septima Clark and Daisy Bates are not included in the McKissacks' book, and only Daisy Bates is mentioned in Wexler's piece. Septima Clark, fired after a forty-year teaching career for refusing to resign from the NAACP, founded the Highlander Folk School in 1932 to educate black adults and make them more aware of their rights and their power within their own communities. Many high profile leaders of the civil rights movement, such as Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr., and John Lewis were associated with the school (144–45).

The Civil Rights Movement: People and Perspectives would be a meaningful addition to high school, undergraduate, and public library collections and is highly recommended.—*Carla Wilson Buss, Curriculum Materials and Education Librarian, University of Georgia, Athens*

The East Asian Story Finder: A Guide to 468 Tales from China, Japan and Korea, Listing Subjects and Sources. By Sharon B. Elswit. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2009. 288p. Alkaline \$75 (ISBN 978-0-7864-3945-4).

Librarian and storyteller Elswit has created a unique reference work that allows the user to find recommended versions of East Asian stories by searching a subject index. Stories and sources are selected for their relevance and availability to modern, multicultural listeners. The tales and tellings referenced here reflect Elswit's professional experience regarding what will work in today's classroom or storytime.