

Currency is a challenge for presenting data in a reference book, especially for a topic with the volatility and variables inherent in gun control. While there is often a publication delay for statistical data sets, major websites will have more current information. For example, the data in the book on homicides and suicides by guns are from 2013. “Key State Gun Laws,” a major table in the “Data and Documents” section, has a detailed legend and explanations that continue over several pages, making it difficult to draw conclusions easily. Other charts and graphs in the book with fewer variables are more effective. There are ample credible reference lists in each chapter from highly respected scholarly journals, books, and websites such as the CDC, FBI, and Bureau of Justice Statistics.

In comparison to the question-and-answer format of *The Gun Debate: What Everyone Needs to Know* by Philip J. Cook and Kristin A. Goss (Oxford University, 2014), this reference book presents comprehensive information in a neutral fashion, creating an important niche in the marketplace for student researchers. Given the fact that many students now begin research on the Internet, this book should be recommended by librarians to students during the research process.—Terry Darr, *Library Director, Loyola Blakefield, Baltimore, Maryland*

Modern Conflict in the Greater Middle East. Edited by Spencer C. Tucker. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2017. 420 p. \$94.00 (ISBN: 978-1-4408-4360-0). E-book available (978-1-4408-4361-7), call for pricing.

Modern Conflict in the Greater Middle East, edited by Spencer C. Tucker, dates modern conflicts between and among twenty-two countries from the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire beginning in 1918 to when the book went to press in 2016, with no end in sight for the civil war in Syria, much less for peace between Israel and the Palestinians. Linked by religious and cultural affinities, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the North African countries of Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia are included as part of a lately considered greater Middle East, as are Cyprus, Iran, and Turkey. A brief overview of the historical events out of which the geopolitical greater Middle East emerged sets the stage for the seemingly intractable modern conflict of the volume’s title.

Modern Conflict in the Greater Middle East is arranged by countries in alphabetical order and follows a consistent format. Preceding each country chapter is a map that shows the location of its major cities and situates the country in relationship to its neighbors. The author or authors of the narrative history that follows are cited at the head of each essay. Their credentials are listed in the “Contributors” section at the end of the volume.

A timeline affords the opportunity to insert additional material as well as to summarize significant events in chronological order, though with less attention paid to the military, political, and biographical details that the prolific Tucker’s six-volume *A Global Chronology of Conflict: From the Ancient World*

to the Modern Middle East (ABC-CLIO, 2010) contains. Books in the “Further Reading” lists include trade and academic titles, most published between the late 1970s and the mid-2000s. Sidebars and black-and-white photographs accompany some of the country essays. A chronologically arranged section of primary documents with source citations and an index of names and subjects conclude the work.

In addition to the aforementioned *A Global Chronology of Conflict*, Tucker has edited or authored several other reference works touching on the theme of wars and warfare in the contemporary Middle East, among them the five-volume *The Encyclopedia of Middle East Wars: The United States in the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and Iraq Conflicts* (ABC-CLIO, 2010) and the four-volume *The Encyclopedia of the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A Political, Social, and Military History* (ABC-CLIO, 2008). *Modern Conflict in the Greater Middle East* supplements these two comprehensively focused sets by providing students with an overview of the background causes and political realities that fuel the besetting strife and discord, internal and external, afflicting a grouping of geographically situated countries labeled together as “the greater Middle East.” Coverage of the history, culture, society, religion, politics, organizations, and personalities that does not dwell exclusively on the region’s persistent turmoil is better addressed by the four-volume second edition of *Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East and North Africa*, edited by Philip Mattar (Macmillan Reference USA, 2004).

Modern Conflict in the Greater Middle East is a vade mecum for students needing an easily accessible guide to modern conflict in the greater Middle Eastern region, its roots, causes, and consequences. As such, *Modern Conflict in the Greater Middle East* is a suitable addition to reference collections in public libraries, high-school libraries, and college and university libraries.—Sally Moffitt, *Bibliographer and Reference Librarian, Langsam Library, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio*

Presidential Power: Documents Decoded. By Brian M. Harvard. Documents Decoded. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2016. 342 p. \$81.00 (ISBN 978-1-6106-9829-0). E-book available (978-1-61069-830-6), call for pricing.

Debates of presidential powers are often tied to the founding documents of the United States of America and the documents produced by those who have held its highest office. *Presidential Power*, therefore, is a natural fit for ABC-CLIO’s Documents Decoded series. The introduction does a thorough job of explaining both the nuances of expressed and implied presidential powers as defined (or not) by the Constitution, and how these powers are expanded or constrained by the branches of government using concrete examples from US history.

The documents covered within the volume do not include the Constitution, which distinguishes its exploration of presidential powers from many other books on the subject. Instead, it illuminates documents that round out our understanding of presidential actions, such as proclamations, letters, speeches,

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Supreme Court opinions, reports, and memos. Different documents allow the reader to explore how the presidents themselves saw their powers, and to understand the thinking of those who agreed or disagreed with these assertions of executive authority. Though not directly presented or annotated, the Constitution is discussed within the other document annotations, providing Constitutional context that supports or refutes the claims made by document authors.

The volume presents sixty-four selected documents with context to explain not only the particular presidential powers being examined but also the people, politics, and other compounding forces that shape our government. Though documents from many presidential eras are explored, the largest groups of documents are from the presidencies of George W. Bush (twelve), Barack Obama (nine), and Franklin Delano Roosevelt (nine).

End matter includes a timeline that gives brief context for each event related to the presented documents, additional reading, and an index. The timeline is not particularly useful, as the documents are already presented in a chronological format, but it may be helpful for quick references. The additional readings are organized alphabetically by author, rather than by subject or time period, which may present a challenge for novice researchers.

In comparison to a similar work, CQ Press's *The Evolving Presidency: Landmark Documents, 1787–2015*, edited by Michael Nelson (2015), there is some, but not much, overlap between documents explored. Additionally, *Presidential Power* is unique in its approach to annotate the primary sources themselves, instead of providing commentary ahead of or after the document text.

Presidential Power is a good resource for high school or undergraduate students exploring the presidency and its balance with the other branches of federal government. It exposes students to the use of primary documents—which are critical to this area of research—and provides enough context for those who are exploring the subject for the first time.—Emily Mross, *Business and Public Administration Librarian*, Penn State Harrisburg, Middletown, Pennsylvania

Race in American Film: Voices and Visions That Shaped a Nation. Edited by Daniel Bernardi and Michael Green. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2017. 3 vols. 1,026 p. \$294.00 (ISBN 978-0-313-39839-1). E-book available (978-0-313-39840-7), call for pricing.

Race in American Film is a three-volume encyclopedic treatment of race and racism in American cinema, from the early film era to modern times. The editors, Daniel Bernardi and Michael Green, address the question of “American cinema’s place in American and world culture with respect to the question of race” (xxx). For the purpose of this three-volume set, they define “race” broadly, using Omi and Winant’s definition of race as a “‘shifting yet reforming’ complex of meanings that works to shape our sense of selves and those we see as similar—thereby allowing us to see others as different.”

(xxi) The concept of race, therefore, is subject to change over time and among different social groups.

The volumes that make up *Race in American Film* cover three categories: films that are considered as outright racist; films that attempt to subvert (however poorly or imperfectly) racism; and those films by nonwhite directors that feature nonwhite characters and themes (xxvi). The entries, signed by their authors, are listed in alphabetical order with cross references to other entries in the volumes. Each topic has a “Further Viewing” section, suggesting other films covering the same topics but not discussed in the encyclopedia, and a “Further Reading” section that includes bibliographical sources used to research the article as well as additional references for study. Each entry is written in accessible English, without jargon, and should be easily understandable by most general readers. At the beginning of each volume is an alphabetical list of entries and a list of films broken down by era (“Early Film to 1928,” “Classic and Mid-century Era, 1929–1969,” and “Contemporary Films, 1970–”). There is also a guide to related topics that lists films dealing with a particular subject or genre, such as film noir or immigration, and volume 3 contains a comprehensive bibliography and index, as well as a list of contributors and their credentials. Bernardi and Green, the editors, are film and media scholars at San Francisco State University and Arizona State University, respectively, and their contributors are experts in film studies, sociology, history, ethnic studies, and related fields.

Race in American Film succeeds well in its intent to present a comprehensive history and reflection of race and racism in American cinema. It is admirably current, discussing events such as the Black Lives Matter movement and films released as recently as 2015. Missing are entries on some contemporary African American directors, such as Steve McQueen and Ava DuVernay; it is to be hoped that a future edition would include some of these filmmakers as well. Overall, *Race in American Film* nicely fulfills its stated purpose, providing in one resource a good jumping off place for readers interested in the topic of race and film and giving researchers suggestions for further study. Highly recommended for high schools, public libraries, and colleges and universities, particularly those that support film and media studies programs.—Amanda K. Sprochi, *Health Sciences Cataloger*, University of Missouri, Columbia

The Routledge Companion to Media and Race. Edited by Christopher P. Campbell. New York: Routledge, 2017. 326 p. \$204.00 (ISBN 978-1-138-02072-6). E-book available (978-1-315-77822-8), call for pricing.

In recent years, Routledge has published several works on various aspects of race and media, including *The Race and Media Reader*, edited by Gilbert B. Rodman (2014). The book under review complements Rodman’s earlier work, although it has a different purpose and focus within this well-studied subject. Campbell also carves out a bit of space for his work