
Best Historical Materials

The RUSA History Section's Historical Materials Committee follows an established method to identify the best materials for the year. The process uses standardized criteria, a broad, national call for nominations, and the work of committee members to review and select from the nominations. The 2017 Best Historical Materials' list is a mix of digital archives, collections, indexes, and print bibliographies that promote the research of unique, rich, and specialized collections. All resources were last reviewed on December 9, 2017.—*Editor*

RUSA History Section Historical Materials Committee

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contributing members: Steven A. Knowlton, Eileen Bentsen, and Sue A. McFadden, editor and chair.

A Biographical Encyclopedia of Early Modern Englishwomen: Exemplary Lives and Memorable Acts, 1500–1650. Edited by Carole Levin, Anna Riehl Bertolet, and Jo Eldridge Carney. New York: Routledge, 2017. 630 p. \$160 hardcover (ISBN: 9780754669005). \$57.95 e-book (ISBN: 9781315440729).

This encyclopedia presents brief, signed biographies of more than seven hundred women who lived in England between 1500 and 1650. It groups women into twenty-two categories, primarily along occupational lines but including categories for "Travelers," "Litigants," "Women at Court," and other topical headings. Each category is preceded by a brief introduction, and each entry includes a brief bibliography of sources. It is useful for beginning research on women and demonstrates the wide variety of fields in which women participated in the early modern era. Includes an index by name and by contributor (with affiliation). Audience: General through researchers. Recommended for large public libraries and academic libraries.—*Eileen Bentsen, Baylor University, Waco, Texas*

A Companion to First Ladies. Edited by Katherine A. S. Sibley. Malden, MA: John Wiley and Sons, 2016. 741 p. \$204.95 hardcover (ISBN: 9781118732229). \$163.99 e-book (ISBN: 9781118732182).

This resource provides essays about the First Ladies of the United States in chronological arrangement. Most essays describe one First Lady, and several First Ladies are discussed in two or more essays. Several essays summarize the lives of multiple First Ladies. The variation depends on the number of presidential terms, number of First Ladies per president, and the lack of details for multiples in one essay. This work updates the First Ladies through Michelle Obama. The resource includes notes on the contributing authors, including credential information. The information provides a view of First Ladies through a new lens: the individual importance of the Lady beyond the White House.—*Sue McFadden, Indiana University East, Richmond, Indiana*

Digital Library on American Slavery, <https://library.uncg.edu/slavery/>

The University of North Carolina Libraries provide access to digital collections of primary resources concerning slavery. These include metadata and digital copies of the original documents. The *Digital Library on American Slavery* is well organized, includes several collections such as the *Race and Slavery Petitions Project*, and offers access to additional collections provided by other institutions. The resource continues to add collections, such as the *North Carolina Slave Deeds* now in development, and metadata are available for libraries to link to digital artifacts. One of the linked collections includes summarized information about life insurance (on individual slaves) sold to slave owners. These resources help tell the story of slavery by introducing the context of slavery in the terms of slaves' daily life, concerns of non-slave owners, and actions of slave owners. A must review for historians of slavery, the United States of the period, and related fields.—*Sue McFadden, Indiana University East, Richmond, Indiana*

Encyclopaedia of the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine in Non-Western Cultures, Third edition. Edited by Helaine Selin. Dordrecht: Springer, 2016. 5 vol., 4071 p. \$2900 hardcover (ISBN: 9789400777460). \$2900 e-book (ISBN 9789400777477).

Alphabetically arranged entries provide broad coverage of science, indigenous knowledge, religion and science, and biographies of known individuals from Africa, Asia, South American, and Indigenous cultures of Australia and the Americas. Articles are significantly revised from the 2008 edition and topic coverage is expanded. It contains charts, graphs, and illustrations. Articles include bibliographies (international in scope) for further research. Recommended for large public libraries, academic libraries, and special libraries.—*Eileen Bentsen, Baylor University, Waco, Texas*

Encyclopedia of the Ancient Maya. Edited by Walter R. T. Witschey. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016. 538 p. \$100 hardcover (ISBN: 9780759122840). \$95 e-book (ISBN: 9780759122864).

Introduces the culture, art, archaeology, and history of the Maya to novices and updates the scholarship, archaeological findings, and significant research of the past two decades. Individual entries vary in length from one to two paragraphs to two pages, include see-also references, and lists of further readings. Entries are arranged alphabetically and are supplemented by a topical index, a chronology, maps and illustrations, a glossary, a bibliography, and a listing of research institutions and internet sites. Suitable for public, academic, and special collections, general readers through researchers.—*Eileen Bentsen, Baylor University, Waco, Texas*

Encyclopedia of the Yoruba. Edited by Toyin Falola and Akíntúndé Akínyemi. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016. 371 p. \$120 hardcover (ISBN: 9780253021335). \$49.99 e-book (ISBN: 9780253021564).

Prominent historian Falola and cultural scholar Akínyemi have edited this single-volume encyclopedia of the Yoruba people, who live in Nigeria, Benin, and Togo, as well as in diaspora in Europe and the United States. While it covers topics traditionally classified as history, it has a strong emphasis on religion, folklore, and cultural practices, which provide crucial context to narrative history. Lengthy articles cover topics at a level of depth that is unusual for a single-volume reference work. This volume gathers in one place important information from a variety of disciplines that will prove essential to helping newcomers to West African history understanding the culture and milieu from which Yoruba history arose.—*Steven A. Knowlton, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey*

KKK Newspapers / Hate in America: The Rise and Fall of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s, <http://lyrasisnow.org/hate-in-america-newspapers-from-the-rise-and-fall-of-the-ku-klux-klan-in-the-1920s/> (Some portions open access; others require fee)

When the re-formed Ku Klux Klan reached its peak of influence in the mid-1920s, more than 4 million members were exposed to reactionary rhetoric through widely distributed newspapers produced by local, state, and national branches of the KKK, as well as affiliated publishers. Few libraries at the time collected the newspapers, however, making it difficult for later researchers to access these scattered titles. Reveal Digital, using a “crowd-funding” financial model, is digitizing and making available via open access a growing number of Klan newspapers.

By the end of the 2017, the database had nineteen titles published between 1921 and 1932. They are full-text searchable and include page images with illustrations and advertisements. With interest in right-wing rhetoric on the rise in both the academy and among public library patrons, this database provides a timely and useful resources for studying its history.—*Steven A. Knowlton, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey*

The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism. Edited by Edward Cavanagh and Lorenzo Veracini. New York: Routledge, 2017. 469 p. \$260 hardcover (ISBN: 9780415742160). \$57.95 e-book (ISBN: 9781315544816).

Settler colonialism—the conquest and occupation of foreign lands with the intention of permanent settlement—is often thought of as a development of the early modern period, originating from Europe. However, the editors of this volume take an expansive view of the phenomenon, tracing it from the Assyrian Empire and ancient Israel to nineteenth-century Hokkaido and twentieth-century New Zealand. In thirty extensive chapters, invited authors provide lengthy historical overviews of settler colonialism in selected geographic regions, as well as discussions of historiography; economic, trade, and cultural factors driving the movement of peoples; and the impact of settler colonialism on the indigenous inhabitants being displaced. Coverage of

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racial ideology is thorough, as well. While formal historiography is not a concern of this volume, the authors do point to essential works in their bibliographies. Each entry is an essential introduction to settler colonialism in its regional history.—*Steven A. Knowlton, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey*

TRIP HISTORIC: Travel Like an Expert, <https://www.trip-historic.com/about-us/>

Trip Historic is a unique online resource, developed by Mike Lewis and his team, providing images and context for travelers about historic sites around the world. Anyone is

free to use the site and travelers may become “community members” with extended privileges on the site. The home page offers searching by country, date/historic period, and keyword. As a beta site, the information is broad, with opportunity for growth through user suggestions and member additions. While not a scholarly resource, the tool links general users with historic sights to plan visits during their travels. Trip Historic offers a public appeal within the confines of history. All libraries benefit from this tool geared toward the general public.—*Sue McFadden, Indiana University East, Richmond, Indiana*