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## SOURCES

differing views. The end of the volume contains an extensive bibliography and index.

There is an older title, *For Appearance' Sake: The Historical Encyclopedia of Good Looks, Beauty and Grooming* (Greenwood, 2001) that focuses on the history of the beauty industry. This title would be a nice addition for any collections that support women's studies, anthropology, or any other classes that teach the cultural context of beauty.—*Stacey Marien, Acquisitions Librarian, American University, Washington, DC*

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***The Civil War and Reconstruction Eras: Documents Decoded.*** By John R. Vile. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2017. 295 pages. Acid-free. \$64.80 (ISBN 978-1-4408-5428-6). E-book available (978-1-4408-5429-3), call for pricing.

Making his fourth contribution to the Documents Decoded series, John R. Vile provides critical commentary for more than sixty documents from the era. The organization is chronological, starting in 1859 and extending to 1877. Source documents are typically brief—averaging one to five pages, with a few longer texts such as the 1861 Constitution of the Confederate States. Designed with the needs of “high school students, college students, and general citizens in mind,” (xiv) each text includes an introduction of about a paragraph providing historical context, and a brief conclusion summarizing the significance of the document. A distinguishing feature of this collection is the reader-friendly approach. The print design is clean and uncluttered with copious white space. The annotations are provided alongside the relevant text, which is clearly highlighted. Placing the commentary side by side with the text makes it easy to go back and forth between the document and the added insights. Consistent with the intended general audience, the editorial additions are not dense scholarly treatments. Rather, they define unfamiliar historical language and elaborate on the meanings of specific sections. There is a list of further readings at the end of the volume; however, no recommendations accompany individual documents.

The selection of texts reflects the interests and expertise of the author, a political scientist and self-described “student of American constitutional law” (xiv). There is a decided emphasis on political and legal topics and government documents including laws, congressional speeches, presidential proclamations, and court decisions. There are no images and little to be found on popular culture (excepting the texts of “Dixie” and “Battle Hymn of the Republic”). No attempt is made to capture the everyday experiences of the time, either on the home front or the battlefield. While familiar figures such as Abraham Lincoln appear frequently, the voices of everyday people from the time—women, African Americans, immigrants, and laborers are largely absent. Legal decisions and laws are certainly important to understanding the era, but compared to other accounts from the time period, they can be dry and unemotional. Readers looking for narratives beyond the political are advised to consult works such as the Library of America's series *The Civil War as Told by Those Who*

*Lived It* (Library of America, 2011–2014) or *Voices of Civil War America: Contemporary Accounts of Daily Life* (Greenwood, 2011). It is fascinating to dip into the array of documents assembled and general readers interested in the political and legal aspects of the era will find much of interest. The addition of further reading lists for each source document would have been an especially valuable addition supporting high school and college students seeking to explore further.—*Eric Novotny, Humanities Librarian, Pennsylvania State University, University Park*

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***The Death Penalty: A Reference Handbook.*** By Joseph A. Melusky and Keith A. Pesto. Contemporary World Issues. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO. 2017. 372 pages. Acid-free \$60 (ISBN 978-1-4408-4549-9). E-book available (978-1-4408-4550-5), call for pricing.

The affordable but brief single-volume *The Death Penalty: A Reference Handbook* is edited by Professor Joseph Melusky of St. Francis University and Keith A. Pesto, a veteran US Magistrate Judge and lecturer at St. Francis. Pesto and Melusky have collaborated several times on related ABC-CLIO reference works including *The Death Penalty: Documents Decoded* (2014), *Capital Punishment* (2011), and *Cruel and Unusual Punishment: Rights and Liberties under the Law* (2003). This title is part of ABC-CLIO's Contemporary World Issues Series, which “address vital issues in today's society” and are “written by professional writers, scholars and non-academic experts,” covering current topics such as marijuana, social media, and prisons (v). Just as all the other titles in this series, *The Death Penalty: A Reference Handbook* provides an overview of the subject, a detailed chronology, biographical sketches, primary sources and relevant data, perspectives essays by experts, and a list of resources (v). The focus of this work is the death penalty in the United States, with the aim of the book to “provide a balanced, objective discussion of arguments, and controversies” (xv). The perspective essays provide a wide range of voices, from former Governor Tom Corbett to academics from multiple disciplines, to leaders in nonprofit organizations. The profiles section provides brief one- to two-page entries on key people, organizations, events, and cases. The strongest part of this work is the third of the book dedicated to “Background and History” and “Problems, Controversies, and Solutions.” These two sections, written by Melusky and Pesto, feature clear, readable, and concise writing that is comprehensive with excellent insights. These sections of the book could serve as the foundation for the research of a high-school student or beginning undergraduate. The analysis throughout the book connects the many cases and decisions that have shaped the law surrounding the death penalty in a fashion that is encyclopedic without being overwhelming. Each section has an extensive list of references including relevant cases, in addition to a sixty-page reference section. In some areas, this title is sometimes too focused on framing the legal history of the death penalty, and doesn't analyze related issues extensively. For

example, capital punishment and individuals with intellectual disabilities is only mentioned once briefly in the context of juvenile justice.

Surprisingly, there are not many recent reference works dedicated solely to capital punishment or the death penalty. The second edition of *The Encyclopedia of Capital Punishment in the United States* (McFarland, 2008) is a good resource but is already in need of an updated edition and focuses on Supreme Court decisions. *The Greenhaven Encyclopedia of Capital Punishment* (2006) is also a good title but is too dated to still be considered current and authoritative. The recently released *Routledge Handbook of Capital Punishment* (2018), edited by Robert Bohm and Gavin Lee, is an excellent volume covering major themes related to capital punishment with essays by major scholars exploring specific subtopics such as the financial costs of the death penalty. *The Death Penalty: A Reference Handbook* could be a good addition to those libraries that will purchase the *Routledge Handbook of Capital Punishment* as the intended audiences are different, with one providing a solid summary for beginning scholars, while the other provides specific analysis of a variety of topics related to capital punishment.

Recommended for high-school libraries and academic libraries for first- and second-year undergraduates.—*Shannon Pritting, Library Director, SUNY Polytechnic Institute, Utica, New York*

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***The Definitive Shakespeare Companion: Overviews, Documents, and Analysis.*** Edited by Joseph Rosenblum. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood/ABC-CLIO, 2017. 4 vols. acid free \$415.00 (ISBN 1-440-83444-8). E-book available (978-1-4408-3445-5), call for pricing.

This multivolume work is an updated version of *The Greenwood Companion to Shakespeare: A Comprehensive Guide for Students* (Greenwood, 2005), also edited by Rosenblum. *Overviews and the History Plays* (vol. 1), *The Comedies* (vol. 2), *The Tragedies* (vol. 3), and *The Romances and Poetry* (vol. 4) make up the set. At 1,987 pages, the updated version is 523 pages longer than its predecessor, with the number of contributors having grown from forty to sixty-two. Six new essays bring the total number to eighty-three. The additions include five- to ten-page overviews in each of the four volumes, a nineteen-page essay by Rosenblum titled “The Authorship Questions,” and a second six-page overview in volume 4 introducing the longer poems. The additional content in many entries reflects scholarship published between 2005 and the publication of the new set, but other books and articles not cited in 2005 but published before that date make up a portion of the newly consulted sources. A comparison of entries in the old and the new reveal major additions to some entries (the entry for *Hamlet* is considerably longer and cites twenty-six sources, while the 2005 entry cites eleven) and minor additions and changes in word choice in others.

The first volume gives the reader a sense of what it was

like to live in Shakespeare’s era by including chapters on his “Age,” “Life,” “Theater,” “Texts,” and “Language.” Commentary for each of the plays appears in the following order: plot summary, publication history, literary sources, historical context, devices and techniques, main characters, critical controversies, production history, reviews of productions, and an explication of key passages. The essays are generally briefer for the poems and contain fewer sections than those on the plays. Included is a prose paraphrase, a discussion that situates the poem within the sonnet cycle, an explanation of various devices and techniques, themes and meanings, and a description of the relationship of the sonnets to the plays. A detailed annotated bibliography is included in volume 4.

The target audience is “high school students, undergraduates, and general readers” (xi). The goal of the new set is identical to that of the 2005 version, namely to “demystify Shakespeare so that students and general readers will be encouraged to appreciate the artistry of the writing and will come to a fuller appreciation of Shakespeare’s genius” (xi). Rosenblum does not fall short of his goal. The students and general readers he has in mind are best served by reading appropriate entries before engaging with the actual writings to benefit in much the same way students benefit from reading an article on an unfamiliar topic in a popular magazine to help better understand more difficult scholarly content. A comprehensive seventy-four page subject index at the end of volume 4 is useful in helping navigate quickly to specific parts of the set when clarification is wanted. Although many critical works have been published on Shakespeare aimed at students, such as *A Companion to Shakespeare’s Works* (Blackwell, 2003), the earlier version of this set in 2005, Gale’s Shakespearean Criticism Series, and Baker and Womack’s 2012 *Facts on File Companion to Shakespeare*, streamlined plot outlines and plainly written critical analysis can be difficult to find.

Highly recommended for all high school, college, and public libraries. Financially challenged libraries or libraries at colleges that teach few courses in Shakespeare might pass on this set in favor of the 2005 version that still has a lot to offer and runs for under one hundred dollars online. Those interested in learning more about the earlier set are encouraged to read a review appearing in *Reference and User Service Quarterly* volume 45, number 4 (Summer 2006).—*Dave Dettman, Library Instruction Program Coordinator, University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point*

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***Encyclopedia of American Women and Religion, 2nd Ed.*** By June Melby Benowitz. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2017. 2 vols. Acid-free \$198 (ISBN 978-1-4408-3986-3). E-book available (978-1-4408-3987-0), call for pricing.

Women have had a major role in religion throughout history but have been consistently overlooked, providing a sound purpose and intention for this two-volume encyclopedia. The expertise shown in the comprehensive coverage is a