

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