

The American Middle Class: An Economic Encyclopedia of Progress and Poverty. Edited by Robert S. Rycroft. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2017. 2 vols. Acid-free \$158.40 (ISBN 978-1-61069-757-6). E-book Available (978-1-61069-758-3), call for pricing.

Analysis of the middle class is a news cycle staple, but how do we define the middle class, and what does the label mean? In the expansive *The American Middle Class: An Economic Encyclopedia of Progress and Poverty*, a wide range of authors offer statistical categorizations, historical perspectives, and ethnographic explorations of the group that is supposed to define the American dream.

Instead of a standard alphabetical framework of short entries, the encyclopedia begins with a prologue of explanatory essays and portraits of identity-based middle-class segments followed by seven separate sections of entries, each with an overview essay. The sections detail nearly every aspect of American life from the political to the social. While the overview essays themselves make compelling connections between the topic and the middle class, many of the entries—though expansive and well-written with cross-references and recommendations for further reading—are less inherently tied to the overarching theme of the middle class. There is no explanation of why entries like absentee voting, intimate partner violence, or school prayer are necessary to understanding the middle class economically. Additionally, entries vary greatly in both topic and length, ranging from the general, like “Neoliberalism” (v. 1, p. 460), to the highly specific, like “Environmental Crime: The Case of the Navajo” (v. 2, p. 789).

The publisher indicates the set is in alignment with themes of the National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies and standards of the Common Core. While it is commendable to attempt to be inclusive of all aspects of a huge and hard-to-define group, the extremely broad scope makes it hard to envision this encyclopedia as a highly useful tool for the high school and lower-division college users it is developed for; however, its entries are rich with data and explanations that might be challenging for novice researchers to discover elsewhere.—Emily Mross, *Business Librarian, Penn State Harrisburg, Middletown, Pennsylvania*

Dreams: Understanding Biology, Psychology, and Culture. Edited by Robert J. Hoss, Katja Valli, and Robert P. Gongloff. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2019. 2 vols. Acid-free \$182 (ISBN 978-1-4408-5616-7). E-book Available (978-1-4408-5617-4), call for pricing.

Dreams: Understanding Biology, Psychology, and Culture is a two-volume reference work that aims to educate readers about sleep and dream research. According to the editors, the work covers “evolutionary perspectives on sleep and dreaming to the most current research into the neuroscience, as well as current psychological theory, therapeutic application, and the artistic and cultural treatment of dreams” (xii).

Intended for students and researchers interested in current understandings of dreams and how we study them, this is a valuable addition to the literature, as most dream reference guides focus primarily on artistic and cultural responses to dreams.

Dreams is divided into four major sections focusing on the biology of sleep and dreams, dream content, the psychology of dreams, and dreamwork and cultural practices. Each section is further divided into chapters, which group together essays on different aspects of a single theme. The essays in each chapter and the chapters in each section build upon each other to guide the reader through current understandings of dreams in a coherent and logical manner.

One of the main features and strengths of this work is the amount of research incorporated into the essays, which are each written by experts in the field. All of the essays make significant reference to published research, and many further include data in the form of tables and charts. Several essays also detail dream research methodologies and ways to conduct dreamwork.

This two-volume set is intended to be used together, as indicated by the continuous pagination and the location of the cumulative list of references and index at the end of volume 2. This work is an excellent tool for the student or researcher who is looking for a comprehensive introduction to the research being done on various aspects of dreams. It is less well suited for general audiences seeking discussion of popular aspects of dreams, including dream interpretation. Because of the lack of similar reference works on the science and psychology of dreams, the incorporation of significant amounts of current research, and the thoughtful organization of the material, *Dreams* is recommended for academic libraries.—Shaunda Vasudev, *Outreach and Engagement Librarian, Capital University, Bexley, Ohio*

Encyclopedia of Political Assassinations. By Nigel West. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017. 359 p. \$95 (ISBN 978-1-5381-0238-1). E-book Available (978-1-5381-0239-8), call for pricing.

Encyclopedia of Political Assassinations is a work that sets out to document global political assassinations that have occurred during the last century and a half. It is a one-volume encyclopedia with alphabetically arranged entries that are well researched and written with an objective tone. It also features an abbreviation and glossary section, a chronology, and multiple appendices to assist the reader. The author is very thorough, and although many entries are brief, they make good use of the space by covering both the significance of the victim and the outcome for the assassin.

Political assassinations and espionage are an especially popular area of research currently. This volume is unique as the stated objective from the author was to comprehensively “identify and document assassination as it occurred during this and the previous century,” and “where the recent declassification of documents has made it possible, shed new

light on old mysteries” (West, p. 4). The author examining and deconstructing the contents of the declassified documents and connecting the dots historically is invaluable for researchers.

This examination is also what sets this volume apart from previous publications that covered this topic. *Assassinations and Executions: An Encyclopedia of Political Violence, 1900–2000*, by Harris M. Lentz III, is a popular volume in many library collections and, prior to *Encyclopedia of Political Assassinations*, was one of the only encyclopedic resources on the topic. However, due to the nature of the volume, the entries in *Assassinations and Executions* are less substantial and do not offer the same level of detail and contextual information. The difference in the depth of coverage can be seen throughout the volumes, but an excellent example is the coverage of the assassination of John F. Kennedy. In both encyclopedias’ entries, the events leading up to and following the assassination are listed, but that is where the similarities end. Lentz’s entry does an excellent job relaying the facts and briefly mentions the major conspiracies surrounding the assassination, but he doesn’t delve any deeper as the objective of his publication was to “present a concise look at the many world leaders who met their end in a violent manner during the 20th century” (Lentz, p. xi). In contrast, West’s treatment of the same topic provides the reader with not only the essential facts but also a discussion on the possible motivations of key figures involved in the assassination and the investigation that followed. Documents that were released long after Lentz’s work was published greatly aided West’s analysis, and researchers and enthusiasts alike will consider this new information fascinating.

This resource provides readers with well-researched, informative entries. It is also different from previous volumes that cover the topic because the author had access to the recently released documents pertaining to assassinations that had a major impact historically. It is a relatively inexpensive volume, and I believe it would be a valuable addition to public or academic libraries as the topic has mass appeal and the treatment of the topic is exceptional.—*Marissa Ellermann, Head of Circulation Services Librarian, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Carbondale, Illinois*

Encyclopedia of Public Health: Principles, Peoples, and Programs. Edited by Sally Kuykendall. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2018. 2 vols. Acid-free \$198 (ISBN 978-1-61069-982-2). E-book Available (978-1-61069-983-9), call for pricing.

The *Encyclopedia of Public Health: Principles, Peoples, and Programs*, a new addition to Greenwood’s health reference catalog, provides a solid resource for libraries looking for a good, low-cost encyclopedia for their public health collection. Dr. Sally Kuykendall, the editor, is a professor of health services at St. Joseph’s University in Philadelphia and an independent evaluator of public health programs. She has assembled a knowledgeable team of public health experts,

health scientists, and medical historians as contributors, who present topics relating to public health in an easily-readable format for general readers. The two volumes present signed articles alphabetically by entry, with cross-references and bibliographies. The text is scattered throughout with black and white illustrations. Both volumes contain a contents section, a guide to related topics that groups articles by theme, a chronology, and an introduction. Volume 2 contains a glossary, a list of organizations and contributors, and a comprehensive index, as well as a section on “Controversies in public health,” which discusses hot button issues like anti-vaccination trends and health care for undocumented immigrants. Kuykendall maintains an even tone and fair treatment of all sides, allowing both pro- and anti-sides of an issue their say.

Given the length restriction of a two-volume set, it is understandable that not all topics are going to be exhaustively covered, but Kuykendall and her authors have done an excellent job of covering the main public health areas of interest. If there is one negative, it would be that Kuykendall has written many of the articles herself or with contributors; more diversity in the voices contributing to the volume would be welcome. However, that is a small quibble for a good resource.

There is a plethora of public health encyclopedias out there, including Academic Press’ multi-volume *International Encyclopedia of Public Health* (2017), Springer’s *Encyclopedia of Public Health* (2008), and Gale’s *Encyclopedia of Public Health* (second edition expected in 2020). However, some of these are either dated or quite expensive. At its \$198 price point, the *Encyclopedia of Public Health: Principles, Peoples, and Programs* is a solid, affordable resource for libraries needing public health information for general readers. Recommended for upper level K–12 students, undergraduates, and public libraries.—*Amanda K. Sprochi, Health Sciences Cataloger, University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri*

From Smartphones to Social Media: How Technology Affects Our Brains and Behavior. By Mark Carrier. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2018. Acid free \$94 (ISBN 978-1-4408-5178-0). E-book Available (978-1-4408-5179-7), call for pricing.

Many consider the release of the Apple iPhone in 2007 as being the moment, and the device, that brought the smartphone into the hands of millions of consumers. Today, smartphones and social media sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, are ingrained into the human experience for countless millions of people. But how do these technologies and social spaces impact our brains and the ways in which they function? *From Smartphones to Social Media: How Technology Affects Our Brains and Behavior* attempts to help clarify these questions, and many more, as they pertain to the technology we carry with us every day and the digital social spaces that we access and participate on with these devices.