

The countries section is followed by a glance at the activities of more than forty major international organizations. These organizations are arranged under broader categories, such as “Defense Organizations,” “Economic Organizations,” and “Arab Organizations.” The entry for the European Union, for example, includes background information, such as headquarters and membership, and reviews its major actions for the year, such as ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, response to the global credit crisis, and climate change.

Additional chapters provide summaries for developments in the international economy, sciences, law, religion, arts, and sports. These sections allow more inclusive coverage of the year’s events. Examples of notable events covered in these sections include controversial fatwas in the Islamic world, the opening of the new Acropolis Museum in Athens, and the end of Roger Federer’s 237-week reign as tennis’s top-ranked player.

The final section of this edition provides the texts of key documents for the year, such as Barack Obama’s U.S. presidential victory acceptance speech and the Kosovo Declaration of Independence, obituaries of significant individuals, a chronicle of key events for the year, and the “Annual Register Archive.”

The *Annual Register* clearly achieves its purpose, which is to “analyze and interpret the year’s most important events and developments throughout the world” (dust jacket summary). Each entry is written in a clear, succinct style that allows one to quickly comprehend the importance of each event without being overwhelmed by too much detail. Even in its 250th year, the *Annual Register: World Events* continues to be a necessary reference work for all high school, public, and academic library collections.—Rick Robison, *Reference and Access Services Coordinator, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, California*

Encyclopedia of Business in Today’s World. Ed. by Charles Wankel. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2009. 4 vols. acid free \$495 (ISBN 978-1-4129-6427-2).

Edited by Charles Wankel (St. John’s University, New York), this set is intended to offer readers an introduction to key business topics in the global marketplace. It comprises more than a thousand entries covering twenty-two themes. Each signed one-to-three-page article is arranged alphabetically and typically includes “see also” references and a brief bibliography.

Considering the editor’s intention that readers use the set “as a GPS to navigate them into the language and ideas of the main conceptual terrain of business” (vii), one has to wonder if this might be too ambitious an undertaking for a mere four-volume subject encyclopedia. To determine if this product delivers, coverage of two of the broad themes—“Corporate Profiles” and “Countries”—are examined.

A comparison of companies included in “Corporate Profiles” to those in the 2008 list of *Fortune* magazine’s “Fortune 500” reveals that entries for 21 of the top 25 companies, 43

of the top 50, and 56 of the top 100 companies are included. However, with only 14 listings in the 50–100 range, it appears that few, if any, of the remaining 400 are included. Thus many of America’s top companies are not profiled, including Goldman Sachs, Kroger, Lehman Brothers, Fannie Mae, Intel, Kraft, American Express, and Coca-Cola, among others. When one considers the names of companies students are researching and writing papers on, some of these would be at the top of the list.

Comparing the list of the one hundred countries covered in this work to those profiled in the most recent edition of *Europa Yearbook*, one finds that while coverage for larger industrialized countries is fairly good, many smaller, less economically developed countries are left out. For these, readers must search broadly written articles on the business environment in “Africa,” “Central America,” “Eastern Europe,” “Middle East,” and “Western Europe,” or under topical articles such as “Industrialized Countries” and “Less Industrialized Countries.”

In looking at the affiliations of the contributors, users will find few from America’s top business schools. Of the nearly 500 contributors, 295 are affiliated with American universities; a comparison of their affiliations with *Business Week*’s most recent ranking of America’s top thirty MBA programs reveals that only 5 are affiliated with any of these programs—none from the top 12. This is somewhat disappointing, as one would like to see authoritative entries on many of the most important topics written by faculty at Harvard, Northwestern, Michigan, Stanford, Columbia, Duke, MIT, Cornell, and Dartmouth, among others.

The text is presented in a very readable font with an attractive layout and design. Articles span a wide range of topics for students and professionals alike, and while some entries seem brief with an overly modest bibliography, readers will appreciate the helpful 52-page glossary, the 139-page appendix of useful business statistics, and the cumulative index.

While this set will not replace the more in-depth, six-volume *International Encyclopedia of Business and Management*, 2nd edition (Thomson Learning, 2001. \$1,499)—whose first edition was selected as a *Choice* “Outstanding Academic Title” in 1997—it is a more comprehensive and appropriate purchase for academic and public libraries than the two-volume *Encyclopedia of Business and Finance*, 2nd edition (MacMillan Reference USA, 2006. \$385).—R. Neil Scott, *Professor/User Services Librarian, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, Tennessee*

Encyclopedia of Death and the Human Experience. Ed. by Clifton D. Bryant and Dennis L. Peck. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2009. 2 vols. acid free \$350 (ISBN 978-1-4129-5178-4). Also available online for \$435.

As the song says, “The moment you’re born you start to die.” Since our beginning as a species, humans have been fascinated by death, its inevitability, its process, its place in life, and its aftermath. This work, edited by two eminent