

and common themes among the groups. These include the “Asian American Movement (AAM),” “Asian Music in America,” “Asian Religions and Religious Practices in America,” and “Political Participation.” All the articles conclude with cross-references and a bibliography of print and online sources for further reading.

A major portion of this encyclopedia contains biographical entries about famous people like Connie Chung, Jhumpa Lahiri, Bruce Lee, Maya Lin, Yo-Yo Ma, and Tiger Woods. However, many of the biographies are about lesser known Asian American artists, athletes, historians, politicians, scientists, and writers. This encyclopedia would be much more functional if it had biographical, geographical, and topical indexes or finders because unless you know the name of the individual there is no way of discovering these prominent figures.

A great supplement to this source is Huping Ling and Allan Austin’s two-volume work *Asian American History and Culture: An Encyclopedia* (Sharpe Reference, 2010). It incorporates information about many of the same Asian American groups and is organized alphabetically by group ethnicity. There is a fair amount of overlap between the two sources, yet Ling and Austin’s encyclopedia could be useful in filling in some of the gaps with the Hmong, Malaysian, Singaporean, and Sri Lankan Americans. Both encyclopedias also chose to include information about the native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islander people although Zhao and Park state, “To lump Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders together with Asian Americans is to marginalize these groups of people” (xix).

Overall, the editors of *Asian Americans: An Encyclopedia of Social, Cultural, Economic, and Political History* did an outstanding job compiling this reliable and significant work, and it is highly recommended for both academic and public libraries.—Megan Coder, Associate Librarian, State University of New York, New Paltz

Culture Wars in America: An Encyclopedia of Issues, Viewpoints and Voices. 2nd ed. Ed. by Roger Chapman and James Ciment. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2013. 3 vols. alkaline \$349 (ISBN: 978-0-7656-8302-1). E-book available, call for pricing.

Culture Wars in America is a three-volume reference set with a stellar list of contributors from well-known universities. This is the second edition, updated for the Obama years. Broadly speaking, the overall content surrounds politics, education, law, various issues in popular culture, current and historical ideologies and movements, the media, and social and moral issues.

There has always been an attempt to define the social and political issues of American society. These books attempt to define these “culture wars” without “a labeling and classification of issues that suggests a moralistic either/or sensibility. Presenting players as pairs of polar opposites oversimplifies issues and fails to acknowledge their nuances and complexities” (xxvii).

The title and introduction are needlessly esoteric. The editors should have been more specific about the book’s intended purpose in the introduction. The meaning of “Culture Wars in America” may not be apparent to the average high school or early undergraduate student.

Information is easy to find because of the book’s well-organized front matter. A concise contents list by page number is in each volume. The “Topic Finder” is a hierarchical arrangement of topics within the three volumes. Volume One and volume 2 are arranged with alphabetized entries from A to Z. The entries are readable and appropriate for high school and college students. Volume 3 is Documents, which includes speeches, legal briefs, testimonies and official statements on topics like health care, climate change, and abortion. These items are timely and well chosen from significant dates in the history of the issue. The useful “Further Reading” lists at the end of each entry are a list of relevant sources, mostly books and articles.

These books will need to be replaced with a new edition in 3–4 years. At this price point, a combination of other resources, especially websites, may be a better bet. For example, the federal government’s website usa.gov, organizational, and news websites provide much of this information in a very timely way at the same depth. Many opposing viewpoint databases serve a similar purpose as this set of books.—Terry Darr, Library Director, Loyola Blakefield in Towson, Maryland

Encyclopedia of Cultivated Plants: From Acacia to Zinnia. Ed. by Christopher Cumo. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2013. 3 vols. acid free \$294 (ISBN: 978-1-59884-774-1). E-book available (978-1-59884-775-8), call for pricing.

The *Encyclopedia of Cultivated Plants: From Acacia to Zinnia* is an interdisciplinary exploration of the various relationships between plants and people that have arisen over the course of human history. As civilizations discovered desirable properties of their local flora, they developed techniques to improve these properties in successive generations of the plants while increasing and controlling the products yielded at harvest. Aesthetic, culinary, and medicinal properties of plants have also made them a focus of art, literature, and music.

Cultivated varieties, including crops grown for food, ornamental plants cultivated for aesthetic qualities, and trees harvested for timber, are listed by common name. A few entries are cross-listed when there is some variation in the common name, and the index provides additional coverage. Entries typically describe the botanical features of the plant, its history as a cultivar, the specific attributes of the plant that affect how and why it is grown and used, and its vulnerability to disease and pests. The entries vary considerably in focus: for example, “tobacco” describes the plant’s interaction with human health and the world economy, while “rosebush” focuses on the symbolism roses have had for different cultures. This is a merit for an interdisciplinary work because it allows the reader to understand the most distinctive characteristics of a given plant, which may emanate from the study of botany,