

Reference Books

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Editor

The Concise Encyclopedia of the Great Recession, 2007–2010. Ed. by Jerry M. Rosenberg. Lanham, MD.: Scarecrow, 2010. 391 p. alkaline \$60 (ISBN 978-0-8108-7660-6). E-book available, (978-0-8108-7691-0).

Rosenberg is a well known, prolific author of business dictionaries such as *Dictionary of Banking* (Wiley, 1993), *Dictionary of Business and Management* (Wiley, 1993), *Dictionary of Marketing and Advertising* (Wiley, 1995) as well as a number of books on the Middle East. In this encyclopedia he states the goal to be an “attempt to spell out the activities and events of the past two years and to be a guide to help navigate the reader through this economic downturn” (viii). One quibble about the source is that the title indicates the information will span 2007–2010 but the content is limited to 2008–2009 period. The goals go on to state “this book should help readers to better understand the reasoning, motives, hidden agendas, and power plays of those responsible for this debacle and, most important, what the government has done to try to overcome it” (viii). Unfortunately, the book does not really address the stated goals.

This encyclopedia contains an A to Z list of short entries. There is a reader’s note giving information about the dates that are used in the entries and how the cross-references work. There is also an alphabetical index. The entries range in length from a sentence to several pages though most are no longer than a paragraph. There are entries with only “see” references such as “ABA see AMERICAN BANKERS ASSOCIATION.” Some examples of the topics that contain lengthier entries are China, Citigroup, Dubai, Ford, Japan, Russia and Unemployment. Many of the entries seem to be filler and don’t advance the goal of helping the reader to better understand the recession. For example, under Portugal it states “unemployment in Portugal in the second quarter 2009 was 9.2 percent and the economy shrank by 3.7 percent in 2009.” Most of the entries concerning companies are only a line or two relating the plummeting of sales, how jobs were affected, and net losses. There is no context for entries like these to show if questionable business practices or risk taking contributed to the economic climate.

The lofty goals of the book make it seem like the reader will have a greater understanding of the big picture of the recession when in fact, this source is purely an encyclopedia with entries. There is no timeline, there is no text to try and connect the information, and there is nothing to help the reader understand how all the concepts fit together. This is a straight forward reference book of recession-related terms and concepts. The bigger question is whether these types of reference books are necessary anymore. All of the information contained in this source could be found elsewhere, although

if a user was researching the recession, it is a handy guide for quick facts and figures. This feels like a quickie book to be the first to market on the topic.—Stacey Marien, *Acquisitions Librarian, American University, Washington, D.C.*

The Early Republic and Antebellum America: An Encyclopedia of Social, Political, Cultural, and Economic History. Ed. by Christopher Bates. Armonk, N.Y.: Sharpe Reference, 2010. 4 vols. alkaline \$449.00. (ISBN: 978-0-7656-8126-3)

“A page of history is worth a volume of logic,” stated Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., in *New York Trust Co. v. Eisner* (256 U.S. 345, 349 [1921]). That sentiment alone is reason enough to have produced this thirteen hundred plus page work on the earliest chapters of the American saga. Bracketed by the end of the Revolutionary War in 1781 and the beginning of the Civil War in 1861, the scope of this set examines the intervening eight decades. As the subtitle indicates, multiple perspectives are taken into account, with alphabetical entries covering such diverse topics as health and medicine (“Epidemics,” “Food and Diet,” “Mental Illness”), religion (“Baptists,” “Religion, African American,” “Religion, Native American”), women and gender (“Clothing and Fashion,” “Gender Roles,” “Marriage and Divorce”), slavery (“Turner Rebellion,” “Underground Railroad”), even geography (“Chicago, Illinois,” “Northwest Territory”). Just as important as the what and where types of articles are the who; about 165 biographical sketches include the famous (“Adams, John,” “Stowe, Harriet Beecher”), infamous (“Burr, Aaron,” “Turner, Nat”) and the unjustly forgotten, such as Charles Brockden Brown (1771–1810), who is generally considered to be the nation’s first significant novelist.

Notable features include plenty of access points, such as a table of contents, list of sidebar articles, topic finder (list of entries by subject) and index. Volume 1 contains an introductory overview of the period as a whole, plus four other essays regarding issues of the era, such as sectional conflict and foreign affairs. Volume 4, meanwhile, contains a generous selection of primary documents of the period, ten chronologies covering broad categories (“Expansion and Exploration,” “Science and Technology”), a glossary and a well rounded bibliography.

One would be hard pressed to discover the omission of any important person, place, thing, or event in this unusually inclusive set. The main quibble is that some topics mentioned in passing as part of other entries deserve fuller discussion as separate articles. The Articles of Confederation receives one sentence under the heading of “Anti-Federalists,” for example, while depressions and financial panics, which occurred at regular intervals during this period, receive but a brief appearance in “Banks and Banking,” and a few other places.

Editor Bates is due shortly to earn his PhD in American history from the University of California at Los Angeles. He has been teaching courses in the same since 2004 at California State Polytechnic University at Pomona. Together with a three member editorial board and two hundred some academics

and independent scholars, this team has created a well written and engaging reference set aimed at senior high school and undergraduate college students, although most adults will profit in consulting this work. All articles are signed by the contributor, contain cross references, and conclude with a short list of materials for further reading.

While there is an overabundance of reference works in English detailing America's wars and the twentieth century, this is hardly the case regarding our nation's infancy. A thorough literature search reveals little else that directly compares to the title under discussion. The Scarecrow Press has an extensive line of compact single-volume compendia which outline the historical eras of various nations. Two of these titles, taken together, are roughly equivalent in scope and content. They are *The A to Z of the Early American Republic* (Richard Buel, Jr., Scarecrow Press, 2009), covering the years 1789 to 1829, and *Historical Dictionary of the Jacksonian Era and Manifest Destiny* (Terry Corps, Scarecrow Press, 2006), for the period 1829 to 1849. Certainly, these two small volumes have their merits, but the Sharpe set is to be preferred in that it represents the latest scholarship, not to mention a more comprehensive picture of the United States during these formative years. *The Early Republic* is therefore strongly recommended for purchase by all public and academic libraries.—*Michael F Bemis, Assistant Librarian, Washington Cty. Lib., Woodbury, Minnesota*

Encyclopedia of Educational Reform and Dissent. Ed. by Thomas C. Hunt, James C. Carper, Thomas J. Lasley, and C. Daniel Raisch. Los Angeles, Calif.: Sage, 2010. 2 vols. acid free \$350 (ISBN 978-1-4129-5664-2). E-book available (978-1-4129-5740-3), \$440.

Compensatory education, *Meyer v. Nebraska*, The Smith-Hughes Act of 1917, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, The Old Deluder Satan Law—these are big ideas, radical ideas at the time of their inception, and marked important and, in some cases, stunning changes to the American educational system and to daily life. These concepts, along with a myriad of other plans and policies, are woven into the fabric of American education. The stated purpose of the *Encyclopedia of Educational Reform and Dissent* is to bring together the many “strands of reforms and reformers, dissent and dissenters, together in one place,” allowing researchers, policymakers, and others one source to turn to to learn more about these changes (xxvii).

A reader's guide conveniently groups entries by broad topics, such as “Accountability,” “Biographies,” “Curriculum and Instruction,” and “Diversity” among others. The lengthy, signed entries provide in-depth information, going beyond a few paragraphs, usually running to several pages. Entries have a “see also” section, as well as a brief bibliography of further readings. The editors provide a historical time-line of American education, running from 1635 and the founding of the Boston Latin School to 2008 and the nascence of the Obama administration. A detailed index runs to nearly one hundred pages.

The entries make for some interesting reading. The Old Deluder Satan Law of 1647 came about as a result of the

Massachusetts Colony's belief that schools should concentrate on “reading, writing and religious training, so as to minimize negative influences” brought in by increasing numbers of new immigrants (675). The State and church worked together to bring about this law to “ensure that Satan would not interfere with a child's opportunity to learn about the Bible and colonial common law” (675).

The encyclopedia compares favorably with another recent encyclopedia, the *Encyclopedia of American Education* by Harlow G. Unger (Facts on File, 2007). The entries in Unger's three-volume set are decidedly shorter, although they are more numerous and include entries on more garden-variety topics than does that of Hunt, Carper, Lasley, and Raisch. But Unger's *Encyclopedia of American Education* is serving a different purpose, and the two titles complement each other. Libraries owning Unger's encyclopedia would also benefit by purchasing the *Encyclopedia of Educational Reform and Dissent*.

The *Encyclopedia of Educational Reform and Dissent* provides an excellent resource for locating the people who opposed the status quo in American educational life and the policies they proposed, supported, and brought to life. The inclusion of so many legal battles highlights the struggles these changes frequently entailed and serves as a reminder that change does not come easily. This two-volume set is a welcome addition to college and university library collections and would also be at home in high school media centers and public libraries. Highly recommended.—*Carla Wilson Buss, Curriculum Materials and Education Librarian, University of Georgia, Athens*

Encyclopedia of Emotion. By Gretchen M. Reevy. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Greenwood, 2010. 2 vols. acid free \$165 (ISBN 978-0-313-34576-0). E-book available (978-0-313-34577-7), call for pricing.

Dictionary definitions of emotion are as expansive as are the conditions being defined. Often there is a reference to heightened, strong, and involuntary states of mind and body. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED 2nd ed.) indicates that the modern meaning of an “agitation or disturbance of mind, feeling, passion; any vehement or excited mental state” was first written about in English in 1660. The meaning the OED ascribes to the field of Psychology is “a mental feeling or affection (e.g. of pleasure or pain, desire or aversion, surprise, hope or fear, etc.), as distinguished from cognitive or volitional states of consciousness.” This meaning was first used in written texts in the early nineteenth century.

The author introduces the concept of emotions by commenting on their necessity to becoming and being human and to their complexity and variation. She summarizes early Greek and Roman theories of emotion and the variations of other philosophers over time. Modern theories began with Charles Darwin and were further developed by William James, Carl Lange, and others. By the mid-twentieth century, the role of cognition entered the discussion, thereby really diverging from the OED definition. More theories continued to be developed and researched with debates about cognition and emotion becoming what might be said, somewhat