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Tammy J. Eschedor Voelker, Editor

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RUSQ considers for review reference books and professional materials of interest to reference and user services librarians. Serials and subscription titles normally are not reviewed unless a major change in purpose, scope, format, or audience has occurred. Reviews usually are three hundred to five hundred words in length. Views expressed are those of the reviewers and do not necessarily represent those of ALA. Please refer to standard directories for publishers' addresses.

Correspondence concerning these reviews should be addressed to "Reference Sources" editor, Tammy Eschedor Voelker, Humanities Librarian, Kent State University, 1125 Risman Dr., Kent OH 44242; e-mail: tvoelker@kent.edu

African Americans and Criminal Justice: An Encyclopedia. Ed. by Delores D. Jones-Brown, Beverly D. Frazier, and Marvie Brooks. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2014. 631 p. Acid free \$100 (ISBN 978-0-313-35716-9). E-book (978-0-313-35717-6), call for pricing.

This work treats an enduring sociopolitical issue that again captured public attention in summer 2014 with the police shooting of Michael Brown in Missouri (too recent to be included in the reviewed work). Despite the extensive mass media attention and scholarly output on the topic, this is the first encyclopedia to focus specifically on African Americans and the US criminal justice system. The most comparable work is Helen Taylor Greene and Shaun Gabbidon's *Encyclopedia of Race and Crime* (SAGE, 2009), but it treats all major US racial and ethnic groups. In recent years, an increasing number of book-length studies have appeared, for example, James Unnever and Shaun Gabbidon's *A Theory of African American Offending: Race, Racism, and Crime* (Routledge, 2011) and Marvin Free and Mitch Ruesink's *Race and Justice: Wrongful Convictions of African American Men* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2012). However, the work under review brings together much information from disparate sources.

Editors Jones-Brown and Frazier are both professors at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York (CUNY); Brooks is retired from the CUNY library system. They have assembled a collection of 129 signed entries. Their stated aim is to document three centuries of "the impact of the law and the justice system on people of African ancestry in the United States" (xiv) and how these have contributed to the disproportionate representation of Blacks in arrests and imprisonment at the local, state, and federal levels. Emphasis is on criminal suspects, convicts, victims, lawyers, and activists. Entries average approximately two to six pages in length, although a few run to thirteen pages or more. Most are either biographical or topical in nature and are interfiled in one alphabetical sequence. Representative biographical entries include Trayvon Martin, Rodney King, O. J. Simpson, and Al Sharpton. Sample subject entries are "racial profiling," "civil rights movement," "gangs," and "sentencing disparities." Each entry provides a list of references at the end, and there are numerous in-text references throughout. Liberal use of "see also" references to related topics is also employed. These features, along with a very detailed index, serve to somewhat mitigate the challenges in navigating a straight A-Z arrangement without broad subject or section headings. Although the essays are relatively brief, the extensive bibliographic citations fulfill the aim of bringing together a large quantity of selected sources for follow-up by users desiring more in-depth information.

Other than the formatting, the chief weakness is the lack of clear criteria for inclusion beyond the general statement cited above. For example, a two-page entry is devoted to Jesse Jackson, in which the only reference to crime is his organizing sit-ins and marches leading to mass arrests. There is also a six-page entry titled "Slavery." While it covers such topics as the fugitive slave laws and the harsh punishments endured

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by many slaves—and makes reference to the lasting legacy of slavery today—the content in this article is readily accessible elsewhere. More selectivity would have made room for lengthier, more in-depth entries pertaining to the core topic.

Despite its flaws, the encyclopedia's unique coverage and thorough bibliographic information still render it a valuable reference source. Recommended for all libraries.—*Michael L. Nelson, Collection Development Librarian, University of Wyoming Libraries, Laramie, Wyoming*

Arab-Israeli Conflict: The Essential Reference Guide. Ed. by Priscilla Roberts. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2014. 377 p. Acid free \$89 (ISBN 978-1-61069-067-6). E-book (978-1-61069-068-3) available, call for pricing.

The Arab-Israeli conflict is one of the most emotion-laden, controversial phenomena in modern history. Too often, the way that American students learn about the Arab-Israeli conflict is through propaganda spread through social media channels, faculty with political agendas, or campus rallies siding with one faction or the other. Educators have an ethical responsibility to provide foundational information about this conflict in a straightforward, neutral manner, ideally from a concise, authoritative source. Dr. Priscilla Roberts' reference guide to the Arab-Israeli conflict can easily fill this niche.

Roberts is a history professor at the University of Hong Kong specializing in twentieth-century international history, Asian-Western relations, and Anglo-American foreign policy. Her research background gives her the required context to present information about the Arab-Israeli conflict in an objective, factual manner. The list of contributors selected to collaborate on this publication include researchers of history, criminal justice, military history, international studies, and Middle Eastern studies.

This single compact volume—a condensed version of the massive four volume *Encyclopedia of the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A Political, Social, and Military History* edited by Spencer and Roberts (ABC-CLIO, 2008)—contains four sections. First, Roberts lays out a general overview of the Arab-Israeli conflict, its causes, and its consequences. Then she provides forty-nine reference entries covering the most important countries, people, events, and organizations involved in the conflict. Each entry includes an extensive further reading section of related scholarly books and journal articles. Documents referenced in the entries are provided in the "Primary Source Documents" section, which includes the online sources where readers can access the original texts in full. Last but not least, the appendix provides a special section that specifically addresses the historical dilemmas of the conflict, as well as a chronology of events, selected bibliography, and a list of contributors that include researchers from American and Canadian universities and the United States military.

At this time, no other broad yet well-researched survey of the Arab-Israeli conflict exists as a single-volume reference resource. For those libraries that do not have Spencer and Roberts' encyclopedia set, this single volume resource would

pair well with *The Encyclopedia of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (ed. Rubenberg, Lynne Reine Publishers, 2010), a three volume set, that provides other details of the conflict such as Israeli laws in the Occupied territories and Palestinian school textbooks that indoctrinate students in anti-Semitism and terrorist activity.

Arab-Israeli Conflict: The Essential Reference Guide would be appropriate for high school, academic, and large public library collections. It would also make a solid textbook for students taking introductory courses on modern Israel or Palestine.—*Rachel Wexelbaum, Associate Professor / Collection Management Librarian, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, Minnesota*

Artifacts from Ancient Rome. By James B. Tschen-Emmons. Daily Life through Artifacts. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2014. 321 p. Acid free \$100 (ISBN 978-1-61069-619-7). E-book (978-1-61069-620-3) available, call for pricing.

Greenwood has launched a new series, Daily Life through Artifacts, which acts as companion of sorts to its Daily Life Series. It is intended to teach students to use material culture with primary sources to investigate historical life and societies. *Artifacts from Ancient Rome* is the first published volume in the series. Its author, Dr. James B. Tschen-Emmons, is a former special collections librarian, now historian and archaeologist, who teaches history at North Idaho College.

The volume itself presents black and white pictures of artifacts from ancient Rome grouped in categories by topics such as communications and record keeping, entertainment, household items, and religion and funerary practices. Dr. Tschen-Emmons has chosen several representative items for each category and gives a brief introduction and description, followed by a section explaining the significance of the item in Roman society. Sidebars give excerpts from Pliny the Elder, Livy, Quintillian, and other Roman historians and commentators translated into English, putting the artifacts into contemporary context and tying material culture to primary resources. There is a brief introduction on the history of Rome and a chapter on "How to evaluate artifacts," which aids students in interpreting and analyzing artifacts and using them to explain Roman life, culture, and customs.

This volume was intended for high school and undergraduate students, and the format reflects this. Text is large and easy to read, and the vocabulary should be easily understandable for these groups. Each entry also has a further information section at the end, which should aid students in finding more in-depth information if they require it. It is a shame that the photographs of the artifacts themselves are in black and white, as color would be more visually appealing and would give readers a clearer idea of how the artifacts appear.

Teaching students how material culture can inform and shape societies, and vice-versa, is a difficult task. The volumes in these series are an interesting attempt to tie the interpretation of the artifacts of a culture to the primary sources available, helping students learn not only analysis and interpretation techniques, but also how to use the primary record. For