Libraries wanting to develop their collections in African American studies have had a few recent titles to ponder. The just released *Greenwood Encyclopedia of African American Literature* (2005, 0313329753, $495) may be on the short list for many. Edited by Hans Ostrom and J. David Macy, Jr., these five compact volumes are packed with close to 1030 articles written by some 200 scholars.

It comes as no surprise that coverage includes numerous articles on influential writers, as well as those on various literary forms, genres, and movements. However, there is also ample space given to the historical and social issues impacting African American literature ranging from Afro-centricity to the Vietnam War, affirmative action to the Middle Passage and from the Nation of Islam to the Underground Railroad. Other essays treat important newspapers like the Amsterdam News and literary journals like Callaloo while others cover influential regions and locations ranging from New Orleans to Detroit and from Haiti to Paris. While accessible to general readers and high school students, undergraduates will find the articles useful for background and facts, and will appreciate the list of added sources following each article.

The set also contains an alphabeti-cal, as well as topical list of all articles, a helpful introduction and a chronology. These features add value and give the reader a firmer sense of the contents and coverage of the *Encyclopedia*. Providing access to the page level is a thorough, easy to use general index.

Rich and detailed, the scope of this work is nonetheless broad and inclusive. The *Greenwood Encyclopedia of African American Literature* not only provides information about writers and literary movements but it successfully places them in historic and societal context. While it in no way replaces *Macmillan's Encyclopedia of African American History and Culture* (2nd edition will be released later this year), it is a worthy complement. It also serves to update, as well as broaden the scope of the critically praised *Oxford Companion to African American Literature* (1997, 0195065107).


*Routledge’s Encyclopedia of Christian Theology* (2005, 1579582508, $495) offers a serious, scholarly treatment with a decidedly European slant. The reason for that is obvious. It is an English language translation of a 2nd edition of the *Dictionnaire critique de theologie*, first published in 1998. Edited by Jean-Yves Lacoste, the over 500 articles contained in this three-volume set attempt to lend shape to the “massive amount

Howard Harris Interview

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there are some ways in which we may be able to enhance their abilities to manage and improve the quality of that data. Stay tuned.

**ATG:** Is there anything else that you would like to tell the ATG readers about yourself, your family, and/or your company? What is your greatest professional accomplishment?

**HH:** I am glad to say I have worked in the library field for a number of years. I attended library school “a few years ago” in North Carolina at UNC-Chapel Hill where I met my wife in the Master’s program. Pat, my wife, is perhaps better known in the library field than I am having worked for the American Library Association and NISO in the course of her career.

We have one daughter, Mary who is a Producer for ABC News. Just before beginning our interview I watched the first of four stories in a series she produced entitled “Made in China” for Good Morning America. I hope my greatest professional accomplishment always lies ahead of me instead of behind me. I find you can drive better looking through the windshield than in the rear view mirror.

**ATG:** Thank you very much, Howard. See you at the Charleston Conference!

**HH:** I’ll be looking to see you there Robyn. Library Dynamics will be at the Charleston Advisor Vendor Showcase event on the first day and available then and later in the meeting to talk with participants to learn about their needs and obviously to talk with people interested in our products and services. I wish everyone a good meeting in Charleston. 🏛

ABC-CLIO has published another nicely focused historical encyclopedia suitable for either circulation or reference collections. *The Constitutional Convention of 1787: A Comprehensive Encyclopedia of America’s Founding* (2005, 1581096298, $185) includes more than 400 articles providing a multidimensional look at this central event in American history. Individual essays cover the delegates and other influential people, important committees, relevant documents, proposed plans of government, and philosophical influences. Author John R. Vile writes in an accessible, straightforward fashion informed by serious scholarship referencing authoritative sources throughout most of these essays. A series of appendices provide relevant historic documents prior to, during and after the convention, a selected bibliography, and a brief list of authoritative Websites. There is also a topical table of contents, a day by day timetable of the convention and an introductory essay setting the stage for the rest of the articles.

Academic libraries in particular will find this title useful. As noted above, when its special-continued on page 54
A fun title to browse, especially this time of year, is McFarland’s 2nd edition of the Cultural Encyclopedia of Baseball (2005, 0786428071, $75). For anyone that wonders (or remembers) what Willie, Mickey and the Duke mean to American culture in the fifties, this is the title for you. Besides biographical sketches of all the great players, the noteworthy owners and the famous sportscasters, this book also contains profiles of all the major league teams, as well as selected minor league, Negro league and 19th century amateur teams. In addition, there are articles on strategy, awards, pennant races, and the various player positions. And, showing the game’s worldwide appeal, there are essays on baseball’s impact in countries like Japan, Cuba, Korea and Mexico, as well as mention of the players from those countries that have played in the major leagues. The darker side of the game is not ignored and is explored in articles on Racism, Integration, Gambling and Fixed Games, Alcoholism and Drug Use and Abuse. The book is organized alphabetically with the “see” and “see also” references appearing in the “reference to a number of collections. It complements broader, more comprehensive works like Macmillan’s Encyclopedia of the American Constitution (2000, 0028648803, $65).

SportClassic Books’ Total Baseball (2004, 189496327X, $59.95)

Grey House has recently published another handy resource directory, The Environmental Resource Handbook (2005, 159237090X, $155) is now in its 3rd edition. The editors claim they have “updated more than 70% of the listings and verified the currency of the rest.” Over 6,700 resources are included along with 102 statistical tables. (Interestingly, this is a decrease from the 8000 resources included in the 1st edition.)

The book is divided into four sections. The first covers the resources themselves, the second offers a number of statistical tables, the third provides a glossary of terms and a list of relevant abbreviations, and the fourth is a section of indexes by entry, geographical location and subject.

The resource section is the largest and contains entries on associations, award and honors, conferences, consultants, and financial resources, as well as government agencies, publications, research centers, educational programs, Websites and relevant databases, and catalogs of environmentally friendly products. The entries for each listed resource give the address, phone and fax numbers, email and Website addresses along with a brief description.

Unfortunately, problems noted in prior editions still persist. The statistical tables are not indexed, nor is there a table of contents allowing for easier access. They are however, arranged alphabetically by topic from air quality to Hazardous Waste to the UV index. With this number of entries, the subject indexing could be also more precise. For example, there are well over 350 entries listed under one subject, Environmental Engineering.

This being said, there is a wealth of data available in this directory that those interested in environmental issues will find valuable. Libraries that need information like this, particularly in short bursts, i.e., specific names of associations or agencies, individual names and email addresses, phone numbers and Webpage URLs, should consider purchase. However, those owning the 2003 edition may want to rely on the Web for updating and pass this edition up. Others needing a resource to develop mailing lists, and other type lists, might opt for the online version. Information on the online product can be found at http://www.greyhouse.com/pdf_de/erh_de.pdf.

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Book Reviews — Monographic Musings

Column Editor: Debbie Vaughn (Reference Librarian, College of Charleston) <vaughnd@cofc.edu>

Column Editor’s Note: The Charleston Conference brings together the different spheres of libraries, publishers, and vendors; for the past 25 years, the business and educational/public service ends of the library spectrum have united to discuss pressing issues from their points of view. Similarly, Jeannette Woodward’s Creating the Customer-Driven Library also brings together the almost-separate worlds of libraries and bookstores, the former with a mission to educate and serve and the latter with a mission to sell. Her book couldn’t come in a more timely fashion. During the mid-to late-1990s, several pieces in the library body of literature focused on the similarities and differences between these two venues. In the past five years or so, though, it seems that the attention has turned to exploring libraries, Amazon.com, and Google. It remains, though that people do not visit bookstores simply to buy books; comfortable reading chairs and cafes are commonplace in both chain and independent venues. Likewise, library patrons often demand customer-is-always-right treatment, and more and more libraries — without exception, the College of Charleston Addleston Library — are being outfitted with the same comfortable reading chairs and cafes. The debate over whether or not libraries should imitate bookstores has not been resolved. Woodward’s work reminds us that we need to continue to evaluate bookstores’ successes and determine the appropriate cues to take from them. Happy reading, everyone! — DV


Reviewed by Debbie Vaughn (Reference Librarian, College of Charleston) <vaughnd@cofc.edu>

When I was in library school at the University of South Carolina, my favorite professor, Dr. Charles Curran, assigned a handful of readings on the topic of libraries and “mega” bookstores. At the time, I was an employee of

<http://www.against-the-grain.com>