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From the Reference Desk

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From the Reference Desk

Reference Reviews

Column Editor: **Tom Gilson** (College of Charleston) <gilson@cofc.edu>

Monographic bibliography is a genre within reference publishing which though rarely in the spotlight, is still significant. Fortunate is the researcher, who finds a complete book devoted to a bibliography dealing with an area of interest, and if that bibliography is selective and annotated, it is like hitting the "research jackpot." A number of publishers continue to produce monographic bibliographies worthy of mention and this issue's column starts by talking about a few recently received volumes.

The two-volume bibliography *Judaica Americana: An Annotated Bibliography of Publications from 1960-1990* (1995, Carlson, 0-926019-7-9, \$150) stands as both a labor of love and a major contribution to the scholarly literature in Jewish studies. This set takes the 58 biannual bibliographies produced by librarian **Nathan Kaganoff** for the **American Jewish Historical Society** (beginning in 1962) and systematically arranges them for convenient access. Using Kaganoff's original scheme of classifying items as either general works or special studies and then subcategorizing under those two broad areas, Carlson Publishing has provided a reference which allows focusing on major areas of interest by merely looking at the table of contents. As with any good reference work, separate indexes by author and subject give access to more specific interests. This affords the curious scholar the option of browsing through major categories or pinpointing specific citations. Books, pamphlets, periodicals as well as individual articles are referenced. Each citation includes necessary publishing information and concise annotations. Full addresses of publishers are given when deemed appropriate. Unfortunately neither the ISBN or ISSN of the cited works are included. But given the overall quality of the set, this is a minor oversight.

Fantasy Literature for Children and Young Adults: An Annotated Bibliography (1995, Bowker, 0-8352-3456-8, \$50) is a source which will be of value to librarians working in the public library children's room as well as in an academic library serving students interested in children's and YA literature. **Ruth Nadelman Lynn's** 4th edition of this reference has been expanded and improved from the 1989 edition to include close to 1,500 more novels and short story collections. *Fantasy Literature for Children and Young Adults* is divided into two parts which serve different purposes. The first part offers annotated citations to 3,148 works of fantasy fiction broken down into ten broad subcategories. In addition to the annotated citations, each

entry gives a grade-level designation, the titles and dates of all sequels and a list of review sources. This listing of review sources adds value to the bibliography in

that it makes it a selective listing. Each book in the annotated bibliography is recommended in at least two of the reviews, and those deemed outstand-

ing are recommended in five or more reviews. The second part of this reference is a research guide which has chapters listing bibliographical and reference sources, critical and historical studies, educational resources and author studies. While all of these research guide chapters are helpful, the "author studies" chapter is the most extensive, listing both books and articles about major writers and their work. An index to authors and illustrators, a title index and a subject index round out the volume. It is easy to see why *Fantasy Literature for Children and Young Adults* is in its fourth edition. This is a useful and significant reference.

Another annotated bibliography in an updated edition is **John Newman's** *Vietnam War Literature: An Annotated Bibliography of Imaginative Works About Americans Fighting in Vietnam*. (1996, Scarecrow, 0-8108-3184-8, \$68). As the title indicates, this work deals with a specific subgenre of popular literature which gains its significance from the era and events it depicts. The impacts of the Vietnam War are still being felt today, and a bibliography of the novels, short stories, poetry and drama produced by the war will be of value to student and scholar, both now and in the future. For this third edition of *Vietnam War Literature*, author Newman enlisted the aid of four contributors so that each of the 1,370 works included in the bibliography could be read and examined individually. The entries contain standard bibliographic information with paperback editions included. Thorough annotations are descriptive with brief critical comments. The arrangement of the book is by genre and then within genre, by date of publication. There is no subject index, but both author and title indexes are provided. While a subject index might not be appropriate, one recommendation for any future edition would be to include some kind of thematic index. Such an index would be helpful in both using the bibliography and for understanding the literature itself. This concern aside, *Vietnam War Literature* would be useful for libraries interested in popular literature and culture as well as the Vietnam War.

Pro-Choice/Pro-Life Issues in the 1990's: An Annotated, Selected Bibliography (1996, Greenwood, 0-313-29355-4, \$59.95) is a sequel updating an earlier bibliography by compilers **Richard Fitzsimmons** and **Joan P. Diana**. Only materials which cover the issue of choice from ethical, legal, moral, social and medical perspectives have been included. Items which discuss specific concerns like contraceptive devices and how-to-methods or deal with peripheral issues like euthanasia are not covered. While the bibliography claims to list non-print formats and specific legal cases citations, these are few and far between. The vast majority of the citations are from magazine and journal articles or books. The mix is eclectic ranging from *MS to Christianity Today* to the *Harvard Women's Law Journal*. Some 1,535 citations are included, each with a short non-evaluative annotation. The arrangement is a straight alphabetical listing by author and thus the bibliography requires no author index. However it makes a strong subject index a must and this one, while satisfactory, could be broken down into more subcategories. There are a number of categories which have fifty or more citation numbers under them and might be better subdivided by more specific category. No title index is provided. Overall, this bibliography does a solid job in covering both the popular and scholarly literature in this area.

Since 1992 Scarecrow Press has published a number of titles in their *Scarecrow Area Bibliographies* series. Three of the more recent titles include *A Bibliography of the Caribbean* by **Marian Goslinga** (1996, 0-8108-3097-3, \$79), *Southern Africa Bibliog-*

continued on page 42

From the Reference Desk
from page 40

raphy by **Reuben and Naomi Musiker** (1996, 0-8108-3175-9, \$52) and *Bibliography of African Literatures* by **Peter Limb and Jean-Marie Volet** (1996, 0-8108-3144-9, \$55). Naturally the physical appearance of all three of these volumes is similar, but the content, arrangement and specific features vary.

A number of bibliographies relating to the Caribbean have been published over the years and **Marian Goslinga's** *A Bibliography of the Caribbean* is a solid addition to that list. Containing 3,600 citations, this bibliography is the "first comprehensive general bibliography on the region since the publication, in 1977, of Lambros Comitas' *Complete Caribbeana*." However, the use of the word comprehensive must be taken with a grain of salt. This bibliography lists only books; no journal articles, pamphlets, government documents, etc., are cited. It is arranged into three broad categories: Historical Materials, Reference and Source Materials and Contemporary Works. The Historical Materials section is arranged chronologically while the References and Sources section is arranged by publication type. The Contemporary Works section, which is by far the largest, is arranged by subcategory. The table of contents gives a clear idea of the volume's scope and is helpful in locating specific sections quickly. Unfortunately there is no subject index, and while the geographical index used with the table of contents can assist a researcher zero in on topics of interest, they are not a substitute for a good subject index. There are also author and title indexes. Materials in the four major languages spoken in the area (English, Spanish, Dutch and French) are included. Each citation is numbered and the citation format is straightforward and easily understood. As with the other bibliographies in this series, there are no annotations. While Goslinga's work by no means replaces Comitas' (a four-volume set), it certainly can be seen as updating and supplementing it. Anyone doing research on the Caribbean will find *A Bibliography of the Caribbean* useful.

Southern Africa is a region of growing importance on the world stage so **Reuben and Naomi Musiker's** *Southern Africa Bibliography* is a timely addition to the reference literature. Limited to books, this bibliography includes over 4,000 unannotated citations covering publications dating from 1945 through early 1995. Southern Africa, as defined in this bibliography, includes Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. There is an author index but no subject index. Because the bibliography is divided into separate sections by each country and then subdivided by specific areas of interest, the need for a subject index is somewhat mediated, but only because the table of contents is thorough and alphabetically arranged within each country. One additional feature of this bibliography are the short bibliographic essays provided for each country in the introduction. These essays refer to other bibliographies which relate to the specific country. Researchers will find the sources listed in these essays an additional help in expanding their efforts.

The *Bibliography of African Literatures* helps fill a real need. Finding listings of the actual writings of African authors, not to mention their critical evaluation, can be a challenge and a bibliography which lists over 4,600 possible sources is a plus for reference collections. The basic arrangement is literatures by language, i.e. African language literatures, Arabic literatures, English literatures, French literatures and Portuguese literatures. Within these language literature breakdowns are subdivided the regions and individual countries in which these languages predominate. Each geographic location is then further divided by subcategories like bibliographies, anthologies, general studies and specific authors. As with the other Scarecrow titles mentioned, being familiar with the table of contents and the overall arrangement of the volume is a must for the efficient use of this bibliography. Once again there is no subject index, but in this case the author index along with the table of contents and a

country index helps make up for the shortfall. The country index is helpful in providing the languages of each country. As with the other bibliographies in this series, the citations are numbered and the format understandable. In addition, the introduction provides a mention of useful periodicals and indexes as well as a "brief survey of bibliographic guides to African literatures" which would be of help to both student and scholar. Lastly, there is a separate index to female literary authors acknowledging the growing number and importance of women in African literature. With *Bibliography of African Literatures* authors Limb and Volet provide a good bibliography which conveys the scope and richness of African literature.

This column would not be complete without mention of a few subject encyclopedias. A number of items from Garland Publishing have come across my desk which are worth discussing. *Protest, Power and Change: An Encyclopedia of Nonviolent Action From ACT-UP to Women's Suffrage* edited by **Roger S. Powers and William B. Voegelé** (1997, 0-8153-0913-9, \$75) documents the use of nonviolence in social protest movements. Events, methods and strategies, leading personalities and organizations as well as overall social movements are treated. The essays are straight forward and factual, ranging from approximately one to seven pages in length and each has a bibliography appropriate to the scope and importance of the topic. There is also a listing of all the contributors along with their credentials and which essays they wrote. The arrangement is alphabetical, but to use the encyclopedia efficiently, reference to the index is necessary. The editors have also included a "Categorical Listing of Entries" to help give the reader a sense of the encyclopedia's scope. In fact, both the index and "Listing of Entries" are essential for use of the book and this is somewhat problematic. In a sense, Powers and Voegelé are trying to help create a body of knowledge that up to this point has lacked clear definition. On the whole, their topic selection and the categories they use to define them work well. But there are instances where the use of the encyclopedia is cumbersome. There are entire essays on the history of nonviolence in Australia or on politics and protest in France which give solid overviews. However to get a sense of the use of nonviolence in Great Britain there is no overview essay and the reader is referred to twenty-six different pages in the volume for information about nonviolence in Great Britain. A similar problem exists for certain subjects. There are individual articles on the Iranian Revolution and the Iraq Uprising in 1948, but none on the overall relationship of Islam to nonviolence. The reader must refer to twenty-one individual pages to get an idea of that relationship. In future editions, inclusion of more overview type essays or more specific subcategories in the index would be a help to address this concern. These suggestions aside, editors Powers and Voegelé have provided a worthwhile and helpful volume for any library with an interest in this area.

Just published this February, *Dutch Art: An Encyclopedia* (Garland, 1997, 0-8153-0065-4, \$125) covers this highly popular national art from the middle of the fifteenth century up through the 1990's. When thinking of Dutch art many people think of the individual masters like Rembrandt, Vermeer and Van Gogh. Naturally, they along with many other artists are given individual coverage by editor **Susan Muller** and her contributors. But this encyclopedia also includes essays on the various schools and movements within Dutch art, as well as the concepts and themes which have informed it. In addition, the encyclopedia contains essays which cover specific genres like painting, sculpture, architecture and photography as well as essays on cultural influences like the Protestant Reformation, Dutch rural life and Nationalism. Each entry has its own selected bibliography and interspersed within the text are two sections consisting of 152 black and white photos and one section of sixteen in color depicting individual works of art. A section entitled "A Reader's Guide and Bibliographical Note" provides guidance on how to use the encyclopedia as well as an overview

continued on page 43

From the Reference Desk
from page 42

of the major categories covered with a list of the articles contained within each category. See also references are provided both after individual articles and within the index. As editor Muller points out, the index is useful and necessary "for inquiries about individuals and topics not covered by entries of their own." This is a scholarly work which would also be of interest to the lay reader. My only reservation is the paper binding which may not stand up to heavy use. At this price a more substantial binding would be expected.

Physical anthropology combines the study of human biological variety, evolution, human genetics, paleoanthropology and primatology. The *History of Physical Anthropology: An Encyclopedia*, also just released by Garland (1997, 0-8153-0490-0, \$175) is a two-volume set edited by **Frank Spencer** which covers the historical development of this field. It is a scholarly treatment of a diverse subject which assembles contributions from 169 noted scholars worldwide. Tracing its beginnings as a discipline to Darwin's publication of the *Origin of the Species*, the history of physical anthropology is rich and varied featuring major contributions like Darwin's as well as the pseudosciences like phrenology and hoaxes like the Pildown skull. In this encyclopedia, biographical sketches are combined with articles on major concepts and theories, intellectual developments in specific countries, accounts of primate behavior studies and landmark discoveries to provide a sense of this history. This set is geared to the student and scholar and full use of the encyclopedia requires an awareness of the subject. For the lay person, some of the information will be hard to find. Searching for information on the famous "Lucy" discovery by Donald Johanson in 1974, I could find no direct reference in the subject index. It was searching for Johanson's name in the name index which finally led me to some information in an article on the Afar Triangle, the site in Ethiopia where Lucy was found. One of the real strengths of this reference are the bibliographies, which for a two-volume set are impressive citing primary, secondary, and archival sources. Photos, tables, charts and maps complementing the text are interspersed where appropriate. Overall this is a worthwhile set of obvious scholarly merit which academic libraries with interest in physical anthropology would want. However, more specific entries in the subject index would be helpful for those less familiar with the field.

Any librarian who has worked a business reference desk will welcome Standard and Poor's *Ticker Symbol Book* (McGraw-Hill, 1997, 0-07-052409-2, \$8.95). Investors who want to follow their stocks need to know what the ticker symbols are and this book provides them for the over 10,000 stocks traded on the New York, American and NASDAQ exchanges as well as stocks traded on a smattering of foreign exchanges. It is simple and straightforward to use. There are two sections of the book and both are arranged alphabetically. The first section is arranged by ticker symbol while the second section is arranged by company name. The ticker symbol, company name, and the exchange the stock is traded on are listed for each entry. Convenient and useful are words to describe this reference.

On a final note, there are a couple of one-volume items that those interested in American history might consider. **John A. Garraty** and **Jerome L. Sternstein** have produced a second edition of their *Encyclopedia of American Biography* for HarperCollins. (1996, 0-06-270017-0, \$50) Over one thousand significant Americans are highlighted with some of the sketches being rewritten and ninety-three new people being added since the 1974 edition. As in the first edition, each entry in this new edition consists of two parts, the first which gives the facts of the person's life and the second which discusses his or her importance. The seventh edition of the *Encyclopedia of American History* (HarperCollins, 1996, 0-06-270055-3, \$50) updates the

continued on page 46

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Book Reviews
from page 45

them. Laws, such as the need for seatbelts in the back seat, are ignored and often rescinded when a belligerent public refuses to comply.

In a summary such as this one, it may appear that *An Italian Education* is facile — or even condescending — in its introduction to Italian ways, but if Parks is ironic and honest, he is never glib in his comparisons and descriptions. He leads the reader as he was lead, layer by layer, through the various elements of the Italian psyche — religion, motherhood, and family duty — so that we as readers slowly come to see what he came to see: that every day, in so many variant ways, (a trip to the store, the emphasis on food at school, the importance of appearance in the moment rather than long-term follow-through, the importance of attending catechism but not on following the rules oneself) Italian children are being taught to be Italian. Parks laughs at the contradictions but rejoices in the lovable richness of the culture around him.

Parks does not make much, directly, of his own feelings upon seeing his children become different from himself in their values and approach to life. But at many points the clash of his own background and the one in which his children are being reared seems to separate him from his children, and he accepts this with apparent good cheer. (Indeed, even though Parks' wry observations an unsentimental vision may lead a reader to think he doesn't like Italy, he clearly has developed a complex fondness

for his adopted home and feels it is the most civilized place in which to raise children.) On one occasion, his dour British soul leads him to expect his son to fail on his first fishing expedition, but, against all odds, his son catches a bucketful of fish. Parks seems to feel resignation but also a bit of pride that his son will now, inevitably, become another absurdly optimistic Italian, who know everything will come to him, as it should.

I picked up this book because it was sold as something to be enjoyed by fans of **Peter Mayle**, and out of interest in the topic of how a parent feels when his own children are raised in another culture, with the inevitable distancing this must create. I ended it with immense respect for Parks as a cultural observer, a funny and yet astute writer, as a careful thinker, and an open-minded parent who can accept difference with pride good humor. Although I cannot vouch for the accuracy of his impressions of Italy, never having been there or having studied the culture, I cannot imagine any reader who is in any way a cultural observer not enjoying this book; one leaves it with a new understanding and affection for Italy, and perhaps most importantly with a greater appreciation for the social forces that shape us, and with a keener eye for those subtle influences in our own society, which stamp us, for better and for worse, as Americans. In the end, I was enchanted by Parks' Italy, but very happy to live where I do. What more can one ask from a travel book than to acquire new appreciation for another culture, new knowledge and insights, long with renewed appreciation that "there's no place like home"? 🌿

From the Reference Desk
from page 43

last edition published in 1982. The major portion of this work is devoted to two chronologies, a basic chronology by year and a topical chronology by broad subject category. There is also a section of 450 brief biographical sketches and a section on the

structure of the federal government, including listings of the presidents and their cabinet members, a review of party strength in Congress since 1789 as well as a list of all the Supreme Court justices. Of the two of these books, the *Encyclopedia of American History* seems the more extensively updated, but given the dates of the prior editions, libraries might want to consider them both if the budget permits. 🌿

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