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From the Reference Desk-Reviews of Reference Titles

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From the Reference Desk

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Grove has figured out another way to make money from their landmark **Dictionary of Art**. First, they published the 34-volume print encyclopedia in 1996 and then released a Web version in early 1999. Now, Grove has begun repackaging and updating special topic "spin-off volumes" into what they are calling the **Grove Library of World Art**. The Library offers much of the same scholarly content available in the **Dictionary of Art** in "more accessible and affordable one- to three-volume encyclopedias." Plans call for these encyclopedias to be organized in five individual series including one for African, Ancient, Asian, and European art, as well as a series for the arts of the Americas.

The Encyclopedia of American Art before 1914 (1999, 1884446035; \$250) is the first title in the projected 4 volume series devoted to the arts of the Americas. Readers familiar with the **Dictionary of Art** will recognize the page layout and print format immediately. According to the folks at Grove, although the articles here are taken from the Dictionary, "every one of them was sent back to the original contributor for review and updating." In cases where the original author was unavailable a member of Grove's editorial staff reviewed the article. But, a quick look at articles on Louis Sullivan, Thomas Cole, the Hudson River School, Luminism, John Trumbull and the Federal Style shows the text is identical to that in the Dictionary. Articles on broader topics like Impressionism and Industrial Design have been edited to fit within the scope of the present volume. However, there are 30 new articles devoted to 19th and early 20th century California artists not covered in the original Dictionary. Also many of the bibliographies have been updated with 1-2 recent citations and some of the articles have added an occasional new illustration. The most striking departure from the Dictionary is

the 100 color il-

lustrations in the *Encyclopedia of American Art before 1914*. Placed together in the center of the volume, the layout of the color illustrations forms a mini-timeline of the development of architecture, furniture, painting, etc. Grove's plans call for each of the volumes in the Library of World Art to have a similar number of color plates. The inclusion of color plates is a major change from the Dictionary. The entire 34 volumes contain a total of only 400 color plates among its 15,000 illustrations. Libraries that do not already own the **Dictionary of Art** may want to purchase these volumes as they are published. They will give top-notch scholarly coverage of the most popular subject areas covered in the Dictionary, and they are individually indexed so they will stand alone as individual references. In fact, as of this writing, there are no plans for a comprehensive index of the *Library of World Art*. But, the actual updating, at least in this volume, is minimal, and while the added color illustrations are a significant feature, they hardly call for the purchase of these new volumes if a library already owns the Dictionary. At the current pricing, those libraries would be better served by considering a subscription to the online version of the Dictionary, despite its pitfalls. (For more information on the online version see my reviews in the September 1999 issue of *ATG*, p. 50, and the October 1999 issue of the *Charleston Advisor*, p. 29.)

Although it lacks the traditional alphabetical arrangement, Academic Press' *Encyclopedia of Volcanoes* (2000, 012643140X; \$99.95) is thorough, comprehensive and fully deserving of its title. It is divided into nine thematic sections that cover topics like the origin and transport of magma, volcanic interactions and hazards, effusive and explosive volcanism, as well as eruptions and eruption response and mitigation. Interestingly, the Encyclopedia is not confined to earthly volcanoes. There is a section that explores extraterrestrial volcanism on Venus, Mars, Io, and the Moon. Finally, while the vast majority of the Encyclopedia is devoted to the science of volcanoes, there is an added feature, an entire section that covers the economic benefits and cultural aspects of volcanism.

Editor-in-Chief **Haraldur Sigurdsson** has assembled an international cast of contributors to write

the 82 articles in this book. The articles are scholarly and will be of most interest to the student and scientific researcher. However, each article has its own glossary that helps make the book more useful to the general reader as well as a list of further readings, some more extensive than others. There are also more than 800 graphs, charts, tables and illustrations that complement the nearly 1400 pages of text. Pulling the book together is a comprehensive index and the helpful use of cross-references.

The Encyclopedia of Volcanoes is unique in its extensive coverage of this fascinating subject. There is a lot of useful scientific information here for the money. Academic libraries that support Geology and other earth science programs will find it a necessary addition. There is also an associated Website at <http://www.academicpress.com/volcano/>.

The first two volumes of ABC-CLIO's planned 5-volume set, *Encyclopedia of Archaeology* (1999, 1576071995; \$150) have been released. True to their subtitle, the *Great Archaeologists*, these two volumes provide biographical sketches of 58 archaeologists who made "fundamental contributions" that had "the power to transform our ideas about ourselves." From the "first reliable archaeologist" **William Stukeley** to the treasure hunting **Heinrich Schliemann** to the recently retired **Roger Curtis Green**, these volumes offer a historic survey of archaeological accomplishment. The entries are arranged chronologically heightening this sense of historical development. However, there is also an alphabetical list of entries with relevant page numbers as well as a useful index that helps the reader focus on specific issues and concerns. The treatment here is serious, but the essays are clearly written and accessible to the lay reader. Each biography has a helpful list of references to both the writings by the subject of the biographical sketch as well as secondary sources about their contributions. There are also illustrations and photos throughout the set as well as a brief glossary.

The main criticism of these two volumes is one that editor **Tim Murray** anticipates. Murray readily admits that given the history and nature of the discipline "we were likely to produce a volume with a lot of dead white males." And in fact, that is what they have done. Perhaps the inclusion of

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Gertrude Bell, Margaret Murray and Gertrude Caton Thompson may have helped. Editor Murray points to the limitations of time and space as to why they were not included. But, he is obviously sensitive to this issue, as he is to the past "colonialist" bias of many in the field. Murray ends volume two with an essay that confronts these, and other issues that affect the "art of Archaeological Biography." It is worth reading.

The *Encyclopedia of Archaeology: the Great Archaeologists* is a promising start to this projected set, as well as, a reference that will stand on its own. The remaining three volumes will cover history and specific discoveries, and according to Amazon.com will be released in September 2000. Academic libraries supporting archaeology curriculums, and large public libraries where there is interest, will want to give these first two volumes serious consideration.

ABC-CLIO has also published two more titles in their *Biographical Companions* series: *Helen Rappaport's Joseph Stalin: A Biographical Companion* (1999, 1576070840; \$55) and David Nicholls'

Napoleon: A Biographical Companion (1999, 0874369576; \$55). While there are numerous books about both of these men, an easy to use reference companion devoted to each is a worthwhile consideration. Both books follow a similar format with the entries arranged alphabetically and both have a chronology, a bibliography and an index. Nicholls' *Napoleon* also has an introductory essay that serves as a biographical sketch as well as a brief section of documents related to Napoleon. Although Rappaport's *Joseph Stalin* does not have these features, it has a glossary of terms as an added bonus.

Napoleon: A Biographical Companion tries to "provide the reader with an understanding of Napoleon as a politician, ruler, soldier, revolutionary administrator, dynast and myth." Browsing through the book finds entries on movements like Jacobinism, theories like Counter-Revolution, issues like Propaganda and institutions like the Bank of France. But the focus remains on Napoleon and his relationship to and impact on each of them. Therefore the reader can see Napoleon from a variety of perspectives. For example, while he was a great military genius, the entry on Naval Warfare makes obvious Napoleon's lack of understanding of its difficulties, and the article on Pope Pius VII points out both Napoleon's dominance of the Papacy and

Pius' attempts to fight it.

Arguably, in dealing with Stalin, Helen Rappaport's job was more difficult.

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the already simmering revisionist approach in Stalinist studies make Stalin more of a moving target. Rappaport's emphasis is as much on Stalinism as it is on Stalin the man. Of course the facts of his life, and the events and people that helped shape it, are given their just due. As you would expect, there are articles on Stalin's relationship with people like Lenin, Trotsky and Beria as well as those on the Yalta Conference and the Great Patriotic War (the Soviet name for World War II). But, there are also articles that deal with things like Family Life, Art and Architecture, Cinema, Religion, Science, Sport and the Place of Women.

Both books are factual and well written. However, the entries in *Napoleon* are shorter and more to the point, while the articles on Stalin are longer and seemingly cover broader topics. But, these books fit their subjects well. Fascinating lives make fascinating reading and both these volumes are not only useful as references, but they offer interesting insights. Their differences have as much to do with the nature of the men they treat, as they do with the differing styles of the two authors. Both will be

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of use in libraries where there is demand. And, as with the other books in this series, larger academic and public libraries may want these books in circulation. (See the February issue of *ATG* v.11#1, p. 38, 41, for the titles and reviews of those books)

Reference librarians in all types of libraries, but especially public and high school, will welcome the Gale Groups' *African American Firsts in Science and Technology* (1999, 0787638765; \$60). This is a handy book of "first facts" that highlights the scientific achievements of African Americans. Not only is it helpful in answering specific questions, but it has been arranged chronologically within eight scientific areas giving a sense of the history of that achievement. The subject areas treated include allied health, dentistry and nursing, life sciences, medicine, math and engineering, physical sciences and transportation. Nearly 1200 scientific achievements are documented with 25% attributed to African American women. Each entry contains the facts of the contribution, some brief biographical information and one or two sources of additional information. There are also three helpful indexes, one by year, one by occupation and a general index. This is a nicely researched and convenient reference that will be used heavily for school assignments and at time like Black History Month. A necessary addition for many public and school libraries, *African American Firsts in Science and Technology* will also find a place in some academic libraries where there is interest.

As with most of the historical dictionaries published by Scarecrow, the *Historical Dictionary of the Holocaust* (1999, 0810836114; \$55) could just as easily be placed in the circulating collection. This is especially true in a case like this given the prior existence of a more comprehensive reference. (The four-volume *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* edited by Israel Gutman comes to mind.) However, author **Jack R. Fischel** does a commendable job in writing a compact and useful book that serves to update and throw added light on a subject of immense importance. He starts with a chronology that records events stretching from the formation of the League of Antisemitism in 1879 through the Holocaust itself and on to the present day questions regarding the actions of the Catholic Church. Fischel then offers an introductory essay that outlines the history of the Holocaust. The dictionary entries follow, and are brief and straightforward, usually less

than a page. However, there are exceptions like the entries on individual countries and their roles, some of the major players and topics like Christianity and Swiss Banks. Unfortunately there is no index but articles are cross-referenced by the use of bold type in the text. Finally, Fischel includes a 45-page bibliography divided into 32 topic areas.

While intended for the non-specialist the *Historical Dictionary of the Holocaust* will also serve as a quick reference for scholars and students. Public, high school and undergraduate libraries should consider its purchase.

McFarland has updated Donald Glut's well-received *Dinosaurs: the Encyclopedia* (1997, 0899509177, \$145). Every bit as scholarly as the original, *Dinosaurs: the Encyclopedia, Supplement 1* (2000, 0786405910, \$60) updates the comprehensive coverage available in the parent volume. In fact, according to Glut, the new, revised and sometime contradictory information that appears in the supplement supplants the information that was previously published in the *Encyclopedia*. Obviously readers will want to use them in tandem to obtain the most reliable information. Like the original, most of the supplement consists of an alphabetical compilation of dinosaurian genera ranging from the *Abelisaurus* to the *Zuniceratops*. There is also a section on Dinosaurian systematics or the classification and naming of dinosaurs as well as a useful introduction in which Glut discusses the newest discoveries and unresolved controversies. The information in this book is informed by recent scholarship as evidenced by the extensive bibliography of the papers, articles and monographs that are referred to in the text. There is also generous use of black and white photos and illustrations that complement the text.

Supplement 1 is the first in a planned series of irregular supplements and it continues author Donald Glut's commitment to providing a "handy reference tool for professional paleontologists and students while also offering less technical information of interest to the amateur." Regarding the latter, it will have to be the informed amateur. The text is punctuated by parenthetical citations and has a tendency to read like a scientific paper. While there is a glossary of terms at the back of the book that assists

the more casual reader, serious students and scholars will benefit most from this book. Libraries that already own the original *Encyclopedia* will definitely want a copy of the supplement. Other libraries needing a comprehensive and scholarly treatment of the world of dinosaurs should seriously consider both volumes.

Sara Knapp has just updated and expanded her *Contemporary Thesaurus of Search Terms and Synonyms: A Guide for Natural Language Computer Searching*. (2000, 157356107X; \$125). Published by Oryx Press, the second edition of this handy and useful search tool includes terms related to business and humanities, as well as updating the social science coverage of the first *Contemporary Thesaurus*, published in 1993. The new edition contains "more than 20,000 entries for over 8,500 concepts representing thousands of words and phrases." As the subtitle indicates, this book is not another "controlled vocabulary" thesaurus. It offers suggested terms for the "free text" searching or "natural language" searching that researchers use when keyword searching in databases or when using their favorite Web search engine. But not only does it provide the searcher specific terms--additional features of the *Thesaurus*, aside from the suggested synonyms, are the "choose from" or "consider also" notes that suggests other possible combinations of phrases or words, as well as "see also" references to related terms within the *Thesaurus*.

However, for the librarian or expert searcher, the *Contemporary Thesaurus of Search Terms and Synonyms* provides another plus. While it is not a substitute for existing controlled vocabulary thesauri, it can be a highly useful complement to them. Used in combination with controlled vocabulary searching, "natural language" or "free text" searching is a powerful method of narrowing and focusing on specific information. Knapp's *Thesaurus* gives the searcher an excellent tool to find contemporary terms for the "natural language" part of that equation. Given its usefulness, there is little doubt that the *Contemporary Thesaurus of Search Terms and Synonyms* will find its way on to the "ready reference" shelves of academic and public libraries, as well as, the personal offices of librarians and other information professionals.