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From the Reference Desk

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From the Reference Desk

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Medical information is always in demand but for years reference librarians have been hamstrung by the lack of sources that take an encyclopedic approach. While there is no shortage of medical dictionaries and one volume medical guides, aside from Salem Press' recently revised *Magill's Medical Guide* (1998, 0893569372; \$310), multi-volume sets have been sorely lacking.

Happily, this shortcoming has been addressed by the newly published *Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine* (1998, 0787618683; \$499). Within its five volumes, the *Encyclopedia* discusses over 900 diseases and conditions, as well as covering a wide variety of treatments, procedures, and common drugs. An added strength is the attention given alternative medicine. The editors include articles on acupuncture, guided imagery and massage, as well as articles on antidepressants, genetic testing and mastectomy. In fact, many of the articles dealing with specific conditions discuss those alternative therapies deemed helpful. Regarding content structure, the articles adhere to two standard formats: one for disorders/conditions and the other for tests/treatments. The entries for disorders/conditions include a list including causes, diagnosis, recommended treatments, possible prevention and prognosis. The tests/treatments articles explain the purpose of the procedure, precautions, preparation, aftercare, risks and results. All articles offer a definition and description as well as a list of key terms related to the topic and a brief section on related resources (which can include books, periodicals, organizations and Web pages). "See also" references are provided by **boldface** within the text of each article. Jargon free and written in a style intended for the layperson, the articles are factual and to the point. Tables, diagrams and photos are placed throughout each volume and support the text. A well-developed and integrated index unites the set. It is obvious that a great deal of care and thought has gone into the planning and structure of this encyclopedia. Patrons in need of consumer health information, as well as students wanting background for their research, will derive equal benefit from its use. The *Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine* provides a tremendous amount of valu-

able information, well organized and easily accessible. Both public and academic reference collections will be enhanced by having it on their shelves.

The Gale Group has also published another in their curriculum-centered "for student" references. Edited by Donna Craft, *Company Profiles for Students* (1999, 0787629367; \$150) features 280 major companies, highlighting their history, finances, corporate strategy, product lines, international status and analyst's opinions. It is aimed at high school students but first year undergraduates will also find it of value. Corporate coverage includes both old standbys like 3M and AT&T as well as the more trendy like MTV Networks and the Gucci Group. Each entry also includes a chronology of key dates and a "Fast Facts" section which lists things like chief officers, number of employees and main competitors. An added strength is the bibliography of relevant sources which completes each entry and which both librarians and students will appreciate. Like the other "for students" sets, the layout is attractive. Individual sections of information are organized into manageable bursts, rather than long imposing columns of print. The appendices include a useful series of industry profiles, a glossary, a directory of specialized business Web sites and a master index. Gale has another winner here. It is nicely geared to its audience in terms of both content and production. *Company Profiles for Students* should not only provide basic information for class assignments, but stimulate further interest among more serious students. High school as well as public libraries will find it of most interest, but some college libraries looking for more accessible company information may want to add it to their shelves.

Walt Whitman is arguably America's greatest poet and as such is deserving of a single volume encyclopedia devoted to his life and work. Now he has one. Garland's recently published *Walt Whitman: An Encyclopedia* (1998, 0815318766; \$115) covers his career, literary production and his far-reaching influence on American letters. Alphabetically arranged, this encyclopedia offers comment

on major and minor works including both Whitman's poetry and prose. Readers will not be surprised that Whitman's masterpiece "Leaves of Grass" gets such heavy play—all significant editions are discussed. But there is also coverage of his less appreciated works like the short story "The Boy Lover" as well as failures like the novel "Franklin Evans." In addition, there are articles on major themes like death, immortality, democracy, comradeship and sex and sexuality. There are also entries on the places, events and people which influenced Whitman and his writing. Articles on Brooklyn and Washington D.C. stand along side those on the Civil War, **Ralph Waldo Emerson** and **Anne Gilchrist**. Special attention is also given Whitman's family with individual articles on family members and a genealogy placed at the end of the text. The index is detailed and leads the reader easily to specific information. Editors J.R. LeMaster and Donald D. Kummings, along with their contributors, are to be commended for this scholarly and thoughtful treatment. The range and depth of coverage in *Walt Whitman: An Encyclopedia* is impressive and does ample justice to its topic. Public and academic libraries with interest in American literature will want it in their collections.

Fitzroy Dearborn's list of timely and useful reference books continues to impress. The brand new *International Encyclopedia of the Stock Market* (1999, 1884964354, \$270) and the recent *History of the Mass Media in the United States* (1998, 1579580122; \$125) will only contribute to this growing reputation. Edited by Margaret A. Blanchard, the *History of the Mass Media in the United States* provides the reader with a single volume reference which traces the historical development of mass media from the colonial broadside to the Internet. In doing so, both the informational and entertainment functions of the media are discussed. Hence there are articles on newsmagazines and investigative reporting, as well as the golden age of radio and prime time television. However, the major contribution here is the sense that one gets of the media's impact on American culture. Some of the most fascinating articles discuss the media and its impacts on broad issues like religion, the military, politics, race, the sexual revolution and civil rights. In addition, there is discussion of the media's role in covering

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individual wars ranging from the French and Indian War to Vietnam, as well as specific events like the Army-McCarthy hearings, the Kennedy assassination and the Watergate scandal. Naturally, there are also articles on important people in the history of mass media development including publishers like **Horace Greeley** and **Henry Luce**, news correspondents like **Pauline Frederick** and **Walter Cronkite**, media moguls like **Ted Turner** and **Rupert Murdoch** and journalists like **Walter Lippman** and **I. F. Stone**. Useful features include both an alphabetical and topical list of entries, individual bibliographies for each entry and a general bibliography of media history studies. A list of contributors with their credentials and a helpful subject index end the volume. One suggestion — in any future edition, a chronology might be included. Chronologies can be particularly helpful in giving unity to a history of such disparate elements. All in all, the *History of the Mass Media in the United States* is a thoughtful and well-constructed treatment of an important and broad-ranging topic. It will be a welcome addition to both public and academic library reference collections.

Ten years ago the publication of an encyclopedia devoted to the world's stock markets may have drawn a collective yawn, but not today. With the Dow topping the 10,000 mark and millions of dollars pouring into mutual funds each month, American stock markets have an obvious fascination. However, the growing global interdependence of today's economies has also increased the interest in worldwide investment. The *International Encyclopedia of the Stock Market* capitalizes on this interest. It is a two-volume set which provides definitions and explanations for 2,000 terms related to the world's stock markets. Arranged alphabetically, the articles cover a diverse range of topics. The major world markets are covered in detailed articles on individual countries which name the various stock exchanges and financial institutions as well as the methods of trading, listing requirements, investor taxation and purchase limitations. Discussions of specific investment vehicles are included, as are those related to particularly influential brokerage houses and banks. In addition, there are articles that cover historic financiers like the **Rothchilds** and **J.P. Morgan**, current investment giants like **Warren Buffett** and **George Soros**, and modern corporate raiders like **T. Boone Pickens** and **Carl Icahn**. However, there is one disappointment regarding content. While I could find individual articles on American market indexes like the Dow and Standard and Poor's, information about the foreign indexes was not so readily available.

There are no individual entries for indexes like Japan's Nikkei or Germany's DAX (names familiar to most viewers of CNN). In fact, they are merely listed in the articles on their respective countries. Entries are arranged alphabetically and contain "see also" references to related articles. There are no individual bibliographies following entries, which is a drawback. However, there is an annotated bibliography of other major reference sources at the back of the book. The appendices also include a directory of finance, trade and banking organizations and an essay on emerging stock markets. One other qualm is with the index. It is cumbersome with broad topics broken into extensive subcategories, and in the above search for information on the Nikkei and the DAX, the index was of little help. However, in spite of these concerns, the *International Encyclopedia of the Stock Market* is a valuable reference. With its generally rich content and international scope, it can act as a primer for the novice, as well as a handy resource for the seasoned investor. Suitable for both academic and public libraries, this encyclopedia will be a worthy addition to business reference collections.

McFarland has published a serious study of a very trendy subject. *Angels: An Indexed and Partially Annotated Bibliography of over 4300 Scholarly Books and Articles since the 7th Century* (1999, 0786405554; \$95) is exactly what its title claims it to be. Author George G. Marshall provides access to a side of this topic lost in the recent surge of popular interest. Entries range from those on theological works and scriptural studies to those on artistic, psychological and sociological implications. Literary allusions in writings of **Milton**, **Dante**, **Blake** and **C.S. Lewis** are also included among the citations. The arrangement is by author with each citation being assigned a specific entry number. In many cases besides the bibliographic information the author has included Library of Congress call numbers followed by the name of a university which has the work. Each entry ends with a list of keywords, many assigned by the author himself but the majority conforming to library subject authority. These lists of keywords form the basis of the subject index which rounds out the bibliography and serves double duty by providing the reader with terms to check in the index for related entries. Unfortunately less than 20% of the entries are annotated and the index uses the maddening practice of listing broad categories like Christianity followed by a column full of entry numbers. That being said, with the use of the keywords mentioned above, there is still a fair amount of subject specificity in the index. I suspect that there will be little call for this book in all but the largest public libraries. However, academic libraries,

especially those supporting religious studies programs, should consider its purchase. Serious students and scholars will find it a useful tool.

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ATG: *The typical recollection people have, also, has to do with technology. That too many profit dollars were being spent on developing new technology. Do you think that's also the case?*

DC: I really do not know. My perception would be that, more to the point, were the other factors. Of course I was a very strong supporter of the technology and I was an advocate, pretty early on, for the development of improved catalog card production systems. In particular, I supported the development of the authority control programs, which allowed us to manage the subject headings for our computer-output microfiche, the COM catalog we used in support of opening-day collections. That specific development was funded by the **University of Texas system**. There were three campuses that had opening-day collection contracts with Abel, including the **University of Texas at Permian Basin**, the **University of Texas at San Antonio**, and the **University of Texas at Dallas**. And the terms of the contract were such that each of those campuses was designed to open with approximately one hundred thousand volumes. We persuaded them to divert \$165,000 to fund the development of computer programs to enable the process of normalizing, or authenticating, LC subject headings. **Rich Meyer**, who is the current director at **Trinity University**, San Antonio, was then head of tech services at Dallas, and he was able to take the resulting software, load it on an IBM computer, and run it for his catalog at Dallas and at least one of the other campuses for awhile.

But consider that this was the technology that enabled Abel to produce better library catalogs on microfilm. And the software became the root, the base software, for **Blackwell's** very successful authority control normalization programs. That software has run, with enhancements, until this last year when it was sold to **OCLC**. So was this a foolish investment or not? Who knows? Texas paid a considerable part of this development. It gave Abel tremendous leverage and reputation that, in a certain way, it never was able to use, but **Blackwell's** saw fit to get profit from it. The approval plan model was successful, and it was based on technology. The original production was typewritten, to be followed by automated selectric models, then by **Flexowriter** paper tape, then **Mohawk** data collection units and ever-improving computers. Abel was the first to deploy the technology. It is commonly believed in business that to be first does not always insure success.

Abel was first to produce catalog cards, which were sent for the approval books. Later, when the computer printed the cards, we had a matching number between the invoice number on an approval book and on the catalog card

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