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From the Reference Desk

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From the Reference Desk

by **Tom Gilson** (Head, Reference Services, Robert Scott Small Library, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC 29424; Phone: 843-953-8014; Fax: 843-953-8019) <gilson@cofc.edu>

Anyone interested in architecture will welcome a recent set published by **Fitzroy Dearborn**. Edited by **R. Stephen Sennott**, the *Encyclopedia of 20th Century Architecture* (2004, 1579582435, \$495) offers readers 700 articles by 300 authors in a well-designed 3 volumes. Scholarly, but written with the lay reader in mind, this set covers a diverse range of topics. As you would expect, there are numerous articles on individual architects from the famous like **Frank Lloyd Wright**, **Le Corbusier** and **Walter Gropius** to the less familiar like **Rifat Chadirji** and **Minoru Yamasaki**. There are also articles on schools and movements from the avant-garde Archigram group to the turn of the century, Vienna Secession. Added to these are articles on the architecture of specific cities, countries and regions.

The *Encyclopedia* also provides a broader view by discussing the physical and cultural environment within which architecture functions. Coverage extends to related fields like industrial design, transportation planning, zoning, and greenbelts, as well as to discussions of movements like cubism, modernism and the impacts of feminist theory. There are also essays on building types ranging from bus terminals to embassies to shopping centers. This handsome set is illustrated with black and white photos and some color plates. Added features include a general and a thematic index of entries, generous use of "see also" references and useful bibliographies.

Editor **R. Stephen Sennott** and his contributors provide a unique look at 20th century architecture. They offer the reader comprehensiveness without being overpowering. The *Encyclopedia of 20th Century Architecture* successfully reflects the complex interplay of planning needs, evolving technologies, historic tradition and contemporary aesthetics. Academic and public libraries will be well served by finding a place for it on their reference shelves.

Both literature students and **Brontë** scholars will be delighted to find the *Oxford Companion to the Brontë's* (2004,



0198662181, \$95) in their library reference collection. The obvious affection authors **Christine Alexander** and **Margaret Smith** have for their subject shines throughout this work. Over 2000 cross-referenced entries discuss the life, times and literary output of the **Brontë's**. While **Charlotte** and **Emily Brontë** are the best known of the **Brontë** family, thorough coverage extends to sister **Anne**, brother **Branwell** and father **Revd Patrick**. Individual entries cover various facets of their lives from their travels to the various homes they lived in and from their education and employment to their friends and acquaintances. Their poetry and novels, as well as the individual characters in their works are discussed, as are the literary climate and historical context in which they wrote. And, of course, there are articles on their literary reputation and critical reception. The added features are impressive. Arrangement is alphabetical but there is a detailed classified contents list and a chronology linking the lives of the **Brontë's** with literary, artistic and historic events. There is also a section on the dialect and obsolete words found in their writings and a selected bibliography. More substantial articles also have a short list of further readings.

Reasonably priced and full of careful scholarship about the **Brontë's**, and analysis of their works, the *Oxford Companion to the Brontë's* will have broad appeal. Academic and public libraries that are serious about literature will find a home for this title in either reference or circulating collections. In fact, it should find its way on to a number of personal shelves as well.

Another **Fitzroy Dearborn** title worthy of strong consideration is the *Encyclopedia of Sculpture* (2004, 1579582486, \$375) edited by **Antonia Bostrom**. This distinctive 3-volume set focuses on a subject that, up until now, lacked a comprehensive encyclopedia. Consisting of 763 entries written by more than 300 scholars, this encyclopedia fills an obvious need and should prove useful to art and sculpture students, faculty and the lay reader. Just as the *Encyclopedia of 20th Century Architecture*, this set features a general and thematic index, selected bibliographies and see also references linking related entries. The coverage is thorough and diverse ranging from biographies to individual works and monuments, and from materials, forms, and techniques to styles and periods. There are also articles on the sculpture of countries and regions throughout the world. There are multiple, chronologically divided entries for China, Egypt, India, the Near East, and Africa, as well as, single entries for places like Cambodia, Melanesia, Japan, Korea, Polynesia, Mesoamerica and Thailand.

Containing all of the elements expected of a scholarly reference work, the

Encyclopedia of Sculpture should prove popular in academic libraries. And given that it is written and presented in a style that will appeal to the informed reader, larger public libraries will find it equally attractive.

Greenwood had updated its well-regarded *Greenwood Encyclopedia of African American Civil Rights* (2003, 031332171X, \$175). First published in 1992, this-2 volume set has been expanded to include 60 new essays (15 were dropped) and covers new developments through September of 2003. There are more than 800 concise articles covering biographies, government agencies, private organizations, public laws, relevant court cases and significant events ranging from race riots to sit-ins. However, in the interest of space, articles on people and organizations that opposed the civil rights movement are not included. The articles are brief and to the point, but contain all the essential information. Entries are arranged alphabetically and there is a general index. And while there is no thematic index, related articles are referenced in bold type within the text of each entry. Enhancing the value of the *Encyclopedia* are added features including a very thorough chronology, as well as list of 120 primary documents from **Frederick Douglass** on the Future of the Negro People in the United States (1862) to **Bill Clinton's** Vision for Bridging the Racial Divide (2001).

Greenwood Encyclopedia of African American Civil Rights is a nicely produced, handy set. Focused on the African American experience, it will add depth to collections that already own broader titles like **Macmillan's Civil Rights in the United States** (2000, 0-02-864765-3, \$260) and **M.E. Sharpe's Encyclopedia of Civil Rights in the United States**. (1998, 0-7656-8000-9, \$299)

Until recently the contributions of black Americans to our military history has been neglected or ignored. Fortunately that has begun to change as evidenced by publications like **ABC-CLIO's African Americans at War: An Encyclopedia** (2004, 1576077462, \$185). Written by **Jonathan D. Sutherland**, these 2 volumes recount the role African Americans have played from pre-revolutionary battles with Native Americans and French Armies to 20th century combat in the deserts of the Middle East. The more than 250 articles in this encyclopedia offer ample evidence of the courage, valor and patriotism of African Americans. In addition to the contributions of specific units like the **Tuskegee Airmen**, individual sacrifices and accomplishments are featured from death of **Crispus Attucks** at the **Boston Massacre** to rise of **Colin Powell** to be the Chairman of the Joints Chiefs of Staff. At the same time, specific entries like those on the **Fort Pillow Massacre** and the **Brownsville Incident**, examine the rac-

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ism and hatred black soldiers were forced to overcome. The author has wisely included a number of special features. There are guides to the formation and service records of African American cavalry and infantry units, lists of battles they participated in, **Buffalo Soldier** postings from 1865-1917, **World War I** and **World War II** recruitment camps and postings, a list of black **Medal of Honor** winners, and a general chronology, as well as one specific to desegregation of the military.

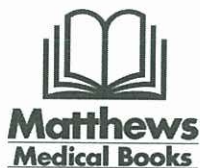
Fascinating and revealing, *African Americans at War: An Encyclopedia* is a good source for background information, while at the same time, pointing to the fact that there is more fertile ground for research. This set is written for a broad audience and should be welcome by public, high school and undergraduate libraries.

Another 2-volume set from **ABC-CLIO** focusing on a specific, under researched aspect of history is *Alcohol and Temperance in Modern History: An International History* (2003, 1576078345, \$185). While alcohol use, and abuse, is as old as history itself, this reference is confined to discussion of the production and use of alcohol beverages in the modern times and ranges from the earliest evidence of Scotch whiskey to the rise of microbreweries. However, to give the full historic perspective, the editors tie their discussion to the temperance and prohibition movements that reflected social concern and exercised influence on government policies toward alcohol use and production. Close to 500 articles by 170 international scholars recount this history. Coverage is global and there is an index by geographic area to aid in finding country and region specific articles. The articles are diverse and cover topics from specific beverages like sake and absinthe, to famous producers like the **Guinness Brewery** and the **Brofman** family, to social impacts and rates of consumption. There are also entries on the various temperance movements like the **Women's Christian Temperance Union** of Australia and France's **Ligue Nationale contre l'Alcoolisme**, as well as on government regulatory agencies like the **Provincial Liquor Board** of Canada and self-help organizations like **Alcoholics Anonymous**. A number of other articles provide biographies of people ranging from reformers like **Carrie Nation** to famous drinkers like **Winston Churchill**.

The overall impression left by this set is one of a serious and factual synthesis.

Alcohol and Temperance in Modern History: An International History enables the reader to come to a clearer understanding of the commercial and social impacts that alcohol use and production have caused, as well as the societal response. The extent of that impact, as reflected in this set, is substantial. This reference work is a worthwhile choice for both public and academic libraries where there is interest.

Routledge continues its *Encyclopedias of the Middle Ages* series with *Medieval Italy: an*



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Encyclopedia (2004, 0415939291, \$295). This 2-volume set contains nearly 1000 entries written by 192 scholars under the editorship of **Christopher Kleinhenz**. The encyclopedia offers coverage of the many diverse aspects of medieval Italian civilization. The entries range from very brief, specific descriptions of small towns and biographies of minor personalities to full-blown essays on major institutions and themes. The arts, politics, religion, economics, language and literature, transportation, commerce, social customs, as well as significant individuals and families are all covered. However, while there is mention of the Crusades and a few specific battles, there is little direct mention of military developments, or methods of warfare. The set also suffers from a lack of a thematic index which would have been a helpful feature given the number of entries. Fortunately there is a good general index, as well as use of "see" and "see also" references. Many of the essays have impressive bibliographies, and the article content uniformly evidences serious scholarship.

Medieval Italy: an Encyclopedia is a worthy addition to this series of encyclopedias. It is scholarly and comprehensive, providing specific facts and background information that will be useful to students. This encyclopedia, along with the rest of the series, supplements and supports Scribner's classic *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* (1989, 0684190737, price varies on Amazon.) It is clearly appropriate for academic libraries. 

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