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## Rachel K. Schenk Memorial Scholarship

Editor

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**From the Reference Desk**  
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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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