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Something to Think About -- Positive Dreaming

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From the Reference Desk
from page 45

phabetical listing of the endangered languages along with a brief description consisting of the “linguistic affiliation, demographic data, the degree of endangerment, and the causes of the threat to it.” Each section also has maps that offer a sense of where the language is spoken. In addition, there is a bibliography of scholarly sources and an index of languages that points the reader to specific pages.

Some may argue that many of the languages discussed here are, in fact, dialects. However, that does not detract from the fact that language endangerment is real and that it is a concern for many linguists, native speakers and in some cases, policy makers. By crystallizing the extent of the problem, the *Encyclopedia of the World’s Endangered Languages* performs a valuable service for the discipline, not to mention the languages themselves. Its publication will be welcomed by scholars and serious students. Aside from some concerns about the inconsistency of the book’s organization and its fairly hefty price tag, this title is recommended for academic libraries that support language and linguistics programs.

Another title that is quite specialized is the *Praeger Handbook of Latino Education in the U.S.* (2007, 978-0313328336, \$175). However, because of its topical nature, this title could find audiences in both academic and public libraries. Everyone from parents to policy makers and from students to professional educators could be interested in the issues raised here.

Edited by **Lourdes Diaz Soto**, these two volumes contain articles from over 100 scholars covering numerous topics. Essays range from those that discuss broad subjects like academic models, testing and urban education to articles on specifics like California’s Proposition 227, Puerto Ricans at the Carlisle Indian School, and technology adoption in New Mexico. There are also entries on various policy approaches from Bilingual Education to the English Only movement. Articles offer historical context, a description of the current situation, and in many cases, prescriptions for improvement. Each is based on solid scholarship but at the same time written in a style accessible to the informed and interested reader. Each entry has a useful bibliography that matches the extent of the article. In addition, there is a set of tables, charts and maps reflecting useful demographics, as well as a short glossary of terms and a general index. However, to reinforce the interrelatedness of the articles, future editions might consider a thematic list of articles or at least the use of “see also” references. Such organizational tools assist the reader in gaining a sense of scope, not to mention the categories of topics treated. They are missed in the present volumes.

Nonetheless, the *Praeger Handbook of Latino Education* in the U.S. succeeds in meeting its goal of informing “educators and the public of both the challenges and the opportunities for

Latino/a learners.” This reference does more than reflect the state of Latino/a education; it raises relevant issues and offers possible solutions. Depending on need, this set would be appropriate for either reference or circulation collections.

From Suffrage to the Senate: An Encyclopedia of Leaders, Causes & Issues (2006, 978-1592371174, \$195) is in its second edition. Originally published by **ABC-CLIO** in 1999, this new version is now available from **Grey House Publishing**. Having been written by the same author, **Suzanne O’Dea**, continuity with the initial edition has been maintained while at the same time, features and content added.

Essentially an encyclopedia of women in American politics, this reference has been updated and expanded to include “journalists, commentators, and columnists... political pollsters, campaign advisors, and campaign managers.” The number of primary documents has been “nearly doubled” and they are now referenced at the end of relevant entries. All of the original entries have been updated and 144 new entries added, taking the total to

844. Some 65% of those are brief biographical sketches, many of which are drawn from respected sources like *Congressional Quarterly*, *Politics in America*, *Women in the United States Congress* and *Current Biography* among others. The remaining articles cover “court cases, legislation, organizations, movements, and social issues.” The entries are written in an unadorned, objective, and factual style with related articles linked by “see also” references. There is a complete list of entries at the front of both volumes of this two-volume set, as well as tables of facts and statistics, a chronology, a bibliography and a helpful general index at the end of Volume II.

Perhaps the most useful added feature is the collection of primary documents alluded to earlier. This section provides a relevant and diverse group of documents ranging from the Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions in 1848 to the Declaration of Sentiments of the National Organization for Women in 1998, and from **Susan B. Anthony’s** speech after being convicted of voting in 1872 to a **Molly Irvins** column on **Hillary Clinton** in 2006. These documents are organized in a

continued on page 48

Something to Think About — Positive Dreaming

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I guess all of us have done our share of dreaming — even at work while doing routine tasks. No? Well, it’s a good thing to do, because it is a relaxation and meditation technique that allows us to function in our jobs without undue stresses. What are your dreams? Exotic or rural locations with water/snow/sunsets/or more? Wild times? Quiet times? I could name so many scenarios that would make you excited from a rush of adrenalin. But ... could you name some work dreams? When I came for an interview here, I arrived early to look around. I began to make a mental list of all the things I wanted to do to give the library a more professional appearance in the serial and microfilm sections. When I was hired, I typed those dreams in black and white, put them on my **Outlook** task list and began work. Every day I see the list as I check my email, and it is a reminder to me that there is always something important to do. We have worked on the binding — to increase the amount done each year; we are weeding the collection to make more room and “lean” it out; we are almost finished labeling a microfilm cabinet that never had labels; our two inch wide plastic boxes have just arrived to replace the four inch wide ones in our Special Collections, and we will soon have that inventory completed as well



as picking up eight shelves of empty space. There will be other dreams too. What else could I want? A dream I have always wanted to design and carry through, is to write and obtain a grant that will allow us to scan our **World War II** airplane factory employee newsletters. There is so much history in these publications that will soon be lost to all of us because they are deteriorating into brown debris and dust. The activities, quantity and quality of work, as well as the people’s creative abilities are placed in the archives of these newsletters to remind us of the cultural changes and supreme human efforts during wartime. Once our collection has been scanned onto CD’s, I would hope that other universities having similar collections of these and other factories would join into the program and complete their scanning as well. Perhaps between us, we would be able to expand all of the holdings of these materials and share the results with innumerable institutions with the same needs. It is a dream, but the good vibes are getting stronger and the positive nature of this project is being heard by others who have similar emotions about the doomed material and may some day “light the fire” that will make it a reality. That, I think, is something to really think and dream about! How ‘bout you? Do you have a dream too? 🌱