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From the Reference Desk

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From the Reference Desk

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The Encyclopedia of American Indian History (2007, 978-1851098170, $395.00) is a new offering from ABC-CLIO. Edited by Bruce E. Johansen and Barry M. Pritzker, this four-volume set contains some 450 articles written by nearly 110 contributors. The set is arranged in “thematically organized volumes” as opposed to alphabetically throughout the set. Such an arrangement requires a solid organizational scheme to facilitate access. Consistent with this, each volume has its own article-by-article table of contents and there is an index to the entire set in each volume. In addition, related articles are linked by liberal use of “see also” references.

The first volume starts with six chronological essays that take the reader from pre-contact to the start of the 21st century. Added to these essays are two sections of articles on issues and events in American Indian history. All the parts in this volume work well together. The six initial essays are helpful in setting the issues and events in context, as well as for providing impressive bibliographies, while the remainder of the volume serves to flesh out the individual issues and events. Volume II focuses on culture, specifically on the impact of newcomers on Indian culture. Volume III deals with Native American culture, religion, and law. Volume IV is devoted to the Native American relationship with the US government.

Endnotes

Technical Services Departments ...

is the object, her people will strive for it themselves...as long as the challenge is seen to be achievable.”

Encouraging employees to help shape the new tasks and job functions can help to give them ownership in the process. Giving them the training they need and want will let them know that they are being supported by management to move through these tasks. Encourage some constructive “play” and allow for the occasional failure. People learn when they are allowed to try and even fail in a supportive environment. Allow them to grieve for their old job and to move on to their new duties. Continue to provide a continual learning environment, being mindful that each person adopts change at his own pace.

Conclusion

In conclusion, today’s technical services department will need to continually reassess workflow to ensure that new technologies and processes have been taken into account. The staff should be regularly reviewed to ensure that new needs are being met and by the person(s) most capable of handling them. Retraining will be an ongoing, interactive and vital part of keeping up with the rapid changes, and giving employees the skills they need to handle not only the technology but the interpersonal relationships is important. Providing the opportunities for employees to play to their strengths and continue to obtain appropriate training will lead to having a staff that is more engaged, more effective and re-energized.
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From the Reference Desk

from page 64

Editor Junius P. Rodriquez adds to his list of respected reference works with the publication of the Encyclopedia of Emancipation and Abolition in the Transatlantic World (2007, 978-0765612571, $269) by Sharpe Reference. Working with 114 scholars in the field, Rodriquez has fashioned a three-volume set that focuses on the transatlantic slave trade and the many personalities and factors that played into its eventual abolition and the emancipation of its victims.

Many of the entries in the set discuss prominent historical figures ranging from pamphlet writers to politicians and from feminist abolitionists to leaders of slave revolts. Other articles concentrate on abolition and emancipation in specific areas of the Transatlantic from Sierra Leone and West Africa to the West Indies and Mexico. There are also articles on influential publications like the British Emancipator, the Pennsylvania Freeman and the National Anti-Slavery Standard, as well as those that cover specific laws and court cases. In addition, the Encyclopedia covers religious and cultural movements and organizations ranging from the Brazilian Anti-Slavery Society to the Ku Klux Klan. The set has a number of finding aids including a table of contents for each volume, a useful general index and a topic finder, or thematic index. The articles are written in a straightforward and unadorned style and generally range from two to five pages in length. Added features include a chronology and a 50-page collective bibliography.

Some libraries may feel that this current set is redundant of works like Greenwood’s Encyclopedia of AntiSlavery and Abolition (2006, 978-0313331428, $195.95). However, given the general strength of its content and with the added emphasis on emancipation, libraries wanting comprehensive collections in this subject will no doubt benefit from its addition. Both advanced high school students and undergraduates will find it valuable for background information and as a source of citations for further research. It is also a set that would benefit larger public libraries.

Rumors

from page 56

And speaking of Berkeley and Greg, I was interested in the recent discussions on Ann Okerson’s liblicense about UC Berkeley’s debut on YouTube as the first university to formally offer videos of full course lectures via YouTube. See the article in the San Francisco Chronicle. Sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2007/10/04/BUJOSJ9JS.DTL

Rittenhouse Book Distributors, Inc. have added Course Links to the R2 Digital Library which is focused exclusively on digital book content for health sciences. Course Links will enable librarians to support course management, class assignments, assigned readings, and other educational software. Meg White is Director of Technology Services at Rittenhouse which has been in business since 1946.

www.r2library.com
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Speaking of eBooks, we have two conflicting perspectives in this issue of ATG. First, Mark Herring’s Op Ed “E-e-e-easy Does It” (“Ebooks have been around about twenty years now, but today we’re not very far from the starting gate.” p.74). Second, Bob Nardini’s Issues in Vendor/Library Relations (“The biggest success story of the past ten years in academic libraries, without a doubt, has been eBooks.” p.90). Hmmmm... Looks to me like more eBooks are being bought but are they being used and do library users like them? What are your experiences? Visit the online ATG Website and tell us what you think!

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continued on page 67