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From the Reference Desk-Reviews of Reference Titles

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From the Reference Desk

by **Tom Gilson** (Associate Editor, *Against the Grain*, and Head of Reference Emeritus, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC 29401) <gilson@cofc.edu>

Recently published by **M.E. Sharpe**, the *Encyclopedia of Jewish Folklore and Traditions* (2013, 978-0-7656-2025-5, \$299) covers a uniquely important heritage, but by necessity, uses a multicultural approach. Edited by founding editor, the late **Raphael Patai** and **Haya Bar-Itzhak** of the **University of Haifa**, this two-volume set is informed by the recent scholarship and perceptions that govern current folklore studies. As such, both oral and written materials that reflect Jewish “spiritual and cultural heritage” are open for inclusion among the more than 250 entries.

Given the Jewish worldwide diaspora there are actually multiple Jewish folk cultures as well as a number of languages reflected in their folklore. And unlike many folk cultures, the written word has played a vital role from the beginning. This inherent complexity is apparent as one reads the pages of this encyclopedia. In addition, a variety of folklore categories are covered ranging from folk narratives to folksong; folk medicine to folk beliefs; and folk art to aspects of material culture like costume and food ways. There are also entries on historic periods, various communities, and both real and fictional characters.

The entries are fact-filled and grounded in solid scholarship with the contributors coming primarily from institutions of higher learning in the United States and Israel. The style is academic but straightforward and should appeal to a variety of readers from the interested lay person to the serious scholar. “See also” references link related articles, and each entry has a useful bibliography that provides helpful leads for those wanting to do further research. There are also appendices that list relevant sources from the Hebrew Bible and the rabbinic literature as well as provide citations to useful anthologies of Jewish folklore gathered into broad categories. The two volumes are handsomely illustrated by both black-and-white and color plates. There is, however, one value-added feature that might have been included. A thematic index or Readers Guide would have been useful in getting the full scope of the set as well as providing an awareness of the relationships among the entries.

Nonetheless, the *Encyclopedia of Jewish Folklore and Traditions* is an impressive entry in the reference literature related to the Judaism and the Jewish experience. Academic, public, and some larger high school libraries where there is interest will find it a valuable addition to their collections. It should find a welcome place beside

similar references like **ABC-CLIO’s** *Encyclopedia of*

the Jewish Diaspora: Origins, Experiences, and Culture (2009, 9781851098736, \$295) and **Routledge’s** *Encyclopedia of Modern Jewish Culture* (2004, 9780415298131, \$660). This set is available electronically from **Credo Reference**.

SAGE Reference adds another two-volume reference to its catalog with the *Encyclopedia of Philosophy and the Social Sciences* (2013, 9781412986892, \$350). A number of scholarly reference works approach their subjects from a multidisciplinary perspective, but here is a set whose essential focus is on such a relationship. Not only does this *Encyclopedia* examine how philosophy views the disciplines within the social sciences, its core concern is the relationships, connections, and interactions between philosophy and those disciplines.

A quick look at the Readers Guide or thematic index bears this out. Entries are categorized under headings like Philosophy and Anthropology; Philosophy and Economics; Philosophy and Politics; and Philosophy and Sociology. The Readers Guide also reveals that there are articles that discuss how branches of philosophy like philosophical psychology, epistemology, ontology, and logic interact with the social sciences.

The entries are arranged alphabetically and there are 402 individual articles ranging in length from briefer discussions of 1,000 words to more thorough essays of 5,000 words or more. While useful tables and charts are employed to illustrate key concepts, the vast majority of the set is text-rich. The intended audience is undergraduates, graduates students, and scholars in the field, so the treatment is serious and grounded in scholarly expertise. Given the subjects discussed, this is not the type of reference that the lay reader would normally seek out, so the writing, while accessible, assumes some academic background and interest. Adding to the serious intent of the set, editor **Byron Kaldis** notes that “special care was taken to identify cross references and further readings” to reinforce the “interconnectedness” of the entries and the topics covered. As such, each entry contains numerous “see also” references as well as a bibliography of scholarly sources. Completing the set is a well-structured and comprehensive general index.

Encyclopedia of Philosophy and the Social Sciences is one of those reference works that aside from providing valuable facts and observations hopes to project a unified vision of an area of study with numerous and disparate elements. Under the able guidance of **Mr. Kaldis**, the *Encyclopedia* has accomplished that goal. It brings together in one manageable work the cross-disciplinary interchanges between philosophy, its numerous branches, and the varied disciplines making up the social sciences. As such, he and his contributors have made a significant contribution that should be appreciated by students and scholars alike. The resulting effort should be high on the list for academic libraries where there is need for such a reference. In addition, faculty teaching in philosophy, the social sciences, and/or interdisciplinary studies might do well to consider a personal or departmental copy.

This title is also available electronically on **SAGE’s** online platform, **SAGE Knowledge**.

Grey House Publishing made its reputation as a publisher of directories so it’s fitting that a classic reference like **Bowker’s Broadcasting Yearbook** has found new life as **Grey House’s Complete Television, Radio & Cable Industry Directory 2013 Edition** (2013, 978-1-61925-103-8, \$350). Former users of the *Broadcasting Yearbook* will expect a lot, and they will not be disappointed. In its new incarnation this reference has been updated, expanded, and effectively reorganized.

One of the big changes is that in the first three major sections — television, radio, and cable — the U.S. and Canadian data has been completely separated with entries arranged under relevant states and provinces. These three sections make up about 75%-80% of the volume and interestingly, in this digital age of the Internet, the section on radio, the oldest technology, is by far the largest of these three sections. The sections are introduced with relevant statistics and rankings. The entries themselves contain key information such as station call letters, channel designations, addresses, phone and fax numbers, Website and email addresses, license information, group owner, national network affiliation, the names of the key executives, and in the case of radio, the Arbitron metro market. Rounding out the volume are much briefer sections devoted to service, materials and equipment providers; professional services ranging from legal to engineering and technical; and listing for associations events education and awards. In total, over 26,600 entries are packed within the covers of this hefty, oversized paperback. The directory also has a number of added features including a chronology, a section on the FCC and Rules of Broadcasting, a glossary of terms, and a list of abbreviations.

Like the *Broadcasting Yearbook* did for reference librarians in years past, the *Complete Television, Radio & Cable Industry Directory* will help answer most, if not all of the nuts and bolts questions posed by patrons needing information on the broadcast industry. It contains a tremendous amount of factual data handily available in a single volume. While a number of people still like having all of this information at their fingertips in a large print directory, many others prefer a digital option. For those folks, this reference is also part of **Grey House’s** online G.O.L.D. database. You can visit www.greyhouse.com or call 800-562-2139 to get pricing, arrange for trials, etc.

The *Oxford Companion to Modern Poetry* (2013, 9780199640256, \$65) is the second edition of a well-received reference title last published nearly 20 years ago. Then it was titled the *Oxford Companion to Twentieth Century Poetry in English* and edited by the late **Ian Hamilton**. Despite the new title, this edition still centers on English language poetry, but of course it has been updated and expanded. However, in a change from the original, the new edition focuses almost entirely on individual poets. Fortunately, this new volume maintains the original’s commitment to quality and scholarship.

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The new edition is edited by **Jeremy Noel-Tod**, Lecturer at the **University of East Anglia**, and covers modern poets active from 1910. There is however, one major change in the new edition. It almost solely consists of biographical entries. A "handful" of articles on "versification and other contextual topics" have been removed, leaving that type of coverage to "more comprehensive works." In reality, the *Companion* has evolved into a biographical dictionary with articles on more than 1,700 modern poets. Some 300 of these are new, and of those 50% are women. While the entries offer useful information on the life of the subject, the focus is really on the poet's work and literary achievements. Particular attention is paid to the publication record of each poet with informed observations accompanying the important works. The entries are fact-filled, well researched, and evaluative. The articles leave the reader with a good sense of the poet and his/her contributions. The biographies are followed by a brief section of informative entries on the various groups and movements with which many of the poets are identified. Read in tandem with the biographies, these entries provide valuable historical and literary context. There is also a list of poetry prizes and prize winners as well as references to useful Websites rounding out the volume. While the arrangement is strictly alphabetical and there is no index, **Mr. Noel-Tod** employs asterisks to indicate cross references throughout the text.

The *Oxford Companion to Modern Poetry* will be valued by anyone interested in the poets and poetry of the last century. It is an impressive single volume; factual, well written, and full of

insightful observations. Although appropriate for reference, it is one of those works that could just as easily be found in circulating collections or on personal shelves.

Extra Servings

September 2013 will see the release of two new multivolume encyclopedias from **Sage Reference**.

- **Multicultural America: A Multimedia Encyclopedia** (9781452216836, \$495) is a four-volume set edited by **Carlos E. Cortés**, Emeritus, **University of California, Riverside** that "explores this topic with more than 900 signed entries not just providing a compilation of specific ethnic groups and their histories but also covering the full spectrum of issues flowing from the increasingly multicultural canvas that is America today. Pedagogical elements include an introduction, a thematic reader's guide, a chronology of multicultural milestones, a glossary, a resource guide to key books, journals, and Internet sites and an appendix of 2010 U.S. Census Data..."
- **Theory in Social and Cultural Anthropology: An Encyclopedia** (9781412999632, \$350) is a two-volume set edited by **R. Jon McGee** and **Richard L. Warms**, both at **Texas State University, San Marcos** that "provides students and professors a place where they can locate a quick overview of a particular theory and theorist with the who, what, where, how, and why..."

Bloomsburg Publishing has added two new titles to its *Cultural Histories Series* of multi-volume sets that offer "comprehensive surveys of the social and cultural construction of specific subjects across six historical periods: Antiquity, The Medieval Age, The Renaissance, The Enlightenment, The Age of Empire, and The Modern Age."

- Released in April 2013, **A Cultural History of Women** (9781847884756, \$550) devotes an individual volume to each of the historical periods referenced above as "each volume discusses the same themes in its chapters: the Life Cycle; Bodies and Sexuality; Religion and Popular Beliefs; Medicine and Disease; Public and Private Worlds; Education and Work; Power; and Artistic Representation."
- **A Cultural History of Gardens** (9781847882653, \$550) was published in June 2013. This set deals with the usual six historic periods, but the themes covered in each volume are "Design; Types of Gardens; Planting; Use and Reception; Meaning; Verbal Representations; Visual Representations; and Gardens and the Larger Landscape."

And those seeking to strengthen their philosophy collections may be interested in a new specialized reference released by **Bloomsbury Publishing** in June 2013.

- The **Bloomsbury Encyclopedia of Utilitarianism** (9780826429896, \$360) deals with "the complex developmental history and the multi-faceted character of utilitarianism in its various contexts and forms... The

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Encyclopedia includes entries on the authors and texts that are recognized as having built the tradition of utilitarian thinking as well as on the issues and critics that have arisen at every stage of the development of that tradition...

Earlier this summer, **CQ Press** published annual editions of two standard sources that librarians and others interested in politics and the inner working of the nation's capital have come to rely on.

- ***Politics in America 2014*** provides "in-depth profiles of all 535 members and 6 delegates of the 113th Congress ... and essential contact information; State-by-state and district demographics; Profiles of each congressional; ... Information on partisan caucuses and standing committees; and Maps, campaign finance interest group ratings, and unique facts and figures about the 113th Congress."
- ***Washington Information Directory 2013-2014*** (978-1-4522-8322-7, \$173) provides "more than 10,000 listings ... for information on U.S. governmental and nongovernmental agencies and organizations... including most contacts' direct phone numbers and email addresses instead of just general agency contact information. It also includes reference boxes, organization charts, and other helpful extras." These titles are also available on the **SAGE Knowledge** online platform.

In fall 2013 **ABC-CLIO** is poised to publish a number of titles including

- ***American Civil War: The Definitive Encyclopedia and Document Collection*** (9781851096770, \$625; eISBN: ISBN: 978-1-85109-677-0, call 800-368-6868 ext. 2 for pricing), edited by **Spencer Tucker**, provides a "multidisciplinary examination of the Civil War period ranging from pre-Civil War developments and catalysts such as the Mexican-American War to the rebuilding of the war-torn nation during Reconstruction... this encyclopedia includes all significant battles and skirmishes; important figures, both civilian and military; weapons; government relations with Native Americans; and a plethora of social, political, cultural, military, and economic developments..."
- ***Consumer Survival: An Encyclopedia of Consumer Rights, Safety, and Protection*** (9781598849363, \$189; eISBN: 978-1-59884-937-0, call for pricing), edited by **Wendy Reiboldt** and **Melanie Horn Mallery**, is a "two-volume, alphabetically arranged reference covering a broad array of topics related to consumer rights, including those of interest to often-overlooked populations such as older adults, veterans, and the homeless. Specific entries address critical areas including food and product safety, housing, health care, the financial industry, the automobile industry, and telecommunications..."
- ***Food and Drink in American History: A "Full Course" Encyclopedia***

(9781610692328, \$310; eISBN: 978-1-61069-233-5, call for pricing), edited by **Andrew F. Smith**, "comprises two volumes containing more than 600 alphabetically arranged historical entries on American foods and beverages as well as dozens of historical recipes for traditional American foods; and a third volume of more than 120 primary source documents. Never before has there been a reference work that coalesces this diverse range of information into a single set..."

July saw **Oxford University Press** publish another in its series of specialized encyclopedias spun off from the **Oxford Companion to United States History**.

- ***The Oxford Encyclopedia of American Business, Labor, and Economic History*** (9780199738816, \$395), edited by **Melvyn Dubofsky**, is a scholarly effort that "offers students and scholars access to information about the concepts, institutions/organizations, events, and individuals that have shaped the history of economics, business, and labor from the origins of what became the United States in an earlier age of globalization and the expansion of capitalism to the present."

And in case you missed it, May 2013 saw the addition of six new titles to the Oxford Quick Reference online collection including ***A Dictionary of Economics*** (4 ed.); ***The Concise Oxford Companion to English Literature*** (4 ed.); ***The Oxford Dictionary of Music*** (6 ed.); ***New Oxford Rhyming Dictionary*** (2 ed.); ***An A-Z Guide to Shakespeare*** (2 ed.); and ***A Dictionary of Social Work & Social Care***. 🌿

Book Reviews — Monographic Musings

Column Editor: **Debbie Vaughn** (College of Charleston) <vaughnd@cofc.edu>

Smallwood, Carol, Jason Kuhl, and Lisa Fraser, eds.
Time and Project Management Strategies for Librarians.

Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 2013. 978-0810890527. 308 pages. \$55.00.

Reviewed by **Debbie Vaughn** <vaughnd@cofc.edu>

Full disclosure: it was a colleague and friend of mine, regular **ATG** contributor **Jolanda-Pieta "Joey" van Arnhem**, who asked if I would consider reviewing the subject of this month's **MM**, ***Time and Project Management Strategies for Librarians***. Joey and I had been communicating about teaching online classes — something we both do for the **College of Charleston** — and the subject of asynchronous communication came up (no surprise there). She mentioned that she and her co-author, **Jerry Spiller**, had written a chapter on that very subject for ***Time and Project Management Strategies for Librarians***, recently published by **The Scarecrow Press**. I told her I would be delighted to review the title, and went about requesting a review copy. Embarrassingly, once my review copy arrived, it sat on my desk for a few weeks. My youngest child, just learning to pull up and grab things off of table-height

surfaces, would frequently pull the book to the floor and, in his baby way, rifle through the pages, which would remind me that I hadn't yet taken the time to examine it, and I would promptly put it back on my desk. That was my first mistake; I should have immediately immersed myself in this book, because once I did, I was motivated and re-charged like I hadn't been in a while.

Many of you are likely at least somewhat familiar with the blog (and/or books) **Lifehacker**; its tagline reads, "tips and downloads for getting things done." ***Time and Project Management Strategies for Librarians*** is the Lifehacker for librarians and library support staff. At the same time, reading this book is what I imagine it must be like going to a **TED Conference**, if there were a **TED Conference** held at library land: it offers "ideas worth spreading" from folks who work in the field, it is engaging

and entertaining, it isn't cumbersome, and it provides practical information that is useful to your professional life (and, let's face it, your professional life bears a relatively significant impact on your personal life). So, **Lifehacker** and a **TED Conference** rolled into one book... how could you resist?

Here's the lowdown: ***Time and Project Management Strategies for Librarians*** is divided into eight major categories: Management Strategies; Working with Staff; Students, Volunteers, and Interns; Monitoring Time and Projects; Getting Organized; Using Technology; Work-Life Balance; and Professional Development. Each section includes several chapters, none more than ten pages. Chapters cover topics on both macro- and micro-levels, from library-wide prioritizing using Six Sigma tools to personal productivity, and from staffing various service points to stress reduction. Authors represent the full spectrum of library professionals and those who work with a library in some capacity: school librarians, public librarians, academic librarians, special librarians, library school faculty, library volunteers, trained librarians working in industry, non-library faculty serving on library committees, and more. This rich cohort of contributors demonstrates that all of the ideas,

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