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## From the Reference Desk-Reviews of Reference Titles

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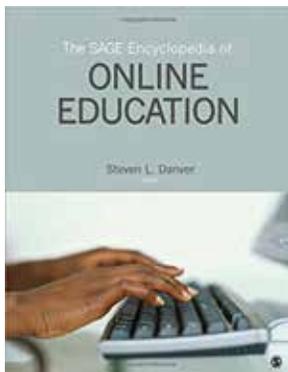
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# From the Reference Desk

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

**SAGE Publishing** recently released a new three-volume set that deals with an increasingly popular, and to some, controversial development in the field of education. Edited by **Steven L. Danver** at **Walden University**, *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Online Education* (2017, 9781483318356, \$495) contains over 350 entries covering both the pitfalls and potentials of this burgeoning field.

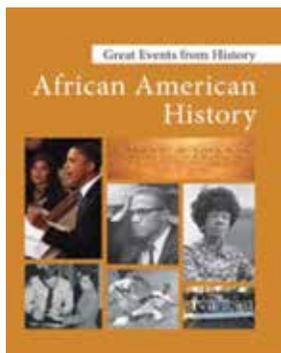
One can get a good sense of the coverage in this set by examining the Reader's Guide which lists all articles in relevant categories. Everything from underlying concepts and theories to legal and accreditation issues to evaluation and testing are covered. In addition, there are entries dealing with student characteristics, different curriculums and instruction practices, various technologies and platforms, as well as concerns related to culture, race, and ethnicity. The articles are informed by recent research and offer treatment of key issues that should be of interest to undergraduates and instructors, as well as college administrators. The approach is scholarly and factual while employing a jargon-free style. Each entry has a list of sources for further exploration appropriate to the topic as well as "see also" references to related articles. There is also a series of appendices offering demographics and select academic leader's opinions on distance education as well as an annotated resource guide, a list of policy standards and a review of current regional and national accrediting agencies. In addition, to the previously discussed Reader's Guide, there is a well-designed and thorough general index for locating specific information. Mention should also be made of **Mr. Danver's** introduction which offers some historical background by discussing online education as a modern extension of earlier correspondence courses and distance education efforts. He also points to other



developments like MOOCs and online learning management systems and gives his take on the current state of the art.

While it contains solid background and overview information, *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Online Education* also offers a view of online education that includes the advantages and disadvantages as well as the opportunities and challenges. As such, it provides readers a serious and professional discussion of the issues involved and offers valuable insights to anyone concerned with the role of online education and its relationship to more traditional forms of instruction. Academic libraries supporting research on current education programs should think seriously about adding it to their collections. And of course, the set is available online on the **SAGE Knowledge** platform.

**Salem Press** has added another new title to their *Great Events* series of reference works. *Great Events from History: African American History* (2017, 9781682171523, \$295; e-ISBN: 978-1-68217-153-0, \$295) is a three-volume set edited by **Kibibi Mack-Shelton** of **Claf-in University**. A collection of 35 overview articles introduces the set. This is followed by discussion of key events listed chronologically from the arrival of the first slave ships in 1619 up until the present day. Overall, there are some 400 essays that average 1,600 words each.



The overview essays cover topics ranging from the Black Church to demographics to lynching to segregation. These articles set the stage for the discussion of the actual

events. As is typical for the *Great Events* series each entry follows a similar format. The date and a summary paragraph introduces the entry followed by the locale in which the event occurred, the broad subject categories into which it falls and a list of the key figures involved. The body of the essay then follows with a full summary of the event, a section on its significance, a list of "see also" references and links to related articles in other *Great Events* and *Great Lives* collections. The events covered are diverse and include those

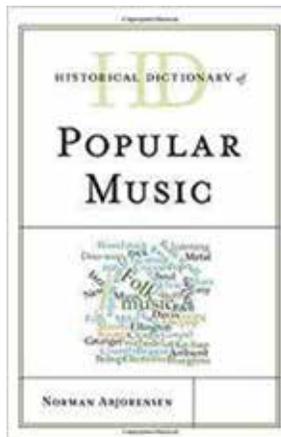
related to topics ranging from abolition to affirmative action, court cases to the Civil War, the media to mob violence, popular culture to politics, and slavery to sports. The entries are well-written and to the point. The summary section presents the facts describing the event while the significance section places the event in context and offers food for thought as to its relevance. Value added features are also a plus. There is a section including short biographies of notable figures, followed by a chronology and a bibliography arranged by 20 categories. In addition, there is a very helpful index that arranges the events by topic as well as an alphabetical subject index.

*Great Events from History: African American History* will be valued by high school students and undergraduates as well as interested lay readers. The articles are well-researched and informed while being unambiguous and readily understood. The organization of the set and the finding aids help highlight the diversity of the events covered and lends to the discovery of related topics. There should be an audience for this reference in public, academic, and high school libraries where there is interest in African American history.

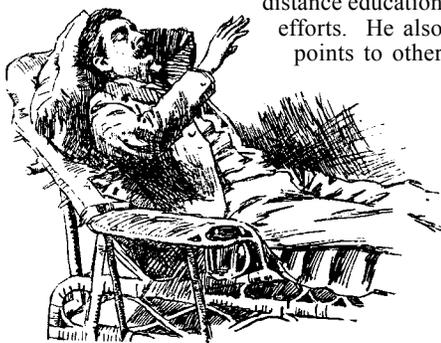
The set is available electronically for a single user price of \$295 while print purchase includes free online access.

**Rowman and Littlefield** has added another title to their prolific *Historical Dictionaries of Literature and Arts* series. Written by Australian historian and author **Norman Abjorensen**, this new book is entitled the *Historical Dictionary of Popular Music* (2017, 978-1538102145, \$145; eBook, 9781538102152, \$137.50).

**Mr. Abjorensen** and his *Historical Dictionary of Popular Music* include more than 1,000 entries that trace popular music back to the 1800s. The book gives readers concise coverage of numerous musicians, composers, songwriters and musical groups as well as definitions of relevant musical genres. The book also discusses the popular music of a number of countries and regions. However, all this being said, the vast majority of entries are allotted to musicians from America and Great Britain who made their mark in the 20th and 21st centuries. Nonetheless, the multiple genres discussed, not to mention the numerous artists profiled, attest to the diversity of the popular music being covered. In each instance, the entries are brief but filled with essential information. They are well-writ-



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ten and offer key facts and helpful context. Other useful features of the book include a listing of notable songs from 1920 to 2015, a select list of Grammy winners from 1958-2015, and an impressive bibliography arranged by place, artist and genre. **Mr. Abjorensen** also provides an introduction that helps define popular music and offers some historical analysis as well as a chronology dating from 1827 to early 2017.

Often books like this are labors of love and the *Historical Dictionary of Popular Music* is no exception. **Mr. Abjorensen's** personal interest and enthusiasm for popular music is evident throughout. It is one of those reference works that is equally, if not more, suited for circulating collections. Both academic and public libraries will want to consider it. And one suspects that a number of popular music fans may want personal copies. As noted above an eBook version is also available.

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### Extra Servings

**SAGE Publishing** will be releasing some new reference handbooks

- The *SAGE Handbook of Neoliberalism* (April 2018, ISBN: 9781412961721, \$175) “showcases the cutting edge of contemporary scholarship in this field by bringing together a team of global experts. Across seven key sections, the handbook explores the different ways in which neoliberalism has been understood and the key questions about the nature of neoliberalism...”
- The *SAGE Handbook of Consumer Culture* (Feb. 2018, ISBN: 9781473929517, \$160) “is a one-stop resource for scholars and students of consumption, where the key dimensions of consumer culture are critically discussed and articulated. The editors have organised contributions from a global and interdisciplinary team of scholars into six key sections...”
- The *SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Business and Management Research Methods* (Jan. 2018, ISBN: 9781473926622, \$325) is a 2-volume set that “provides a state-of-the-art overview of qualitative research methods in the business and management field. The Handbook celebrates the diversity of the field by drawing from a wide range of traditions and by bringing together a number of leading international research-

ers engaged in studying a variety of topics through multiple qualitative methods. The chapters address the philosophical underpinnings of particular approaches to research, contemporary illustrations, references, and practical guidelines for their use...”

**Salem Press** has a number of new and forthcoming titles in the offing including:

- *Salem Health: Genetics and Inherited Conditions, Second Edition* (Oct 2017, ISBN: 978-1-68217-603-0, \$395; e-ISBN: 978-1-68217-604-7, \$395) is a 3-volume set that alphabetically arranges “459 essays on diseases, biology, techniques, methodologies, genetic engineering, biotechnology, ethics, and social issues. Written for non-specialists by professors and professional medical writers, this comprehensive reference publication will interest health-care consumers, premedical students, public library patrons, and librarians building scientific collections...”
- *Defining Documents in American History: Political Campaigns, Candidates, and Debates (1787-2017)* (March 2018, ISBN: 978-1-68217-700-6, \$295; e-ISBN: 978-1-68217-590-3, \$295) is a 2-volume set that “offers documents and commentary that showcase the American political process. Candidates, issues, and campaign styles have changed dramatically over time, from the front porch approach of the presidential campaigns of the 1800s to the social media campaigns of today. Political debates aren’t limited simple to presidential campaigns, and this work examines how this American institution has shaped the government and its policies on personal, local, state, and national levels...”

**H.W. Wilson** is publishing a new updated second edition:

- *American Reformers* (Oct. 2017, ISBN: 978-1-68217-196-7, \$195) is in its second edition and “brings together informative biographies of 600 men and women who were the principal architects of reform in America from the seventeenth century to modern times. Designed for students and the general reader, coverage includes not only the chief facts of each subject’s life, but also offers a thought-provoking assessment of the subject’s significance to the general reform movement in this country. Last published in 1985, this new second edition offers over 100 new entries, to extend its coverage into the twenty-first century...” 🌿

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## Collecting to the Core — Chemical Safety in the Academic Lab

by **Jeremy R. Garritano** (Research Librarian for Sciences/Engineering, Brown Science and Engineering Library, University of Virginia; Chemistry Subject Editor, *Resources for College Libraries*) <jg9jh@virginia.edu>

Column Editor: **Anne Doherty** (*Resources for College Libraries* Project Editor, CHOICE/ACRL) <adoherty@ala-choice.org>

**Column Editor’s Note:** The “Collecting to the Core” column highlights monographic works that are essential to the academic library within a particular discipline, inspired by the *Resources for College Libraries* bibliography (online at <http://www.rclweb.net>). In each essay, subject specialists introduce and explain the classic titles and topics that continue to remain relevant to the undergraduate curriculum and library collection. Disciplinary trends may shift, but some classics never go out of style. — AD

Over the last decade, there has been increased scrutiny focused on improving chemical safety in academic laboratories. A number of incidents, ranging from minor injuries to fatalities, has caused various groups to call for increased investments in safety culture and new methods for chemical safety education. For those unfamiliar with the issue, an editorial in *ACS Central Science*

provides useful background on some of the recent incidents and proposed solutions.<sup>1</sup> Academic librarians, especially those serving the sciences, should be aware of the most current publications and reports particularly because of rapid changes across policy, regulations, and philosophical approaches to safety education. Additionally, because of the increasing availability of open data and information on the Internet, many of the reports and publications acknowledge the importance of using appropriate information resources. While it may be assumed that, through coursework, students are provided the necessary safety information to carry out lab experiments, making these resources available through the library broadens their access, enhances a safety culture throughout the institution, and provides individuals (such as independent study students, student entrepreneurs, and novice researchers) with the latest industry reports, best practices, guidance, and data.

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