

# OUTSTANDING REFERENCE SOURCES 2001

by Teresa Portilla Omidisalar

## THE ANNUAL RECOMMENDATIONS OF DISTINGUISHED REFERENCE WORKS SELECTED BY REFERENCE LIBRARIANS

**E**ven with the excited anticipation of President George W. Bush's inauguration, the Reference Users Services Association (RUSA)'s 2001 Reference Sources Committee remained focused on the task of selecting the year's outstanding reference sources during ALA's Midwinter Meeting in Washington, D.C. Although preliminary committee work began months earlier via e-mail, it took five sessions and 15 hours for the nine-member committee to select 28 titles as outstanding.

The committee annually evaluates reference titles and compiles a list of the outstanding items that are suitable for small to medium-sized academic and public libraries. The size of library budgets is a factor the committee considers in its selection. On occasion, more expensive titles are listed if considered to be exceptionally useful or unique such as this year's *Encyclopedia of Biodiversity* and the *Encyclopedia of Psychology*.

The 2001 selected titles varied widely in content, size, and scope. There is something for the automobile enthusiast (*The Beaulieu Encyclopedia of the Automobile*), the fisher (*Ken Schultz's Fishing Encyclopedia*), the sports admirer (*Sports: The Complete Visual Reference*), and for those who cherish spiritual matters

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(*Contemporary American Religion*, *Encyclopedia of Judaism*, and the *Encyclopedia of Monasticism*). The committee also included large multivolume sets (*Women in World History*) as well as small single-volume tomes (*Encyclopedia of Movie Special Effects*).

The process of selecting the year's best reference sources is detailed. Each committee member is assigned one or more subject areas, and combs publishers' catalogs, announcements, and reviews seeking potential titles. By October of each year, members submit lists of nominations to the committee chair. The chair compiles a preliminary list based on that information and forwards it to the entire committee along with reviews. The committee considers the evidence and refines the list until days before the Midwinter Meeting, when the chair finalizes the list of nominated titles. Individual committee members may nominate or withdraw titles until final



**This National Motor Museum photograph of a 1996 Lotus Elise two-seater sports car is one of many included in the *Beaulieu Encyclopedia of the Automobile* (Fitzroy Dearborn).**

deliberations, and may vote only on titles they have personally examined.

A 2001 Outstanding Reference Sources exhibit will be displayed at the RUSA booth during the ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco. To get more information on the Reference Sources Committee, or to see current and previous lists of outstanding titles along with full annotations, visit the RUSA Web site at [www.ala.org/rusa/bestref.html](http://www.ala.org/rusa/bestref.html).

## HISTORY AND CULTURE

*The Beaulieu Encyclopedia of the Automobile*, edited by Nick Georgano. 2 vols. 1,792p. London: The Stationery Office Books, 2000. Distributed by Fitzroy Dearborn, Chicago (1-57958-293-1), \$285.

The most comprehensive automobile encyclopedia available today, this title covers every manufacturer and every model ever produced commercially.

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*Encyclopedic Histories*, vol. 1920-7), George E. York: Ga...

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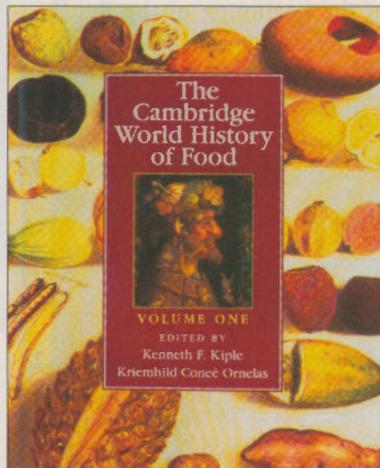
*Encyclopedic American Political Military* by David Jeanne vols. 2,7... bara, Ca... 2000 (1... \$425.

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*Encyclopedia of Ephemera: A Guide to the Fragmentary Documents of Everyday Life for the Collector, Curator, and Historian*, by Maurice Rickards. Edited by Michael Twyman. 402p. New York: Routledge, 2000 (0-415-92648-3), \$65.

With more than 400 entries on paper collectibles from the most obscure to the most common, this outstanding source is arranged alphabetically and provides written descriptions and photographs of anything from an ABC primer from 19th-century London to winkle bags. This is truly a source to be consulted by collectors or anyone looking for a glimpse of the past.

**Hermenegildo Bustos's *Still Life with Pineapple and Still Life with Watermelon* provide the backdrop for the two-volume *Cambridge World History of Food* (Cambridge University Press) that encapsulates the history of food and nutrition through the span of human life on earth.**



*Encyclopedia of the Palestinians*, edited by Philip Mattar. 514p. New York: Facts on File, 2000 (0-8160-3043-X), \$82.50, \$74.25 for libraries.

The scholarship and the balanced nature of a controversial, highly partisan issue are what make this volume important and useful to students of current events. The articles are clear and accessible, and discuss the political

movements, arts, customs, and individuals that have made an impact on the Palestinian world.

*Encyclopedia of the United States Cabinet*, by Mark Grossman. 3 vols. 1,137p. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-Clio, 2000 (0-87436-977-0), \$275.

This encyclopedia is the first work of its kind devoted entirely to the history of the United States Cabinet and its secretaries. Arranged alphabetically by cabinet department, it provides a history of the department and detailed biographical and historical entries of the members who served in some of the nation's highest positions. Also available as an e-book, it is a truly outstanding source filled with facts about the U.S. Cabinet.

*Women in World History: A Biographical Encyclopedia*, edited by Anne Commire. 15 vols. Detroit: Gale, 1999 (0-78763-736-X), \$995.

Locating information on women is difficult and the editors have done a fine job assembling and publishing information extant on individual women from many nations, both living and dead. Because in some cases only birth, marriage, children, and death dates are known, the 10,000 articles vary in length according to the subject. If you haven't been able to answer reference questions on women, you need this set.

*Cambridge World History of Food*, edited by Kenneth F. Kiple and Kriemhild Conèe Orenlas. 2 vols. 1,958p. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000 (0-521-40216-6), \$150.

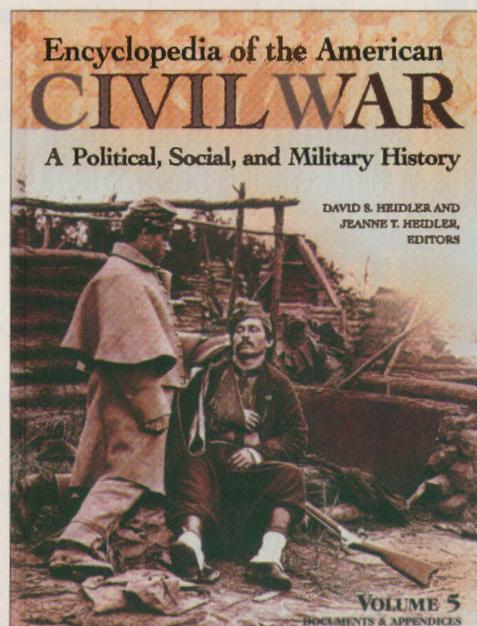
This outstanding work of scholarship explains what we eat and why we eat it. The multidisciplinary articles discuss both individual foods and topics such as food fads, famine, and eating disorders.

*Encyclopedia of Lesbian and Gay Histories and Cultures*, 2 vols. *Lesbian Histories and Cultures*, vol. 1, edited by Bonnie Zimmerman. 862p. (0-8153-1920-7), \$140. *Gay Histories and Cultures*, vol. 2., edited by George E. Haggerty. 986p. (0-8153-1880-4), \$250. New York: Garland, 2000.

This source is unique among encyclopedias of homosexuality with separate volumes devoted to gay and lesbian issues. The volumes consist of short, signed entries arranged alphabetically. This set, which should become the standard in its field, will be a useful addition to all public and academic libraries.

*Encyclopedia of the American Civil War: A Political, Social, and Military History*, edited by David S. Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler. 5 vols. 2,733p. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-Clio, 2000 (1-57607-066-2), \$425.

The editors have compiled a comprehensive source that provides a first-stop reference on broad areas or specific topics on the Civil War. The contemporary photographs and lithographs bring the human element into the encyclopedia, a type of reference more known for facts and



**A wounded Zouave during the Civil War is vividly portrayed on the cover of the *Encyclopedia of the American Civil War: A Political, Social, and Military History, Volume 5* (ABC-CLIO). (Photo by Mathew Brady. © Bettmann/Corbis)**

*Encyclopedia of European Social History from 1350 to 2000*, edited by Peter N. Stearns. New York: Scribner, 2001 (0-684-80582-0), \$595.

Covering the period from the beginning of the Renaissance to the present, this encyclopedia consists of 209 signed articles and nearly 300 biographical entries. The set is thoroughly indexed, amply illustrated, and a joy to read. Graduate students will find it useful as an introduction to historiography while advanced high school students will enjoy the articles on historical topics.

## RELIGION

*Contemporary American Religion*, by Wade Clark Roof. 2 vols. 861p. New York: Macmillan Library Reference, 2000 (0-02-864928-1), \$225.

This excellent source furnishes students and scholars with information on contemporary religion, personalities, and popular topics from Fundamentalist Christianity to feng shui.

*Encyclopedia of Judaism*, edited by Jacob Neusner, Alan J. Avery-Peck, and William Scott Green. 3 vols. 1,592p. New York: Continuum Publishing/The Museum of Jewish Heritage, 1999 (0-8264-1178-9), \$300.

With more than 100 lengthy essays, this exceptional work on Judaism covers more than its historical framework. The *Encyclopedia of Judaism* provides complete and accurate coverage of Judaism—everything from its history, beliefs, and observances, from the beginning to modern times. It is an excellent source written by scholars.

*Encyclopedia of Monasticism*, edited by William M. Johnston. 2 vols. 1,556p. Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2000 (1-5795-8090-4), \$295.

This well-written, well-researched reference source brings together monastic life with particular attention to three traditions: Buddhist, Eastern Christian, and Western Christian.

## SCIENCE AND NATURE

*Encyclopedia of Aquaculture*, edited by Robert R. Stickney. 1,063p. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 2000 (0-471-29101-3), \$350.

A comprehensive resource that explains every aspect of raising fish commercially, this selection covers the biology and the business aspects of the subject.

*Encyclopedia of Biodiversity*, edited by Simon A. Levin. 5 vols. San Diego: Academic Press, 2001 (0-

12-226865-2), \$1,295.

The encyclopedia looks at all forms of life, from nematodes to human beings, in 313 signed articles. The set covers a wide range of scientific and social science issues, making it a useful resource for learning about purely scientific concepts as well as issues concerning human effects on the environment. Academic and larger public libraries will find this work invaluable for answering questions about environmental and biological topics.

*Encyclopedia of Paleontology*, edited by Ronald Singer. 2 vols. 1,435p. Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1999 (1-884964-96-6), \$295.

This resource is ideal for patrons seeking information about the principles and methods of paleontology, paleontology in different regions of the world, and the primary researchers in the field. Dinosaurs as well as all types of animals, plants, and organisms discovered in fossils are included.

*Encyclopedia of Psychology*, edited by Alan E. Kazdin. 8 vols. 4,160p. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000 (1-55798-187-6), \$750.

The American Psychological Association, under the editorial direction of Alan Kazdin, has produced an exceptional multidisciplinary and multicultural encyclopedia.

ACCIDENTAL HUMOR ANIMATION  
ACADEMIC STUDY OF HUMOR  
BODY HUMOR ANTI-AUTHORITY HUMOR  
AFRICAN AMERICAN HUMOR BUSINESS HUMOR  
CHILDREN'S TELEVISION

## Encyclopedia of 20th-Century American Humor

RADIO HUMOR FRONTIER HUMOR  
DIALECT HUMOR ETHNIC HUMOR  
LEGAL HUMOR  
IMPERSONATION GAY & LESBIAN HUMOR  
SCREWBALL COMEDIES PRACTICAL JOKES  
VAUDEVILLE SITCOMS  
PUNS CARTOONS  
RIDDLES POLITICAL CORRECTNESS  
Alleen Pace Nilsen  
Don L.F. Nilsen  
ORYX

*An exploration of why humor is important is offered in the Encyclopedia of 20th-Century American Humor (Oryx Press), a reference source that provides an overview of humor studies and treats a wide range of humor-related subjects.*

*Encyclopedia of the Scientific Revolution: From Copernicus to Newton*, by Wilbur Applebaum. 758p. New York: Garland, 2000 (0-8153-1503-1), \$150.

This unique reference book focuses on scientific development in the 16th and 17th centuries, when the field of science underwent tremendous advances and discoveries. The 441 articles cover scientists, processes, phenomena, philosophy, religion, and professional societies.

*Science and Its Times: Understanding the Social Significance of Scientific Discovery*, edited by Neil Schlager and Josh Lauer. 7 vols. Detroit: Gale Group, 2000/01 (0-



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**Reference Sources Committee members: (standing, from left) Juleigh M. Clark, Vicki D. Bloom, Sandra C. McCarthy, and chair Teresa Portilla Omidsalar; (seated) Deborah D. Costa, Edward Kownslar, Katharine Dean, and Michael Levine-Clark. Not pictured is Barbara Bibel.**

7876-3932-X), \$595.

This series discusses how the major fields of science developed during specific time periods. Each volume focuses on a range of years and includes developments in exploration, life sciences, mathematics, physical sciences, and technology. When the series is completed, the seven volumes will cover 2000 B.C. to the present.

**Scientific American Science Desk Reference.** 690p. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1999 (0-471-35675-1), \$39.95.

Divided into 15 sections covering a specific scientific discipline, this work includes sections on key concepts, glossaries, and biographies of prominent researchers in that field, chronologies, and information unique to that particular discipline.

## LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

**Encyclopedia of German Literature**, edited by Matthias Konzett. 2 vols. 1,136p. Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2000 (1-57958-138-2), \$175.

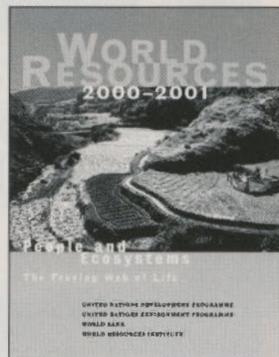
A substantial contribution to English encyclopedias of German literature, this authoritative two-volume set features in-depth treatment of the authors, works, topics, and influences of German literary studies. Arranged in A-to-Z format, the articles are both definitive and critical.

**Encyclopedia of 20th-Century American Humor**, by Alleen Pace Nilsen and Don L. F. Nilsen. 360p. Phoenix, Ariz.: Oryx, 2000 (1-573-56218-1), \$67.50.

This unique encyclopedia treats the concepts, persons, themes, and media of 20th-century American humor and humor studies. More than 100 alphabetically arranged entries highlight a broad range of humor-related topics from wit, understatement, and ambiguity to late-night talk shows

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*Science Books & Films, October 1998*

### **World Resources 2000-2001 People and Ecosystems: The Fraying Web of Life**

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and the Internet. Entries are enhanced with humorous examples and suggested readings.

**Facts on File Companion to the American Short Story**, edited by Abby H. P. Werlock. 542p. New York: Facts on File, 2000 (0-8160-3164-9), \$71.50, \$64.50 to libraries.

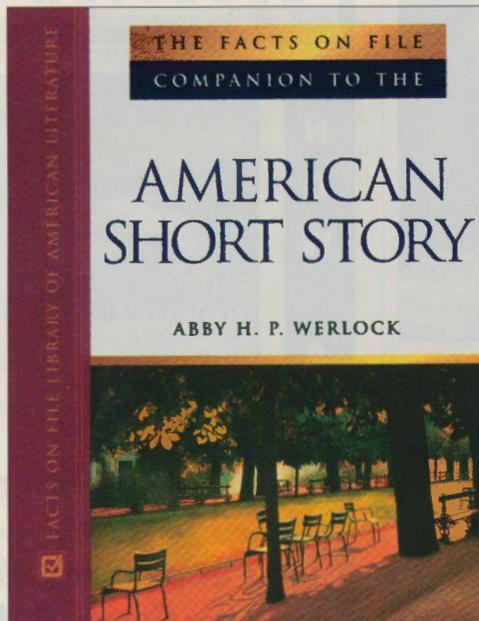
A handy volume that presents an immediate introduction to American short fiction from the 19th century to the 1990s, the 675 alphabetically arranged entries consist of author biographies, literary terms, theories, themes, well-known characters, influential events, and summaries of major stories. Entries are definitive and written in a clear style.

**Encyclopedia of Movie Special Effects**, by Patricia D. Netzley. 291p. Phoenix, Ariz.: Oryx Press, 2000 (1-57356-167-3), \$65.

A unique resource detailing the developments and use of special effects in the American movie industry, this title is well indexed and illustrated with 366 entries. It covers Academy Award-winning special effects movies, groundbreaking techniques, equipment and devices, special effects houses, and pivotal figures in mechanical and visual special effects, makeup, creature design, directing, and stunt work.

**Oxford Companion to Crime and Mystery Writing**, edited by Rosemary Herbert, Catherine Aird, and John M. Reilly. 535p. New York: Oxford, 1999 (0-19-507239-1), \$60.

Entertaining and authoritative, this alphabetically arranged companion is an indispensable reference guide to crime and mystery writing. Unique in its biographical and critical treatment of major detective writers, it is a comprehensive digest to the genre's lexicon, characters, themes, time periods, milieus, and curiosities.



*The serene painting Early Morning (Dale Kennington, 1991) dons the cover of The Facts on File Companion to the American Short Story, described as the only reference book to analyze the genre as a whole.*

**The importance of women in sports is acknowledged in the extensive two-volume International Encyclopedia of Women and Sports (Macmillan Reference USA) complete with historical photographs.**

**Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales**, edited by Jack Zipes. 601p. New York: Oxford, 2000 (0-19-860115-8), \$60.

Researchers from scholars to the general public will find this reference source an excellent starting place to find definitions, summaries, authors, artists, and regional and historical overviews of fairy tales, past and present.

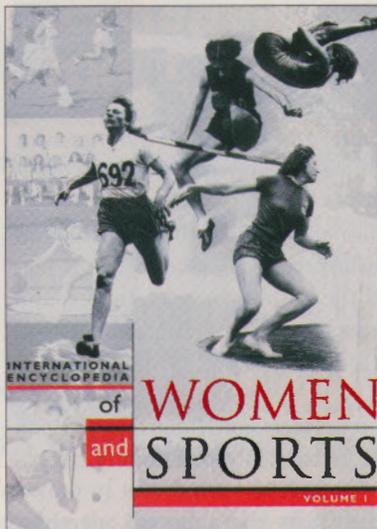
## SPORTS

**International Encyclopedia of Women and Sports**, edited by Karen Christensen, Allen Guttmann, and Gertrude Pfister. 3 vols. New York: Macmillan Library Reference, 2000 (0-02-864954-0), \$325.

No other encyclopedia covers the world of women in international sports with such depth, currency, and detail. This three-volume, illustrated reference set provides articles on all aspects of the history and the current state of women's sports. Included are more than 230 biographies, 170 individual and group sports, and 75 country profiles, plus examinations of cultural, societal, health, and ethical issues.

**Ken Schultz's Fishing Encyclopedia: Worldwide Angling Guide**. 1,916p. Foster City, Calif.: IDG Books Worldwide, Inc. 2000 (0-02-862057-7) \$60.

Whether you are looking for a fishing destination, description of a species of fish, or information on equipment, it's all here. Written by a long-time editor of *Field and Stream* and renowned fishing expert, this mammoth new guide with more than 2,000 entries and 1,400 color drawings and photographs will serve as the seminal guide to sports fishing for years to come.



**Sports: The Complete Visual Reference**, edited by Francois Fortin. 372p. Buffalo, New York: Firefly Books, 2000 (1-55209-540-1), \$39.95.

A sure winner for any sports reference collection. Using lavish color graphics, photographs, and concise, clear explanations, readers can learn about the history, rules, techniques, equipment, playing fields, terminology, training regimens, player positions, and physical requirements for more than 125 sports played around the world.

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