

OUTSTANDING REFERENCE SOURCES 2002

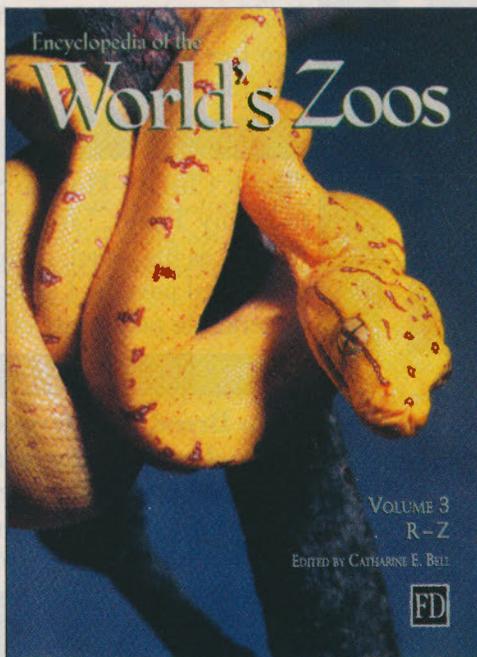
By Vicki D. Bloom

THE ANNUAL RECOMMENDATIONS
OF DISTINGUISHED REFERENCE WORKS
SELECTED BY REFERENCE LIBRARIANS FROM
PUBLIC AND ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Amid the hubbub and excitement in New Orleans as the city geared up to host the Super Bowl and Mardi Gras festivities, a group of 11 librarians convened in a conference room during ALA's Midwinter Meeting to complete the annual task of compiling a list of the year's outstanding reference sources. These librarians comprised ALA's Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) Reference Sources Committee, a group charged with identifying newly released reference works of distinction that would be appropriate for small to medium-sized academic and public libraries.

Each committee member is assigned one or more subject areas to review. Throughout the year they comb catalogs, peruse publisher Web sites, collect reviews, and examine hundreds of new reference titles. Close contact is established with publisher representatives to obtain news of forthcoming publications and to acquire relevant review copies. In October, the chair solicits committee nominations and distributes a preliminary list that is continually refined. Titles are often added at the last minute

VICKI D. BLOOM is head of reference services at the University of California/Riverside's Rivera Library. As chair of RUSA's Reference Sources Committee, she is responsible for the introduction of this article and for editing the annotations written by committee members.



A green tree python that makes a home at Chicago's Lincoln Park Zoological Gardens adorns the cover of the Encyclopedia of the World's Zoos, Volume 3 (Fitzroy Dearborn), the first major reference work to provide description, history, analysis, and information on every aspect of the zoo world.

due to heavy year-end publishing activity. Some 50 to 60 titles were held up to committee scrutiny during the five sessions and 15 hours of deliberations in January. A final list of 26 outstanding titles emerged.

The 26 winning titles not only reflect the highest quality, but range widely in subject matter, scope, format, and price. Some titles, including the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, were selected for their magnitude of scholarship; while others, like the *Encyclopedia of the World's Zoos* and *Martial Arts of the World: An Encyclopedia*, filled

a niche in reference literature. The many science titles, such as the *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Energy*, demonstrate the continuing need for current information in an era of rapid scientific and medical advancements.

The cost factor loomed over the committee as a critical selection criterion. The expensive 29-volume *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* made the list after a determination that its unique wealth of information and inclusion of new information made it suitable for a great number of public and academic libraries. Sec-

ond editions, such as the *New Historical Atlas of Religion in America*, are usually not included, but this year's list includes three classic titles that have been completely revised and significantly expanded.

An exhibit featuring the 2002 Outstanding Reference Sources will be on display at the RUSA booth during the ALA Annual Conference this summer in Atlanta. To learn more about the Reference Sources Committee or to see past and present lists with fuller annotations, visit the RUSA Web site at www.ala.org/rusa/bestref.html.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Macmillan Encyclopedia of Energy, edited by John Zumerchik. 3 vols. 1,270p. New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2000 (0-02-865021-2), \$375.

These volumes provide a snapshot of the history and science of energy production, conservation, and use. Multidisciplinary in scope, the 253 signed and lavishly illustrated articles cover topics ranging from biofuels and bicycles to steam engines and thermodynamics. The work ends with a fascinating energy time line that puts major events in the history of energy into context.

Encyclopedia of Computers and Computer History, edited by Raúl Rojas. 2 vols. 950p. Chicago and London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2001 (1-57958-235-4), \$295.

This unique reference work includes 600 articles covering the full history of computing from the abacus to eBay. Biographies of major figures in the history of computers, company background, and lists of computer terminology as well as profiles of pioneering computers such as the ENIAC and the Commodore 64 are provided.

Encyclopedia of the World's Zoos, edited by Catharine F. Bell. 3 vols. 1,600p. Chicago and London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2001 (1-57958-174-9), \$325.

No other reference work provides the history and background of more than 150 of the world's major zoos, as well as the types of animals housed, the concepts and issues of animal care and keeping, facility design, professional organizations, and significant people in the field of zoology. Some 500 illustrated entries and indexes supplement the highly informative and readable text. An international team of more than 250 contributed to this work.

Reader's Guide to the History of Science, edited by Arne Hessenbruch. 900p. London and Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2000 (1-884964-29-X), \$135.

A readers' advisory to the best books on the history of science. Written by 200 international scholars, the 600 comparative essays begin with a bibliography of important works, followed by reviews of those sources in the body of the entry. Important concepts and processes, phenomena, and scientists as well as scientific developments in different countries are covered.

AAAS Atlas of Population and Environment, by Paul Harrison and Fred Pearce. 215p. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2001 (0-520-23081-7 cloth), \$65; (0-520-23084-1 paperback), \$29.95.

This volume discusses and illustrates the effects of the world's population on natural resources, land use, atmosphere, chemicals, wastes, ecosystems, and biodiversity. It is filled with high-quality maps, charts, and informative illustrations.

Encyclopedia of Genetics, edited by Eric C. R. Reeve. 970p. Chicago and London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2001 (1-884964-34-6), \$150.

Discoveries in genetics are reported daily. Written for academic audiences and well-informed generalists, this authoritative and impressively up-to-date 125-entry encyclopedia covers not only the basics and principles of genetics, but details the role of genetics in current issues, such as diseases, disorders, aging, sex, conservation, mapping, gene therapy, and food and nutrition.

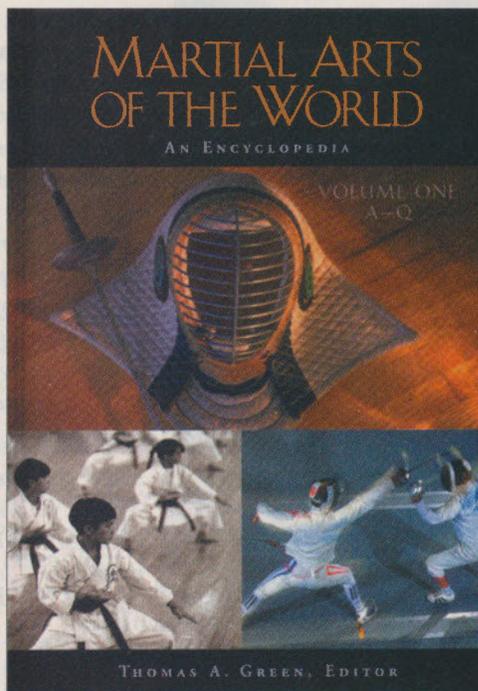
SPORTS AND RECREATION

Aak to Zumbra: A Dictionary of the World's Watercraft, by the Mariners' Museum with M. H. Parry. 676p. Newport News, Va.: Mariners' Museum, 2000 (0-917376-46-3), \$49.95.

Boat lovers will rejoice when they see this delightful new dictionary of indigenous watercraft from around the world. This reference work is both a great contribution to "the ethnography of the boat" and includes boats with such names as zumbra and abubuz, making it a treasure trove of terms for Scrabble players everywhere. Accompanied by line drawings, the 5,600 entries list country of origin, function, dates of operation, and appearance.

Martial Arts of the World: An Encyclopedia, edited by Thomas A. Green. 2 vols. 894p. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2001 (1-57607-150-2), \$185.

Did you know that the martial arts include such former Western pursuits as dueling, gunfighting, and gladiatorial combat? Nearly 100 articles by scholars discuss specific martial arts, countries, and concepts such as religion and spiritual development common to martial arts traditions of the world. Definitions of unfamiliar terms and an index that notes the historical figures and classic texts discussed within articles



The two-volume Martial Arts of the World: An Encyclopedia (ABC-CLIO) offers entries dealing with the history, philosophy, and evolution of the complex world of martial arts including coverage of contemporary practice.

help to make this set a scholarly corrective in an area often informed by the movies.

SOCIAL ISSUES

Censorship: A World Encyclopedia, edited by Derek Jones. 4 vols. 2,950p. Chicago and London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2001 (1-57958-135-8), \$450.

Scholarly and sophisticated, yet still accessible, this set tackles one of the world's oldest practices with geographic and historical completeness. International experts have contributed fascinating and detailed articles on people (victims and perpetrators), countries (large and small), religions, genres (including film and music), hot topics (such as academic freedom and hate speech), institutions, and organizations. The excellent bibliographies for each of the 1,500 entries and the indexing will guide students further with their research.

Reader's Guide to the Social Sciences, edited by Jonathan Michie. 2 vols. 2,165p. London and Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2001 (1-579-58-091-2), \$285.

This deep two-volume, 1,200-entry pair offers students, teachers, and librarians expert advice and analysis to an overwhelming amount of secondary material available in the social sciences.

Fully cross-referenced, the title identifies the key published works and includes evaluative essays on a vast number of topics. An excellent research and collection development tool.

Encyclopedia of Women Social Reformers, by Helen Rappaport. 2 vols. 888p. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2001 (1-57607-101-4), \$185.

This valuable contribution to women's studies includes the stories of more than 400 women from 64 countries and brings into the limelight many forgotten movements and personalities that have had major impacts on history. Readers will be inspired by the fascinating biographies.

Encyclopedia of the U.S. Supreme Court, edited by Thomas Lewis and Richard Wilson. 3 vols. 1,024p. Pasadena, Calif.: Salem Press, 2000 (0-89356-097-9), \$315.

Succinct topical essays, easy-to-read headers, extensive cross-references, and lists of further readings make this encyclopedia particularly valuable to researchers looking for Supreme Court information. The entries comprise landmark cases, biographical data of justices and other prominent figures, types of law, and the court's impact on U.S. Constitutional law. A roster of justices and the presidents who nominated them, a time line, and a table of important federal statutes round out this handsome set.

MUSIC

Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians, ninth edition, Centennial Edition, edited by Nicolas Slonimsky and Laura Diane Kuhn. 6 vols. 4,220p. New York: Schirmer, 2000 (0-02-865525-7), \$650.

Nicolas Slonimsky's venerable single-volume reference is now a six-volume set, with better page layout and typeface, and a subject range outside its traditional concentration on classical music. Under new editorship since Slonimsky's death in 1995, coverage has expanded to over 1,000 new entries on classical music and over 2,000 new entries on jazz and popular music. Nice features include reprints of Slonimsky's witty introductions to earlier editions and indexes for genre, nationality, and women composers and musicians.

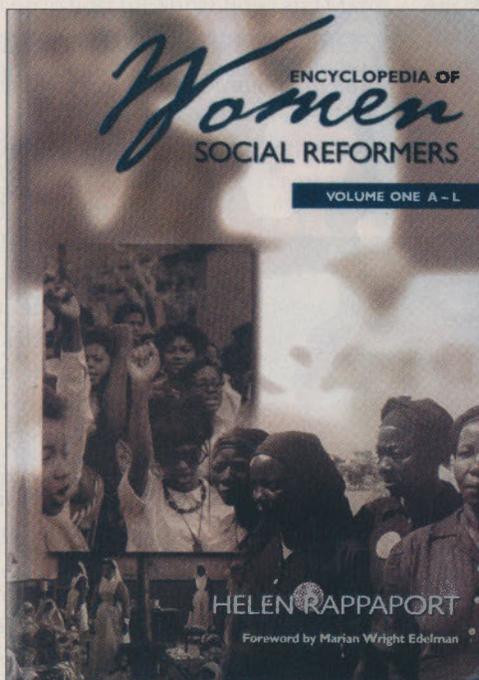
New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, second edition, edited by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell. 29 vols. London: Macmillan Pub., New York: distributed by Grove's Dictionaries, 2001 (1-56159-239-0), \$4,850.

This reference classic has approximately doubled in size since its last publication 20 years ago, and the expansion

involves more than the thorough revision and addition of articles about music of the past. More articles about 20th-century composers and composer-performers have been added, as well as topical articles about the gender-related, multicultural, and interdisciplinary ways that music is now being studied. Add to these changes that *New Grove* is also available online, making it a source that would have made its many-faceted creator Sir George Grove proud.

MEDICINE AND PSYCHOLOGY

The Gale Encyclopedia of Cancer: A Guide to Cancer and Its Treatments, edited by Ellen Thackery. 2 vols. 1,239 p.



Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund, provides the foreword in the two-volume Encyclopedia of Women Social Reformers (ABC-CLIO), the first comprehensive guide to women activists from every part of the world, and discussion of the broad range of women's struggles to reform society from the 18th century to the present.

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MEDICINE AND PSYCHOLOGY

The Gale Encyclopedia of Cancer: A Guide to Cancer and Its Treatments, edited by Ellen Thackery. 2 vols. 1,239 p.

Detroit: Gale Group, Thomson Learning, 2001 (0-7876-5609-7), \$285.

All of us fear the modern scourge of cancer at some level, and being an informed patient or family member is essential in this confusing world of advanced technology and conflicting advice. This new encyclopedia is a perfect entry point, with its clear, but medically informative, articles on 120 different cancers, drugs, and diagnostic tests. Treatments (traditional and alternative), causes and prevention, clinical trials, and demographic information are also provided. Users will especially appreciate the pertinent colored illustrations, the highlighted "Questions to Ask the Doctor," and lists of additional resources.

A Dictionary of Psychology, by Andrew M. Colman. 864p. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001 (0-19-866211-4), \$45.

Confused by the "cone of confusion"? Andrew Colman, psychology professor at the University of Leicester, Midlands, United Kingdom, and a British Psychological Society Fellow, has created an excellent dictionary that clarifies definitions of the most significant and difficult terms in the field of psychology, psychiatry, psychoanalysis, and other related fields. Reasonably priced, this dictionary will be a terrific addition to any library.

Art Across America: A Comprehensive Guide to American Art Museums and Exhibition Galleries, by John J. Russell and Thomas S. Spencer. 898p. Monkton, Md.: Friar's Lantern, 2000 (0-9667144-1-5), \$29.95.

This friendly, affordable guide to some 1,700 museums with art collections is a perfect resource to hand the art lover who wants to know what museums and other public exhibition spaces to visit in an area. Entries are arranged by state and city, and include basic information about fees, hours, activities, Web sites, and a description of the collections, facilities, a bit of history, and any special points of interest. Handy maps showing museum locations introduce each state section, and inviting photographs accompany most entries.

RELIGION

Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible, edited by David Noel Freedman. 1,459p. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2000 (0-8028-2400-5), \$45.

This outstanding source is the place to find definitions, personal names and their deriva-

tion, places, and concepts from the Bible. Six hundred leading scholars from a wide spectrum of theological perspectives have come together to provide almost 5,000 articles that reflect current biblical scholarship, archaeological discoveries, trends, and issues. A must for every library.

New Historical Atlas of Religion in America, edited by Edwin Scott Gaustad, Philip L. Barlow, and Richard W. Dishno. 464p. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001 (0-19-509168-X), \$145.

A completely reorganized, updated, and expanded edition of Gaustad's 1962 original work and the 1976 revision, this beautifully illustrated atlas presents a historical narrative of America's rich and diverse religious past. Lively text along with 260 colorful, detailed maps and 200 other graphics provide the histories, migrations, developments, and growths of religious communities in the United States.

HISTORY AND CIVILIZATION

The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt, edited by Donald B. Redford. 3 vols. 1, 880p. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001 (0-19-510234-7), \$450.

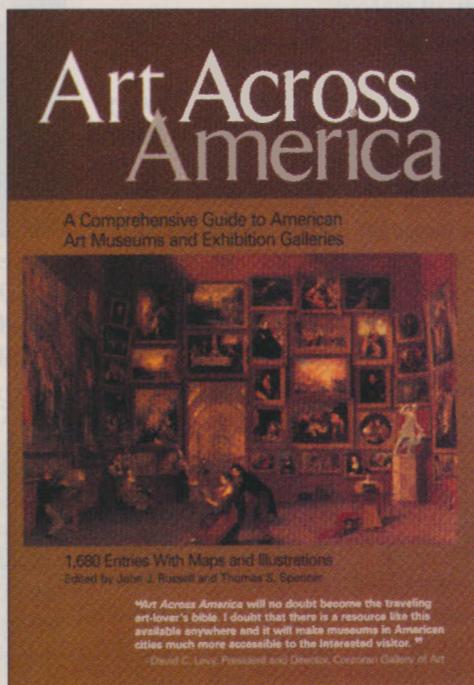
Until now, there has been no comprehensive, scholarly English-language encyclopedia covering ancient Egypt. This beautifully constructed work fills that gap with more than 600 academic, but accessible, articles on all aspects of Egyptology. The coverage is interdisciplinary, combining history, archaeology, economics, science, and literary and religious studies. A stunning piece of scholarship.

Encyclopedia of the United States in the Nineteenth Century, edited by Paul Finkelman. 3 vols. 1,705p. New York:

Charles Scribner's Sons, 2000 (0-684-80500-6), \$390.

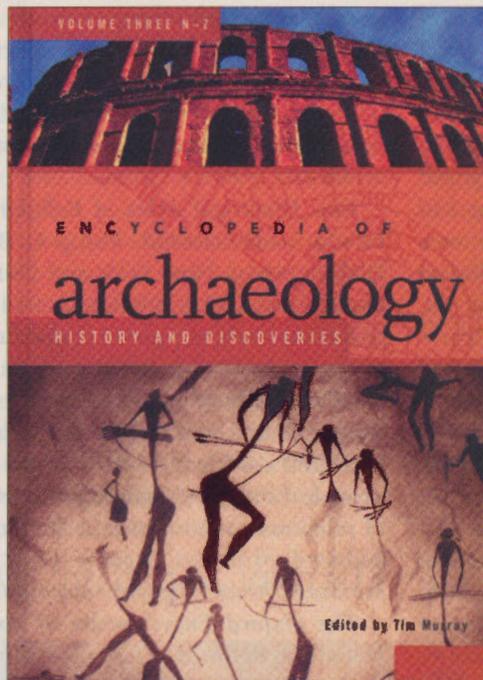
The 19th century was arguably the most important in the nation's history, making the publication of this first-rate encyclopedia a significant event. Students using this 600-entry work, which is conveniently keyed to the National Standards for United States History, will find the entries easy to follow and enjoyable to read. It is an essential purchase for all public and academic libraries.

Samuel F. B. Morse's "Gallery of the Louvre, 1831-1833" is pictured on the cover of *Art Across America: A Comprehensive Guide to American Art Museums and Exhibition Galleries* (Friar's Lantern). The work is part of the Daniel J. Terra Collection housed at the Terra Museum of American Art in Chicago.



Encyclopedia of Archaeology: History and Discoveries, edited by Tim Murray. 3 vols. 1,580p. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2001 (1-57607-198-7), \$295.

This three-volume work bridges a long-existing gap by successfully filling the space between scholarly and popular coverage. Taking a global perspective, this 500-entry set contains articles on the full range of archaeological knowledge, including great discoveries, significant archaeologists, important organizations, major geographical areas, and key concepts.



Archaeology from prehistory to the present day is covered in the Encyclopedia of Archaeology: History and Discoveries (ABC-CLIO). The three-volume set is illustrated with rare photographs, drawings, and maps contributed by the world's most eminent archaeologists.

this authoritative and illustrative 3,000-entry compendium is well constructed, solidly cross-referenced, and above all, delightful and interesting reading.

Encyclopedia of Life Writing: Autobiographical and Biographical Forms, edited by Margaretta Jolly. 2 vols. 1,150p. Chicago and London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2001 (1-57958-232-X), \$185.

So, what is life writing? This unique and inspiring encyclopedia sketches the territory of autobiography and biography from the many forms of personal writing. Included are popular and historical reporting of another person's life and expressions outside of the written form, such as testimony, oral history, and film. Signed, alphabetically arranged essays cross history, geography, and discipline

in their treatment of the genres, persons, works, and themes of this rich—albeit amorphous—body of literature. ♦

The Oxford Companion to Military History, edited by Richard Holmes. 1,072p. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001 (0-19-866209-2), \$60.

This Oxford companion does much to untangle the long and complicated history of military events in Europe and North America since the 18th century. The thoughtful entries are clear, concise, and readable, with a number of extended entries on such subjects as artillery, infantry, and the science and technology of war.

LITERATURE

Encyclopedia of American Poetry: The Twentieth Century, by Eric L. Haralson. 866p. New York and London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2001 (1-57958-240-0), \$125.

Reliable and easy-to-use, this volume encourages an appreciation for English-language poets, representative poems and collections, and the evolution of American poetry in the last century. Alphabetically arranged essays are definitive and critical; range from two to five pages; and offer a biographical, critical, and explicative introduction to the 20th-century's significant and influential authors, landmark works of poetry, and its major topics, schools, and movements.

The Oxford Companion to Shakespeare, edited by Michael Dobson and Stanley Wells. 576p. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001 (0-19-811735-3), \$60.

A truly fun, accessible, and contextually rich companion to the vast world and work of Shakespeare. Spanning the historical and contemporary, and the literary and dramatic,



Reference Sources Committee members (standing from left): Edward Kownslar, Kathy Dean, Michael Levine-Clark, Nevin Mayer, Jeff Kempe, Deborah Costa, James McShane, and Emily Horning; (seated) Vicki D. Bloom and Betsy Lindsley.

Visit www.ala.org/rusa/mars/best2001.html for the RUSA Machine-Assisted Reference Section's 2001 outstanding reference sites on the World Wide Web and www.ala.org/rusa/brass/besthome.html for the 2001 listing of the "Best of the Best" Business Web Sites compiled by the RUSA Business Reference and Services Section's Education Committee.