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Traditional Festivals: A Multicultural Encyclopedia (Review)

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IN THIS ISSUE

We've starred our reviews of *The Encyclopedia of New England* (p.66) and *The Greenwood Library of American War Reporting* (p.69).

The Encyclopedia of New England is another in a line of university-press-produced regional encyclopedias, following on the heels of *The Encyclopedia of Chicago* (Univ. of Chicago, 2004), *Encyclopedia of the Great Plains* (Univ. of Nebraska, 2004), and *The Encyclopedia of New York State* (Syracuse, 2005; watch for our upcoming review). Like *Encyclopedia of the Great Plains*, the New England volume is arranged first by broad topic, a scheme that works better than an A–Z or state-by-state approach to present the commonalities that give each area its unique identity.

There is no question that the Internet has helped spur the use of primary source materials in the classroom, but print reference tools often do a better job of providing organization and context. It is common now for print sources to include primary material as part of their content, and we have seen several reference books that, like *The Greenwood Library of American War Reporting*, are document-centered. Others include Gale's 10-volume *American Decades Primary Sources* and Facts On File's 3-volume *Encyclopedia of American Historical Documents* (2004). *The Greenwood Library of American War Reporting* is unique because it takes a more targeted approach. For more on war reporting, see Keir Graff's Reference on the Web column, "The Blogs of War," on p.68.

One of the things that drove many of us to become reference librarians is a love of the odd fact, and there are plenty of odd facts in three of the other titles we review in these pages, all belonging to the reference subgenre of works created by single individuals who have spent countless hours in the dogged pursuit of data. *Television Cartoon Shows: An Illustrated Encyclopedia, 1949 through 2003* (p.69) updates a 1995 title and contains detailed histories of made-for-television cartoons all the way from *Crusader Rabbit*, "the first animated series made exclusively for the small screen," to *The Adventures of Jimmy Neutron* and *South Park*. *The Wizard of Oz Catalog* (p.70) lists, among other things, every Oz-inspired television program, such as *Wizard of Soul*; a Jackson Five special that aired in 1971; and a 1999 episode of *Rugrats*. The most generally useful title, *Notable Last Facts* (p.68), compiles more than 16,000 "lasts," including the last crime of Billy the Kid, the last baseball players allowed to use the spitball, and the last year in which only female names were used for hurricanes and tropical storms.

COMING UP

For the December 1 Booklist Spotlight on Sci-Tech, we'll be reviewing *Encyclopedia of Science, Technology, and Ethics* (Macmillan); *Technology in World History* (Oxford); and *Universe: The Definitive Visual Guide* (DK), among other titles.

—Mary Ellen Quinn (mquinn@ala.org)

NEWS and VIEWS

style, and the significance of the elements of each show. Entry length generally ranges from one-half page to nearly 10 pages for *The Flintstones* and its many derivatives. The historical essay in volume 1 covers 75 years of cartoons, starting with Disney's *Steamboat Willie* in 1928 (also the year that Radio Corporation of America began testing for long-range broadcasting on a television screen) up to the current landscape defined by improved production techniques, new FCC regulations regarding content, the growth of cable television, and the popularity of Japanese anime. Volume 2 concludes with an essay on cartoon voices, a selected bibliography, and an index to both volumes. The index provides access to programs, people, techniques, and organizations but not to cartoon characters, unless their names correspond to the titles of shows. We found a few errors; for example, the text contains a *see* reference from *Heckle and Jeckle* to *CBS Cartoon Theatre*, but there is no entry for the latter.

Whether a person wants to find information about a particular program or learn the history of television cartoons, this set will be useful and entertaining. It is recommended

for public libraries and for academic libraries supporting studies in television and animation. —Patricia Hogan

Traditional Festivals: A Multicultural Encyclopedia. 2v. By Christian Roy. 2005. 548p. illus. index. ABC-CLIO, \$185 (1-57607-089-1); e-book, \$200 (1-85109-689-2). 394.26.

More than 150 traditional festivals from around the world are described at length by historian Roy. The festivals include the major feasts of all world religions and religious groups: Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, Voodoo, Bahaim, Islam, ancient Greek and Roman, Native American, and several African tribes. Roy goes beyond the basic facts and descriptions to "provide insight into the festival patterns." As a result, the articles are detailed, and many are several pages in length. The coverage for India and Africa includes only the best-known and -documented festivals because of their sheer number.

Articles cover specific festivals (*Divali*, *Sabbath*, *Saturnalia*) and are arranged alphabetically, with *see also* references as well as references

listing books and a few audiovisual and digital sources. Festival names within the text appear in bold type whether they are entry headings or not, which is contrary to the usual practice of using bold type to point to other articles and may be confusing. Black-and-white illustrations are strewn throughout both volumes. Appendixes chart the main Hindu, Muslim, and Jewish festivals and holidays; the movable feasts of the Western Church; Gregorian dates of Orthodox Easter; and Chinese Lunar New Year's dates. In addition, there are a comparative table of all festivals arranged by season and a full list of festivals within each cultural area.

The more expansive *Holidays, Festivals, and Celebrations of the World* (Omnigraphics, 2005) offers quick facts but less detail on many of the same festivals. *Encyclopedia of Religious Rites, Rituals, and Festivals* (Routledge, 2004) is similar in content and scope to *Traditional Festivals*. Since the Routledge encyclopedia is organized by theme (*Divination, Judaism, Naming rituals*), it makes a good complement to Roy's compendium, which is recommended for academic libraries with a focus on religious studies, theology, or world religious culture. Public and school libraries may find *Traditional Festivals* less useful because, aside from the appendixes, it is not designed for locating quick factual data. —Sue Polanka

Unnatural Phenomena: A Guide to the Bizarre Wonders of North America. By Jerome Clark. 2005. 369p. illus. index. ABC-CLIO, \$85 (1-57607-430-7). 001.94.

Clark has compiled an intriguing collection of anomalies, some believable and some not. Chapters are arranged alphabetically by the 49 continental U.S. states and contain chronological entries varying in length from one paragraph to eight pages. For each entry, Clark includes citations to original print sources, most of which are newspaper articles dating from 1729 to 1927. A sprinkling of pen-and-ink drawings accompanies the text.

The subject matter varies from a fiery snake sighted near Delphi, Indiana, in 1893 and caterpillars found on the snow in Danville, Pennsylvania, in 1849 to more common sightings—falling and flying objects, mirages, swamp lore, unusual snow, and clouds of crickets. The writing is objective and controlled, leaving the reader to ponder what may have caused a pillar of fire in Tennessee, boiling well water in North Carolina, or a soap-bubble sky in New York. The curious reader can peruse the index to find *animal oddities*, *falling objects*, phenomena occurring in San Francisco, and instances specific to land, sea, river, lake, and sky. This work is an inviting trove of nature's miracles for high-school and public libraries. —Mary Ellen Snodgrass

The Wizard of Oz Catalog: L. Frank Baum's Novel, Its Sequels and Their Adaptations for Stage, Television, Movies, Radio, Music Videos, Comic Books and More. By Fraser A. Sherman. 2005. 286p. illus. index. McFarland, \$45 (0-7864-1792-7). 016.813.

Since its publication in 1900, L. Frank