The Dog Breed Bible (Review)

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American Wars series is the Civil War Almanac, by Fredriksen, author of Revolutionary War Almanac (2006). The first section is a minutely detailed day-by-day chronology that covers nearly 600 pages and includes all the events pertinent to the war. Fredriksen starts the chronology on February 1, 1860, when Democrat William F. Pennington is elected after 44 ballots, noting, “This contest highlights growing factionalism within the Democratic Party.” The chronology concludes in December 1865.

Events for each day are grouped under such topics as “Diplomacy,” “Politics,” “North,” “South,” “Southwest,” and “West,” with the geographic groupings primarily referring to military movements or engagements. Following the chronology are more than 100 biographies of important military and political leaders, focusing on their contributions during the Civil War. The biographies are brief, most less than two pages, and many include black-and-white photos of the subject. A short appendix contains a selection of statistics. A final section of maps is an excellent addition and one of the strengths of this volume. A wide variety of maps, all in black and white, range from large-scale maps showing the entire Confederacy to detailed maps of all the key military engagements. The maps detailing the troop movements are particularly well done, detailed, clear, and easy to read. The volume concludes with an extensive bibliography and a thorough index.

The information in this volume is both accessible and of high quality, making it an outstanding resource for any history researcher or Civil War buff. Highly recommended for academic and public library collections as a complement to resources such as Encyclopedia of the American Civil War: A Political, Social, and Military History (ABC-CLIO, 2000). —Jessica Meyer


Lhasa apsos, terriers, and beagles, oh my! More than 160 American Kennel Club–recognized breeds in the areas of sporting, hound, working, terrier, toy, nonsporting, herding, and “miscellaneous”—those not yet placed in an AKC group—are beautifully described here in a condensed version of Barron’s Encyclopedia of Dog Breeds (2d ed., 2005). Although the same breeds are included, this version leaves out some introductory and back-matter material and the sidebars, which provide a detailed black-and-white breed illustration.

Full-page entries contain the breed name; brief descriptions of history, temperament, upkeep, and health concerns; a copyrighted color photo of the full body and close-up of snout area; and highlighted data on the origin, function, coat, color, and height and weight of the breed. For example, the captioned color photo for the Finnish Spitz breed includes descriptions of its almond-shaped eyes; foxlike head and expression; small, high-set erect ears; plumed tail; and round feet. A sidebar rates eight personality and grooming traits from 1 to 5. For example, the Pekingese entry rates energy level, exercise requirements, playfulness, and ease of training at level 1 (low); affection and friendliness at level 2; and grooming at level 5 (high); and it recommends this breed for lap purposes only. The information provided is perfect for selecting the appropriate pooch based on personality, good looks (check out the Komondor and Puli—black and white “mops”), or grooming and health needs.

Front and back matter include an overview of the breed entries with explanations of ratings, descriptions of the eight AKC groups, a glossary of medical conditions from achondroplasia to zinc responsive dermatis, a glossary of breed color terms, and a listing of health resources. Entries are consistent in coverage and design, making it easy to compare breeds. This small, spiral-bound book is perfect for circulating or reference collections in school and public libraries. —Sue Polanka


This volume in the Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Literature series focuses attention on literature produced by writers of Asian descent from the mid–nineteenth century to the present. Editor Oh, who chairs the English Department at Rider University, has chosen authors whose works are likely to be read widely in high school and college and works that are generally available. The 200 writers included here have cultural and ethnic origins in Afghanistan, Cambodia, China, Japan, Jordan, Laos, North and South Korea, the Philippines, Singapore, Vietnam, and other countries. The list of profiled authors is impressive, ranging from Diana Abu-Jaber to Maxine Hong Kingston and including Khaled Hosseini, Ha Jin, Gish Jen, Jhumpa Lahiri, and Phung Thi Le Ly Hayslip.

The 337 alphabetical, signed, and cross-referenced articles range generally from half