

# Sources

## Reference Books

Tammy J. Eschedor Voelker, Editor

<i>100 Entertainers Who Changed America: An Encyclopedia of Pop Culture Luminaries</i> . . . . .	295
<i>American Civil War: The Definitive Encyclopedia and Document Collection</i> . . . . .	296
<i>Asian Americans: An Encyclopedia of Social, Cultural, Economic, and Political History</i> . . . . .	296
<i>Culture Wars in America. An Encyclopedia of Issues, Viewpoints and Voices</i> . . . . .	297
<i>Encyclopedia of Cultivated Plants: From Acacia to Zinnia</i> . . . . .	297
<i>Encyclopedia of Domestic Violence and Abuse</i> . . . . .	298
<i>Encyclopedia of Great Popular Song Recordings</i> . . . . .	298
<i>Encyclopedia of Latino Culture: From Calaveras to Quinceañeras</i> . . . . .	299
<i>Encyclopedia of Politics of the American West</i> . . . . .	300
<i>Famous Americans: A Directory of Museums, Historic Sites, and Memorials</i> . . . . .	300
<i>Food and Drink in American History: A "Full Course" Encyclopedia</i> . . . . .	301
<i>Hats and Headwear from Around the World: A Cultural Encyclopedia</i> . . . . .	301
<i>Inspired by True Events: An Illustrated Guide to More Than 500 History-Based Films</i> . . . . .	302
<i>Music in American Life: An Encyclopedia of the Songs, Styles, Stars, and Stories That Shaped Our Culture</i> . . . . .	302
<i>Sexually Transmitted Disease: An Encyclopedia of Diseases, Prevention, Treatment and Issues</i> . . . . .	303

RUSQ considers for review reference books and professional materials of interest to reference and user services librarians. Serials and subscription titles normally are not reviewed unless a major change in purpose, scope, format, or audience has occurred. Reviews usually are three hundred to five hundred words in length. Views expressed are those of the reviewers and do not necessarily represent those of ALA. Please refer to standard directories for publishers' addresses.

Correspondence concerning these reviews should be addressed to "Reference Sources" editor, Tammy Eschedor Voelker, Humanities Librarian, Kent State University, 1125 Risman Dr., Kent OH 44242; e-mail: tvoelker@kent.edu

*100 Entertainers Who Changed America: An Encyclopedia of Pop Culture Luminaries*. Ed. by Robert C. Sickels. Santa Barbara, Calif: Greenwood, 2013. 2 vols, acid free \$189 (ISBN: 978-1-59884-830-4). E-book available (978-1-59884-831-1), call for pricing.

It's probably safe to say that reference librarians are probably one of the only groups who, when encountering a new encyclopedia, actually consult the introduction to get a sense of the scope and intent of the authors and editors. (This is because the introductions are generally boring.) Imagine the surprise one of those reference librarians might receive when they encounter this in the introduction by editor Robert C. Sickels: "100 Entertainers Who Changed America. The title alone is fabulously intriguing and evocative and the kind of thing likely to fuel endless debate about the choices contained herein, and that's just what a collection encompassing this topic should do" (xi). Fabulously intriguing? This is an introduction worth reading! Sickels goes on to defend the entertainers he's chosen to include in the two-volume set and points out that those who grumble about who's not included may be mistaking popularity with influence—a good point. Sickels also goes on to explain that "entertainers" can be those involved in film, television, music, sports, and generally those whose longevity and breadth of influence has permeated across popular culture. Sickels seems defensive of his choices, however, when he writes, "I don't pretend to have a definite formula, but the fact of the matter is that neither does anyone else in the world; after all, it's not math—there's no right or wrong here" (xii).

So who made the cut? Elvis Presley, of course, and Martha Stewart, Billie Holiday, Chuck Berry, and Oprah Winfrey. While I am not certain the world needs any more general-interest essays on incredibly well-known people and their influence on the rest of us, the strength of the set lies in the essays about those who may seem surprising choices, such as voice actor Mel Blanc, rapper Chuck D, soap opera creator Agnes Nixon, and the rock group the Velvet Underground. Each essay focuses on the entertainer's career with brief biographical information. Some of the essays are unconventional, such as the one on Woody Allen, which is a kind of memoir about growing up as a self-professed bookish comedy nerd with some long passages about Woody Allen films (there is also, strangely, almost nothing biographical about Allen in the essay). Most of the essays follow the standard format, however, and could be useful to those looking for a broad overview of popular figures.

While not for every collection due to the chance of finding equally valuable information in a variety of print and online sources, *100 Entertainers Who Changed America* is entertaining (get it?) and a load of fun to browse through.—Tracy Carr, *Library Services Bureau Director, Mississippi Library Commission, Jackson, MS*