

Encyclopedia of Social Media and Politics. Ed. by Kerric Harvey. Los Angeles: Sage Reference, 2014. 3 vols. \$415 (ISBN: 978-1-4522-4471-6).

“Social Media. n. web sites and applications which enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking” (OED Online—www.galileo.usg.edu/express?link=zdrop&inst=uga1). Or, “forms of electronic communication (as Web sites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos)” (Merriam-Webster Online—www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/social%20media).

There are probably as many definitions of social media as there are opportunities to pen them. But one feature carries across the definitions: some form of online communication which creates a sense of community. Harvey’s *Encyclopedia of Social Media and Politics* does a good job of bringing together the myriad forms of social media with the wider world of politics. Her edited three-volume encyclopedia covers a plethora of topics from the AARP to Mark Zuckerberg. In addition to the expected introductory essay, there is a fairly detailed chronology beginning with 1945, which quotes an article by Vannevar Bush calling “for the creation of some sort of collective memory, which he called the memex, . . . [for] storing or organizing information. . . . This article is often cited as the first to suggest the properties later realized through hypertext” (xxxix). The signed articles are usually multi-page entries, and each includes cross-references and suggestions for further reading. As one would expect in an encyclopedia on this topic, many of the suggested readings contain URLs to websites and blogs. The glossary provides additional information on terms that may not be familiar to everyone, including entries on *friending*, *tweeps*, and *Wonkette*. A resource guide, which does not include all the entries from the suggested readings, directs users to a select bibliography of books, journal titles (not to actual articles, however), and websites. A unique appendix provides a chart of Representatives and Senators, listing the member’s age and other relevant demographics, party affiliation, and whether or not he or she has a Facebook page, Twitter account, RSS feed, or a YouTube presence. The number of “likes,” followers, and the activity level in each area of social media complete the chart. Readers are invited to draw their own conclusions about this activity or lack thereof.

Significant historical events, such as the Arab Spring, the Occupy Movement, and the rise of the Tea Party Movement, are covered as well as lesser known topics. A “Reader’s Guide” divides the articles into general topics, making it easier to hone in on a given area.

Books on this topic abound. Among some recent publications are David Taras and Christopher Waddell’s *How Canadians Communicate IV* (AU Press, 2012), Jason Gainous and Kevin Wagner’s *Tweeting to Power: The Social Media Revolution in American Politics* (Oxford University Press, 2014), *Transforming American Governance: Rebooting the Public Square*,

edited by Alan Balutis, Terry F. Buss, and Dwight Ink (M.E. Sharpe, 2011), and *Party On! Political Parties from Hamilton and Jefferson to Today’s Networked Age* by John K. White and Matthew R. Kerbel (Paradigm Publishers, 2012). These titles are either entirely about social media and politics or have sections devoted to the topic. However, these publications are more suited to the general collection. A publication from 2013 which sits nicely on the reference shelf along with Harvey’s encyclopedia is the three-volume set, *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social & Political Movements*, edited by Snow, Della Porta, Klandermans, and McAdam (Wiley-Blackwell, 2013). The Wiley-Blackwell title is more historical in scope, covering the American Revolution, other decolonization movements in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as well labor movements and strikes. Social media is woven into the narratives and is also a section unto itself. Libraries would do well to purchase both of these complementary titles. *Encyclopedia of Social Media and Politics* is recommended for undergraduate, graduate, and public library collections. —Carla Wilson Buss, *Curriculum Materials & Education Librarian, University of Georgia Libraries, Athens, Georgia*

Environmental and Natural Resource Economics: An Encyclopedia. Ed. by Timothy C. Haab and John C. Whitehead. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2014. 372 p. acid free \$89 (ISBN: 978-1-4408-0119-8). E-book available (978-1-4408-0120-4), call for pricing.

The editors state up front in their preface that the aim of economics is the study of “stuff” – how it is bought, sold, and used; its costs, benefits, and policies; and whether it is conserved or not conserved, etc. The “stuff” of this single volume encyclopedia is the definitions, descriptions, contributions, and techniques of economics and economists applied to many of the environmental and natural resource contexts and issues. What is missing are more of the intrinsic contributions of the natural environment to maintaining life on Earth. The book would benefit from more emphasis on the well-being of humans and all other species beyond the excellent discussion of ecosystem services (117–120).

Among the many useful and clearly written entries is the one called “Books.” It is a short essay and bibliography of texts and other books important to the understanding of economics and human decisions on ecology and the environment.

The contributions of the selected economists to the environment, such as the understanding of conservation (Dr. John V. Krutilla, 202), environmental valuation (Sherwin Rosen, 285), and interpreting economic ideas to policy makers (George S. Tolley, 305) and others will lead users to want to learn more about their ideas and influence.

The “Value of Statistical Life” entry (330) is fascinating and troubling. While recognizing that life is precious, and protecting it is always the balancing of risks and affordability or a benefit cost analysis, it is discussed as primarily individual decision making. The concept is presented as individuals making choices rather than living with and under the political

policies, corporate profit motive, and governmental agency definitions that limit the choices individuals have. Readers should also read the “Precautionary Principle” entry (264) to understand valuing life and dealing with risks, as well as just using statistical life as the major metric.

This encyclopedia can be read cover to cover to get an overview of some of the principles (economic and political) that are essential to environmental and natural resource economics. It is available as an e-book, but serendipity while leafing through the print edition will lead to reading such entries as “Hedonic Price Method” (178) or “Natural Monopoly” (220), concepts which might not be found when looking for specific definitions in the e-book.

This is an important resource for students, faculty, and the general public to learn more about some of the concepts and economists involved in the application of economic ideas to the environment. As John C. Whitehead reminds all in his entry on “Earth Day,” Gaylord Nelson’s statement about the significance of the first Earth is still true. Whitehead says, “the efficient management of the earth’s resources is still one of the most fundamental issues that society faces” (115).—Linda Loos Scarth, retired reference librarian, independent scholar, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Faiths Across Time: 5,000 Years of Religious History. By J. Gordon Melton. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2014. 4 vols. acid free \$415 (ISBN: 978-61069-025-6). E-book available (978-1-61069-023-3), call for pricing.

This timeline represents a vast undertaking for a single author. Using Egyptian records as a starting point, Melton has arranged major religious events and developments from around the world into a single chronology. This chronology is more inclusive, especially regarding traditional religions, than Tim Cooke, ed. *Concise History of World Religions: An Illustrated Timeline* (National Geographic, 2011). Melton also provides up to two paragraphs describing each event in the chronology, while the National Geographic publication usually provides only a single sentence. These differences account for the difference in length, where *Faiths Across Time* requires four volumes that are each approximately the size of the *Concise History*’s single volume.

Faiths Across Time includes a few longer, informative essays, usually a half page or a full page, on selected topics from the timeline. It also includes occasional grayscale photographs and illustrations. By comparison, the *Concise History of World Religions* includes more frequent essays, long chapter introductions, and ubiquitous color photographs and illustrations. Overall, this renders the *Concise History* more visually appealing, while *Faiths Across Time* is more informative and more comprehensive.

Faiths Across Time also comes across as more objective and more culturally sensitive than the *Concise History*. For example, a one-column essay about Greek Religion in the *Concise History* focuses on the hedonistic qualities of the Olympian deities and on the philosophers’ negative reception of that

tradition, without discussing how the Olympian religion might have been an expression of the human condition or held any meaning for its adherents. It comes across as implicitly anti-polytheistic. By comparison, *Faiths Across Time* begins a brief essay about monotheism in the ancient world by acknowledging how uncommon it was in ancient times before proceeding to mention Akhenaten and then the Hebrews. An essay about the Mystery Religions in *Faiths Across Time* is equally objective in approaching these ancient, polytheistic traditions. To be fair, the *Concise History* is also more objective with large, contemporary traditions such as Islam.

All four volumes of *Faiths Across Time* contain a comprehensive index to the entire work, and page numbers are continuous through the four volumes. This makes the work rather accessible.

The real value of this work is in its ability to fit religious events and developments into the broader chronological and geographic context of religious history. One could imagine a researcher turning to this work in order to compare events from the Mayan civilization with those from the Egypt or to compare events in the development of Islam with events in eastern Christianity. It is doubtful that a researcher studying a single tradition would turn to this work first in order to gain an introduction, but the work might be useful to such a person in establishing context. It is also an interesting work to browse. *Faiths Across Time: 5,000 Years of Religious History* is appropriate for the reference shelves of academic libraries supporting undergraduate programs. It is also appropriate for secondary school libraries where an objective approach to comparative religious history would be valued.—Steven R. Edscorn, Executive Director of Libraries, Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma

Food History Almanac: Over 1,300 Years of World Culinary History, Culture, and Social Influence. By Janet Clarkson. Rowman & Littlefield Studies in Food and Gastronomy. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014. 2 vols. alkaline. \$195 (ISBN: 978-1-4422-2714-9). E-book (978-1-4422-2715-6), \$194.99.

The author, Janet Clarkson, is the Australian author of *Pie: A Global History* (Reaktion Books, 2009) and *Soup: A Global History* (Reaktion Books, 2010) as well as a food-related blog called *The Old Foodie* (www.theoldfoodie.com). According to the preface, the author came to write this book because she wanted to do something with the large amount of food information she had collected over the years. She started writing her blog eight years ago and evolved into writing two books on pie and soup and now this almanac. The introduction states that this book “is an almanac in the broadest sense of the word in that it has a calendar format. For every day of the year there is a selection of stories with a food history theme”(xi).

The almanac is in two volumes with Volume 1 covering January through June and Volume 2 covering July through December. Each month is then arranged by day. Under each