

Sources

Reference Books

Tammy J. Eschedor Voelker, Editor

<i>The 100 Most Important American Financial Crises: An Encyclopedia of the Lowest Points in American Economic History</i>	77
<i>500 Great Military Leaders</i>	78
<i>All Things Julius Caesar: An Encyclopedia of Caesar's World and Legacy</i>	78
<i>Antarctica and the Arctic Circle: A Geographic Encyclopedia of the Earth's Polar Regions</i>	79
<i>The Brain, the Nervous System, and Their Diseases</i>	79
<i>Comics Through Time: A History of Icons, Idols, and Ideas</i>	80
<i>Drugs in American Society: An Encyclopedia of History, Politics, Culture, and the Law</i>	80
<i>Famous Assassinations in World History: An Encyclopedia</i>	81
<i>The Great American Mosaic: An Exploration of Diversity in Primary Documents</i>	81
<i>Health Under Fire: Medical Care During America's Wars</i>	82
<i>Muhammad in History, Thought, and Culture: An Encyclopedia of the Prophet of God</i>	82
<i>Oil: a Cultural and Geographic Encyclopedia of Black Gold</i>	83
<i>Russia at War: From the Mongol Conquest to Afghanistan, Chechnya, and Beyond</i>	83
<i>Sweet Treats around the World: An Encyclopedia of Food and Culture</i>	84
<i>Women's Rights in the United States: A Comprehensive Encyclopedia of Issues, Events, and People</i>	84
<i>World War I: The Definitive Encyclopedia and Document Collection</i>	85
<i>The World's Population: An Encyclopedia of Critical Issues, Crises, and Ever-Growing Countries</i>	85

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The 100 Most Important American Financial Crises: An Encyclopedia of the Lowest Points in American Economic History. By Quentin R. Skrabec Jr. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2015. 337 pages. Acid free \$89 (ISBN: 978-1-4408-3011-2). Ebook available (978-1-4408-3012-9), call for pricing.

The story of the United States is tied inexorably to the highs and lows of its economy. This single-volume encyclopedia brings together what the author feels are the one hundred most important financial crises that occurred from Bacon's Rebellion in 1676 to the Detroit bankruptcy in 2013. There is also an appendix which includes textual reproductions of some of the events covered in the book, along with a robust bibliography and index. Topics are 2–3 pages long. Individual entries consist of a condensed narrative of events, followed by a "see also" section pointing readers to other entries the author finds similar or connected and, finally, a list of two or three recommended readings. Some entries provide illustrations or photographs but no charts or graphs are used. The format remains consistent throughout.

Quentin R. Skrabec Jr. holds multiple advanced degrees in business and engineering as well as a PhD in manufacturing management. Currently, he is a professor of business at the University of Findlay. Skrabec is the author of many works, though this book is heavily inspired by one of his previous: *The 100 Most Significant Events in American Business: An Encyclopedia* (Greenwood, 2012). The similarity is not the titles but that the entries in these works read more like discrete historical narratives than what one might expect from an economics resource. Of course, my critical lens has been colored by hundreds of hours spent in history classrooms.

This narrative approach makes the work more accessible to general readers; however, it also creates some minor issues. On the positive side, Skrabec is conscious of the importance of providing context to the events he covers. At other times, unfortunately, the author chooses narrative flow over explicitness. For example, the section "1929—Wall Street Crash and Great Depression" mentions several of the specific steps that Roosevelt took but fails to mention the highly important Bank Act of 1933, instead simply calling it "new banking regulations" (149). Recently, the Bank Act, also known as Glass-Steagall, was also a major point of contention. He also did not mention it in "2008—Banking and Subprime Mortgage Crisis," though both sides of the argument make strong cases for and against its effect. That the author chose not to mention this suggests that either he does not believe the Bank Act of 1933 is important or, more likely, that the author was forced to make difficult choices to include so much material in a single volume. Either reality could prove problematic. Another issue which hurts the accessibility provided by the narrative format is that Skrabec assumes a level of understanding not common to all readers. It is difficult to understand the statement, "Corporate investment was negative, and capital investment was below the level of depreciation" (146). Somebody with knowledge

SOURCES

of business or economics may understand, but general readers may require additional help.

The 100 Most Important American Financial Crises is a unique reference resource that straddles a difficult line. While not as comprehensive as similar multivolume sets like *The New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), it is, however, more accessible to general readers. The language can sometimes become too technical but in no way insurmountable. Because of these hurdles this work is recommended for college-age readers. It would make a good addition to large libraries with similar items in their stacks or for smaller institutions looking for an affordable treatment on the topic usable by students in many disciplines.—Edward Anthony Koltonski, Graduate Student Reference Assistant, Kent State University Libraries, Kent, Ohio

500 Great Military Leaders. Edited by Spencer C. Tucker. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2015. 2 vols. Acid free \$189 (ISBN: 978-1-59884-757-4). Ebook available (978-1-59884-758-1), call for pricing.

If the title were *500 Important/Noteworthy Military Leaders*, that would sound awkward, so instead we have “Great,” but listing the important/noteworthy is what Tucker says in his preface he was striving to achieve. That helps explain his selections, many of whom are portrayed as capable men who played significant roles in major wars—perhaps as trainers or planners or theoreticians. Others were outstanding subordinate leaders or “great” within their times and locales.

There just haven't been five hundred Cyruses or Alexanders or Genghis Khans, who could aspire to glory by combining military brilliance, outstanding resources, and absolute political power. Modern military leaders are now almost always directed by civilians, so their opportunity for personal “greatness” in the classical sense is lost.

The latest project from the prolific Tucker comes off as an uninspired response to the unceasing public demand for lists. A third of the entries are from other ABC-CLIO products, but it's commendable that this is noted up front.

The format is similar to that of Trevor Dupuy, Curt Johnson and David L. Bongard's *Harper Encyclopedia of Military Biography* (HarperCollins, 1992) and to Alan Axelrod and Charles Phillips's *The MacMillan Dictionary of Military Biography* (MacMillan, 1998). All three have alphabetical entries as well as either source notes or suggested further readings. Tucker offers a larger type face, and both he and Axelrod provide a few portrait illustrations. Both the Axelrod and Tucker works have prose more readable than some of the densely composed entries in Dupuy.

In looking over the five hundred in Tucker, the only one I saw who rose to prominence in the period since Dupuy or Axelrod were published is David Petraeus. I did not make a formal comparison, but it does appear there are a lot of leaders who appear in only one or two of the works, so Tucker offers some variety to a library that already owns one of the others.

Public librarians looking for something more visually informative will want to consider R. G. Grant's *Commanders: History's Greatest Military Leaders* (DK, 2010) or Jeremy Black's *Great Military Leaders and Their Campaigns* (Thames and Hudson, 2008). Both oversize books include hundreds of color illustrations as well as enough text to satisfy the needs of casual readers.—Evan Davis, Librarian, Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana

All Things Julius Caesar: An Encyclopedia of Caesar's World and Legacy. By Michael Lovano. All Things. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2014. 2 vols. Acid free \$189 (ISBN: 978-1-4408-0420-5). Ebook available (978-1-4408-0421-2), call for pricing.

All Things Julius Caesar (ATJC) is part of a series of encyclopedias titled All Things. This series looks at a topic—in this case, Julius Caesar—from a variety of angles, including cultural, religious, and architectural. This provides the reader with ability to understand the larger historical context for a specific topic. While there are several reference works related to the Roman Empire, there are none that provide such a broad perspective on a narrow topic.

ATJC provides excellent overviews on a variety of topics related to Julius Caesar. For example, an article titled “Slavery and Slaves” begins by providing an overview of what slavery was like and how slaves were treated throughout the Roman Empire during the reign of Julius Caesar. The brevity of the article (about three pages) and the references at the end, make this an excellent resource for a first- or second-year undergraduate beginning research on this topic.

At the end of each article there is a “see also” feature, providing more articles in ATJC that might be of use when doing research on a particular topic. While this is a nice feature, it would be of greater benefit if terms used in an entry that had individual entries were simply emboldened. Many twenty-first-century students are more familiar with the concept of linking than they are with a “see also” feature. While the full features of linking cannot be utilized in a print resource, mimicking linking (i.e., emboldening words in individual entries that have their own entries) may have been a resource to the reader.

ATJC also provides articles on geographic elements that were critical under Julius Caesar's reign. For example, there is a great article on the Adriatic Sea, providing not just an overview, but also connecting it back to Julius Caesar and his reign in the Roman Empire. However, a question may arise for a novice reader, to whom this work is aimed, regarding the location of the Adriatic Sea. Where is it? While there are some maps in the introduction to this work, they are very small and articles that make reference to geographical entities make no reference back to these maps. While one cannot expect a map to be at each geographic entry, it would help the reader if the article could make reference back to a map so that one can see where these geographical entities are located.