REFERENCE BOOKS OF 1975

A list of last year's reference books compiled by the Library Journal List of Reference Books Committee, Reference and Adult Services Division, ALA

THE STIMULUS provided by Dr. Louis Shores' annual checklist of reference books (LJ, 1953-57) prompted the appointment of a committee to work in cooperation with Library Journal to identify outstanding reference books of the year. Since 1958 the committee, appointed from the membership of the Reference and Adult Services Division of ALA, has developed 18 annual lists. Including the 44 titles identified for the current list, a total of 1,398 reference books has appeared on these lists of "outstanding books." Many of the titles are now accepted as standard works by reference librarians; others have been frequently revised to keep pace with current reference needs. A few have failed to prove as outstanding as their selectors had anticipated. This year's committee members can only hope that their individual and collective efforts have met the standard of excellence set past committees.

The committee's charge is to select from the year's output of reference titles those new publications which would be of value to reference collections of small and medium-sized public and college libraries. A reference book is defined as a work designed specifically to supply information in a form which facilitates ease of use. The requirement that the title be new eliminates from committee consideration revisions of standard works, annuals (unless the first publication appeared during the year), and new volumes of incomplete sets. Policy also eliminates consideration of pamphlets, books mainly local in scope, bibliographies and criticisms of individual authors or their works, and reference works designed exclusively for children. These criteria force the committee to reluctantly exclude excellent reference titles. (This year's committee voted not to consider Joyce F. Shild's Make It: an Index to Projects and Materials (Scarecrow) because the author is a member of the committee. We do not wish this, however, to become committee policy which could result in an unjust elimination of titles.)

Only a few late 1974 titles were selected by this year's committee for inclusion on its list. There is a lower percentage of the previous year's titles than evident on earlier lists. Of the 1974 titles, four were "carry-over considerations" from last year's committee. The late year release of a new title and its delayed inclusion in bibliographic control and review sources, coupled with the committee's early meeting during the following year, causes an unavoidable exclusion of some excellent titles.

In their search for new reference titles, committee members were asked to note trends in the publication

EDITED BY CARL T. COX

of reference works. Noteworthy is a continuing trend of fewer reference titles of the required quality and appropriate scope for this list. Reference books, perhaps rightfully so, continue to capitalize on current interests which may quickly pass from the scene; our Bicentennial celebration is an example. The appearance of several titles covering the same area was also noted: the crafts field illustrates this trend. Finally, due perhaps to general economic conditions, there is much interest in and publication of “do-it-yourself” activities—not only the traditional repair manuals, but also concerns about new jobs and financial investments. Some entries in this year’s list are representative of these trends. It is hoped that no entry represents the trend toward poorer quality in reference titles!

Members of the committee assumed major responsibility for one broad subject area and minor responsibility in a second area. In the major area, each individual was asked to identify, examine, evaluate, and prepare recommendations for or against the inclusion of new reference titles on this year’s list. A committee member’s minor area supports the major area of another committee member. During the period of examination, evaluation, and selection, members were in communication with each other and the committee chairman. At the Chicago ALA Midwinter Conference, the committee met to discuss titles identified during the pre-conference activities. Several hundred were identified, approximately 175 were discussed, with 44 being selected for inclusion. These titles have been examined by at least two committee members, and many are known to a majority of the committee. The included titles were selected through committee consensus or majority vote, if consensus failed. Following the conference each member prepared an annotation for the books selected from his/her recommendations.

Members of the committee used library reference collections and book stores in Georgia, Maryland, Missouri, New York, Ohio, and Tennessee to identify and evaluate 1975 titles.

Committee members, all of whom participated in the preparation of this list, are: Daniel Hagelin, Head, Reference Department, Lakewood Public Library, Ohio; Kathryn T. Ivey, Social Sciences Department, Memphis/Shelby County Public Library, Tennessee; Helen Adele Jones, Adult Services, Prince George’s County Memorial Library, Oxon Hill, Maryland; Wilbur McGill, Senior Humanities Specialist, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore; H. Dale Montieth, Reference Department, Robert W. Woodruff Library, Emory University, Atlanta; Joyce Shields, Associate Director, Niagara Falls Public Library, New York; Lynn Wishart, Interlibrary Relations Coordinator, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri; and serving as chairman, Carl T. Cox, Professor, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Committee members wish to emphasize that no attempt has been made to provide a well-rounded list. The members urge careful consideration of each title to avoid having the entire list regarded as suitable for all small and medium-sized public and college libraries. Titles are arranged by broad subject areas with a general heading assigned when only one title appropriate to an area is included. This avoided fragmentation of the list. All entries are 1975 imprints unless noted as 1974.

Titles on this list will be displayed at the Reference and Adult Services Division booth at the Chicago Conference of the American Library Association, July 18-24. After the conference, the titles selected will be available for loan to any interested group to exhibit at regional, state, and local meetings. The only cost of this service is payment of transportation charges. For further information, write to the Executive Secretary, Reference and Adult Services Division, American Library Association, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611.
Trifolium from Dictionary of Architecture and Construction (McGraw)

fully constructed. Terms found in drawings, materials specifications, installation, and testing are included. Usable by architects, building tradesmen, specification writers, students, and anyone needing clear definitions. Black and white illustrations are provided on nearly every page to augment the work’s usefulness.

SMITH, Whitney. Flags Through the Ages and Across the World. 357p. McGraw. $39.95. The fascination of flags has been captured in this clearly written and superbly illustrated book. Serving not only as a guide to flags, the work is concerned with the history of flags, flag-makers, the various departments of flags, and flag customs and etiquette. In addition to national flags, ethnic minority flags, women’s flags, and symbols of political parties, steamship lines, airlines, and sport groups are included. Designed for quick reference or a leisurely survey.

WASHINGTON. Information Directory, 1975-1976. 829p. Congressional Quarterly. $18; pap. $7.95. Subject access is the key to this unique directory, sources of information in Washington D.C. Sixteen chapters (covering topics such as Energy, Equal Rights, Individual Assistance Programs, National Resources, Health and Consumer Affairs). 14 appendices, and two tables of contents combined with three indexes (Subject, Department & Agency, Regional Offices) make this volume an invaluable guide through Washington’s red tape. More than 5000 information sources in Congress, the Executive Branch, and private associations are listed giving locations and names of key contact persons for each organization plus a brief statement of scope and activities. Bibliographies.

Biography

BURKE'S Presidential Families of the United States of America. 676p. Burke's Peerage, dist. by Arco. $39.95. Long renowned as an authoritative publisher, Burke's has lived up to its reputation in this treatment of the United States' presidents. For each president the book gives a biographical sketch, a chronological listing of major events in his life, writings of the president, his lineage, those of his brothers and sisters, and bibliographical references to additional sources. Treatment is as complete as possible. National Resources' family is traced back to 1590 and up through 1972. Portraits of the president and his wife (or wives) are also included. Important appendices include full treatment for Jefferson Davis, brief treatment of vice presidents, and interesting family relationships among presidents and world notables.

HAVLICE, Patricia P. Index to Literary Biography. 2 vols. Scarecrow. $39.50. Locating biographical and critical information on approximately 68,000 authors from antiquity to the present may quickly be accomplished with this convenient set. Fifty literary reference works published between 1951 and 1972 in four languages are indexed. Information will be found either under the author's real name or pseudonym, with full cross references. Each entry gives the author's name, pseudonym, birth and death dates, nationality, literary genre, and a letter code referring the user to the biographical work containing information on the author.

MARQUIS Who's Who Publications/Index to All Books, 1975. 2d ed. 517p. Marquis. $24.95. Introduced in 1974 and revised to keep pace with new editors, this index identifies all entries in Who's Who in America, the latest
(only) "Who Was Who in America, the regional, and other "who's who" from Marquis. Heretofore time-consuming searches have been greatly simplified. (The committee selection was based on the 1974 first edition. The bibliographic data for and annotation of the 1975 edition are provided to assure citation to the most current revision.)


Written for the general reader and beginning psychology student, this guide to modern psychologists provides biographical data, contemporary discussions of their concepts, and excerpts of their thoughts. The authors, who have met their subjects, report that "the majority of psychologists are interesting and stimulating people." The book is divided into three parts: Biographical, Conceptual, and Methodological. Each part is divided into several sections, each of which contains the basic biographical data, the author's own comments on the personality of the psychologist, and a selection of the author's work. The book is well-organized and easy to read, making it a valuable resource for anyone interested in psychology.


A long needed compilation, this bio-bibliographical covers over 2000 black American writers in various genres from the early 18th century to the present. Brief biographical information is given for approximately 450 living authors (who provided the information themselves) and for 150 deceased authors. References to biographical essays have been noted. The bibliographical entry includes all known published books by the author. Many biographies include personal comments by the writers. The works include a general bibliography and appendices of black and white critics, historians, and editors.


This is a companion volume rather than an update to the earlier volumes in the Wilson Authors Series, Twentieth Century Authors (1942) and Twentieth Century Authors, First Supplement (1955). The volume includes information on 1500 authors, most of whom came into prominence between 1950 and 1970. The coverage is comprehensive, reflecting the growing number of non-fiction authors and the increasing concern of the academic discipline and the date the proposal is due for submission, each entry contains basic information such as the author's name and the title of the work. An index of authors by country of origin, and by country of publication is also provided. This makes the book a valuable resource for anyone interested in the history of literature.


Bringing together major governmental statistical series for the purpose of documenting the growth and development of 26 European nations between 1750 and 1970, British economist P. R. Mitchell has compiled a wealth of statistical information in one convenient package. The book is divided into 16 major sections such as population, agriculture, income, taxation, and education, among others. In addition to the main introduction, each section has a brief introductory commentary and extensive footnotes. A welcome tool for those attempting to locate comparable data on these countries.


A new, important, and superb atlas destined to become the standard in its field. The full color illustrations, maps, and text provide a comprehensive and up-to-date account of China's political, social, and economic development.

The book is divided into nine major sections: History, Geography, Economy, Agriculture, Industry, Education, Government, and Socio-Cultural Factors. Each section is illustrated with maps, photographs, and charts, and is accompanied by a detailed commentary. The book is well-organized and easy to read, making it a valuable resource for anyone interested in China.
are maps and text on each individual province and 32 cities. The index cross references from old Post Office spellings to the Wade-Giles (U.S. standard) and the Pinyin (People's Republic of China) romanization systems.

Language


You no longer need to grope for that word on the tip of your tongue. This unique tool takes you from a vague idea to a specific word. Looking under clue words or related expressions will immediately give you the word you are looking for. When necessary, this lexicon also gives several entries for the same word. The index of “target” words enables the user to address the word much as a conventional dictionary. Various phonics and manias are listed under “phobias” and “mania” respectively. A list of terms for groups, males, females, and the young of animals, birds, and other creatures may be found under “Creature Terms.” Although a fun book, it accomplishes its intention as a serious work to help persons find words that temporarily are eluding them or words that they did not know existed.

KATZNER, Kenneth. The Languages of the World. 374p. F.A.W. $11.95

Covering some 500 languages spoken today, this work brings together in one volume specific information about the languages. The charts in Part I show the relationships of the languages and precede descriptions of the major and minor language families, subgroups, and branches. Part II gives basic information on the individual languages of Europe, the Middle East, the Northern Hemisphere, Africa, and the artificial language Esperanto. The book concludes with a country-by-country survey of sources of specifically quoted passages and an index of languages and language families in Part III.

Literature


The set reprints the 97 widely acclaimed critical essays first published between 1959 and 1972 by the University of Minnesota Pamphlets on American Writers. In preparation for this anthology, the authors of the original essays were contacted, asked to review their possible, and, if possible, to revise and update them. Many did. The majority of the writers included are from the 20th Century and most are writers of fiction although some writers of other forms of literature have been included to a lesser degree. The arrangement of the anthology is alphabetical by subject and each essay includes basic biographical data. The major emphasis, however, is literary analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of a writer's career. An extensive index provides complete access to the set.

CHAPMAN, Dorothy H. Index to Black Poetry. 54p. Hall, 1974. $25

In the first index to black poetry, the author provides access by author, title, first line, index of 94 book and pamphlets by individual poets and to 33 anthologies. Dorothy Porter's The Negro in the United States and North American Poets... were used as sources for the indexed titles. Works included range from the early 1900's to 1972, and while the majority of the poets are black Americans, some Africans, West Indians, and others are included. For many libraries, this will be a useful supplement to Granger's Index to Poetry.

Gustav Doré illustration from the story of Red Riding Hood in Perrault's Fairy Tales from Who's Who in Children's Books (Holt)


Over one thousand characters from the pages of children's books are sketched by the author, a leading authority in children's literature. Fisher describes the appearance, role, and background of each of the characters and also provides useful literary criticism of the stories. The author states the characters chosen for inclusion were those who had become household words or who interested her personally. Nursery rhyme characters, mythological figures, and most real life people have been excluded. Over 400 illustrations, some in color, add value to the book. Indexed by author and by title.


Aimed at the educated nonspecialist, this set provides a concise overview of Oriental literature. Volume I covers East Asia; Volume II, South and South East Asia; and Volume III, West Asia and North Africa. However, the literature of Black Africa is excluded. All articles are signed and range in length from a paragraph to a page. Information on the lives and works, as well as critical assessments of individual figures, forms the major part of each volume. Other articles cover important anonymous works, genres, schools of writing, literary movements, etc. Most entries conclude with a selected bibliography.

RUOFF, James E. Crowell's Handbook of Elizabethan and Stuart Literature. Crowell, 468p. $13.95

The authors, movements, literary genres, works, and terms associated with the English Renaissance (1558-1660) are clearly defined in this unique one-volume encyclopedia. An entry for a writer contains basic biographical details, a discussion of artistic development, an estimate of his influence, and finally, a select bibliography of the most significant criticism, biographies, and complete works. For a literary work, a typical entry includes information about composition, dating, and the genre to which it belongs. Either a detailed synopsis or a precis follows as well as a discussion of the significance and the style of the work. A bibliography lists the most important editions of the work as well as a selection of the notable critical writings about it.

Science & Technology

HOW Things Work in Your Home (And What To Do When They Don't). ed. by Jackson Hand & others. 368p. Time-Life, $15.95

With the increasing interest in do-it-yourself, this authoritative, thorough, easy to understand and follow volume would lend itself well to any reference shelf. The special value of this work lies in its exceedingly clear illustrations, including step-by-step diagrams, drawings, exploded views, cutaways, tables, and troubleshooting charts which will prove themselves uncomplicated for beginners. Includes bibliography and index.

DOLLAR BILL

How to clean an open-contact thermostat from How Things Work in Your Home (and what to do when they don't) (Time-Life)


Units of measures, including linear, surface, capacity, weight and mass, comprise the major chapters in this compendium. Within each, countries of the world are listed in alphabetical order, with the units of measure and their equivalents in various other systems. An index by country and by the name of the unit of measure is provided. Obsolete and ancient units are given along with the history of each. Some of the unusual items included are units of poetic verse and music.
Clockwise from top left: "Snakes and Ladders" game from The Way to Play (Paddington Pr.; Two Continents); a striped burrfish from Fishes of the World (Macmillan); Cary Middieoff in Masters Tournament swing from The Encyclopedia of Golf (Viking)

LEGGETT, Arnold & Pat Faige. Complete Garden. 246p. Oliver Pr.; dist. by Scribners. pap. $3.95

Sources for seeds, tools, and other necessities for the indoor and outdoor gardener are described. The main listing is an alphabetical directory of firms which depicts areas of activity, lists available products, and reveals whether or not a catalog is available. An index to products refers back to the companies which produce each. Some of the many areas covered are greenhouse equipment, composters, and seeds for flowers and vegetables. Illustrated with line drawings.


This convenient encyclopedia brings together a broad spectrum of over 300 alphabetically arranged articles written by more than 200 different experts in environmental science. The signed articles are written for the non-specialist at any reader level and include numerous illustrations, diagrams, charts, and photographs. Each article first defines the subject, gives a one- to four-page discussion, and provides a bibliography. While some of the material in this volume has appeared in the McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science and Technology and four volumes of McGraw-Hill Yearbook of Science and Technology, articles were prepared especially for this work which merits strong consideration even though the other works may be owned. Well indexed.


To make the search for science fair topics less tedious, the Akron-Summit County Public Library staff has indexed over 300 books, pamphlets, and periodicals published since 1960. Methods, exhibit techniques, equipment, and experiments in the natural and physical sciences suitable for junior and senior high school students are given emphasis. The arrangement of topics is based on Library of Congress subject headings. This book should be used heavily as students (and parents) begin the task of selecting winning entries for the annual science fair.


Full color plates illustrating 1000 species constitute the first 144 pages. Some of the photographs are of specimens in the British Museum while others depict butterflies in their natural habitat. The second half of the book is a dictionary with some 2000 brief entries describing habits, distribution, size, food plants, and unusual relationships. Arrangement is by scientific name with cross reference from common appellations. Reference is made to the plate wherein the insect is presented.

WHEELER, Alwyn E. Fishes of the World: an illustrated Dictionary. 366p. Macmillan. $27.95

More than 700 line drawings and 500 color photographs, many of which were taken under water, illustrate this alphabetical listing. Geographic range, size, habitat, commercial importance, behavioral patterns, and biological data are described. Arrangement is by scientific name, with cross references from popular terms. The text refers the reader to the photograph wherein the fish is displayed.

Sports & Games


A companion to The Rules of the Game, which was included in "The Science Book of 1974" (L.J. April 15, 1975), this volume is concerned with chess, dominoes, hopscotch, and other games which, to date, may have been unknown. Arranged by types of games, each activity is described sufficiently to permit play. Diagrams which would enable one to construct necessary playing equipment are provided. Excellent color illustrations.

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA of Golf. ed. by Donald L. Steel & Peter Ryde. 480p. Viking. $30

A single alphabetical sequence of terms, courses, personalities, and playing techniques makes this differ from Golf Magazine's Encyclopedia of Golf: Tables showing major tournament winners, clear diagrams of major golf courses, drawings illustrating proper club selection, and photographs of courses and major golf notables are closely linked to the well-written text. Excellent treatment of women golfers. A worldwide index to courses, arranged by country, is provided.


Following years of leadership through its Companion series, Oxford now provides a handbook of sports and games played in national and international competition. Describing how the game is played, as opposed to how to play the game, the handbook is designed to help the reader understand a sport the first time it is watched. Entries for major athletes, teams, and stadiums, coupled with illustrations of courts and fields on which the game is played, make this a comprehensive volume. Although not a compilation of records, historical development of the game is included. Blood sports, children's games, and table games are excluded.

RICE, E. Philip. Outdoor Life Gun Data Book. 570p. Times Mirror Magazine; dist. by Harper. $10

Domestic and imported rifles, shotguns, handguns, and their ammunition are presented through both text and tables. With emphasis on the weapons' basic characteristics, attention is also given to arms associations, shooting matches and safety rules. Chapters are also concerned with stock refinishing, blueing, and other concerns of the gun enthusiast. A directory of arms goods, services and manufacturers is included.