Today's Environmental Issues: Democrats and Republicans

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From the study of the cell to the biosphere, from DNA to dinosaurs, the scope of modern biology is astonishing. Science writer Jackson whistles down the discipline into 100 topics, terms, theories, and breakthroughs that highlight its historical evolution. The one-to-two-page entries are arranged chronologically, beginning with early ideas such as spontaneous generation and concluding with some of the field’s latest advances in synthetic biology, cloning, and genetic engineering. Photographs, charts, diagrams, and images of medieval herbs and bestiaries draw in the eye, especially the photo of an underwater plant releasing oxygen during photosynthesis with the oxygen gas visible as pearl-like bubbles covering the plant. Rounding out this whirlwind tour is a peek at some of the big unanswered questions in biology—how proteins fold, the origin of life, the biological basis of aging—as well as short biographies of 31 biologists. VERDICT This beautifully designed book deserves a spot in every life sciences collection. Whether browsed or read straight through, it will be an enjoyable selection for anyone interested in learning about scientific discoveries that changed the way we understand the world.—Cynthia Lee Knight, Hunterdon Cty. Historical Soc., Flemington, NJ
The fourth edition of Greenwood’s (How Often Would I Have Gathered You) exhaustive guide covers technological innovations in genealogical research since the publication of the third edition in 2000. The book addresses web terminology, search strategies, and DNA testing services and discusses at length features of major family history websites (free as well as subscription-based). Traditional sources of genealogical information including vital records, census schedules, wills, deeds, and church and military records are explored thoroughly in separate chapters that explain not only their historical services and as backup when Internet fails.” The Offline Internet Summit was organized by ASU along with Bibliothèques Sans Frontières/Libraries Without Borders and IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations). A number of organizations are working on bringing online systems and services to areas that don’t have the Internet, said ASU in an announcement; bringing those efforts together was a goal of the meeting. The discussions resulted in “The Tempe Principles” (ow.ly/MtTE30ivTTA), which include assertions such as, “Access to the information commons should be recognized as a fundamental human right” and “We judge that open source and open access tools and content best meet the interests of the communities we seek to support.”
COLLECTING LINKED DATA Libraries considering the gathering and preservation of linked data will find a useful resource in Chris Dijkshoorn et al’s “The Rijksmuseum Collection as Linked Data,” published in the Semantic Web (ow.ly/fj2M30ivTSf). The article presents the linked data set (datahub.io/dataset/rijksmuseum) made available by Amsterdam’s Rijksmuseum, which describes 437,607 objects and discusses lessons learned by staff who were responsible for creating the resource.

ereviews | Reference News Roundup

By Henrietta Verma & Gary Price

Below are news briefs and resources recently featured on LJ’s InfoDocket (www.InfoDocket.com) that will be useful to reference staff in academic and public libraries. (Note: Model Diplomacy was not included on InfoDocket.)

MODEL DIPLOMACY
The Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) has produced Model Diplomacy (modeldiplomacy.cfr.org), “a free interactive program that uses role-play to demonstrate the challenges of shaping U.S. foreign policy in an interconnected world.” Geared toward high school and college students, the program features a library of case studies developed by experts “to teach students about the issues, institutions, and processes that determine how American foreign policy is made,” explained Will Davis, deputy director of campus outreach at CFR, in an email to LJ. “But the cases are also designed to reinforce the fundamentals of critical thinking, effective verbal and written communication, collaboration, and problem-solving.” To create simulations, instructors first choose from cases such as “Dispute in the East China Sea,” “Global Climate Change Policy,” and “Boko Haram in Nigeria.” Each case is available at a high school or college level. Once a case is chosen, the instructor then invites students to participate in a related online simulation, assigns roles (there are 12 roles in the Boko Haram case, for example, including vice president, secretary of state, and director of National Intelligence), and sends relevant history and other information about the scenario. In the dashboard area, instructors can keep track of each situation they are conducting with students as well as find up-to-date news from CFR on diplomacy efforts worldwide.

OFFLINE INTERNET SUMMIT
A recent conference at Arizona State University (ASU) explored the importance of providing “offline Internet services for communities without access to such services and as backup when Internet fails.” The Offline Internet Summit was organized by ASU along with Bibliothèques Sans Frontières/Libraries Without Borders and IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations). A number of organizations are working on bringing online systems and services to areas that don’t have the Internet, said ASU in an announcement; bringing those efforts together was a goal of the meeting. The discussions resulted in “The Tempe Principles” (ow.ly/MtTE30ivTTA), which include assertions such as, “Access to the information commons should be recognized as a fundamental human right” and “We judge that open source and open access tools and content best meet the interests of the communities we seek to support.”

COLLECTING LINKED DATA
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creation and use but also the type of material that can be extracted from such records and how they can be obtained. Greenwood also provides examples of records, titles of published indexes or guides to particular record types, and definitions of terminology, a feature particularly helpful in the case of probate records. Chapters examining standards of evidence in genealogy and the necessity of conducting preliminary surveys of previous research efforts should help ensure the accuracy and integrity of readers’ own findings. VERDICT This essential resource for American genealogical research will prove helpful to family historians at any stage of their work.—Sara Shreve, Newton, KS


Does society or upbringing influence personality? What role do genetics and evolution play? Church (emeritus, counseling psychology, Washington State Univ.), along with 65 contributors (mostly psychology doctoral students or PhDs) from 18 countries, answer these and other questions in 31 well-researched essays. Volume 1 reviews the field's history, focusing "on the cross-cultural study of dispositional traits." The second volume identifies the relationship between culture and personality traits, while the third looks at genetic, evolutionary, neuroscience, and ecological aspects. Though the set is cohesive, each book can stand alone, as there is no cumulative index. Volume 1 includes a table that cross-references main questions to specific chapters throughout. Essays also cross-reference to other entries as the contributors attempt to provide a complete picture of the field. Bibliographies (following each entry) are lengthy, and each volume contains a detailed index. Jargon abounds, and some chapters are rather dense, making this more appropriate for those with a serious interest in the topic. VERDICT For postgraduates or professionals in the areas of psychology, sociology, or anthropology.—Laurie Selwyn, formerly with Grayson Cty. Law Lib., Sherman, TX


Walker (political science, Elmhurst Coll.) and several contributors provide an accurate, even-handed overview of Democratic and Republican parties’ policy positions on the most important environmental issues and challenges facing the United States. The book deftly explains the different stances of each party and expertly documents differences of opinion within the parties, effectively debunking assumptions (for instance, that federally elected officials always vote lockstep with their parties). The volume consists of 31 essays comprised of summaries of both parties’ positions and policies on the issue discussed, an overview of the topic including historical trends, and resources for further reading. Sidebars of quotes and details of relevant events supplement the text. The illuminating preface discusses 2016 national party platforms and compares and contrasts terminology used by each party on different subjects (e.g., both parties associate drilling with the terms offshore or oil, but Republicans link it with monotorium or jobs, while Democrats connect it to coast or spill). Overall, the work sorts through a lot of front-page partisan-speak to capture the disagreements and attitudes of politicians on the environment and its future. VERDICT An excellent, balanced resource that summarizes complex and sometimes controversial political stances on environmental issues for general readers, high school students, and undergraduates.—Rob Tench, Old Dominion Univ. Lib., Norfolk, VA

Its bibliography provides a solid overview of practices related to linked data today.

IFLA has released Part 1 of a survey of library copyright policies worldwide (see ow.ly/GDfp30ivTPU), including “an inventory of recent and ongoing reforms that affect libraries and their services around the world.” The report’s forthcoming concluding portion will identify themes related to copyright across the globe and discuss what libraries are doing in response.

PROJECT MUSE

Project MUSE has announced the availability of more than 550 open-access university press titles. These books will appear in search results alongside other Project MUSE publications and journals. Related MARC records are available from Project MUSE, with the organization also announcing it will be working with discovery services to provide metadata that will allow these materials to be easily activated. See InfoDocket (ow.ly/cTQv30ivTV5) for a complete list of titles now available.

Henrietta Verma is a former Reference Librarian and a reviewer for LJ and its sister publication School Library Journal. Gary Price is a librarian, writer, and consultant and aggregates LJ’s InfoDocket.