The Handbook of Research on Black Males: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Multidisciplinary

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The study of world religions has been largely dominated by men (as has been the case with most disciplines), and only recently have modern scholars begun to explore the role of women. This timely, two-volume encyclopedia fills in the gaps regarding women’s religious contributions. Edited by de-Gaia (philosophy & religion, Central Michigan Univ.), this work boasts a diverse range of contributors, including academics, religious leaders, healers, artists, and museum directors. De-Gaia emphasizes that the focus is women in religious institutions.


Featuring 114 period maps and 100 new ones, this stunning atlas illustrates the military campaigns and political boundaries of World War II. Also included are contextualizing essays, photo reproductions of weapons and soldiers, and pictures of artifacts of the era such as spy gear and tattered wartime flags. Coverage is comprehensive, including major battles (Stalingrad and Midway, where the tide turned against Germany and Japan) and obscure theaters (Burma). Kagan (editor, Great Photography of World War II) and frequent National Geographic contributor Hyslop (Atlas of the Civil War) arrange the chapters chronologically by theater and belligerent. Emphasis is on war and political history aficionados and anyone with an interest in maps would enjoy this beautiful coffee-table reference work. VERDICT This essential cartography will be useful in academic and public libraries and can be added to our personal collections. —Robert Eagan, Windsor P.L., Ont.


Bats make up about 20 percent of the world’s mammals, but the challenges of studying such small, fast-flying, nocturnal animals mean that our knowledge about them is incomplete. Technological advances in field and lab research have increased our understanding, reflected in this spectacular volume from Taylor (The Way of the Hare). The precise text and lush, extravagant photographs from Tuttle (The Secret Lives of Bats) offer a compelling combination. A concise introduction explores evolution, diversity, biology, behavior, ecology, and the bats/people connection. Brief profiles of 1,386 known species, arranged taxonomically, comprise the second section and detail the distribution, conservation status, physical traits, habitat, and behavior of various kinds of bats. Most color and full-page photographs show the creatures doing their beneficial things: on the wing chasing insects, pollinating flowers, or aiding in seed dispersal. These animals astonish even in repose, especially when “sitting” for one of Tuttle’s facial portraits or roosting en masse. Indexes provide access by scientific and common bat names, but one might wish for an easier way to pinpoint local species, such as an additional “distribution table.” VERDICT Going far beyond the practical value of a guidebook, this is an important update to bat literature and one to savor, containing a wonder on nearly every page and proving that bats are indeed “intelligent, curious, comical, even essential animals.” —Robert Eagan, Windsor P.L., Ont.


This vital work by Ransaw (African American & African studies, Michigan State Univ.), C.P. Gause (educational leadership & counseling, Southeast Missouri State), and Richard Majors (Univ. of Colorado-Colorado Springs) encourages researchers in different fields to explore the American black
male experience and share their perspectives to inform their subjects and improve their lives. Each part (history, research and trends, health, education, and social justice, hip-hop, and programs and initiatives) provides several essays and ends with a personal vignette by a former student of Ransaw. Gause’s concluding piece, “Where Do We Go From Here,” asks readers to explore what it means to be a black man in the United States and to find long-term solutions to gender and racial prejudice. Although all the essays are superb, the sections on education and hip-hop are particular standouts, with pointed discussion on out-of-the-box teaching strategies, the school-to-prison pipeline, and hip-hop as an avenue of unpacking the complexities of black masculinity. This is a seminal piece on out-of-the box teaching strategies, the volume is balanced, covering controversial mended resources concludes the work. The volume is balanced, covering controversial subjects and larger issues such as censorship, and the 100-plus entries contain further reading suggestions. A lengthy list of recommended resources concludes the work. The volume is balanced, covering controversial subjects and larger issues such as censorship, the effect of violence on children, and First Amendment rights.

VERDICT An absorbing, timely title for high school and undergraduate students and general readers interested in media depictions of violence.—Rob Tench, Old Dominion Univ. Libs., Norfolk, VA

Violence in Popular Culture: American and Global Perspectives. Greenwood.

**REFERENCE**


Most readers are aware of the pervasive nature of violence in U.S. popular culture, but many who pick up this crisp, informative encyclopedia will be surprised to learn just how far it extends: Disney movies, Broadway musicals, and famous novels. Finley (sociology & criminology, Barry Univ., FL) and coauthors thoroughly explore the influence of violence in the media. Students in need of information for reports will gravitate to the chapters on video games, which analyzes Call of Duty, World of Warcraft, and Super Mario Brothers, among others. Other sections examine radio, film, TV, music, and literature. Chapters begin with excellent introductions, and the 100-plus entries contain further reading suggestions. A lengthy list of recommended resources concludes the work. The volume is balanced, covering controversial subjects and larger issues such as censorship, the effect of violence on children, and First Amendment rights.

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**CONTENT** This collection of primary sources offers insight into European maritime exploration from about 1420 to 1920, focusing on British, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Dutch explorers. This period covers everything from the earliest voyages of Vasco de Gama and Christopher Columbus up through the race to be the first to reach the North and South Poles. In between are searches for the so-called “New World,” the establishment of European settlements on every continent, and the discovery of the Northwest and Northeast Passages. Materials include diaries, ships’ logbooks, correspondence, maps, art, photographs, manuscripts, scientific papers, and even some audio and video footage. Content is drawn from 12 libraries and archives from the United States, Canada, the UK, France, and New Zealand. The resource also features an interactive chronology and map and biographies.

Documents are divided into ten themes, including new territories, life at sea, indigenous peoples, and competition. Some highlights include Capt. James Cook’s journals, Le livre des Merveilles by Marco Polo, and the silent film Sir Ernest Shackleton’s Glorious Epic of the Antarctic (1919). Researchers can investigate a wide range of archival materials marking key events in the history of European exploration and colonialism.

**USABILITY** The homepage, and every other page, features a basic keyword search box. Users can filter results by date range, document type, theme, region, language, and library/archive. They can also narrow results to documents, images, or secondary resources. Each filter type has check boxes that easily allow users to select whatever combination of options they desire, resulting in precise searches with minimal technical expertise required. Users can also sort the search results by nearly all of the filter options. An advanced search lets users select from the various filters up front. They can also construct searches by keyword, titles, people, or regions. A set of search directories list keywords, people, places, expeditions, and ships and allow users to select from terms drawn from the metadata.

Each search result, in addition to the documents themselves, contains valuable additional information (date, collection name, regions, keywords, language, and more), and much of it is formatted as clickable links. Users can easily construct additional searches and find related documents. Researchers can view or download materials as PDFs. Citations can be copy/pasted or exported to EndNote, RefWorks, and Zotero.

The “documents” tab opens a page of options very similar to those found under advanced search. From here, users can home in on materials of interest by region, document type, theme, and library/archive. As with advanced search, each facet offers checkable boxes to create an efficient navigation experience. Another tab lets researchers quickly locate maps in the collection or explore an interactive map that illustrates more than 50 well-known and