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Book Review: Encyclopedia of Minorities in American Politics by Jeffrey D. Schultz et al.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Encyclopedia of Minorities in American Politics. Jeffrey D. Schultz, Kerry L. Haynie, Anne M. McCulloch, and Andrew L. Aoki, editors. American Political Landscape Series. Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press, 2000. 2 Vols. 800p.

For young researchers, or those who are simply interested in learning more about minorities in US politics, it is difficult to find one source of comprehensive information, a starting point from which to venture further into more specific sources. This shortcoming in reference material has been overcome with the publication of *The Encyclopedia of Minorities in American Politics*. This two-volume set provides at once an historical and reasonably thorough guide to the treatment of minorities in the United States, as well as their responses and participation in the political system. While Volume I contains sections on African Americans and Asians, and Volume II focuses on Hispanic Americans and Native Americans, the authors take great pains to recognize the diversity within these groups. For instance, the introduction to the Hispanic American section explains why and how so many different cultural and ethnic identities are considered to be Hispanic for those of us who don't understand the complexities of the Hispanic identity. In fact, each introduction provides a clear historical analysis of where each of these identity groups finds itself on the contemporary American landscape and how it came to be there. These outstanding introductions contextualize a great deal of information and provide a chronology in language that is accessible to the middle or high school student working on a research paper or to the college student who needs to develop a bibliography for her research paper.

In recognizing that minority groups have been treated differentially, the *Encyclopedia* includes many perspectives. For example, "affirmative action" is found as an entry in the African American, Asian American, and Hispanic American sections.

Each entry is unique, treating the origin and history of affirmative action as it has affected each identity group and allowing the reader to develop an appreciation for minority group differences. Of course, it would have been more complete to include a similar entry in the Native American section. Entries are also found on theoretical concepts such as "liberalism" and "conservatism." The authors provide the theoretical foundations of these concepts and proceed to develop them as practiced in American politics. They also relate them to minority groups showing how different conceptualizations have influenced the treatment of minorities and how minority groups have taken, shaped, and used Western political concepts for their own benefit. The nearly 2,000 entries are, for the most part, insightful and concrete. The appendices, timelines, and statistics provide much needed information and are well organized and accessible.

The *Encyclopedia* does not refrain from addressing controversial issues such as abortion, assimilation, and miscegenation. But some of these issues needed to be addressed more comprehensively. There is an entry for "anti-miscegenation" in the Asian American section and no reference to miscegenation at all in the African American section. There is no entry for "lynching" in the African American section. There are several additional shortcomings that should be mentioned. Some of the entries are glaringly incomplete. Specifically, the entry on "afrocentrism" (aside from being misspelled *afrocentricism*) makes no reference at all to Molefi Asante, not even in the bibliography, while relying on the arguments of Bernal and Lefkowitz to illustrate the theoretical debate. One may not agree with afrocentric scholars, but Asante should have been included in the bibliography since his is recognized as the work that ignited the debate. Other entries are painfully short, such as that on "Mary Frances Berry" whose accomplishments are many. Others are not current, ending with information from the 1980s or early 90s. The information included in the organizational listing found in each section's appendix is also dated and incomplete. In my own small

sampling, I located one organization that changed its name two years ago, several with inaccurate or disconnected phone numbers and so on. In addition, there are far too many misspellings and oversights for a reference work of this caliber otherwise. Perhaps in the next edition, the proofing and editing will be done more carefully.

The *Encyclopedia* is highly recommended in spite of its shortcomings. It sets forth and accomplishes the goal of providing source material not found comprehensively elsewhere in two well-researched and well-written volumes.

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Radical Feminism: A Documentary Reader. Barbara A. Crow, editor. New York: New York University Press, 2000, 573p.

Selecting writings from a variety of sources, Barbara Crow attempts to show the diversity of perspectives included within a radical feminist framework, while holding true to the unifying themes of this standpoint. The book includes 67 documents, organized around sources of oppression, manifestos, methods, lesbianism, heterosexuality, children, race, and class. The documents included range from public speeches, to articles printed in organization newsletters, to published scholarly texts. Those who are well-read in feminist writings will find many authors with whom they are familiar including Kate Millet, Susan Brownmiller, Toni Cade, Charlotte Bunch, Shulamith Firestone, Robin Morgan, and Toni Morrison. What sets this book apart from other currently-available anthologies is its specific focus on radical feminism in the United States in the mid-1960s and 70s; the resurrection of classic articles that have been