Review of The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Folktales and Fairy Tales

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This Greenwood encyclopedia aims to provide a broad audience with wide-ranging coverage not only of fairy tales and folktales from around the world, but also of the changing contexts that have influenced centuries of creative expression and scholarship. With the 670 entries included here, editor Donald Haase has done justice to the intended purpose of this work. Entries for specific cultural and linguistic groups introduce diverse narrative traditions, while significant themes, characters, and tales themselves have separate entries. General readers and students stand to gain background knowledge from the clearly-written entries on the concepts, vocabulary, and methods used by researchers. It is to the benefit of all users that well over one hundred contributors write from the perspectives of a range of relevant disciplines and highlight the vitality of the critical and creative work that has advanced the field since the 1970s.

The standard for this type of reference work was set by Jack Zipes' Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales: The Western Fairy Tale Tradition From Medieval to Modern (Oxford Univ. Pr., 2000). Haase was a contributing editor to that work, which covers only literary fairy tales—as distinct from folk tales—and focuses solely on Western European and North American traditions. Some overlap in entries between these two works is inevitable, but The Greenwood Encyclopedia truly stands apart with its multicultural scope and its theoretical framework that challenges the received knowledge of the field.

Each volume contains a table of contents for the entire work and begins with a complete list of the alphabetically arranged entries. Cross-references, “see also” notes, and an index provide deeper access. Black-and-white illustrations, though scant, offer a useful visual reference to particular manifestations of the tales discussed (such as representative work of a well-known illustrator or a still from a movie adaptation). “Further readings” after each entry include references to multimedia resources and relevant works (in English where available), and the extensive bibliography in the third volume is an excellent starting point for further research. I could see this work being especially valuable when used alongside William M. Clemente's Greenwood Encyclopedia of World Folklore and Folklife (Greenwood, 2006), which provides deeper sociological and geographical context for the cultures discussed.

Physically, the volumes are comfortable to handle and the font is a readable size. I only hope that future editions will print entry headings in bold; under the current organiza-

This two-volume set by veteran popular music writers Scott Schnider and Andy Schwartz and a handful of other writers explores the two dozen rock groups and solo artists the authors consider most influential in rock music history.

As with any noninclusive historical reference set, some readers may take issue with the subjects the authors chose to include or exclude. Schnider explains their selection process by writing, “Although each left an indelible mark on rock’s development, we chose this combination of acts in effort to provide a representative cross-section of rock’s rich panoply of sounds, styles and stances” (xiii). It should be noted, though, that the majority of the musicians covered are members of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (and the authors would probably argue that the ones who aren’t members should be).

Each entry contains a black-and-white photo of the artist and a detailed and lengthy essay that is scholarly yet accessible. A timeline, selected discography, and suggestions for further reading conclude each entry. A selected bibliography and index finish the set.

This is a thoughtful and useful reference work, but a few minor improvements could be made. For example, the artists appear to be arranged in chronological order from Elvis Presley to Nirvana. However, this biographical set would be easier to use if the artists were arranged alphabetically instead. Another issue is that the two musicians pictured on the covers of the two volumes, Ray Charles and Joni Mitchell, aren’t exactly who I would expect to be the faces of a reference set about rock music legends. An early rock pioneer like Elvis Presley and a contemporary rock musician like Bruce Springsteen might have been better choices. It would be beneficial to have color photographs of the musicians. For example, the black-and-white photo of David Bowie in his colorful Ziggy Stardust costume doesn’t do the icon’s famous character any justice whatsoever.

Of course, information about these musicians is freely available online via sites such as www.rollingstone.com, but this set’s lovingly written essays contain a wealth of knowledge and informed perspectives and would be an excellent edition to high school, college, and public libraries.—Samantha J. Gust, Reference Librarian, Niagara University Library, Niagara University, New York


The Greenwood Icons encyclopedias on popular culture topics explore their subject matter through in-depth essays on around twenty-four principal figures “embodying a group of values and reflecting the essence of a particular culture” (Greenwood Press website). In his introductory essay to this encyclopedia, author Bob Gulla explains the criteria used and difficult choices made in selecting the twenty-one individuals and five musical groups that are the subject of Icons of R&B and Soul. Each twenty to twenty-five-page essay includes an extensive biographical and historical narrative as well as some commentary on musical style and historical significance and influence. Each essay also includes a sidebar that explores some additional important event or individual in greater detail. Although each essay has its own brief discography and bibliography, the encyclopedia concludes with an extensive bibliography of books, articles, websites, and, particularly welcome, a list of printed music titles, as well as a comprehensive index.

With its extended essay format, Icons of R&B and Soul is recommended for both large and small collections. Its depth of coverage makes it appropriate for large collections as a useful supplement to standard popular music reference works such as The Virgin Encyclopedia of Popular Music (Virgin, 2002) and The Penguin Encyclopedia of Popular Music (Penguin, 1998), as well as The Encyclopedia of Popular Music (Muze, 1998) and its derivative publication, The Virgin Encyclopedia of R&B and Soul (Virgin, 1998). For smaller collections, Icons of R&B and Soul can provide some additional depth of coverage of the topic, but without the cost of many individual monographs.—Paul Cauthen, Assistant Music Librarian, University of Cincinnati, Ohio


First published in 1995, this is a new paperback edition of the work of the late J. R. Porter, a scholar of theology at the University of Exeter and Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford. Introductory essays detail the literary history and composition of the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, the history and archaeology of the Bible, and the relationship between mythology and scripture. Although brief, these essays convey the excitement and depth of many centuries of biblical scholarship to the general reader, including more than a few surprising facts, such as that the first Bible printed in America (1663 in Cambridge, Massachusetts) was in the indigenous Algonquin language, rather than English.

The main body of the text is divided into two parts focusing on “The Hebrew Scriptures and Apocrypha” and “The New Testament.” The organization then follows the chronolo-