New Publications

E-Book Functionality: What Libraries and Their Patrons Want and Expect from Electronic Books, by Susan Gibbons, Thomas A. Peters, and Robin Bryan (138 pages, June 2003), outlines the most useful characteristics of e-books, concluding that library users expect them to have all the same features as paper books with such added benefits as multimedia capability, linking, forms, and access to relevant discussion lists. An annotated bibliography of materials on e-book features serves as the core of this publication. $34.99. ALA Library and Information Technology Association. ISBN 0-8389-8229-8.

Encyclopedia of Christmas and New Year's Celebrations, by Tanya Gulevich (977 pages, 2d ed., April 2003), is a major expansion of the 1999 edition, containing nearly 240 entries on the history, legends, customs, symbols, and worldwide observances of Christmas and western New Year's traditions. Find out about the symbolism of St. Basil's bread in Greece, the star of Bethlehem, was-sailing the fruit trees, Christmas in Lebanon and Iraq, the first Christmas card in 1843, and the winter goddesses of northern Europe. A handy guide with a substantial bibliography and webliography. $68.00. Omnigraphics. ISBN 0-7808-0625-5.

Encyclopedia of Cuba, edited by Luis Martínez-Fernández, D. H. Figueredo, Louis A. Pérez Jr., and Luis González (688 pages, 2 vols., January 2003), encompasses all of Cuban history and society from the colonial period to the present. Divided into 12 subject areas (including geography, literature, performing arts, and the Cuban diaspora), the book's 81 contributors offer a balanced view of the island's culture and politics, seeking to avoid such distortions as crediting all progress in Cuba to the Revolution or blaming it for every misfortune. The essays are both biographical (Reinaldo Arenas, José Martí) and topical (educational system, Cienfuegos Province, Cubans in the U.S. music industry), with many black-and-white illustrations and several pages of color plates. An excellent choice for either general or Latin American collections. $174.95. Greenwood. ISBN 1-57356-334-X.


Google Hacks, by Tara Calishain and Rael Dornfest (330 pages, March 2003), contains a wealth of tips and tools to enhance the Google searching experience. The first two chapters delve into special syntaxes (site:, inurl:, phonebook:) and special services (groups, images, news), which alone are worth a close look. Most of the rest of the book requires you to obtain a Google Web API, which allows programmatic access to the Google index and the ability to run scripts using Perl or Java, but the last chapters offer Google pranks and games, and tips on maximizing the Google effectiveness of your Web site. $24.95. O'Reilly. ISBN 0-596-00447-8.

Library: An Unquiet History, by Matthew Battles (245 pages, June 2003), examines the challenges and redefinitions that the library as an institution has survived throughout the ages. In a series of essays on the social function of libraries, Battles covers ancient and medieval collections, Jonathan Swift's satire "The Battle of the Books," the accomplishments of Antonio Panizzi and Melvil Dewey, Nazi book burnings, and the destruction of Bosnian libraries by Serbian nationalists. Harvard's collections are also mentioned frequently, as Battles is

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Male Witches in Early Modern Europe, by Lara Apps and Andrew Gow (190 pages, April 2003), examines the significance of the arrests and trials of male witches during the European witch craze of the 15th–18th centuries. Although Apps and Gow do not dispute the feminist analysis that patriarchy and misogyny were primary causes of the persecution, they effectively challenge the marginalization of male witches by such authors as Anne Barstow (Witchcraze, 1994) and the assumption by Stuart Clark (Thinking with Demons, 1997) that male witches were conceptually impossible for contemporary demonologists. The authors examine the Malleus maleficarum and other texts, including the narrative of Johannes Junius, who was burned at the stake in Bamberg, Germany, in 1628. $24.95. Manchester University. ISBN 0-7190-5709-4.

Nostradamus: L’éternel retour, by Hervé Drévillon and Pierre Lagrange (127 pages, April 2003), is a solid 21st-century reassessment of the famous 16th-century French physician, astrologer, prophet, and poet Michel de Nostredame, better known as Nostradamus. A well-researched overview by historian Drévillon and sociologist Lagrange, this French-language paperback highlights the differing interpretations of Nostradamus’s purposely obscure prophecies, and includes the hoaxed quatrains on the Internet that fooled people into thinking he had predicted the September 11 terrorist attacks. The historic illustrations will appeal to bibliophiles. In short, a good update to such comprehensive works as Edgar Leoni’s Nostradamus and His Prophecies (1961) and Peter Lemesurier’s Nostradamus Encyclopedia (1997). EUR11.60. Gallimard. ISBN 2-07-076748-5.

Strategic Bombing by the United States in World War II: The Myths and the Facts, by Stewart Halsey Ross (244 pages, January 2003), calls into question the supposed precision of the air raids in Europe and Japan during the war and argues that the indiscriminate bombing of civilian centers actually did little to hasten the end of the war. Ross, who participated in bomb accuracy tests for the U.S. Army Ordnance Corps at Edwards Air Force Base in the mid-1950s, also discusses the stress levels among the airmen, who knew that the likelihood of their completing a 25-mission tour without getting killed, wounded, or captured was roughly 50 percent. $39.95. McFarland. ISBN 0-7864-1412-X.

You Can Prevent Global Warming (And Save Money!): 51 Easy Ways, by Jeffrey Langholz and Kelly Turner (370 pages, April 2003), provides many practical tips on energy efficiency, from using less paper and installing sun-control window screens to car pooling and composting. Each section gives an estimate on the annual cost savings as well as the amount of carbon dioxide not emitted by adopting the featured suggestion. An easy read, but lacks an index. $10.95. Andrews McMeel. ISBN 0-7407-3327-3.