Africana: The Encyclopedia of the African and African American Experience, edited by Kwame Anthony Appiah and Henry Louis Gates Jr. (5 vols., March 2005), updates, corrects, and massively expands the first, single-volume edition of 1999 with new biographies, many topical essays, and an expanded scope that encompasses more of the African diaspora in the Americas. This set must come close to the vision that historian and activist W. E. B. Du Bois had in 1909 of an Encyclopedia Britannica for people of African descent. Africana contains entries for most countries of the world, with a detailed history, description, and achievements of their black populations, often accompanied by maps showing political subdivisions. The editors include a much-needed index in the fifth volume and have scattered major essays (called “interpretations”) throughout the text on such topics as Islam, race, blacks in Latin America, AIDS, and African religions. There are many entries for music genres (from ragtime and blues to bebop and rap) and even descriptions of signi cant African animals from aardvarks to zebras. An excellent resource for all academic libraries. $525.00. Oxford University. ISBN 0-19-517055-5.


Baseball before We Knew It: A Search for the Roots of the Game, by David Block (340 pages, January 2005), thoroughly examines the confusing protohistory of baseball and its bat-and-ball predecessors. Not content with merely demolishing the credibility of Abner Doubleday and Cooperstown once again, Block discerns baseball’s true origins in a British children’s game of the early 18th century. Masterfully researched and extraordinarily well-documented, this book includes an invaluable 60-page, chronological bibliography of baseball mentions from 1450 to 1861. Other extras include a list of constitutions and bylaws of pre-Civil War baseball clubs and nine surviving descriptions of baseball-like games written and published before 1845. $29.95. University of Nebraska. ISBN 0-8032-1339-5.

A British Eyewitness at the Battle of New Orleans, edited by Gene A. Smith (150 pages, December 2004), contains the annotated memoirs of Royal Navy Admiral Robert Aitchison from 1808 to 1827. Although the title makes it sound like this is a thorough account, Aitchison actually missed much of the 1814 battle because he was only serving as a valet. However, his manuscript is a centerpiece of the Historic New Orleans Collection and offers rare insights into the Napoleonic era as well as the flora and fauna of Louisiana, New England, Canada, Cuba, and Bermuda, where he went on his travels. Accompanied by numerous engravings, maps, and color plates. $15.95. Historic New Orleans Collection. ISBN 0-917860-50-X.

Degunking Your PC, by Joli Ballew and Jeff Duntemann (370 pages, March 2005), offers practical advice on getting rid of computer-related clutter. Common signs of gunk in an academic setting include too many periph-
erals, out-of-control cabling, outdated hardware, dust and dirt, disorganized backups, and slow performance. This guide shows how to configure your work area, degunk your components and peripherals, untangle USB and FireWire connections, create both wired and wireless networks, launch an efficient backup strategy, and enhance PC and media performance. Running on a different platform? Paraglyph Press also has *Degunking Linux* (June 2005), *Degunking Your Mac* (June 2004), and *Degunking Your Mac, Tiger Edition* (June 2005) in the same series. $24.99. Paraglyph. ISBN 1-933097-03-5.


**The Ezra Pound Encyclopedia**, edited by Demetres P. Tryphonopoulos and Stephen J. Adams (342 pages, April 2005), encompasses the life, inquinces, and writings of this controversial American modernist poet who flirted with fascism in the 1930s but pioneered the use of free verse in extended compositions and was a major in quince on Yeats, Eliot, Joyce, Moore, Frost, and other poets. This volume provides 265 entries written by more than 100 contributors and an extensive bibliography. $125.00. Greenwood. ISBN 0-313-30448-3.

**The Freedom of the Streets**, by Sharon E. Wood (321 pages, April 2005), investigates the problems of working women both prostitutes as well as those more respectably employed in Davenport, Iowa, during the Gilded Age. Post-Civil War industrialization allowed women to take up paid employment as a path to political and social independence. Wood chose Davenport as typical of many American cities of similar size where women's reform attempts were thwarted at the local level by men with differing views of sexuality and political power. Middle-class women who entered the work force faced the prevailing conviction that employment disrupted domestic stasis and that wage-earners were little better than the prostitutes who often worked a block or two away from respectable businesses. Wood also takes a close look at the Lend a Hand Club that working women joined, the reasons why local women turned to prostitution, civic efforts to regulate the brothels, and the reformatories that attempted to civilize wayward girls. $59.95. University of North Carolina. ISBN 0-8078-2939-0.

**A Guide to Slavic Collections in the United States and Canada**, edited by Allan Urbanic and Beth Feinberg (198 pages, January 2005), describes 85 libraries in North America that own significant Slavic and East European research materials. Contact information for each is provided, along with online catalog Web sites and access policies. Published simultaneously as Volume 5, Number 3-4, of Haworth’s Slavic and East European Information Resources. $19.95. Haworth. ISBN 0-7890-2250-8.

The Pearl: A Failed Slave Escape on the Potomac, by Josephine F. Pacheco (307 pages, February 2005), describes the nature of slavery in the District of Columbia, where the slave trade was not prohibited until 1850 and the institution not abolished until 1862, only nine months before the Emancipation Proclamation. Slave labor helped build the U.S. Capitol, the White House, and the Treasury building, and slaves were often rented out for work in the Washington Navy Yard. Pacheco takes as a focal point the Pearl incident of 1848, in which two white watermen hid 76 fugitive slaves on a schooner they had leased and tried to take them up the Chesapeake Bay to freedom. However, they were apprehended by a posse of slaveowners as they lay anchored at the mouth of the Potomac waiting for favorable winds. Most of the runaways were given to slave dealers who sold them to buyers in the Deep South. The incident inspired the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher to take up the antislavery cause. $29.95. University of North Carolina. ISBN 0-8078-2918-8.

West Virginia Tough Boys, by F. Keith Davis (254 pages, November 2003), recounts the little-known story of the rough-and-tumble, old-style, back-room electioneering that resulted in John F. Kennedy winning the West Virginia primary in 1960. As much an examination of life in Appalachia in the mid-20th century as a political memoir, Davis’s interviews and conversations with the former old-boy Democratic bosses in Logan County—who engaged in some questionable methods for getting out the vote—are a rich mine of local color and country culture. $29.95. Woodland Press. ISBN 0-9724867-2-0.