A/V A to Z: An Encyclopedic Dictionary of Media, Entertainment, and Other Audiovisual Terms, by Richard W. Kroon (766 pages, January 2010), defines some 10,000 historical and current words and phrases used in film and television production, exhibition, and distribution. Much more comprehensive than Ira Konigsberg’s now dated Complete Film Dictionary (Penguin, 2d ed., 1997), this book offers descriptions in language easy for novices or home viewers to understand and includes terms for cinematography (for example, dynamic cutting), acoustics (mosquito noise), lighting (Kino Flo), projection (megaplex), communications (cable signal leakage), staging (proscenium), personnel (script supervisor), business (audience fragmentation), legal (Madrid Protocol), rating systems (MA 15+), academic film studies (core fantasy), genres (mocumentary), studios (UPA Pictures), abbreviations (AVCHD), and slang (carpetbagger). $195.00. McFarland. 978-0-7864-4405-2.

The Aztec Calendar Stone, edited by Khristianan D. Villela and Mary Ellen Miller (333 pages, April 2010), assembles 21 essays and book extracts related to the Aztec Calendar Stone, or Piedra del Sol as it is known in Mexico. Constructed in Tenochtitlan in 1519–1521, the 24.5-ton stone sculpture features mythological and historical imagery carved on its face and sides. Much of the literature describing and analyzing the Calendar Stone is only in Spanish or else buried in hard-to-find publications, but this anthology aims to rectify that imbalance. Following an introduction on the stone’s history and significance, the editors provide an extract from Fr. Diego Durán’s The History of the Indies of New Spain (1581), which describes its carving by stonecutters on the orders of Moctezuma II; a record of its rediscovery in 1790 by Mexican astronomer Antonio de León y Gama; an 1876 essay by Mexican antiquarian Alfredo Chavero; a translation of an important 1921 description and analysis of the stone by German archaeologist Hermann Beyer; and various modern reinterpretations of the stone’s central figure and significant glyphs. $49.00. Getty Publications. 978-1-60606-004-9.

Also from the Getty Museum is The Aztec Pantheon and the Art of Empire, by John M. D. Pohl and Claire L. Lyons (97 pages, April 2010), a companion publication to an exhibition at the museum that ran March 25–July 5, 2010, and an examination of the way 16th-century Spanish scholars regarded Aztec civilization through the lens of classical Roman history and myth. $25.00. Getty Publications. 978-1-60606-007-0.

Barnum Brown: The Man Who Discovered Tyrannosaurus Rex, by Lowell Dingus and Mark A. Norell (368 pages, June 2010), is the first full biography of the pioneering paleontologist who in 1902 discovered the first documented Tyrannosaurus remains in the Hell Creek Formation of southeastern Montana. That was a significant enough accomplishment to ensure his fame, but Brown (named at birth in 1873 by his brother Frank after the circus showman P. T. Barnum) spent a total of 66 years collecting and curating fossils for the American Museum of Natural History, among them one of the largest crocodiles ever found, the bones of a prehistoric bison accompanied by the Paleolithic spear point that killed it, a huge number of dinosaur specimens from the Red Deer River in central...
Alberta, and even some intriguing early anthropoid specimens in Burma. In his later years, Brown was responsible for the spectacular dinosaur hall in the American Museum and the dinosaur exhibit at the 1964 New York World’s Fair. Dingus and Norell capture much of the adventure in Brown’s exploits, which were frequently as glamorous as his contemporary Roy Chapman Andrews, whose life was documented in Charles Gallenkamp’s Dragon Hunter (Viking, 2001). $29.95. University of California. 978-0-520-25264.

Care and Conservation of Manuscripts 11, edited by Matthew James Driscoll and Ragnheiður Mósesdóttir (313 pages, October 2009), consists of papers presented at the 11th international Seminar on the Care and Conservation of Manuscripts held at the University of Copenhagen, April 24–25, 2008. Highlights include the papyrus collection in Lund University, restoration of a 9th-century psalter recovered from an Irish bog in 2006, the causes of atypical browning of incunabula in the University of Graz library, and 10th-century Georgian manuscripts at St. Catherine’s Monastery. $43.00. Museum Tusculanum Press. 978-8-7635-3099-6.

The Encyclopedia of Weather and Climate Change: A Complete Visual Guide (512 pages, March 2010) offers a wealth of meteorological maps, charts, facts, figures, and photography for weather buffs and climate change activists alike. Not an encyclopedia in the traditional sense, this volume manages to get its points across in bits of text accompanied by vivid graphics, rather than substantial essays. A two-page spread on icebergs, for example, has a “fact file” on six classes of iceberg; a three-sentence definition; photos of penguins on an ice floe, a glacier calving, and a melting berg; a chart on iceberg size classification with an accompanying illustration; a fact file on the Drygalski Ice Tongue in the Southern Ocean; and a cutaway view of the underwater portion of a berg. The following two-page spread has a longer text section on ice hazards to ships, with illustrations of the Titanic disaster and explorers’ ships caught in the polar ice. A regional guide to climate showcases specific geographic areas from the North American Arctic to Antarctica. The final section on climate change is an excellent introduction to the human impact on global ecosystems and how those trends can be abated. $39.95. University of California. 978-0-520-26101-3.

Student’s Guide to Writing College Papers, by Kate L. Turabian, revised by Gregory G. Colomb and Joseph M. Williams (281 pages, 4th ed., April 2010), bears little more than a general resemblance to the third edition, published in 1977. In fact, it is more a student version of The Craft of Research (3rd ed., 2008), which Colomb, Williams, and Wayne C. Booth collaborated on. But that’s a good thing, since the earlier edition of Turabian was hopelessly dated. This version (largely Colomb’s effort, since Williams died in 2008 and Turabian has been gone since 1987) is a robust guide to finding a research question, locating and engaging sources, honing an argument, presenting evidence, avoiding plagiarism, revising first drafts, and citing sources, followed by general rules for spelling, punctuation, titles, names, and numbers. Colomb’s emphasis is on showing students that conducting research is far more challenging and rewarding than writing a report on a topic, and he offers far more than the standard term paper advice by suggesting that students read sources generously to understand, then critically to evaluate; support claims with reasons and evidence; create fair summaries and paraphrases; and be open to surprises and changes. $15.00. University of Chicago. 978-0-226-81631-9.