

Summer 2018

Book Review: Street Style in America: An Exploration

Todd J. Wiebe

Hope College, wiebe@hope.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.hope.edu/faculty_publications



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Repository citation: Wiebe, Todd J., "Book Review: Street Style in America: An Exploration" (2018). *Faculty Publications*. Paper 1467.

https://digitalcommons.hope.edu/faculty_publications/1467

Published in: *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, Volume 57, Issue 4, Summer July 1, 2018, pages 305-306. Copyright © 2018 American Library Association, Chicago, IL.

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by Hope College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of Hope College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@hope.edu.

the lens of place by focusing on how geographical features, from natural landscapes to imposed borders, contribute to trafficking.

The book features five main sections. The first covers the process of trafficking, from the origins of trafficked people and goods to their distribution. In the second and third sections, the authors explore different types of human and commodity trafficking. For each type, they provide a definition, impacts, contributing factors, and deterrence efforts. Although the authors include some historical information, their focus is on the present.

The fourth section consists of forty-eight profiles of individual countries or groups of countries. Each profile lists basic characteristics of the country (location, size, population, landscape, history, government) and how they affect trafficking there, the types of trafficking prevalent in that country, and any anti-trafficking laws and efforts in the country. The concluding fifth section provides the full text of documents related to trafficking.

Throughout the book, the authors emphasize the connection between geography and trafficking. For example, they describe how trafficking is more likely when the demand for an item is located far from the item's source (77). Similarly, they note that anti-trafficking laws can be difficult to enforce in places where borders cross "rugged and isolated terrain" (99). The authors also stress the connections between different types of trafficking. For example, they describe how trafficked children may be forced to mine gems that are in turn trafficked (78).

Among similar titles, this book appears to be nearly unique in its combination of human and commodity trafficking, and certainly unique in its use of geography as the method of study. In *Illicit Trafficking: A Reference Handbook* (ABC-CLIO, 2005), Robert J. Kelly, Jess Maghan, and Joseph Serio examine both human and commodity trafficking, but do so from the perspective of criminal justice and organized crime. In addition, the work borders on being out of date. The *Routledge Handbook of Human Trafficking*, by Ryszard Piotrowicz, Conny Rijken, and Baerbel Heide Uhl (Routledge, 2017), and *Human Trafficking: A Reference Handbook*, by Alexis A. Aronowitz (ABC-CLIO, 2017), both focus solely on human trafficking.

The book's language is extremely accessible and assumes no background knowledge of either geography or trafficking. In addition, most citations reference news sources such as National Public Radio and the *Guardian*. Because of this, the book seems most appropriate for a public library, high school, or early undergraduate audience. While the inclusion of both human and commodity trafficking makes a strong point in the book's favor, the fact that the majority of citations point to news articles makes the book seem lacking. This reviewer would hesitate to rely on the book as the sole trafficking-related title in an academic reference collection; it would probably function better as a companion to a work with more thorough research.—*Bethany Spieth, Instruction and Access Services Librarian, Ohio Northern University, Ada, Ohio*

Russian Revolution of 1917: The Essential Reference Guide. Edited by Sean N. Kalic and Gates M. Brown. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2017. 257 pages. Acid-free \$75.20 (ISBN 978-1-4408-5092-9). E-book available (978-1-4408-5093-6), call for pricing.

Kalic and Brown's *Russian Revolution of 1917* was one of a handful of works published last year undoubtedly to coincide with the centennial anniversary of the historic event which it considers. Anyone familiar with "Essential Reference Guides" from ABC-CLIO will find this relatively nimble tome (only 257 pages) to be another reliable entry in the series. Sandwiched between three introductory overview essays and an assorted collection of over twenty English translated letters, correspondences, and other assorted primary source materials are the main ingredients of nearly one hundred traditional A–Z subject entries.

The book is predominantly informed by a US post-war perspective, as indicated by such hallmarks as referring to the October Revolution as "really a coup d'état" (109). The fact that Woodrow Wilson's entry is longer than Bukharin's, Trotsky's, and nearly even Lenin's is perhaps also unsurprising given that the primary editors both have affiliations with the US Army Command and General Staff College. As such, one looking for an ideological counterpart from last year's aforementioned crop might consider Neil Faulkner's *A People's History of the Russian Revolution* (Pluto Press, 2017).

Nonetheless, entries are succinct and informative and are generally well suited to their stated heading. Nearly half of them are biographical in nature and are followed by entries devoted to either historical events such as the Tambov Rebellion, Bloody Sunday, and the Battle of Narva, or formal organizations including the likes of Cheka and *Pravda*. The choice of which groups to cover feels occasionally idiosyncratic: for example, there exists an entry for Mensheviks but no corresponding one for Bolsheviks. The introductory essays parse the chronology covered by the work into the distinct periods of the 1905 Revolution, the 1917 Revolution, and the Russian Civil War with roughly equal weight afforded all three. The primary source materials at the conclusion of the book are useful and provide greater context, but they are mostly reprints from widely available sources. This title, paired with Michael Hickey's 2012 RUSA Outstanding Reference Source *Competing Voices from the Russian Revolution* (ABC-CLIO, 2010) might make for a complimentary two-volume set. In any case, this work is best suited for general undergraduate level collections or lower.—*Chris G. Hudson, Director of Collection Services, Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio*

Street Style in America: An Exploration. By Jennifer Grayer Moore. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2017. 380 pages. Acid-free \$94 (ISBN 978-1-4408-4461-4). E-book Available (978-1-4408-4462-1), call for pricing.

While I am not one to pay too much attention to fashion or clothing trends, I do find myself interested in urban culture and subculture, which is what this book is really

SOURCES

about. Rather than simply documenting the varied dress and outward appearance choices of inner city Americans, author Jennifer Grayer Moore, an art and design historian, provides a more nuanced account of how diverse urban populations have evolved over the years, paying particular attention to how each have inevitably developed a “look” or certain visual traits that to some extent play a role in defining who they are.

Part 1 consists of four chapters in which “street style” is examined in its sociocultural historical context and how the mass media, fashion and clothing industry, and personal self-expression all play important roles in understanding its proliferation. Here, Moore is careful to acknowledge that “even the street style of recognizable style groups (including subcultural styles) is neither static nor homogeneous . . . [it is] constantly evolving and is subject to an infinite number of personal interpretations that written documentation may inadvertently belie” (3). She also makes the clear distinction between street style and fashion, noting that in fact “some street style is definitively a form of antifashion” (4). These opening chapters ought not to be overlooked by researchers looking for information on one or more of the specific groups covered later in the book, as they are critical to framing the lens through which subsequent entries are examined.

Part 2 contains thirty-four A–Z entries spanning “American Street Gangs” to “Zoot Suit.” Each is accompanied by a parenthetical reference to the approximate years the style was, or has been, in existence, for example, New Wave (Late 1970s–Late 1980s). Entries are substantial, most being five to six pages including further reading suggestions. Some of the more extensive entries are broken down into sections, duly acknowledging their diverse subgenres, styles, or coinciding social movements. For example, “Hip Hop” contains sections on “Fly Boy Style,” “New Jack Swing,” “Militant and African Nationalist,” “Gangsta Style,” and “Ghetto Fabulous.” Where applicable, Moore explains how certain styles rose from the “street” level to greater circles of popular fashion.

Finally, part 3 contains a photo gallery of American street style with black-and-white images coinciding with the entries in part 2 and, as such, appear in alphabetic order. Each image is paired with a paragraph-length description on the opposite page. I don’t see why these were not just included in part 2 alongside their full entry counterparts, but this is a minor grievance. Also, it is unfortunate that only one image is provided per entry. Some could have really benefited from additional images showing various representations of the style.

A search of WorldCat show this to be the only title cataloged under what I would consider its most appropriate subject heading, “Urban youth—Clothing—United States History—20th century,” thus evincing its uniqueness. While many of the individual urban subcultures and styles covered in this volume have been given serious scholarly treatment of their own (too many to list), Moore’s book is the first to bring them together in a reference-like compendium. It would serve as a great starting point for serious researchers of urban studies or fashion history, as the further reading

suggestions and bibliography are quite extensive. I believe there would be something of value here for upper high school through graduate school students. In the library stacks, it would be equally at home among the HTs as it would in the GTs, but that’s a call I’d leave up to the catalogers.—*Todd J. Wiebe, Head of Research and Instruction, Van Wylen Library, Hope College, Holland, Michigan*

The Great Depression and the New Deal: Key Themes and Documents. By James S. Olson and Mariah Gumpert. Unlocking American History. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2017. 295 pages. Acid-free \$48 (ISBN 978-1-4408-3462-2). E-book Available (978-1-4408-3463-9).

Olsen and Gumpert designed this new book to serve the ready reference needs of “advanced high school and early undergraduate readers” (vii), but they emphasize support for high school advanced placement US history classes and the Common Core curriculum. The content of the book covers the period from the Stock Market crash in October 1929 until the beginning of World War II in September 1939, but the focus on “key themes” means that the authors do not seek the broad topical scope of an encyclopedia.

The alphabetically arranged topics, mostly from one to five paragraphs in length, are weighted heavily toward biography of influential persons, laws passed by Congress, New Deal programs, and selected Supreme Court cases. There are topical entries related to agriculture, banking, industry, labor, politics, groups of workers, arts programs, and a few well-known writers and photographers. There is less emphasis on social and cultural aspects of American society and even important political topics during the period. There are no index entries for Republican or Democratic parties but there are entries for the Socialist Party and Union Party. There are no index references to migrant workers, sports, women as a subject (there are five biographical entries for women), isolationism, or to the House Un-American investigations of the 1930s. Although the entry on Walter Frances White mentions his work on the Federal Anti-Lynching Bill in Congress, the subject index does not mention lynching or anti-lynching. There are no index entries under Blacks or African Americans, but there are entries for Scottsboro Boys, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and Black Cabinet. Of course, users of the e-book may discover brief mention of topics that do not appear in the index, such as the mention of Democratic Party in twelve entries. All entries offer a brief list of further readings, and a bibliography organized by topics appears near the end of the book. In addition, the authors provide a chronology of the Great Depression in the United States, and topical lists of entries.

The authors selected ten excerpts from documents that offer students examples of primary sources. There are two photographs and eight texts from presidential public addresses, federal laws, an Executive Order, and a magazine article about teachers in the Depression. In addition,