

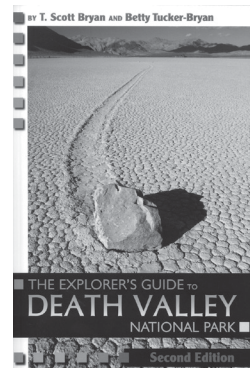
**The American Revolution: A Grand Mistake**, by Leland G. Stauber (292 pages, December 2009), dares to question the fundamental assumption that independence from Great Britain was both an inevitable consequence of the American Revolution and an unmixed blessing. Stauber suggests that Americans' hatred of British tyranny was transferred into the national saga as a generalized dislike of all governmental authority, a legacy that reached extremes in the South where states-rights proponents and strict constructionists insisted that the U.S. government had no business restricting slavery. He points out that if the colonists had accepted the British peace offer of 1778 and settled for partial independence, the U.S. government would most likely have evolved into a unicameral parliamentary democracy like Canada, instead of the bicameral presidential system with built-in protections for the status quo that was established by the Philadelphia Convention of 1787. The questions raised here should make for some lively discussions in political science classes. \$27.00. Prometheus. 978-1-59102-763-8.

**David Ruggles: A Radical Black Abolitionist and the Underground Railroad in New York City**, by Graham Russell Gao Hodges (266 pages, February 2010), tells the story of African-American abolitionist and writer David Ruggles (1810–1849) who is credited with helping some 600 escaped slaves—among them Frederick Douglass—attain their freedom. His philosophy of activism embraced civil disobedience and self-defense in an era when abolitionists tended to be passive advocates. Among other things, Ruggles created the first reading room and circulating library in New York City run by an African American. Hodges has written the first full biography of this overlooked activist. \$30.00. University of North Carolina. 978-0-8078-3326-1.

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**Encyclopedia of Weird Westerns**, by Paul Green (265 pages, October 2009), is one of those McFarland titles that you just know your collection can't live without. Green provides an annotated list of genre-bending fiction, films, TV series, radio shows, comics, and games that combine a Western setting with elements of science fiction, fantasy, steampunk, or horror. The Weird Western genre originated with the proto-steampunk dime novels starring Frank Reade and Tom Edison Jr. in the late 19th century, followed by *Weird Tales*-influenced pulp-fiction Westerns of the 1950s. The quintessential TV series was *The Wild, Wild West* in the 1960s, starring Robert Conrad as James T. West, while the prototypical role-playing game is *Deadlands*, an alternative-history scenario in which malicious entities known as the Reckoners unleash zombies, madmen, and monsters on the 1870s frontier. Green supplies a short historical overview of the elements that led to the Weird Western genre. \$39.95. McFarland. 978-0-7864-4390-1.

**The Explorer's Guide to Death Valley National Park**, by T. Scott Bryan and Betty Tucker-Bryan (454 pages, 2d ed., December 2009), can serve the armchair tourist as well as the cyclist or backpacker who wants to know more about America's largest national park outside Alaska. The authors cover the geology, human history, mining history, flora and fauna, and desert climate of the park, which ranges from desiccated salt flats 282 feet below sea level to the pine-clad peaks of the Panamints 11,000 feet above. Eleven chapters of mile-by-mile road logs describe more than 1,200



miles of paved and dirt roads throughout the area. Appendixes enumerate the many ghost towns, mining camps, and railroads in Death Valley. \$23.95. University Press of Colorado. 978-0-87081-962-9.

**Hieroglyph Detective: How to Decode the Sacred Language of the Ancient Egyptians**, by Nigel Strudwick (160 pages, March 2010), contains a summary of Egyptian hieroglyphic signs and grammar, 23 sample texts from ancient tombs and temples with a step-by-step analysis of each message, and a reference list of common signs. The book is an excellent choice for beginners, though it is less detailed than *How to Read Egyptian* by Mark Collier and Bill Manley. \$16.95. Chronicle. 978-0-8118-6985-0.

**How to Pay for Your Degree in Library and Information Studies, 2010–2012**, by Gail Ann Schlachter and R. David Weber (266 pages, 1st ed., May 2010), offers a comprehensive summary of all the scholarships, fellowships, grants, loans, and awards available that support study, research, and conference attendance for LIS undergraduate and graduate students in the United States and Canada. All of the 833 funding sources listed here are portable, in that the grant or stipend is not restricted to one institution or location. Detailed eligibility requirements are provided for each entry. Indexes by program title, sponsoring organization, residency, tenability (funding restricted to a specific area), specialty, diversity, and deadline enhance access. \$30.00. Reference Service Press. 978-1-58841-215-7.

**The Islamic Manuscript Tradition: Ten Centuries of Book Arts in Indiana University Collections**, edited by Christiane Gruber (281 pages, January 2010), explores the Islamic book and manuscript holdings of the Indiana University Art Museum, the Lilly Library, the Mathers Museum, and the Kinsey Institute in seven essays written by Gruber and her graduate students for a 2006 seminar on Islamic calligraphy, illumination, printing, and book-binding from the 9th to the 20th centuries.

Gruber provides a succinct and informative overview of traditional Islamic book art and its modern revival. Of particular interest are chapters on Islamic works in the Ruth E. Adomeit collection of miniature books; the books printed by İbrahim Müteferrika, who founded the first officially sanctioned Ottoman Turkish printing press in Istanbul in 1727; and an illustrated abridgement of the Persian poet Firdawsī's *Shahnama* produced in Lahore during the non-Muslim Sikh Empire in the first half of the 19th century. \$39.95. Indiana University. 978-0-253-35377-1.

Christiane Gruber is also the editor, along with Frederick Colby, of *The Prophet's Ascension: Cross-Cultural Encounters with the Islamic Mi'rāj Tales* (389 pages, March 2010), which examines the myriad adaptations of the story of Muhammad's journey to heaven on his winged steed Burāq. The authors show how the narrative was used to construct group identity, regulate social norms, convert non-Muslim communities, illustrate key esoteric concepts, teach children the tenets of Islam in a format similar to a modern graphic novel, absorb elements from other cultures, and create vivid and dramatic public performances. \$59.95. Indiana University. 978-0-253-35361-0.

**Library Data: Empowering Practice and Persuasion**, edited by Darby Orcutt (302 pages, November 2009), focuses on the types of data that libraries generate and how it can be used in decision-making and advocacy efforts. The authors, primarily academic librarians, examine methods of collection evaluation, analyses of electronic resource usage data, measures of reference transactions, assessment of information literacy sessions, and data analysis to make the case for institutional repositories. \$50.00. Libraries Unlimited. 978-1-59158-826-9. **ZZ**

