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Review of Cultural Anthropology: A Guide to Reference and Information Sources

Fran Mentch
Cleveland State University, f.mentch@csuohio.edu

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Original Citation

Mentch, Fran. (2008). Review of Cultural Anthropology: A Guide to Reference and Information Sources. *Collection Management*, 33(3), 251-252.

Repository Citation

Mentch, Fran, "Review of Cultural Anthropology: A Guide to Reference and Information Sources" (2008). *Michael Schwartz Library Publications*. 61.
https://engagedscholarship.csuohio.edu/msl_facpub/61

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1-1-2008

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Repository Citation

Mentch, Fran, "Review of Cultural Anthropology: A Guide to Reference and Information Sources" (2008). *Library Faculty Publications*. Paper 1.
http://engagedscholarship.csuohio.edu/msl_facpub/1

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Fran Mentch

CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY: A GUIDE TO REFERENCE AND INFORMATION SOURCES

This article was originally published in:

Mentch, Fran. (2008). Review of Cultural Anthropology: A Guide to Reference and Information Sources. *Collection Management*, 33(3), 251-252.

Post-print prepared by MSL Academic Endeavors, the imprint of the Michael Schwartz Library at Cleveland State University (2012)



CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY: A GUIDE TO REFERENCE AND INFORMATION SOURCES. Joann Jacoby and Josephine Z. Kibbee. *Westport, CT; Libraries Unlimited, 2007, ISBN-13: 9781591583578.*

It has been about 15 years since Josephine Kibbee wrote the first edition of “Cultural Anthropology: A Guide to Reference and Information Sources.” She is joined in writing this second edition by her colleague Joann Jacoby; both Jacoby and Kibbee are librarians at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Library. This new edition of this reference work comes right on time to help a new generation of librarians, researchers, and students. Both editions have almost identical formats, so the first edition’s readers can easily transition to this new one. But the resources are, of course, updated to include the digital forms of old and new resources. The authors have addressed the problem of how to mix the old and new forms of information; they successfully bridge this gap by providing detailed annotations that put resources in their historical context. Introductory remarks tell us that this work takes a comprehensive approach to the field of anthropology, but focuses on sociocultural anthropology, and does not include popular treatments; it includes works through 2006.

The authors divide the topic of cultural anthropology into eight chapters. They begin with general and social science sources, then move to general anthropology reference sources, methods and practice, subfields of anthropology, research areas, humanities related fields, area and ethnic studies, and end with supplemental resources. All the basics are here and some tidbits as well, such as the entries on “Theses Canada Portal” where you can search and download for free, full-text versions of some Canadian theses and dissertations, and the “Association for the Study of Play” and University at Buffalo’s online “Anthropology Review Database.” Author, title, and subject indexes are included and there is a very strong Supplemental Resources chapter that lists, among other things, core journals, archives, and a section on career development and

grants.

This type of reference work has a limited, but very grateful audience. An important part of that audience who should be encouraged to use this book are students considering graduate study in anthropology. Students will find the chapters Methods and Practice and Supplemental Resources to be the most helpful to them in their approach to research and their career possibilities. Because this work is a microcosm of the field of anthropology, students can use it to review the history of anthropology, as well as its current applications, and decide if anthropology is the right place for them.

The book would have benefitted from more editorial attention; I found a typo in the table of contents, Linguistic Anthrology [sic], and a bibliographic entry for a book was missing the publication date (entry 465). The book's cover has several small photos that do not provide a meaningful visual message about the book's content; the people that appear in most of the images all look like contemporary North Americans.

This is a much needed second edition, and I think that librarians will find it useful for their collection development and research and will enjoy this tour of the resources in the cultural anthropology corner of our information world.

*Fran Mentch
Social and Behavioral Sciences Librarian
Cleveland State University Library
Cleveland, OH 44115-2214*