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One of the complaints this reviewer hears from instructors in Gender Studies programs is the dearth of current content related to transgender and intersex issues in general textbooks assigned for introductory courses. As far as a single volume text, Hilary Lips’ Sex and Gender (McGraw-Hill, 2007), now in its sixth edition, may likely be the standard in the field. Still, the emergence of new contentions and unresolved issues related to sexual development, identity, and gender roles in society during the interim ten years calls for a new resource. David E. Newton, a prolific freelance writer holding a doctorate in science education, addresses this need in Sex and Gender: A Reference Handbook. Transgenderism and other nonbinary gender identities are not simply included in a single chapter in this resource, but are woven in appropriately and substantially throughout the sections. For example, the introduction to the chapter “Background and History” begins with a discussion of the 2016 “Dear Colleague Letter,” issued jointly by US Department of Justice and Department of Education regarding the use of bathrooms by transgender students, and the “Chronology” section concludes with a 2017 entry on President Trump rescinding the policy. The result is an accessible resource that offers unbiased insights on controversial gender topics as well as important primary source information.

A single volume work will never be inclusive enough to encompass the broad range of issues related to sex and gender in societies. Despite being part of ABC-CLIO’s Contemporary World Issues series, it is perhaps worth pointing out that the concentration of this work is focused primarily on the United States. Instructors and students seeking more global perspectives of gender issues will still need to supplement their research with other sources. That said, Sex and Gender: A Reference Handbook is a recommended addition to school, college, and public libraries.—Robin Imhof, Humanities Librarian, University of the Pacific, Stockton, California


Stress in the Modern World: Understanding Science and Society is a two-volume reference set that looks at a wide array of aspects of stress. It looks at the impact stress has on both physical and psychological health. It offers both theoretical and practical perspectives. It “presents a variety of theories, external and internal triggers of the stress experience, and both effective and ineffective coping mechanisms” (xvi).

Stress in the Modern World: Understanding Science and Society is composed of four parts. Part 1 details theories of stress, part 2 looks at sources of stress, part 3 covers responses to stress, and part 4 features personal accounts. This last part is what truly makes this source unique. Each chapter ends with a summary and an extensive list of references and further reading. It was written by fifty-two writers, nearly all of which are “professional mental health counselors and therapists or university faculty who instruct students in the mental health fields” (xiii).

Part 1 explores many different theories of stress as well as misconceptions about stress. It also discusses the effects of stress on the mind and body. Part 1 ends with exploring aspects of stress assessment and measurement. Part 2 covers sources of stress. While this can vary significantly