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A Brief History of Encyclopaedias: From Pliny to Wikipedia

By Andrew Brown

Hesperus Press Ltd, United Kingdom, 2011. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 193 x 124 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. Including topics such as Wikipedia's importance as a global phenomenon, this is a timely consideration of the roles of the guardians and editors of information throughout history. Encyclopedias have traditionally claimed to provide absolute knowledge, yet with information now among the world's most valuable commodities, this Brief History is a sensible deliberation on how accurate that claim can ever be. While the omissions and distortions of the Great Soviet Encyclopedia may seem easy enough to spot, those of--for example--the Britannica, the Universalis, or the Brockhaus may not be so widely known. Since the Middle Ages, rapid advancements in science have made all encyclopedias effectively obsolete virtually immediately as they are published, which begs the question: Is the encyclopedic project fundamentally flawed? Also discussing the impact online encyclopedias have had on the conundrum, this is a fascinating account of an unjustly neglected area of cultural history.

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