Index in particular represents a wealth of information on even such problematic issues as "meaning" in proverb study. Perhaps most clearly in that Index Professor Mieder's own conceptual grasp of important issues in parieniology is indicated. He is justly proud-- like Stith Thompson and his Motif-Index-- of having created the Index manually, with his own intuition for key words as a guide. He closes his introductory statements with an invitation to any and all who are engaged in proverb research to send him notices or reprints of current research or items that have escaped his sleuthing efforts. By chance, I have an article of my own on proverbs and fables that he missed. Admittedly, it was obscurely placed, so I have sent him a copy. Aside from that grave oversight, I can think of nothing bad to say about the Bibliography. Folklorists, bibliographers, librarians, students of speech, literature, or values owe themselves the pleasure of looking into-- and using-- this fine bibliography.


Reviewed by Guy H. Haskell.

Robert A. Georges and Stephen Stern have provided the student of American and Canadian immigrant and ethnic folklore and ethnography with a tool which will prove of tremendous value in research. They have compiled a bibliography of one thousand nine hundred entries covering fifty-six different ethnic groups, including one section on general theoretical concerns of the field. The bibliography spans ninety-two years of research; the first entry was published in 1880, the last in 1980.

Georges and Stern employed two main methods in compiling their list of entries: bibliographies requested from specialists working with specific ethnic groups or fields of study, and the page by page perusal of forty-three different journals related to the field. The compilers
have done an impressive job in tackling a complex and difficult task.

It is clear that in compiling a bibliography of materials on so many different groups that there would be an occasional omission. Yet, from an examination of the listings for two ethnic groups with which this reviewer is familiar, there appeared to be no omissions of importance. On the contrary, there were works included with which this writer was unfamiliar. Unfortunately, Georges and Stern chose to omit materials they were unable to obtain and read themselves. Although the reasons for this procedure are understandable, it would have been preferable to include such references, perhaps marking them with an asterisk; they might then be obtained and used by researchers who would be able to find them.

Each item in the bibliography is listed under the ethnic group it discusses. When two or more groups are included in a work, that work is crosslisted under both groups. A short description of each work follows the listing, providing pertinent and precise information on its content and value. The only shortcomings this reviewer found in the bibliography were minor. For example, within each ethnic category, works are listed by author's last name. When there is more than one work by a single author, however, the listing of works by that author appears to follow no discernible pattern (such as date of publication).

For the beginning folklore student, the veteran researcher, or scholar from another discipline, this bibliography is a tool which will aid in finding and evaluating materials from diverse sources. It is a valuable timesaver and guide in the investigation of North American ethnic groups and their folklore.