been abused by popular literature, and thus essays covering these topics might well serve to point out past errors and invite future research. Further, unlike American cultural myths, American folklorists have done research and published about these two topics.

The Handbook is, further, much more than sixty eight individual essays bound together in a very reasonably-priced form. Richard Dorson's organization, editing, and introductions help create a massive offering to anyone interested in American culture. This volume must be read, for it is the finest single-volume contribution to American Folkloristics.

**Unriddling: All Sorts of Riddles to Puzzle Your Guessery Collected from American Folklore.**

Reviewed by W. K. McNeil.

Many folklorists have collected and studied children's folklore, but few have attempted to publish such material in books aimed primarily at children. As a result, that task has been left mainly to amateurs, among the most active of which in this regard is Alvin Schwartz. To date, Schwartz has issued thirteen books for pre-teenagers, drawing on various folklore collections for these compilations. His latest effort, Unriddling, is typical of Schwartz's books, and thus it is a good one to examine for the faults and virtues of the entire series. Schwartz must be given high marks for actually consulting folklore collections rather than merely fabricating material and calling it folklore, as others have done. There is even some evidence that several of the items came from his own fieldwork. Schwartz also includes a
section of notes which discuss the history of many of the riddles included in his book.

On the negative side, folklore publications are used rather indiscriminately. Hodgepodge collections such as *Folklore on the American Land* or *Zickery Zan* are given equal status with more significant works like *Kaiser und Abt*, *Folklore from the Schoharie Hills*, or *Up Cutshin and Down Greasy*. More importantly, Schwartz does not seem to respect texts found in folklore collections and collected in the field. Several texts have been "improved" in various ways; to Schwartz's credit, he identifies the occurrences of such alterations. Factual errors also appear (such as the assertion that rebus riddles, among others, are no longer used), along with an unfortunate antiquarian attitude in which folklore is associated solely with the past.

None of these criticisms, of course, matter much to Mr. Schwartz, who has designed his book for children rather than for folklorists. Although he has not presented the material in exactly the same way as a folklorist would, he has done far better than most other children's authors who deal with folklore.

"Sounds So Good to Me": The Bluesman's Story.


Reviewed by Gregory Hansen.

Barry Lee Pearson insightfully tells the bluesman's story in "Sounds So Good to Me": The Bluesman's Story. From interviews with blues musicians and from their life stories, Pearson glean common themes as he examines the archetypal stuff that blues legends are made from: first guitars, church/blues tensions, rip-offs, success, alcohol, violence, and "the