the subject, but the thorough grounding in American materials ensure the anthology's appeal to the American undergraduate student for whom it is intended. Ultimately, every instructor has to decide for herself which instructional materials best suit her style and her audience (and every teacher knows that every class reacts differently to reading selections). I would, however, recommend that Oring's two volumes be given a try no matter how long one has successfully used an older folklore textbook. Both anthologies are more representative of what the discipline of folklore has grown to be than any other folklore texts, and both are very reasonably priced.


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The continuing fascination with the American South as a cultural entity is clearly demonstrated by the widespread publicity that greeted the recent publication of the Encyclopedia of Southern Culture. Its appearance has been celebrated with a street party in Oxford, Mississippi, reviews in local newspapers, and a reception in the U.S. Senate caucus room attended by 1,200 enthusiasts, politicians and contributing essayists.

Sponsored by The Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi, the encyclopedia strives to describe the characteristic aspects of the South's culture from a wide range of perspectives. The result is probably the most exhaustive single-volume response to Shreve's query in Absalom, Absalom!, "Tell about the South. What's it like there. What do they do there. Why do they live there. Why do they live at all," which appears as the encyclopedia's epigraph.

Instead of employing a single alphabetical arrangement, the editors chose to organize the encyclopedia into 24 thematic sections, covering such topics as agriculture, education, language, media, and violence. Each section opens with an overview essay, followed by thematic articles and then brief topical-biographical sketches. Although all of the sections focus on the South's culture, folklorists will probably find the sections on black life, ethnic life, folklife, music, the mythic South, and women's life to be of greatest interest.

I feel that the encyclopedia's greatest contribution is this comprehensive treatment. Along with the expected articles on kudzu, barbecue, and the blues, essays on nuclear pollution, the Vietnam War, and gays provide the generally ignored southern perspectives on these topics. Similarly, the essay on air-conditioning reminds the reader of the causal relationship between technological innovation and culture.
Occasionally while reading the encyclopedia, I feel a native-born northerner's reluctance to accept all of the traits described as southern. For example, when I read, "Four identifiable human interest areas survive from the earlier southern rural way of life: a love of sports, a taste for regional foods and cooking, an all but inerasable streak of religious fundamentalism, and the love of a good folksy yarn," (p. 12). I remember enjoying or enduring the same traits while growing up in rural Pennsylvania. While the passage does not explicitly state that these traits are unique to the rural South, the implication is that these traits are worth noting because they stand in opposition to some larger, outside culture, in this case presumably non-southern or urban culture. I would not single out the encyclopedia for any special criticism in regard to this issue because I feel that this is an underlying problem for any regional study. While regional scholars wish to describe the traits that they feel are special to the region, they may be reluctant to assert explicitly that these traits stand in opposition to the culture outside the region.

Despite this reservation, I find the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* to be a very satisfying and enjoyable exploration of the South. Its interdisciplinary treatment is perhaps the most rewarding technique for illuminating the region and makes it clear that the South is special in many ways. Besides the wide-ranging essays, I especially enjoyed the maps which clearly demonstrated the distinct distribution of traits often described as southern. The ten years of planning, writing, and editing required to produce the encyclopedia have been well rewarded, and I would recommend this volume for both casual reading and as a reference work.


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Robert E. Walls's *Bibliography of Washington State Folklore and Folklife* is what a research bibliography should be—extensive and accessible. It enables a variety of potential users to pursue different research, teaching, and presentation interests.

There are over 2,100 citations. Walls does not claim that this number is exhaustive; but it will certainly satisfy scholars—if not obsessives. The real joy of the bibliography is the wide variety of sources Walls has explored—sources such as the *Journal of Forest History*, master's theses in arts, sciences, and even Physical Education, Foxfire-type high school publications, and cookbooks. Approximately 80 percent of the entries are annotated.