ISAR is an important resource for American Studies; Tim Miller tells about an important product of its work. THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF AMERICAN RELIGIONS. Edited by J. Gordon Melton. Detroit: Gale Research, 1987, $165.00. The Institute for the Study of American Religion, headed by J. Gordon Melton, the editor and author of this impressive tome, is devoted to the daunting task of documenting all of American religion. Since the larger and better-established religions tend to maintain archives of their own, ISAR has concentrated especially on the marginal groups: the ephemeral, the small, the odd, the underrecognized. After nearly a quarter century of accumulation, ISAR's resources are second to none, and this book demonstrates that.

The Encyclopedia of American Religions brings together basic information on all of the major and hundreds of the minor American religions. The volume is organized by "families" (ranging from the Western Liturgical family, including Catholicism and Episcopalianism, to such families as "Ancient Wisdom" and "Magick").

Part I provides introductory essays and bibliographical resources for each of the twenty-two families; the far longer Part II is a directory which provides a few paragraphs of background on each group plus listings of numbers of members, publications, educational facilities and the like. Multiple indices help make the work accessible.

This reference volume deserves a place in virtually every school and public library.

News of two massive research/reference projects reaches us from Chadwyck-Healey Inc. The first is the CATALOGUE OF MANUSCRIPTS IN THE HOUGHTON LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY in eight royal quarto volumes (Alexandria, Virginia, 1986). The catalogue is $1600; the catalogue plus inventory, $2300. This is a most useful tool for Americanists, of course, because of the Houghton's powerful collections on important nineteenth-century New England historical figures and on major authors.

Then there is the NATIONAL INVENTO OF DOCUMENTARY SOURCES. It is divided into several parts—the first covers Federal Records (The National Archives, The Smithsonian Institution Archives and the several presidential libraries (1600 microfiche with printed index, $3950); the second, the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress (900 microfiche with printed index, $2750); the third, state archives, libraries and historical societies.
published as microfiche and indices in units of $1000 per unit; and the fourth, academic libraries and miscellaneous repositories, also sold unit by unit.

The publishers would like us to run an extensive description and evaluation of this material, something it is probably inappropriate for us to do given the mission of this journal. We are pleased, however, to alert readers to the fact that major libraries will shortly have these immensely useful materials, which, in the perfectly reasonable words of the publishers' blurb, should provide "for scholars in search of documentary sources something similar to what the publication of the National Union Catalogue has done for scholars looking for published materials." They will certainly make life easier for many of us who work with original documents; more important, they will make it less likely that we will remain unaware of the existence of something important.


The essays clearly demonstrate the Chicano leaders' articulation of the ideology, desires and needs of each of the movements. The authors compare and contrast the rhetoric of the leaders, their background, use of language and ability to present the demands of their constituents. The rhetoric presents the individual ideals and goals of each movement as a separate entity. For example, Gonzalez deals with urban poor Chicanos, Chavez with farm workers and Tijerina with demands for acceptance of Spanish and of colonial Spanish land grants in New Mexico. This aspect of the volume is well researched and presented.

However, the essays lack any real cohesiveness or conclusion. There is little or no attempt to compare and constrast the movements these leaders represented, no attempt to link the movements to other civil rights activism of the time (Blacks, Native Americans and women) or the anti-Vietnam War movement. The most important omission is discussion of the impact of the protests of the 1960's and 1970's on present day Chicano politics and radicalism, especially the impact of the leadership and the dialogue. As

From a section of What Time Is This Place? which guides young readers to look at their personal histories. See p. 120.