

CD-ROM REVIEW

BY CHERYL LaGUARDIA & ED TALLENT

OVER THE PAST SIX MONTHS or so, readers have been asking most often for multicultural products. If our correspondence is any indicator of the marketplace, interest in this area is enormous. The last time we covered multicultural products (CD-ROM Review, *LJ*, 4/15/93), the discs for the most part were bibliographic in nature, in contrast to this column's titles, which are subject-specialized, full-text products in their own right. There was also minimal multimedia on those 1993 discs, whereas all of the discs reviewed here are multimedia. These discs trace some notable changes that have taken place in the CD-ROM industry during the intervening three years.

DIScovering Multicultural America contains video, audio, photos and images, full-text, statistics, graphs, charts, and reference information about the "four most studied American ethnic groups": African, Asian, Hispanic, and Native Americans. Call Gale Research Inc. at 800-877-4253.

500 Nations: Stories of the North American Indian Experience combines images, animation, audio, graphics, and text to describe the history of North American Indians. Based on the TV movie of the same name. Call Microsoft, Inc. at 800-426-9400.

The Native Americans is based on two chronicles of Native American history: Turner Publishing's book by David Hurst Thomas & others (1993, ISBN 1-878685-42-2) and the TBS documentary both of the same name. The disc holds text, images, sound, and video. Call Image Smith at 310-325-5999.

One Tribe is a reference guide incorporating maps, photographs, video, music, statistics, text, and quizzes to explore cultures in 235 countries around

Disc Data	
	DIScovering Multicultural America Gale Research Inc. 1996 Windows \$500
	500 Nations: Stories of the North American Indian Experience Microsoft, Inc. 1995 Windows \$35
	The Native Americans Image Smith 1995 Windows/Mac \$39.95
	One Tribe Virgin Sound and Vision 1994 Windows \$69.99
	American Journey: The Hispanic-American Experience Research Publications 1995 Windows \$149

the world. Call Virgin Sound and Vision at 310-246-4666.

American Journey: The Hispanic-American Experience is a multimedia research tool with full-text documents, photographs, illustrations, maps, and audio detailing the history of Hispanic Americans. Call Research Publications (an imprint of Primary Source Media) at 800-774-7741.

Getting to go

Four discs installed without incident under the Windows RUN command. We experienced some difficulties with **American Journey: The Hispanic American Experience**, however; it refused to install

on our 486 machine, and we had to resort to a Pentium workstation (where it installed easily and quickly). But beware of using this on 486s.

A familiar journey

American Journey: The Hispanic-American Experience is another volume in Research Publications' "American Journey" series. It functions much like other titles in the series: search options include full-text, index terms, time line, map, and lists A-Z. The disc contains mostly historical documents and photographs, and the initial search results screen nicely identifies just what it is you've pulled up with each search, whether picture, biographical information, the full-text of a historical document, etc.

You can also browse a Picture Album, read through a Historical Overview, scan through Key Topics in depth (from "Spain's Troubled Empire" to "A Place on Identity's Bookshelf"), or find disc background and tips on how to use it under a section called About This Disc. The full-text search screen was easy to decipher, and we were able to find quickly material on "Raza Unida." After successfully running the search, however, when we tried to go back one step (to look at the search screen again), an error message appeared saying this step backwards "could take time" (which was curious given that we'd been going back and forth over steps for some time). When this message was cancelled, a "screen-over-screen" overlay glitch appeared, and we couldn't read any of the text onscreen because it was superimposed by more text and pictures.

We bugged out briefly to the main screen, repeated our former maneuvers from start to finish, and everything worked fine, so it looks like an isolated incident. Nothing untoward happened with the disc after this point.

We next attempted an Index term search for "raza," but it was not in the Index Term list. A quick look in the index for "zoot suit" found two entries in the index: *Zoot Suit* (drama) and *Zoot Suits*. We did index searches for them both handily.

It took quite a while to figure out the ondisc Timeline (it's neither intuitive nor obvious nor elegant). We've seen better quality time lines on other discs, notably the Gale disc reviewed below.


The ondisc audio is superb, and the selection of multimedia examples is interesting: a traditional mariachi song linked to a modern performance by a

Cheryl LaGuardia is Coordinator of the Electronic Teaching Center, Harvard College Library, and author of *The CD-ROM Primer: The ABC's of CD-ROM* (Neal-Schuman, 1994). Ed Tallent is Coordinator of Library Instruction, Harvard College Library



Like Orange Juice, Milk and Bread,
Information Is Better When It's Fresh



The CD-ROM with the Freshest
Information on the World 



EXEGY is an easy-to-use research tool of current world information. Updated every two months, more often than any other CD-ROM of its kind, it is a single source for information on all the countries of the world. It contains over 2,000 stories on current events, over 800 biographies, more than 1,000 profiles of businesses & organizations, important statistics & documents, over 1,500 photos, more than 250 maps & more. EXEGY for Windows and Macintosh includes six update discs per year and toll-free technical support. Phone 800-368-6868 or 805-968-1911 for a 60-day on-approval copy or free on-site demonstration.

EXEGY IS ANOTHER INNOVATIVE REFERENCE TOOL FROM

A B C  C L I O

130 Cremona Drive, Santa Barbara, California 93117