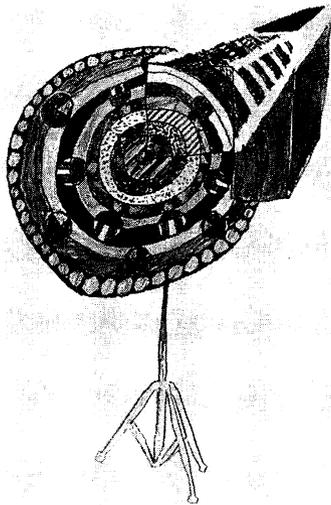


american studies column

AMERICAN STUDIES PRIZE: Winton Solberg reports that the "Committee appointed to select the best essay published in American Studies during 1985" chose A. Arnold Wettstein's "Churches, Cults, and Constitu-

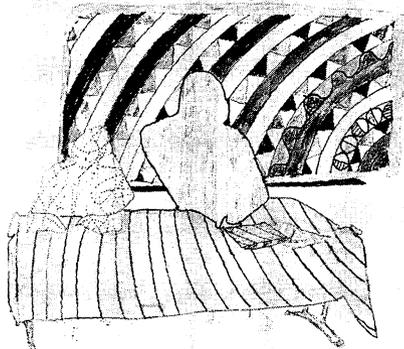


tionality." The citation reads, "Thoroughly versed in the appropriate secondary literature, original in his research into contemporary legal practice, Professor Wettstein takes on an important contemporary issue, providing good historical background and an effective argument. His essay has cultural scope and intellectual richness." On the prize committee were Nina Baym, Mary Kelley and, as chair, Winton Solberg. The prize carries an honorarium of \$100.

The awards process is administered in an interesting way: when we as editors decided that there should be a prize, we felt that it was inappropriate for members of our board to be involved in the selection process. So the job of chairing and selecting the committee fell to the President of the association. Wint was president in 1985.

It's nice to note that a number of different articles in the 1985 volume received votes; we take that as a sign that the quality of articles in the journal is high, for these are distinguished jurors. Mr. Wettstein's essay was the only one "ranked among the top three by all committee members." We thank Wint and his committee, congratulate the winner and hope that all involved—especially our contributors—feel as good about the matter as we do.

For some years Iowa State University has been quietly stockpiling resources and personnel in the history of TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE. There's a distinguished crew in Ames by now, so the decision has been made to create a Center for Historical Studies of Technology and Science. A wide range of activities is contemplated, among them gathering and preserving historical records; there's a special interest in the interface of business with technological innovation. Alan I. Marcus is the director; write him for information: 635 Ross Hall ISU, Ames, Iowa 50011.



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Students of the BIG BAND ERA pay attention to "territory bands," groups which were famous in an area, but failed to obtain national exposure. Soloists, sidemen, rhythm sections and arrangers for territory bands live on in oral tradition and in the memories of people who danced to their music and remember them well; since some of those listeners are knowledgeable, they provide a resource for study. Not enough recordings and charts have survived to document even the best known of them satisfactorily, but with ingenuity and diligence, one can learn a great deal. Historians of rock music might similarly begin paying attention to regionally famous rock bands. At least one band which bridged the tough era when big bands died and rock moved in is well-documented in a university collection: the Red Tops. The Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi writes to tell us that "tapes and records of studio and live performances, as well as business journals, ledgers and cash books, Social Security timebooks and appointment books listing all Red Tops performances from 1953 to 1973 with notes about each of them" are now fully catalogued and available in the Archives. Information comes from Suzanne Steel at (601) 232-7753.

Scholars who are LATIN AMERICAN CITIZENS and who would like to study in the United States may apply for funds administered by the John Carter Brown Library at Brown. Although the JCB is a great collection of Americana, the scholars are not limited to United States topics. They pay their keep by doing some lecturing and teaching; the program runs jointly at Brown and the University of Connecticut, and is funded by the Tinker Foundation. Information from the JCB, Box 1894, Providence RI 02912.

The JCB has LOOT of its own for scholars with reasons to work in its great collection. Same address as above.

REUTHER LIBRARY MONEY in the form of fellowships to work in the "Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs" in Detroit is announced in a packet we received from Joan Rabins. Information and forms come from Philip Mason at the Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University, 5104 Cass Ave., zip 48202, phone (313) 577-4024.

The ROCKEFELLER ARCHIVE sends us frequent releases to tell us that money is available for scholars who have reason to work in the collection. We run information as a service to readers and also for the pleasure of seeing "Pocantico" in print. Phone (914) 631-4505 if you need information, or look in a past issue of this journal.

The ASA announces a NEW PRIZE named for John Hope Franklin. It's worth \$750 and honors "the best published book in American Studies"

every year, by a member of the ASA. Details from the ASA office, 307 College Hall, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia 19104.

Editorial Board Member John R. Stilgoe was awarded the George W. and Constance M. HILTON BOOK AWARD for his *Metropolitan Corridor: Railroads and the American Scene* (Yale, 1983) by the Railway and Locomotive Historical Society, which terms the book "of lasting value to the interpretation of a key part of our American heritage." Having alighted from a commuter train several years ago, Mr. Stilgoe is completing a history of American suburbs between 1745 and 1950.

A prize not limited to American subjects, but of interest to Americanists, is the CLIFFORD PRIZE. It's awarded by the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, and goes to the best article nominated on "some aspect of eighteenth-century culture . . . regardless of discipline." Information comes from R. G. Peterson, St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota 55057.

MAASA stands for the Mid-America American Studies Association. But the Mid-Atlantic ASA also uses those call-letters. That nobody until now has noticed says something about the wonderful looseness of the whole field. We probably should do something, though, to eliminate the duplication before it leads to confusion. At one stage in the discussion of a new title for our organization, the word "Heartland" was proposed (instead of Mid-America). It strikes Your Faithful Editor (as it apparently struck others) as rather hammy. "Central" is out, too, because "Central American Studies Association" implies that we're going to study Costa Rica and its neighbors. "Midcontinent" was not considered because that had been the name of one of the two chapters which merged to form the "Mid-America." Actually, the combined territories of the former NCASA and MASA look as much in the middle of the continent as did the territory of MASA alone. YFE wonders whether the former NCASA bunch would really object to our returning to the title "Midcontinent." It always seemed a little pretentious, too, but nobody could think of anything more modest which was still descriptive. "Plains" just won't do; too much of our turf is not plains. Or maybe we should remain Mid-America but think of some other way to abbreviate the mess. "M-AASA" would do it, I suppose, but that's getting awfully fussy.

MASA was about the same age as the MISSOURI VALLEY HISTORY Conference, and for years the organizers of our annual meetings tried to prevent conflicts—both groups traditionally meet in spring. They also have tried to avoid conflicts with MMLA and a number of other outfits whose members overlap ours. The merger of NCASA and MASA into MAASA

probably means that there are even more good conventions to dodge. MVHC, at any rate, has booked March 12th-14th, 1987 for a meeting on "all fields of history as well as interdisciplinary methodological studies"; all this will happen in Omaha. Michael Tate in the History Department of the University of Nebraska at Omaha (the zip is 68182) will fill you in on details. As for filling you up and out on liver dumplings and other wonderful Omaha delicacies, MAASA can offer specialized technical advice. Or the hungry conference-goer could search through past numbers of this column. Omaha has rebuilt a picturesque old part of the town and turned a bunch of warehouses into fancy speciality shops and restaurants for tourists, boosters and yuppies, but the really good food is much further south of downtown, on 13th Street, if memory serves, on what used to be Highway 75 before they re-routed it, just a few blocks north of the Sokol Hall. Back in the years when gas was cheap, when one didn't count calories or worry about cholesterol, and one somehow had time to do foolish things, YFE and his family had been known to drive all the way up from Lawrence to spend a few pleasant hours in the Joslyn Museum, then drive over to the place with the tile front where the beer is from Pilsen and the dumplings from heaven, eat too much for a couple of hours, and drive all the way home.

When the American Studies Association holds its November 20-24 1987 meeting in New York, it will be joined by the Canadian Association for American Studies. If you want to participate in this INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, contact the ASA, 309 College Hall, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia PA 19104-6303.

A memo from J. Bunker Clark on SONNECK SOCIETY letterhead reads, Would you believe that that much appreciated notice of the Sonneck meeting next year, beginning April Fool's Day, did not include WHERE? It's at the Stephen Foster Memorial, University of Pittsburgh, which will be having its 50th anniversary.

Can you get said addition into next issue, or will said issue appear after said meeting? (Answer: "Yes" and "Hope so.")

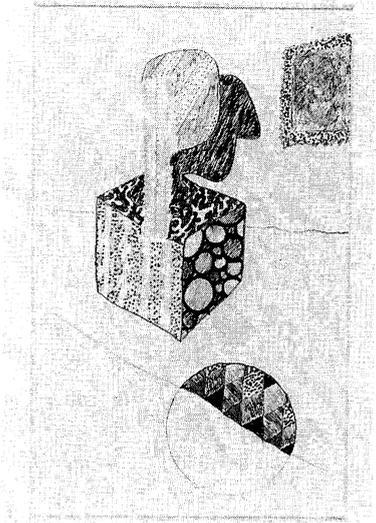
Siena College in Loudenville, New York is having a WORLD WAR II CONFERENCE June 4th and 5th, 1987, with main emphasis on the year 1937. The release lists a broad range of topics in which they're willing to see papers. Information comes from Thomas O. Kelly II. He is in history; the zip is 12211.

EARLY AMERICAN REPUBLIC, the history of same, is the topic of a conference at Temple University July 16-18 1987. Information comes from James Stewart, Macalester College, St. Paul, Minnesota 55105.

WAR ON THE GREAT LAKES is a symposium run in conjunction with the State of Michigan's 1987 sesquicentennial festivities. Ron Goulet has information: Monroe County

C.C., 1555 South Raisinville Road, Monroe MI 48161.

The Religious Studies Department and the Center for American Studies at Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis have themselves a planning grant to develop "a project on RELIGION IN AMERICAN CULTURE as it relates to the independent (nonprofit) sector of the country." The Lilly Endowment is the sugar-daddy; you get information from Anne Fraker, 301C Cavanaugh Hall at the University; the zip is 46202.



IN THIS SPACE each issue we run a note to express our gratitude to scholars not on our editorial board who have lent a hand by acting as guest editorial consultants on articles in their specialties. We thank: Eric Carlson, University of Connecticut—Storrs; Lewis Dabney, University of Wyoming; Hasia R. Diner, University of Maryland—College Park; Jay P. Dolan, Notre Dame University; Robert M. Farnsworth, University of Missouri—Kansas City; Warren French, Indiana University—Purdue University at Indianapolis; James Gilbert, University of New York—Fredonia; Alan Gribben, University of Texas—Austin; David Grimsted, University of Maryland—College Park; Alan Heimert, Harvard University; Theodore Hovet, University of Northern Iowa; Alexander Kern, University of Iowa; Ralph Levering, Earlham College; David W. Levy, University of Oklahoma; Richard G. Lillard, California State University—Los Angeles; Nancy O. Lurie, Milwaukee Public Museum; John J. McDermott, Texas A & M; Robert M. Mengel, University of Kansas; Walter Meserve, Indiana University; W. Stitt Robinson, University of Kansas; Lillian Schlissel, City University of New York; Eldon Turner, University of Florida; John Wrenn, University of Colorado.