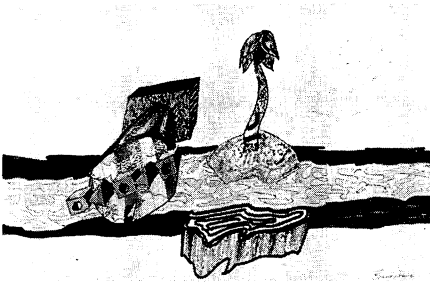


## american studies column

Consisting of Dialogue Among the Chapters of The American Studies Association, and a Semi-Conducted Tour of Ideas, Conferences, Research Opportunities and Resources in Our Field



**MIGHTY MASA MERGER WITH NCASA:** from Al Stone we hear that the American Studies Association National Council approves merger of the North Central American Studies Association with the Midcontinent ASA, pending approval of a "majority of the membership of both regional associations." Subsequent contact with Al indicates that the new name is likely to be Mid-America ASA. The new chapter would include North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois (including Chicago), Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma and Arkansas. Members in individual states might decide that their state membership would prefer to affiliate differently.

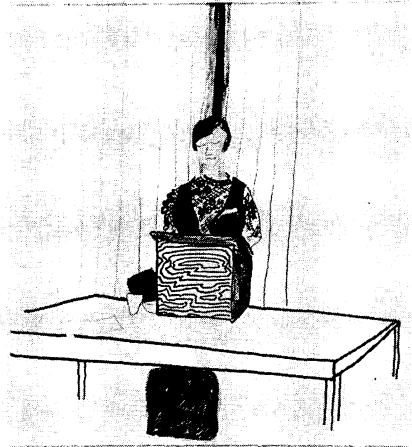
MAASA looks funny to our eyes, but that's the new name, and it's official: since we wrote the item above, the merger has gone through. NCASA and MASA have joined to form MAASA.

**TECHNOLOGY** in culture; "Culture in Technology" is the topic which the California American Studies Association used for its '84 spring conference, April 27-29 at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. Wayne K. Hobson, American Studies, CSU, Fullerton (92634) has details of what transpired. As in the past,

CASA tried to keep costs down by hustling about for housing for those who didn't want to rent motel rooms.

**FOLKLORE:** CASA also sent us word of a California Folklore Society do at Fort Mason, San Francisco, April 6-8, 1984. That was run by T. W. Johnson, Anthropology, CSU, Chico (95929-0400).

MAASA IN 1985 will meet at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. Former *American Studies* editorial board member Winton Solberg says he will chair the program committee.



A GREAT PLAINS SCHOLAR from Texas a few years ago introduced us to the term "Humidman," by which he meant all mankind  
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research about the American elderly: e.g., Burnam and Addie live near children; they enjoy a functioning support network of family, friends and neighbors; they cherish independence and express satisfaction with life; and, in the face of life's exigencies, they are active problem solvers and copers.

Egerton's style is lucid and sensitive. He has fashioned a poignant richly descriptive life history and written of his subjects with affection.

OF STUDIES IN AMERICAN INDIAN LITERATURE: Critical Essays and Course Designs. Edited by Paula Gunn Allen. New York: Modern Language Association. 1983. Cloth: \$25.00; paper: \$12.50. Bernard Hirsch writes, "This book is invaluable to the scholar and teacher of American Indian literature. Ms. Allen considers five different areas of concentration from oral literature to contemporary, provides excellent essays for each by a number of fine scholars, offers several helpful and informative course designs for both introductory and advanced courses, and includes a thorough bibliography. The book will, I am certain, stimulate

already active programs in American Indian literature and encourage the development of new ones."

There is no telling why someone in the publisher's promotion office chose to send us Nathan Goldstein's *THE ART OF RESPONSIVE DRAWING* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1984. \$29.95), the third edition of a drawing textbook obviously inappropriate for review here. But it's so good as a primer of how to see that we nevertheless insert this note in "Obnafrucepbobitroas" to alert readers who use graphic art in American Studies to a fine "sensitizing" tool. When we use art as artifact for the study of culture or society, we should never use it just for "substantive" content. Artists' ways of seeing have to be part of our discussion or we distort; the style, manner of perception and related artists' values are part of content, too, and we as culturalists should learn to see them. This is a good primer of the language, and the handsome cuts make eloquent illustrations of how artists feel about elements of drawing.

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unfortunate enough not to live on the high plains. The high plains are semi-arid; life there is very different than it is elsewhere. For one thing, as Your Faithful Editor discovered when, during a 1976 trip to Garden City, Kansas, to be Bicentennial speaker, he borrowed a bicycle to get a little exercise: the dry wind will peel the skin off the face of a Humidperson (Okay?) in about 25 minutes. For another, population has always been low. Drawn by the great beauty of the area, I have returned many times and have been to several conferences on high plains life. If you have never been briefed, we commend to your attention one at the Center for Great Plains Studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 20-22 March, 1985. John Braeman, who has been affiliated with this journal for longer than either of us wants to admit, is running it, and in our experience everything John does is first-class. He's in History; the zip in Lincoln is 68588-0327. Always thoughtful, he's trying to raise money to help participants pay their way in cases in which their own institutions are too broke or tight to do so. Go if you can, and tell John I sent you.

SUMMER SEMINARS for college teachers are designed to give teachers at institutions which tend to overwork humanists, or which have inadequate library facilities to support advanced humanistic work, a chance to do scholarship under a leading humanist at a major university with a major library. The seminars are usually

just wonderful. If you're interested in details, write Jeannette Beer, Division of Fellowships and Seminars, National Endowment for the Humanities, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Room 316, Washington, D.C. 20506.

THE SONNECK SOCIETY, which is clearly playing our song, held its 1984 meeting March 22-25 in Boston. One theme emphasized was turn-of-the-century Boston musical life. The conference included a furious round of musical events from chamber music to a premier of John Harbison's First Symphony by the Boston Symphony Orchestra. If you want to know what happened, write Steven Ledbetter, 65 Stearns Street, Newton Centre, Massachusetts 02159.

SONNECK elects honorary members, most recently Wilfrid Mellers to honor him for his scholarship on American music, especially *Music in a New Found Land* (1964).

IRVING LOWENS died on November 14, 1983; he was founding president of the Sonneck Society, dean of the Peabody Conservatory, music critic of the *Washington Star* and an awfully nice man. Sonneck has established an award in his memory for a significant piece of scholarship of any sort which deals with our music or that of the other Americas. Allen P. Britton is collecting funds to endow the award. Checks payable to the Sonneck Society, identified as being for the

award, may be sent to Kate van Winkle Keller, 410 Fox Chapel Lane, Radnor, PA 19087.

**MATERIAL CULTURE** is the new title of the journal hitherto known as *Pioneer America*. Simon Bronner says the change was made because the magazine intends to run "interdisciplinary artifactual studies" of "folklore, psychology, anthropology, history, geography, sociology, museology and American studies." For subscription or membership in the Pioneer America Society, contact Allen Noble, Geography, University of Akron, Akron, Ohio 44325; for matters editorial, write Bronner, who's in Folklore and American Studies at Penn State—Capitol Campus, Middletown, Pennsylvania 17057.

**THE CO-EDITOR** of the *Mississippi Folklore Register*, Philip C. Kolin, writes to tell us about the varied activities of the magazine and of his own scholarship and teaching. We mention it here because he has strong American Studies interests, and would like to hear from people in our field interested in his magazine. Address: Southern Station, Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39406-8395.

**HUMANITIES AND TECHNOLOGY** are what they deal with at Interface '84, a conference on October 25-26 at Southern Technical Institute, Marietta, Georgia 30060. Given our recent printing schedules, there is no way that you are going to read this by the deadline for abstracts, which is April 27, 1984, but you may still want to contact Becky Kelly and Virginia Hein, English and History, STI. The new Humanities and Technology Association has a journal, too.

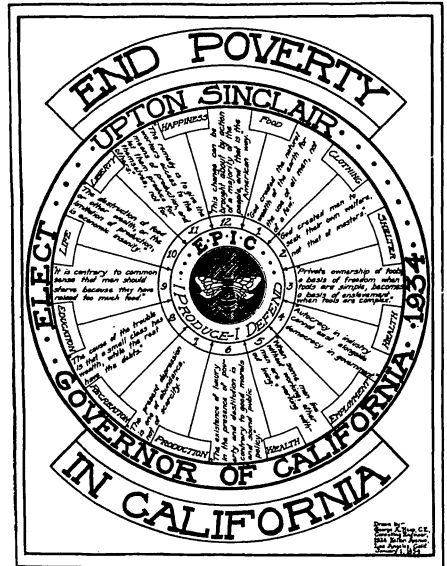
**OFF WE GO** to the U.S. Air Force Academy History Department's symposium on "Military Planning in the 20th Century," 10-12 October, 1984. Flight plans are available from Captain Bernard E. Harvey, History, U.S.A.F.A., Colorado Springs, Colorado 80840.

**RELIGION AND THE LIFE OF THE NATION:** Write to the Indiana University/Purdue University/Indianapolis Center for American Studies, 425 Agnes Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46202 for information about three symposia on the subject funded by a grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc.

**WELL-WATCHED TREES** and other aspects of the forest and conservation history of the Rocky Mountain West are what the 38th annual meeting of the Forest History Society, October 18 and 19, 1984, in Denver, plans to discuss. Address inquiries to Norman I. Wengert, Forest History Society, 109 Coral Street, Santa Cruz, California 95060.

**WHIM** stands for Western Humor and Irony Membership, an outfit which tries to publish its proceedings. "The Language of Humor and the Humor of Language," their 1982 conference material, is now in print; they tell us that stuff from their 1983 conference, "Humor and Meta-

phor," should have been available around April 1 (when else?), 1984. In 1984, the plan was to meet March 28-April 1 in Phoenix with the topic "Contemporary Humor and Contemporary Issues." Don Nilsen, English, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona 85287 is running the '84 gathering, and will know how to buy proceedings.



**EPIC** stood for "End Poverty in California"; it is now 50 years since Upton Sinclair ran for governor via that acronym, and H. Morton Newman, 2398 Parker Street, Berkeley, California 94704, 415-845-3749, is gathering data to commemorate the event. He asks "to hear from anyone who participated in any capacity in that campaign, pro or con."

**BUILT FORM AND CULTURE RESEARCH** was the topic of a forum at the University of Kansas 18-20 October 1984. The subtitle says more: Approaches and Implications in the Study of Socio-Cultural Aspects of Built Environments. Write 205 Marvin Hall for details. The zip in Lawrence is 66045. You can phone 913-864-5127.

**WE HAVE AGENTS** everywhere, people not on our staff who help us and the cause of American Studies scholarship. Those who assist as editorial consultants we thank in this space each issue. Thanks, then, to Ed Grier, University of Kansas; Richard Lillard, California State University, Los Angeles (retired); William G. McLoughlin, Brown University; Joel Porte, Harvard University; Dennis Rohatyn, University of San Diego; Elliott Rudwick, Kent State University; Gary Shapiro, University of Kansas; Geoffrey Steere, University of Kansas; Elmer Suderman, Gustavus Adolphus College, and John Willingham, University of Kansas.