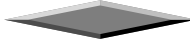


The University of Iowa American Studies Newsletter

September 2000



The State of the Department



What follows is an abridged version of my "First Ever State of the Department Address" delivered at our First Floating Friday of the year on August 25:

New beginnings offer an occasion to signal where we're headed as a community, to identify ourselves to our new members (and to remind the old-timers in case some of us have forgotten), and to show that I hope to bring to this endeavor a lot of energy.

History: John Raeburn's term as chair took us through a self-study and a program review, an increase in undergraduate majors (35); more majors traveling abroad, completing honors theses, and graduating with honors; the hiring of Laura Rigal; both Laura's and Jane Desmond's positive tenure decisions; my promotion to full professor; and our first full cycle of the affiliate faculty program (Susan Birrell, Health, Leisure, and Sports Studies; Alan Steinberg, History; Joni Kinsey, Art History, will remain with us for her third year as an affiliate this year).

Rich Horwitz introduced a new required course (45:20 Sources for American Studies), a move that has strengthened and solidified the major. Jane and Virginia Dominquez received a Rockefeller Foundation Grant to set up IFUSS, the International Forum for U.S. Studies, a continuing entity for facilitating international faculty and scholar exchanges. John, Rich, Jane, and I participated in the re-activation of the American Studies exchange with Katholieke Universiteit in Nijmegen, Netherlands. Laura and I launched the informal "History and Theories of Technology Reading Group," a good place for graduate students and faculty to read and talk about a topical subject outside of classes. Laura and several graduate students writing dissertations met periodically to discuss individual chapters on which students were working.

Of course, we graduated several PhDs, **20 in all** since May '96. We annually received Seashore-Ballard Dissertation Fellows, including this year's bumper crop of Jane Simonsen, Mike Augspurger, and Laura Baker. Kevin Quirk won a 2000 University Teaching Assistant Award.

On a daily basis, Carrie Louvar has ably and steadfastly assisted American Studies for 20+ years now (and she has the fancy pin the University just gave her for such service to prove it). We hired Laura Kastens a little over a year ago, and that has not only made Carrie's job easier, but it has improved our nerve center.

So, now let's look ahead. All the faculty continue exciting research projects on which they're working [see separate news sections], and they continue to receive grants, fellowships, and awards. We welcome two new affiliate faculty: Eric Rothenbuhler from Communication Studies and Kim Marra from Theater Arts. It's a small faculty, but one that continually maintains distinction while teaching and playing important departmental and community roles.

Laura Rigal will be Director of Guest Events (DOGE) this year, coordinating a new Floating Fridays program of lectures and/or workshops every other Friday afternoon for the year. Rich Horwitz, newly returned from China where he spent 1999-2000 as

a Fulbright Professor at Peking University revitalizing the American Studies Center, has agreed to help us develop our links, programming, and role in the community, a tradition deeply rooted in American Studies.

We will host two visitors this year: Shirley Wajda, Asst. Professor in History at Kent State, returns to Iowa (she was a visitor here in fall 1995) next spring to teach a course on material culture and a graduate seminar on the American home. She is finishing a book on commercial portrait photography and the rise of the 19th century middle class and beginning new research on yard sales. Diederik Oostdijk, an instructor at Katholieke Universiteit and the University of Amsterdam, will teach a spring course on the theoretical and historical contexts for popular culture especially focusing on youth culture of the last 40 years.

As a very goal-oriented person, I also want to outline some areas on which I hope to focus:

1. Establish American Studies as a vibrant intellectual community with regular get-togethers, events for American Studies grad students and faculty as well as for anyone interested in interdisciplinary work about America. I'd like to see us organize some workshops, special weekend seminars, lecture series. American Studies needs to make our extra-curricular life an important corollary to the curriculum. Okay: this also means more food, more parties!
2. Look more to community outreach: we have a headstart this year with undergraduates participating in the Johnson County Historical Society Oral History project on movies in the silent era and Rich leading a series of programs in West Liberty, Iowa City, and Cedar Rapids on immigrant communities in Iowa. We will also be looking to expand academically our ability to prepare people for work in the public sector, museums, archives.
3. Strengthen our commitment to African American culture. The African American World Studies Department is growing, and it's the right moment for us to take initiative at a number of programmatic and resources levels. I hope to work regularly with African American World Studies on a number of projects.
4. We have particular strengths here in studying American Studies in an international context, and we will continue to target efforts in that area.
5. Our new affiliates help us to broaden our strengths in popular culture, and we will be looking for some exciting opportunities here.

Like all new chairs, I expect a honeymoon period while I try to figure out my job, act naively on some things, and make mistakes on others. As chair, I know I'll lead us to do some new, exciting things. I'll help open doors for some of you that will probably make some very happy with my leadership. But I will also have to make tough decisions that will inevitably result in unpopular choices with at least a few of you from time to time. So, I'm excited – but know that the job means I'll make some things better and I'll probably lose a few battles, too. I mostly hope I can report back to you next year and do a second state of the department address that maintains my current levels of optimism and energy as well as your goodwill and enthusiasm.



WELCOME NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS!

Carolyn Buddenberg is from Bielefeld, Germany, and is here on a German Academic Exchange. She has interests in the USA in general, and literature. Hobbies include playing tennis, reading, and meeting friends.

Sam Graber, originally from Stockholm, Wisconsin, has a BA from St. Olaf College, and a MAR from Yale University, Divinity School. He is interested in literature, religion and culture, and recently finished an internship working with over-privileged youth at Phillips Exeter

Academy. Sam came to Iowa because of the atmosphere, the faculty, and the financial aid. When he's not studying he enjoys basketball, writing, and doing crazy stuff with friends.

Indra Kobke is here on the Dortmund (Germany) exchange. Her hometown is Bochum, which is in the Ruhr area, 100 km north of Cologne. She studies English (including American Studies) and German at the University of Dortmund. She is interested in contemporary and 20th century literature, both German and English, and cultural studies, including studies on minorities. Indra came to Iowa as part of the exchange program between her university and the UI, and is really enjoying Iowa City. She likes sports, going to the theater, the movies, or just

sitting in a café and watching people. Indra also plays the accordion in an orchestra and during her holidays she likes to travel around, especially to the European capitals.

Pat Naick comes from Lakewood, California. He holds degrees from UC Berkeley (BA, English) and Purdue (MA, English), and is interested in 1850-1950 literature, intellectual and social history. In the past he has taught freshman composition at NCSU, Purdue, and a community college. He chose Iowa because he liked the program. When he wants to relax he runs, bikes, goes to movies, listens to music, and drinks!

Eriko Ogihara is here from Matsusaki-shi Mie, Japan. She has BA and MA degrees from The University of Tsukuba. She would like to do research in the areas of literature, geography and education. While in college, Eriko was active in the Voluntary Services Club, the English Literary Society of Japan, and the Guitar & Mandolin Club (as a music arranger).

Patrick Brenus Oray is from Chicago, Illinois. His undergraduate degree is from The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Patrick's intellectual interests include multi-ethnic activist collaboration; effects of American pop culture on other countries; multicultural education and multimedia. Past jobs include 2 years with Americorps VISTA; Program coordinator at the University of Illinois YMCA; odd jobs like bartender, cook, text editor; some activist work (health care, American Indian mascots); and community radio. He decided to come to Iowa because his advisor graduated from this program and suggested it (and the fellowship helped also!) Downtime activities include soccer, tennis, mountain biking, studying languages, and reading.

Congratulations

Mike Augspurger and **Jane Simonsen** were married this summer!

Jennifer Rasin Denniston and husband Rhawn announce the birth of Anna Salinas Denniston, born July 26.

Congratulations to **Leslie Abadie** and **Russ Peterson**, who passed their comprehensive examinations last spring; to Lucille Gregory for receiving her MA; to **Bill Bryant** who held his prospectus meeting; and **Dr. Dan Lewis**, for a successful Ph.D. defense.

Lauren Rabinovitz received a National Endowment for the Humanities two-year Educational Development Grant to complete her multi-media project, "Yesteryear's Wonderlands: Introducing Modernism to America." The grant will allow her to complete the expensive process of professional software development and make a virtual 1908 American amusement park, complete with 3D animation.

Jane Desmond and Virginia Dominguez, co-directors of IFUSS (International Forum for U.S. Studies) were recently awarded a 3-year \$165,000 grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to extend and enhance IFUSS. This will allow IFUSS to continue its mission of bringing foreign American Studies scholars to Iowa to teach, conduct research, and to collaborate with one another and with Iowa faculty.

GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

Bill Bryant will be presenting a paper at the ASA annual meeting in Detroit this year. The panel he's on is called "CyberNatures/CyberCultures: Redefining Natural and Cultural Borders." The title of his paper is "Nature and Technology in the Age of Cybernetic Systems."

Eleanor McConnell had a book review published in the Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies this past spring. She reviewed three books about women and labor in the 19th and 20th centuries. She also presented a paper at a conference on "Memory, Autobiography, and DNA" at the University of Kansas this past spring. Her paper, titled "Because Every Life Has a Story: Self-Advertisement and Self-Actualization in American Genealogical Practice," examined the cultural and historical significance of the modern amateur genealogy craze.

Jennifer Pustz is still working at Bruce more 3/4 time as the Historian. She has been involved with three exhibitions in the past year since the opening of the Visitor Center. They recently opened a new temporary exhibition called "Help Wanted: Working at Bruce more, 1907-1937." It focuses on the servants and gardeners who worked at Bruce more during the Douglas era. It also discusses the work they did and how it changed during that period. Jennifer did most of the research for "Help Wanted" and helped with the conceptualization, writing and image selection. The exhibit runs through January 31, 2001. In conjunction with this exhibition, she will be presenting a

lunchtime lecture at Brucemore on October 4 entitled, "The Ideal and the Real: Images of Servants in the Early Twentieth Century."



Susan Birrell has been appointed Chair of HLSS - Health, Leisure, and Sport Studies. This is a new name for the department formerly known as Sports, Health, Leisure, and Physical Studies (SHLPS).

Rich Horwitz will be on the road for a pair of events early in October. From the 6th through the 10th he will be at Brown University in Providence, RI, acting as consultant for a non-governmental project linking American Studies faculty and students in China and the U.S. On the 11th, he'll head to Motown for the ASA Meeting where he will be a commentator for the session, "American Studies in International Contexts." Other participants hail from Brazil, Germany, Japan, Poland, and Turkey.

He is also pleased to report that he now has a clearer desk. Among the items off to publishers are: *Roots of American Studies* -- an anthology for undergraduate majors (he thinks the only one explicitly for that audience) in the survey or methods course (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources). He wrote short, contextualizing essays for each of the 50 selections plus a couple of longer essays, aiming for a clear introduction to what American Studies is all about. Among the aims are broadening the context for the field to emphasize earlier and more distant precedents that span cultivated and vernacular traditions; "American Studies: Approaches and Concepts" -- one of two definitive essays for the first *Encyclopedia of American Studies*, ed. George Kurian, Miles Orvell, Johnella Butler, and Jay Mechling (Bethel, CT: Grolier Publishing Company for the [U.S.] American Studies Association); plus sundry book reviews.

Rich has received a "seed grant" for 2000-2001 from The Center for Global and Regional Environmental Research. The title and abstract (with the requisite social-scientisms) reads: "An Ethnographic Study of Climate Considerations in Regional Agricultural Decisions." Rich says "This project researches how people in Iowa know and understand climate variability. We use ethnographic methods to investigate how climate knowledge is used in agricultural decisionmaking and will result in increased understanding of how people utilize climate products. Do people get their weather and climate information from

NOAA [the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration -- the folks that have brought us "El Nino/a" and "Global Warming"]? The Weather Channel? Have they seen changes in the way climate affects their decisions (e.g., what to plant and/or when to plant)? We will use interviews to establish an extended list of stakeholders who depend on weather and climate knowledge. We will identify the kinds of information they need and how they use it in decisionmaking. Finally, we will identify possible improvements to climate information." The "we" here refers to Rich and his "co-principal investigator," Dave McGinnis in the Geography Dept. They are collaborating on a MUCH larger project joining natural and policy scientists, engineers, and social scientists at NOAA, the other Regents institutions, environmental activists, farmers, and the USDA Extension Service. So, Rich is playing the role of humanistically-inclined interdisciplinarian.

Kim Marra won a Dean's Scholar Award, which provides two years of research support, and used the first grant to fund a two-week trip to the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts in June to work on her book manuscript, "Taming American Actresses," under contract for the Studies in Theatre History and Culture Series of the University of Iowa Press. With Robert A. Schanke, she co-edited *Staging Desire: Queer Readings of American Theater History*, forthcoming from the University of Michigan Press in Spring 2001. She published "Taming America as Actress: Augustin Daly, Ada Rehan, and the Discourse of Imperial Frontier Conquest" in *Performing America: Cultural Nationalism in American Theater*, edited by Jeffrey Mason and J. Ellen Gainor (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999). This past August, she was an invited participant in a panel on feminist theater historiography sponsored by the Women in Theatre Program at the Association for Theatre in Higher Education Conference in Washington, D.C.

Laura Rigal has two new articles that can be found in the most recent issue of *American Literary History* (Summer 2000). The first is a study of Benjamin West's well-known painting, *William Penn's Treaty with the Indians of Pennsylvania*, and is titled "Framing the Fabric: A Luddite Reading of Penn's Treaty with the Indians." The second article is a reflection on the state of American Cultural Studies titled "Whose Affirmative Culture?"

Laura will also be delivering a paper on Benjamin Franklin's electrical papers at Boston University in March 2001. Her paper will make connections between the

seemingly arcane world of Anglo-American science to the creation of global labor markets in the mid-eighteenth century, as a way of demonstrating how Franklin's theories of electricity anticipate, and even undergird the proliferation and mystification of digital communication today.

UNDERGRADUATE MAJORS — HONORS STUDENTS

Two American Studies honors student majors are participating in the Undergraduate Scholar Assistantship-IOWA Advantage Program this semester. This program allows honors students to work as research assistants for faculty -- to get paid and to have it listed on their transcripts as an internship. Laura Rigal, Honors Advisor, made two highly successful pairings of student to faculty: VIRGINIA CRONIN, who is interested in health care issues, will work with Women's Studies professor Jael Silliman; SARAH TOLON, who is a joint American Studies-English major and has done research on photography, will work with Lauren Rabinovitz on her multi-media amusement park project. If you know of other American Studies honors students who would be good candidates for this program in future semesters, contact: Laura Rigal.

Floating Fridays

September 22 Kim Marra (Theatre and American Studies) will present "Drilling Her in the Emotional Parts: David Belasco's 'Strange Duet' with Mrs. Leslie Carter."

October 6 Joy Kasson, Professor of American Studies and English at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, will lecture on Buffalo Bill's Wild West. This is also the title of her very recent book (Hill and Wang, 2000).

October 20 Graduate Student Job Search Information Meeting. Professors Laura Rigal and Rich Horwitz will lead graduate students through the ins and outs of finding and landing that perfect job.

November 10 Eric Rothenbuhler (Communication Studies) will present "Robert Johnson's Blues Style as a Product of Recorded Culture."

***Floating Fridays are held at 4:00 p.m. in 204 Jefferson Building. An informal reception in the American Studies suite will follow each talk. ***

SATURDAY SCHOLARS.

TAILGATING FOR THE MIND

Fall season of Saturday morning lectures. 10:00 a.m. in 40 Schaeffer Hall. Free and open to the public before home football games.

October 7 Lauren Rabinovitz, "Yesteryear's Wonderlands: How Amusement Parks Introduced Modernism to America"

October 14 Horace Porter (Chair, African American World Studies), "All that Jazz: Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington"

AMERICAN STUDIES TO HAVE

IDA BEAM SCHOLAR

John F. Kasson, Professor of American Studies and History at the University of North Carolina, has been named an Ida Cordelia Beam Distinguished Visiting Professor in American Studies for 2000-2001. Prof. Kasson will visit Iowa from October 4 to October 7 and participate in a number of formal and informal events. Highlights will be two public lectures: "Strongmen and Escape Artists: The Male Body and the Crisis of Modernity in American Culture, 1893-1917" at 4:00 on Thursday, October 5 in Gerber Lounge, 304 EPB; and "Houdini's Body, Magic, Masculinity, and Modernity" at 1:00 on Friday, October 6 in 204 Jefferson Building. The English and History departments are co-sponsors.

Professor Kasson's research is well known to the American Studies community. His books, Rudeness and Civility: Manners in Nineteenth-Century Urban America (1991), Amusing the Million: Coney Island at the Turn of the Century (1978), and Civilizing the Machine: Technology and Republican Values in America, 1776-1900 (1976), provide a synthetic vision of American cultural history over three centuries. His talks this fall will preview his new book on the cultural history of the body and masculinity at the turn of the last century and consider arguments addressed in his earlier work on the origins and character of modernity.



Rich Horwitz's pick of the term, for anyone who might have missed it, is: Buzz Bissinger's *A Prayer for the City* (New York: Random House, 1997). It is an up-close but also

politically and culturally grounded analysis of Philadelphia, focusing on Mayor Rendell's attempt to save the city. Along the way, the book bespeaks oodles about the depth of the challenge to urban America and the need to care about it.

**CONFERENCES AND
CALLS FOR PAPERS**

Comparative Drama Conference invites papers on new research and developments in any aspect of drama for the 25th conference that will take place at The Ohio State University, April 26-28, 2001. Papers may be comparative across disciplines, periods or nationalities, may deal with any issue in dramatic theory and criticism, or any method of historiography, translation, or production. Papers are to be 15 minutes in length and should be accessible to a multi-disciplinary audience. A 400-word abstract, with paper title and author's name, academic affiliation and postal address at top left, should be sent by **November 15** to Dr. Stratos Constantinidis at Constantinidis.1@osu.edu

Southern American Studies Association Biennial Conference, February 22-25, 2001, invites proposals for individual papers, complete panels, and workshop sessions on all aspects of American cultures. One- to two-page abstracts for individual papers or workshop sessions must be postmarked by **October 15**. They should be mailed to:

Professor Cristine Levenduski
Department of English
302 North Callaway Center
Emory University
537 Kilgo Street
Atlanta, GA 30322. Phone: 404-727-7989
Email: cmleven@emory.edu

Southwest/Texas Popular Culture Association and American Culture Association invites papers or panels treating any aspect of Western Landscape Art as part of its annual meeting to be held March 7-10, 2001. Please

submit a one-page abstract or panel proposal and a c.v. by **December 1, 2000** to:

Charlene G. Garfinkle
SW/Texas PCA/ACA
1030 Kellogg Place
Santa Barbara, CA 93111-1026 805-566-7163
arthistgar@aol.com

Teaching Literature Conference invites submissions for an open forum on the presentation and discussion of ideas, methods, and pedagogy of the teaching of literature. Submit paper or two-page abstract or proposal for panels, presentations, a 10-15 minute class, workshop, roundtable, or other creative method for modeling effective teaching practices to:

Teaching Literature Conference
Department of English
510 George Street
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
New Brunswick, NJ 08903 teachlit@rci.rutgers.edu
For further details go to www.rci.rutgers.edu/~teachlit

Great Lakes American Studies Association Annual Meeting invites proposals for individual papers and presentations as well as panels exploring with interdisciplinary approaches any aspect of community, family, or youth in the United States. Proposals are due **October 1**. Please send a one-page c.v. and three copies of your abstract. Individual abstracts should be 250 words, while panels should be 500 words. Send to:

Anthony O. Edmonds
History Department
Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306 765-285-2779
00aoedmonds@bsuvc.bsu.edu

The Ninth Tampere Conference on North American Studies welcomes proposals of individual papers, panels, and workshops on all aspects of the theme of the conference, which is 'Great Divide,' referring to all kinds of divides within the continent of North America. They anticipate three broad foci to emerge: divides within scholarship; divides within and between cultures and societies, and within personhood and motherhood; and divides involving regional and national borders and international relations from the cost war to globalization.

Please submit a one-page abstract to
David Robertson, Chair of the Conference
Professor of English
Center for North American Studies
FIN-33014 University of Tampere
FINLAND
david.robertson@uta.fi



FELLOWSHIPS/GRANTS

The American Antiquarian Society announces the competition for the fourth **MELLON Post-Dissertation Fellowship**, tenable for a minimum of twelve months during the period June 1, 2001 - August 31, 2002. Scholars who are no more than three years beyond receipt of the doctorate are eligible to apply. The twelve-month stipend for this fellowship is \$30,000. **Applications are due October 15, 2000**, and results of the competition will be made available in late January 2001.

More information about the American Antiquarian Society, its collections, and details of each of its fellowship programs may be obtained electronically from the Society's web site <www.americanantiquarian.org>. An application packet must be requested before application is made.

Mellon Post-Dissertation Fellowships
American Antiquarian Society
185 Salisbury Street
Worcester, MA 01609-1634
(508) 755-5221
Email: cfs@mwa.org

National Gallery of Art announces their 2001-2002 predoctoral fellowships at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts. There are nine fellowship categories, most of which are about American Art, Architecture, and Urbanism, and several about Western Art. Candidates must be nominated by their departments. To be eligible, the nominee must have completed all departmental requirements, including coursework, residency, and general and preliminary examinations by **November 15, 2000**. That is the deadline for applications as well. Certification in two foreign languages is also required. Fellowships are \$16,000 per year. If you are interested in being nominated by American Studies, please contact Lauren by November 1.

Information on this and other fellowship programs at the Center is available at:

<http://www.nga.gov/resources/casva.htm>
Email: advstudy@nga.gov

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

University of California, Santa Cruz, seeks to appoint an assistant (tenure-track) or associate (tenured) professor in **American Studies with a specialty in African American Studies** for the Fall 2001 academic

year. Applicants should submit the following materials: informative letter of application; curriculum vitae; four current letters of recommendation; a sample of applicant's best scholarly writing, published or unpublished; sample syllabi of relevant introductory and advanced courses. Materials should be sent by **October 31, 2000** to:
Professor Judy Yung, Chair
Department of American Studies
University of California
Santa Cruz, CA 95064

POINT OF NO RETURN:

1950, The Cold War, and the 20th Century

A series of public and scholarly symposia and seminars will consider American actions, the reasons we gave for them, the consequences, and possible alternatives.

September 29 *COMMITMENT TO VIETNAM*

Speaker: George Herring, Kentucky

September 30 *THE CULTURE OF CONSPIRACY*

Speakers: Michael Birkner, Gettysburg College; Justus Doenecke, South Florida; Richard Fried, Illinois at Chicago

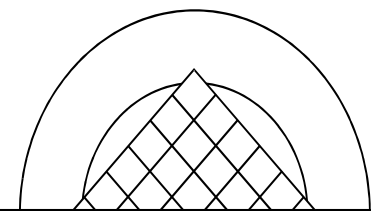
October 14 *ECONOMICS AND THE COLD WAR*

Speaker: Thomas Schelling, Maryland

November 17-18 *MYTHMAKING FOR AMERICA*

Speakers: Jennifer Hammett, UC-Berkeley; Ira Strauber, Grinnell College.

Details available from the Obermann Center for Advanced Studies, (319)335-4034 <http://www.uiowa.edu/~obermann/1950/>



American Studies Department

<i>Faculty:</i>	<i>Staff:</i>
Lauren Rabinovitz, Chair	Carrie Louvar
Jane Desmond (on leave)	Laura Kastens
Richard Horwitz	(newsletter editor)
John Raeburn (on leave)	The University of Iowa
Laura Rigal	202 Jefferson Building
<i>Affiliate Faculty:</i>	Iowa City, Iowa 52242
Joni Kinsey	319-335-0320
Kim Marra	Fax: 319-335-0314
Eric Rothenbuhler	american-studies@uiowa.edu

KEEP US POSTED

If you have information that you would like to pass on to The University of Iowa American Studies Program, please consider this your invitation to share the news.

Your Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Have you received any honors, made a presentation, or had an article or book published recently?
2. Have you attended any conferences, or do you know of any that may be of interest to American Studies?
3. Do you know about possible fellowships, grants, or employment opportunities?
4. Would you write a paragraph or two to review or recommend music, a book, or a film?
5. What research are you currently involved in that you'd like the American Studies community to know about?

Feel free to respond to any or all questions by mail, e-mail (laura-kastens@uiowa.edu) or fax (319/335-0314).

*American Studies Alumni - We'd
love to hear what you're doing and
where you're living. Please take a
moment to drop us an email!*

The American Studies Department
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202 Jefferson Building
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