

NEH SUMMER INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION FACULTY

THE FEDERAL WRITERS' PROJECT: NEW DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH, TEACHING, AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

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Barclay, Jenifer L. Chapter 2. *The Mark of Slavery: Disability, Race, and Gender in Antebellum America*. University of Illinois Press, 2021, pp. 36-63.

Bold, Christine. Chapter 7. *Writers, Plumbers and Anarchists: The WPA Writers' Project in Massachusetts*. University of Massachusetts Press, 2006.

Borchert, Scott. "Prologue" and "Tour One." *Republic of Detours: How the New Deal Paid Broke Writers to Rediscover America*. Farrar, Picador Paper, 2022.

Bowen, Betsey. "Reading Slavery/Writing Freedom" Research from the Federal Writers' Project." sites.google.com/student.fairfield.edu/readingslavery/home.

Butts, J.J. Chapter 5. *Dark Mirror: African Americans and the Federal Writers' Project*. Ohio State University Press, 2021.

Chen, Wilson, and Maggie Morris Davis. "Recovering the Worker in Meridel Le Sueur's Worker Writers (1939/1982)." *Resources for American Literary Study*, vol. 45, no. 1, 2024, pp. 99-136.

de la Piedra, Benji. pp. 33-58 "That Something Else": Botkin, Portelli and Ellison on Democratic Pluralism and the Dialogical Encounter, 2016.

DeMasi, Susan Rubenstein. Chapter 9. *Henry Alsberg: The Driving Force of the New Deal Federal Writers' Project*. McFarland, Inc., 2016.

Fazio, Michele. Chapter 33, "Documenting Lumbee Working-Class History." *Routledge International Handbook of Working-Class Studies*. Routledge, 2020.

Hathaway, Rosemary. "Native Geography: Richard Wright's Work for the Federal Writers' Project in Chicago." *African American Review*, vol. 42, no. 1, 2008, pp. 91-108.

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Kaplan, Anna. "'Help My People When They Needed It': Black Women's Collaborative Labor in the Federal Writers' Project."

Lucy, Robin. "Folklore, Folk Life, and Ethnography in African American Writing of the 1930s." *African American Literature in Transition, 1930–1940*. Ed. Eve Dunbar and Ayesha K. Hardison. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022. 111–138.

Morris Davis, Maggie E. "'When he saw the pencil put to paper': The Meaning Making of Children's Language in Depression-era Harlem." In *Producing Children: Critical Studies in Childhood Creativity*, edited by Peter C. Kunze and Victoria Ford Smith. Rutgers UP, 2025, pp. 85-100.

Mutnick, Deborah. Chapter 4. *No Race, No Country: The Poetics and Politics of Richard Wright*. The University of North Carolina Press, 2025.

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Rivera, Diana Noreen. "Of Conquistadors and Corridos: Aurora Lucero White and the new Mexico Federal Writers' Project. Rewriting America: New Essays on the Federal Writers' Project." University of Massachusetts Press, 2022, pp. 107-32.

Rodriguez-Barrera, Juan. "The Disalienating Realism of William Attaway's *Blood on the Forge*." *African American Review*, vol. 55, no.1, 2022, pp. 51-67.

Rutkowski, Sara, ed. Introduction. *Rewriting America: New Essays on the Federal Writers' Project*." University of Massachusetts Press, 2022.

---. Chapters 1-3. *Literary Legacies of the Federal Writers' Project: Voices of the Depression in the American Postwar Era*. Palgrave, 2017.

Robinson, Greg, and James Sun. "Eddie Shimano and Gerald Chan Sieg: Asian American Writers in the FWP." *Rewriting America: New Essays on the Federal Writers' Project*, edited by Sara Rutkowski. University of Massachusetts Press, 2022.

Smith, Clint. "We Mourn for All We Do Not Know." *The Atlantic* 327.2 (2021): 28ff.

Steedman, Carolyn. "'Something She Called a Fever': Michelet, Derrida, and Dust." *The American Historical Review*, vol. 106, no. 4, 2001, pp. 1159-1180.

Stewart, Catherine A. Introduction & Chapter 8. *Long Past Slavery: Representing Race in the Federal Writers' Project*. The University of North Carolina Press, 2016.

Taylor, David A. "Three Lenses on the Legacy of the Federal Writers' Project." *Rewriting America: New Essays on the Federal Writers' Project*, edited by Sara Rutkowski. University of Massachusetts Press, 2022.

Tidwell, John Edgar. "The United States vs. Sterling A. Brown: A Biographical Note." *The Langston Hughes Review*, vol. 30, no. 1 2024, pp. 6-27.

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Young, Melvina Johnson. "Exploring the WPA Narratives: Finding the Voices of Black Women and Men." In *Theorizing Black Feminisms: The Visionary Pragmatism of Black Women*, edited by S.M. James and A.P.A. Busia. Routledge, 1993, pp. 55-76.

RECOMMENDED READING

Banks, Ann. *First-Person America*. Alfred A. Knopf, 1980.

Bascom, Lionel. *A Renaissance in Harlem: Lost Voices of an American Community*. Bard, 1999.

Basso, Matthew, ed. *Men at Work: Rediscovering Depression-era Stories from the Federal Writers' Project*. University of Utah Press, 2012.

Blassingame, John W. "Using the Testimony of Ex-Slaves: Approaches and Problems." *The Slave's Narrative*, edited by C. T. David and H. L. Gates, Jr. Oxford UP, 1985, pp. 77–98.

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Dolinar, Brian. *The Negro in Illinois: the WPA Papers*. University of Illinois Press, 2015.

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Hirsch, Jerrold. "Rediscovering America: The FWP Legacy and Challenge." *Community Literacy Journal*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2012, pp. 15-31.

Hunt-Kennedy, Stephanie. "Had His Nose Cropt for being formerly runaway': Disability and the bodies of fugitive slaves in the British Caribbean." *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies*, 2019, DOI: 10.1080/0144039X.2019.1644886.

Jones-Rodgers, Stephanie E. *They Were Her Property: White Women as Slave Owners in the American South*. Yale University Press, 2019.

Kietzman, Mary Jo, and Paul M. Gifford, editors. *Exploring Mid-Michigan: A Guide to Flint, the Saginaw Valley, and the Thumb*. Michigan State University Press, 2026.

Lagakos, David et al. *American Life Histories*. National Bureau of Economic Research working paper 33373. 96 pages. January 2025. <https://www.nber.org/papers/w33373>.

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Owens, Dierdre Cooper. Chapter 2. *Medical Bondage: Race, Gender, and the Origins of Gynecology*. University of Georgia Press, 2017, pp. 42-72.

Penkower, Monty Noam. *The Federal Writers' Project: A Study in Government Patronage of the Arts*. University of Illinois Press, 1977.

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Schulten, Susan. "How to See Colorado: The Federal Writers' Project, American Regionalism, and the 'Old New Western History.'" *The Western Historical Quarterly*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2005, pp. 49-70.

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Tidwell, John Edgar. "Recasting Negro Life History: Sterling A. Brown and the Federal Writers' Project." *Langston Hughes Review*, vol. 12, no. 2, Winter/Summer 1995, pp. 77-82.

Tidwell, John Edgar, and Mark A. Sanders, eds. *Sterling A. Brown's A Negro Looks at the South*. Oxford University Press, 2007.

Tracy, Steven E., and John Edgar Tidwell, editors. *After Winter: The Art and Life of Sterling A. Brown*. Oxford University Press, 2007.

Trubek, Ann, editor. *American Made: Stories of Work from the WPA*, Bell Publishing, 2026.

FILMS

"The Negro in Illinois: The WPA Papers at Woodson Regional Library in Chicago, Illinois." C-Span2 Book TV, Chicago, 16 Nov. 2013.

Soul of a People: Writing America's Story. Directed by Andrea Kalin, Smithsonian Networks, 2010.

Enough to Live On: The Arts of the WPA. Directed by Michal Maglaras, 217 Films, 2015.

Unchained Memories: Readings from the Slave Narratives. Directed by Mark Jonathan Harris, HBO Video, 2004.

AUDIO

The People's Recorder. Podcast, edited by Chris Haley, host; Andrea Kalin, James Mirabello, producers; David Taylor, producer/writer; Ethan Oser, Spark Media. sparkmedia.org/projects/the-peoples-recorder/.

FEDERAL WRITERS' PROJECT PRIMARY SOURCES

American Guide Series: The WPA Federal Writers' Project. Research Guides. Rowen University Libraries. Accessed February 20, 2020.

guides.loc.gov/native-american-spaces/published-sources/american-guide-series.

American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers Project, 1936-1940. Library of Congress Collection. loc.gov/collections/federal-writers-project/about-this-collection/.

Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the FWP< 1936-1938. loc.gov/collections/slave-narratives-from-the-federal-writers-project-1936-to-1938/about-this-collection/.

LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES

Library of Congress

National Archives

New York City Municipal Archives New York Historical Society

Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, NYPL

Chicago Public Library, Vivian G. Harsh Research Collection

University of Minnesota Twin Cities

University of Delaware