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THE WPA ARTS PROJECTS IN TEXAS

by Kenneth E. Hendrickson, Jr.

Although President Herbert Hoover recognized the need, the federal government gave little attention to work relief projects before 1933, and virtually none to the needs of white collar workers. The early New Deal provided some improvement when the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) began operations in the spring of 1933 under the leadership of Harry Hopkins. There was an effort made to address the problems of destitute women, many of whom were unable to perform manual labor, and to encourage the development of professional programs. But since the FERA was a grant-in-aid agency and had no authority over the states, there were few accomplishments.¹

Unlike the FERA, the Civil Works Administration, created in November 1933, was a federal program. It was both financed and administered from Washington, and it was of this agency that cultural work relief programs were born. Beginning in New York City and other metropolitan centers, projects for actors, musicians, writers, and artists appeared during the winter of 1933-34. These projects generally were recreational in nature and there was little effort to achieve high professional quality. With the end of the CWA in March 1934, the responsibility for work relief returned to the FERA, but again little was accomplished. It was not until the establishment of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in 1935 that anything significant occurred.²

The WPA program included specific provisions for the relief of artists and professionals as well as laborers. The philosophy of the WPA projects as conceived by Harry Hopkins and his colleagues was to provide employment for competent professional actors, musicians, writers, and artists, to encourage these people to produce high quality work, and to make the results available to the general public. As before, the arts projects were aimed primarily at the large metropolitan centers where most artists lived, but in an effort to be fair, projects were established in almost all the states. Intended to provide both relief and cultural enrichment, these programs suffered throughout their existence from inadequate financial support to perform the functions expected of them. They never provided assistance to all who needed or requested it nor did they provide as much cultural enrichment as they might have.³

Under Harry Hopkins' overall leadership the arts program was subdivided into four sections, each with its own director. Collectively, these subdivisions were known as Federal Project Number One, or "Federal One," and were under the administrative control of the WPA until 1939,

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when, under pressure from Congress, the federal theatre was cancelled and the three surviving projects were required to have partial state funding and local sponsorship.⁴

The Federal Theatre Project was headed by Hallie Flanagan in Washington, and in the beginning, by Charles Meredith in Texas. Meredith, the well-known director of the Dallas Little Theatre, had talent but he was not enthusiastic about the project, and served for only a short time. Centers were established in Dallas, Fort Worth, and Houston, but were closed after the first year, and the project was re-established in San Antonio where it operated for an additional year before it was closed permanently in June 1937.⁵

Although small, the Texas Federal Theatre was diversified. In addition to dramatic companies that presented full-length, three-act plays, there were also one-act play groups, a marionette unit, a ballet company, and a tent show theatre. Altogether, there were more than thirty separate productions attempted, but most had short runs and only the Pioneer Texas pageant, staged in Houston in conjunction with the Texas Centennial, was performed more than a half dozen times. The pageant employed Texans. Two other shows had longer runs, but they were imports. In connection with the Dallas celebration of the Texas Centennial, the Federal Theatre staged a review called "Follow the Parade," employing a cast from Los Angeles, and a black production of Macbeth from New York.⁶

The Texas program got off to a slow start because of general administrative confusion, the difficulties of acquiring equipment and production space, and the problem of identifying professional theatre people on relief. However, by April 1, 1936, all three centers were ready to begin production. Dallas had an initial allocation of \$18,600 and fifty-four players on the payroll; Fort Worth had forty players and \$14,000; and Houston had a troupe of sixty with a budget of \$20,000. In Houston all efforts were concentrated on the production of Pioneer Texas, but in Dallas and Fort Worth the Federal Theatre set out to provide a more varied program. The Fort Worth company planned for three one-act plays and four full-length productions in the spring of 1936. However, their plans were overly ambitious and they succeeded only in staging three performances of the one-acts and two performances of a play by Sydney Grundy entitled Water Carnival. None of their other plans materialized.⁷

The Dallas company was more successful. They planned five one-act plays and seven full-scale productions plus Macbeth and Follow the Parade. Only one of their productions failed to reach the stage and if official statements and press reports are to be believed, the program was popular enough to have been continued. Most of the plays were performed out of doors before hundreds of viewers and there were no insurmountable technical or administrative problems. It was obviously the desire of the Administration to economize, more than any other factor, which caused the consolidation of the Texas Federal Theatre in San Antonio.⁸

In spite of its general popularity, the Federal Theatre had its detractors in Texas, but during this early period the critique had nothing to do with the fear of radicalism which was in part responsible for the later national controversy. Instead, the early opposition reflected questions of cost and quality. One official who rendered little support, although he was not openly hostile, was Harry P. Drought, Texas State Director of the WPA. Drought came from a respected San Antonio family and his mother was a well-known patron of the arts. The Droughts appear to have been opposed to the concept of public support for the arts and thus the son did little to encourage either the theatre project or any other arts projects in Texas. He believed they should be as small and as economical as possible and should be considered mainly as work relief programs, the same as any other WPA activity. This view, of course, was not entirely consistent with the philosophy of Federal One as developed in Washington.⁹

In Dallas, especially, the attitude of the press was unfriendly. In August 1936, John William Rogers, art critic for the Dallas *Times Herald*, wrote a summary of Federal Theatre operations to that date. After a careful analysis of the Dallas project, Rogers concluded that the initial allocation was wasted. He had no objection to the concept of federal relief nor even to the employment of actors by the government, but he did object to what, in his view, was low quality theatre and he reminded his readers, "To date we have had a number of Punch and Judy shows in the parks and frequent performances of half a dozen plays admittedly hardly more than tent show quality." Then he asked, "Do you feel this is a creditable showing?" The people employed by the Federal Theatre could have been more economically and productively employed elsewhere, he concluded.¹⁰

The press in San Antonio disliked the New Deal, yet, surprisingly, expressed no opposition to the establishment of the Federal Theatre in the Alamo City. This may have been true because Fred Morrow, the acting director who succeeded Meredith on September 1, 1936, was extremely cautious in his initial activities. His first production was *Noah*, by Andre Obey, a play regarded by most theatre people at the time as "perfectly safe." Fearing the possibility of a hostile public reaction, Morrow released virtually publicity on *Noah* nor did he advertise, and the result was predictable. There was no hostile public reaction, but on the other hand, virtually nobody knew the play was on and so virtually nobody saw it. Happily, those few who were present at one of the five performances of *Noah* were almost unanimous in praising it.¹¹

After *Noah*, Curtis Somers-Peck, the new director, exhibited more confidence and actively sought publicity for the second production, *The Taming of the Shrew*. The newspapers obliged, and in fact, treated "Shrew" as if it were the first Federal Theatre production in the city. The play was performed six times between November 1936, and early 1937, and was well done.¹²

Subsequently, the Federal Theatre staged five plays in San Antonio

before the Texas project was closed in June 1937, but none was as good as "Shrew." The most ambitious and perhaps the most controversial of these productions was *The Last Enemy*, by Frances and Robert Greene. Staged in response to a request from Washington that something be done to reflect the peace movement, "Enemy" dealt with the conflict between science and morality which was joined when an aged scientist discovered the ultimate weapon, a highly destructive death ray, and then entrusted the secret to his grandson and two friends. They quarrelled over its disposition and the story ended tragically with murder and suicide. Although potentially an excellent anti-war vehicle, the play was not well performed and so failed to make its point effectively.¹³

In spite of the shortcomings of some productions and its restricted size, the Federal Theatre in Texas could undoubtedly have continued to operate successfully until the entire project was cancelled in 1939. Instead, as in several states where the project was small, it was terminated during the summer of 1937, subsequent to additional federal cutbacks.¹⁴

From 1935 and 1939 Nicolai Sokoloff, former conductor of the Cleveland Symphony, was the National Director of the Federal Music Project. Sokoloff was replaced by Earl Vincent Moore of the University of Michigan, who served until 1940, and he in turn, was succeeded by George Foster, who served until the end in 1943. The State Director during the entire period was Lucille Lyons of Fort Worth, a woman of substantial energy and talent, who unlike some of her colleagues at the state level, was devoted to the success of the project. Though hampered by an infinitesimal budget and some difficulties with Sokoloff, she operated the project effectively throughout the period from 1936 to 1942, offering work to an average of 200 musicians per year and a wide variety of entertainment to thousands.

The first centers of activity were Dallas, Fort Worth, and San Antonio, where several projects were established in early 1936. These included a variety of instrumental and vocal groups, many of which were short-lived because of budget restrictions.¹⁵ During his tenure as National Director, Sokoloff emphasized high quality musicianship above all and thereby caused Mrs. Lyons additional problems. While there were plenty of musicians on relief in the large cities, not all were high quality professionals in Sokoloff's view; and yet, some of the performing units employing these people, such as the Tipica Orchestras, became so popular with the public that to disband them was unthinkable. The result was constant tension between the state and national director as Sokoloff persistently demanded high quality work from relievers incapable of producing it.¹⁶

Another difficulty derived from the fact that many people did not fully understand the mission or the philosophy of the arts projects, professing to believe they were designed for the support of private organizations and individuals. Had this been true, Federal One would have

represented a revolutionary breakthrough indeed, but such was not the case. Nevertheless, several individuals attempted to secure help for privately endowed institutions. From Houston, for example, Miss Ima Hogg requested support for the civic symphony. She sent a long letter to Sokoloff describing the orchestra, detailing its weaknesses, and offering a plan by which it could be improved and maintained by importing federally subsidized musicians from other cities. Similarly, from El Paso came several requests for funds to support the existing private symphony orchestra, and as late as 1940 there was a request for the establishment of a federal orchestra in Brownsville even though there were no professional musicians there on relief.¹⁷

Not only was Ima Hogg's request turned down — since it was inconsistent with program philosophy — but the federal music project never operated in Houston at all.¹⁸ El Paso, however, was quite a different story. The civic symphony received no assistance, but because of consistent pressures exerted by Mrs. Hallet Johnson, a well-known local musician, a federal program was established in September 1936, with Mrs. Lyons' blessing. The El Paso unit began with a Tipica Orchestra and later added a teaching unit for underprivileged children.¹⁹

The Texas Music project musicians engaged in a wide variety of activities. They played concerts in museums, auditoriums, and parks, they traveled to smaller towns, they played for recreational events, and they did numerous special programs. One of the most unusual and popular activities was that of the El Paso Tipica Orchestra, which played concerts during the rush hour at El Paso Union Station for several years.²⁰ Still, the Texas music project lacked certain important dimensions in comparison with others. Nothing, for instance, was done to encourage composers, but more significantly, little was done in the teaching field until very late. Oklahoma and New Mexico quickly developed teaching programs which were relatively successful, but the Texas Teaching program, which began in 1937, remained small and confined to few locations. This failure did not occur because Lucille Lyons was disinterested, but because she found it virtually impossible to emphasize both high quality performance and teaching with the limited budget and personnel at her disposal.²¹

There is no way to gauge the popularity of the music project with statistical accuracy, but there are some general indicators. For one thing, performances often drew substantial crowds, who were, if they can be judged by their reactions, pleased with the entertainment they received regardless of the level of its professional quality.²² For another thing, throughout the history of the project there were few complaints either from within or without. Occasionally a participant would complain of unfair treatment or a musician unable to secure a position would complain of discrimination, but these instances were rare.²³ Rarer still were complaints from the public at large and even the press avoided any major attacks against the music project. In fact, John William Rogers of the *Dallas Times*

Herald, who disliked the Federal Theatre, was a fan of the music project and so was John Rosenfield, amusements editor of the *Dallas Morning News*. Also, the music project received consistent support from the American Federation of Musicians and the Texas Music Teachers' Association.²⁴

Since many performers were members of minority groups, race could have been an explosive issue in the music project, but happily it was not. What problems there were concerned the Mexicans, especially in San Antonio and El Paso. Many of these people claimed to be musicians, but it was difficult to determine which of them were professionals. As one disgruntled Anglo put it, "They all play guitar or mandolin, but none of them can read music." Anglos were also disturbed by the fact that many of the Mexicans were aliens; however, most of these eventually were identified and dismissed from the project, so the pressure was relieved. On the other hand, all of the *Tipica Orchestras*, made up entirely of Mexican-Americans, continued to perform throughout the life of the project and were quite popular.²⁵

As for blacks, Lucille Lyons was sensitive to the potential for charges of discrimination. She believed that the quality of some of the black performing groups was low, but she was reluctant to disband them, even when personnel quotas were reduced, for fear of criticism. At one point, operating under severe budgetary pressures, she terminated a white jazz band rather than a black one for precisely this reason.²⁶ Mrs. Lyon's efforts to avoid difficulty apparently were successful. Although the number of blacks working on the project remained small, and although they were, for all practical purposes, segregated, there is no record of any major complaints such as those which rocked other New Deal programs in Texas.

After the administrative changes in 1939, the music project continued to function under the sponsorship of the Texas State College for Women until early 1942. Unlike the other projects, music did not decline, but rather expanded its operations. Not only did a full schedule of concerts continue, but the teaching program grew both in Tarrant County and in the El Paso area, and Lucille Lyons would undoubtedly have done more had she had the necessary resources. In 1941 the music project contributed to national defense by playing concerts at troop cantonments throughout the state, but after the United States entered the war the project was dismantled.²⁷

The writers' project was potentially the most creative of all, but it too had limitations. Originally designed as a multi-faceted program, it soon came to emphasize the *American Guide*, a series of books on the history and culture of each state.²⁸ Henry G. Alsberg, the visionary National Director of the Federal Writers Project, wanted the guidebooks to reflect the diversity of American life and the strength of democratic institutions which support this heterogeneous society.²⁹ Most of the guidebooks failed to measure up to this lofty goal, but they represented a remarkable achievement nevertheless.

In Texas the State Director was J. Frank Davis, a native of Massachusetts who had settled in San Antonio during the 1920s and soon became a well-known and respected member of the literary committee. Davis faced an enormous task. Not only was he required to identify and enroll as many impoverished writers as possible, he had also to devise a plan for gathering and sorting the vast amount of information which would be needed to produce the book. At the outset he found that WPA Administrator Drought seemed to be more interested in the writers' project than any of the others and was reasonably cooperative.³⁰ Although there were hundreds of writers in Texas in 1935, most were neither professional nor on relief, but at length Davis located and enrolled about 175 workers. He also created a large volunteer advisory board to assist with the compilation and evaluation of material.³¹

Four years were required to finish the Texas Guide, about average when compared to the completion time for books in other states. The Texas Guide was published in 1940 by Hastings of New York under the sponsorship of the Texas State Highway Department. It included twenty-one essays on various aspects of Texas society, profiles of fifteen cities, and twenty-nine tours. It was useful and interesting, but it was not particularly creative nor did it give sufficient attention to those aspects of Texas culture which reflect its uniqueness and diversity.³² These weaknesses resulted in part from a decision in Washington that all the guidebooks should adhere to a preconceived form which limited the space allocated to any one topic.³³

An examination of the folklore section of the Texas Guide provides a good example of the results. In 1936 Alsberg appointed Texan John Lomax as National Folklore Advisor. Lomax served until 1938 and was succeeded by Benjamin Botkin. Between them they encouraged the collection of an enormous amount of material which originally was intended to be used not only for guidebooks but also for special publications.³⁴ In Texas the man responsible for the folklore chapter was Harold Preece of the University of Texas. He approached his task enthusiastically and soon developed plans for a comprehensive essay to be included in the guide plus several other supplementary essays to be published elsewhere. He was discouraged to learn that only a brief essay was to be included in the guidebook, but he continued his work nevertheless. The result was a six-page discussion reflecting a very flat and undistinguished treatment of the subject. Preece collected a great deal more material than he used, such as ex-slave narratives, pioneer memoirs, songs, and expressions, but most of this material lay unused in the Library of Congress for many years.³⁵

In addition to the Texas Guide, the writers' project in Texas completed twenty-five city, regional, and military site guides, most of which appeared after 1940, but there was no creative writing produced by this group. Alsberg in Washington planned early to publish a periodical magazine to be called *American Stuff* which would include the best creative works of

WPA writers from around the country. At length this project was trimmed back to an anthology and no Texas writers were represented in it.³⁶

The National Director of the Federal Artists' Project, Holger Cahill, was neither an artist nor an art critic, but a journalist, museum director, and art lover. Cahill, was, however, an excellent choice because he was knowledgeable and diplomatic and possessed excellent administrative skills. Under his leadership the art project set out to employ as many easel painters, muralists, and sculptors as possible, and also to support special projects. Among these, two were most significant: the art center program and the *Index of American Design*. The former was dedicated to the establishment of art teaching and appreciation centers in communities of all sizes throughout the country where people could be exposed to these aspects of culture as in no other way. The idea was to appeal to middle and working class Americans who had never before had an opportunity to experience the pleasures of the visual arts. The *Index of American Design* program aimed to identify and catalogue all forms of American folk and craft art from colonial times to the nineteenth century and to preserve images of these items on water color plates.³⁷

Although there were artists in Texas who were in need of assistance, there was no federal program for them. Cahill was anxious to establish one, and even selected Jerry Bywaters of Dallas as state director. But Administrator Drought delayed implementation of the program, claiming that professional artists in Texas were too scarce and too widely scattered. He identified twenty-three artists who were eligible, but then declared that it would be uneconomical to appoint a state director and formally operate a state-wide program with so few people. Even though Cahill and his staff did not pursue the matter, Drought eventually relented somewhat and permitted a small section of the *Index of American Design* to operate. It employed fifteen people for a period of three years. But the people of Texas missed a potentially excellent program in the absence of the art centers.³⁸

Various conclusions may be drawn from a study of Federal One in the states. Although conceived originally as simply a component of the relief program, it was soon broadened in scope to reflect a cultural and nationalistic orientation. Not only would it provide work for unemployed artists and performers, it would provide entertainment on a broader scale than had hitherto been available in many areas, it would bring art to those who previously had no access to it, and simultaneously it would glorify the American way of life through the media of theatre, music, design, and the printed word. Many project administrators from the national to the local level soon became committed to this concept and also to the idea that the arts projects soon be made permanent, although there was little discussion of the latter notion in Texas.

Unfortunately, Federal One soon proved to be a bureaucratic and administrative nightmare with problems that in many ways overshadowed

its positive features. There were, to be sure, artists in need of assistance, and people in need of cultural enrichment, but to bring them together was difficult. The identification of *bona fide* artists and performers was almost impossible, while limited budgets and selection quotas placed intolerable burdens on local program directors who were often hard pressed to operate their programs at all, let alone do something of cultural significance. Moreover, administrative problems were magnified by the fact that state WPA officials, with a much broader range of responsibilities than the program director, often had little interest in the arts projects and were sometimes openly hostile.

There was certainly some measure of success for the federal arts projects as indicated by the popularity of many of its programs, even in their limited form, but in general, the reality never matched the ideal. More than anything else the lesson of Federal One was that an effort to use a limited work relief program as a vehicle for cultural enrichment was doomed to failure. The case can be made that both relief and cultural enrichment are legitimate arenas for government activity, but an equally strong argument can be made that support for the arts should be provided on the basis of ability, not need. Federal One opened the eyes of many to the possibility of broadened support for the arts, but did not provide a workable pattern for the future.

NOTES

¹William F. McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts* (Columbus, 1969), pp. 15-17.

²McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, pp. 52-56.

³Milton Metzger, *Violins and Shovels: The WPA Projects* (New York, 1976); Hallie Flanagan, "Why Not Here," *Federal Theatre Magazine*, 2 (1936), p. 5.

⁴McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, pps. 415-420, 614-617, 687-691.

⁵Hallie Flanagan to Walter Walken, San Antonio, October 12, 1935; Lester E. Lang, Assistant to the Director, to Walken, October 29, 1935; Federal Theatre Project, Texas File 651.312, Record Group 69, National Archives, Washington, D.C. Hereinafter cited as FTPC Texas RG 69 NA.

⁶Record of Federal Theatre Productions in Texas, Federal Theatre Project Collection, George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia. Hereinafter cited as FTPC George Mason.

⁷Dallas *Times Herald*, August 16, 1936; Houston *Chronicle*, May 31, 1936.

⁸Narrative Reports, Federal Theatre Project, Texas, FTP Texas RG 69 NA.

⁹Frank Bentley, Regional Supervisor, Professional and Service Projects, WPA, to Holger Cahill, January 30, 1936; Federal Arts Projects, Texas, File 651.315, Record Group 69, National Archives, Washington, D.C. Hereinafter cited as FAP Texas RG 69 NA.

¹⁰Dallas *Times Herald*, August 16, 1936.

¹¹San Antonio *Light*, October 4, 1936; Narrative Report, Federal Theatre Projects, Texas, September, 1936; FTP Texas RG-69 NA.

¹²Narrative Report, Federal Theatre Project, Texas, November, 1936; FTP Texas RG 69 NA; Record of Federal Theatre Productions in Texas, FTPC George Mason.

¹³Synopsis, "The Last Enemy," in *Ibid.* San Antonio *Light*, April 2, 1937.

¹⁴*Ibid.*

¹³McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 604-606; 614-615; Lucille Lyons to Nicolai Sokoloff, June 10, 1936; Federal Music Project, Texas, File 651.311, Record Group 69, National Archives, Washington, D.C. Hereinafter cited as FMP Texas RG 69 NA.

¹⁴Mary K. Taylor, State Director, Division of Women's and Professional Projects, to Ellen S. Woodward, Assistant Administrator, WPA, April 1, 1938; Lyons to Sokoloff, April 12, 1938; in *Ibid.*

¹⁵Ima Hogg to Sokoloff, May 26, 1936; Lucille Lyons to Sokoloff, June 16, 1936; H. Arthur Brown, Director, El Paso Symphony, to Sokoloff, September 6, 1936; in *Ibid.*

¹⁶Sokoloff to Lyons, June 19, 1936; Reports of the Federal Music Project, Texas; in *Ibid.*

¹⁷Mrs. Hallett Johnson to Sokoloff, August 4, 1936; Johnson to Alma Munsell, July 28, 1936; Lucille Lyons to Mary K. Taylor, July 29, 1936; Blanche M. Ralston to Ellen S. Woodward, July 27, 1936; Lyons to Sokoloff, August 4, 1936; Sokoloff to Johnson, August 8, 1936; Sokoloff to Lyons, July 30, August 8, 1938; in *Ibid.*

¹⁸Narrative Reports of the Federal Music Project, Texas, 1940; in *Ibid.*

¹⁹Narrative Reports of the Federal Music Project, Texas, 1937-1941; in *Ibid.*

²⁰See for example: Narrative Reports of the Federal Music Project, 1937-1941; also, Mabel Colbert Thomas to Lucille Lyons, March 17, 1938; Lyons to Sokoloff, December 28, 1937; Richard Foster Howard, Director, Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, to Harry L. Hopkins, December 1, 1938; Howard to Sokoloff, December 1, 1938; in *Ibid.*

²¹Thomas Burrus to Sokoloff, October, 1936; Mrs. W.C. McDonald to Franklin Delano Roosevelt, March 23, 1937; Sokoloff to Joseph N. Weber, President, American Federation of Musicians, October 8, 1937; Vida Routzong to Sokoloff, October 1, 1938; E.E. Marcyes to Franklin Delano Roosevelt, March 9, 1937; Joe Bush to Harry L. Hopkins, January 5, 1938; G.C. Stein to Florence Kerr, Assistant Commissioner, WPA, December 16, 1941; in *Ibid.*

²²John Rosenfield, Amusements Editor *Morning News*, to Florence Kerr, January 13, 1941; J.W. Parks, Secretary Local 147, American Federation of Musicians, Dallas, to Senator Tom Connally, August 1, 1939; Mrs. Roger C. Neely, Secretary-Treasurer, Texas Music Teachers' Association, to William C. Mayfarth, Deputy Director, Federal Music Project, July 25, 1939; Clyde Jay Garrett, President, Texas Music Teachers' Association, to C.E. Triggs, Director, Community Service Projects, Federal Works Agency, WPA, October 20, 1940; in *Ibid.*

²³W.E. Kenney, El Paso, to Harry L. Hopkins, June 19, 1937; for assessments of the Tipica Orchestra see the Narrative Reports, Federal Music Project, Texas, 1937-1941; in *Ibid.*

²⁴Lucille Lyons to Sokoloff, June 14, 1937; in *Ibid.*

²⁵Narrative Reports, Federal Music Project, Texas, 1940-41; in *Ibid.*

²⁶McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, pp. 693-750.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 663-665.

²⁸William Cunningham, Oklahoma State Director, Federal Writers' Project, to Alsberg, July 3, 1936; Wallace Miller, Field Supervisor, Federal Writers' Project, to Alsberg, February 8, 1936; Federal Writers' Project, Texas, File 651.317, Record Group 69, National Archives, Washington, D.C. Hereinafter cited as FWP Texas RG 69 NA.

²⁹Alsberg to J. Frank Davis, November 16, 1935; Davis to Alsberg, February 8, 1936; in *Ibid.*

³⁰See: *Texas: A Guide to the Lone Star State* (New York, 1940).

³¹George W. Cronyn, Associate Director, Federal Writers' Project, to Davis, July 15, 1936; FWP Texas RG 69 NA.

³²Davis to Alsberg, August 7, 1936; Alsberg to Davis, August 12, 1936; in *Ibid.*

³³Davis to John A. Lomax, September 15, 1936; Harold Preece to Lomax, October 14, 1936; Preece to Davis, October 13, 1936; Lomax to Preece, October 15, 1936; December 7, 1936; Alsberg to Davis, November 24, 1936; Preece to Alsberg, November 26, 1936; in

Ibid. Minten Morgan to Lomax, May 30, 1937; Maude Peckenpaugh to Lomax, November 11, 1937; Herbert Davenport to Lomax, February 23, 1939; J. Marvin Hunter to Lomax, March 8, 1939; Frank Godwyn to Lomax, March 11, 1940; Preece to Lomax, April 5, 1937; E.K. Bowman to Lomax, July 19, 1937; J.A. Richard to Lomax, February 15, 1939; John A. Lomax Papers, E.C. Barker Library, University of Texas, Austin, Texas.

¹⁶Jerre Mangione, *The Dream and the Deal: The Federal Writers' Project, 1935-1943* (Boston), pps. 244-252, 393. The Historic Records Survey was attached to the Writers' Project and operated in Texas, but it is not dealt with in this essay.

¹⁷McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, pp. 377-379, 422-482.

¹⁸Report on the Federal Art Project in Texas, October 25, 1935; Thomas C. Parker to Harold Stein, January 13, 1936; Parker to H.P. Drought, October 30, 1935; Parker to Jerry Bywaters, December 19, 1935; Parker to James Chillman, Houston Museum of Fine Arts, December 18, 1935; Drought to Frank Bentley, Regional Supervisor, Professional and Service Projects, WPA, February 5, 1936; FAP in Texas RG 69 NA. The Treasury Relief Art Project and the Public Works' of Art Project operated in Texas between 1933 and 1943, producing numerous murals and other renderings, but their activities do not fall within the scope of this essay.