

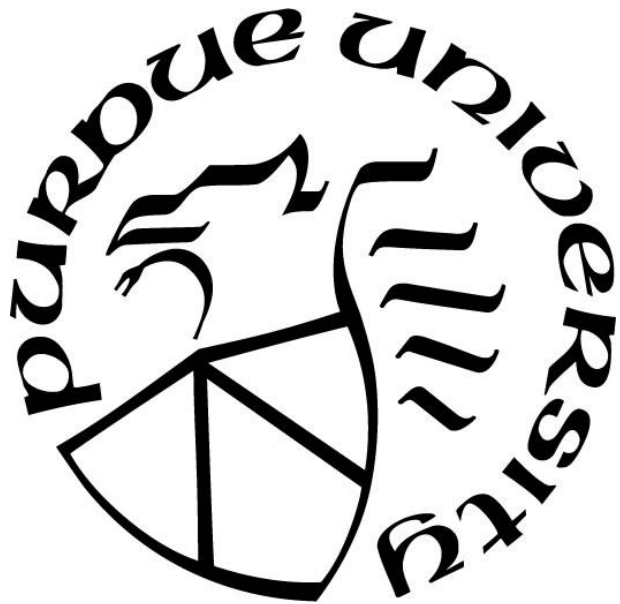
**MADE IN AMERICA: THE FEDERAL MUSIC PROJECT IN THE
MIDWEST**

by
Renée Gaarder

A Dissertation

*Submitted to the Faculty of Purdue University
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of*

Doctor of Philosophy



Department of History
West Lafayette, Indiana
December 2019

**THE PURDUE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL
STATEMENT OF COMMITTEE APPROVAL**

Dr. Nancy Gabin, Chair

Department of History

Dr. Whitney Walton

Department of History

Dr. Sharra Vostral

Department of History

Dr. Lynn Hooker

Department of Visual and Performing Arts

Approved by:

Dr. David Atkinson

Dedicated to Andrew and Genevieve, the loves of my life.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I need to thank my Graduate Advisor and Committee Chair Dr. Nancy Gabin, one of the strongest women I know. Thank you for always seeing my potential, even at times when I couldn't, and challenging me to be my best. You have been unwavering in your support, and I am eternally grateful. Thank you also to Dr. Sharra Vostral, Dr. Whitney Walton, and Dr. Lynn Hooker for being willing to serve on my committee and provide me with valuable guidance and direction.

Dr. Mike Morrison was one of the greats. He was my most ardent supporter and I am honored to count him among my mentors. He was an inspiring historian and educator, supporter of the arts, connoisseur of cat videos, and one of the most compassionate people I have had the joy of knowing. His command of a room and dedication not only to his classes but his students are things I try to emulate myself. I simply would not be where I am today without him and Nancy Gabin.

I would also like to thank the staff of the National Archives and Records Administration—College Park, especially Reference Specialist Gene Morris who is the subject matter expert for the WPA and related New Deal-era agencies. His guidance led me to all the records I needed, many of which were not initially on my radar. Special thanks also goes to Michael Chornesky, my “inside-man” in the reading room. Thank you for helping me navigate the logistics of the reading room and going above and beyond to assist in my search for specific documents. Thank you also to the staff at the Library of Congress Music Division, especially the reading room staff.

There should be a balance in all things, and the friendships and community associations I have made in the Greater Lafayette area helped me with that balance. Kristen Thomasberger, you

were my very first friend at Purdue and I am so thankful for you and our mutual love of history, music, Broadway, and Disney. You were also there to help me care for my daughter so I could finish coursework after she was born and without you I would not have been able to do so. To the Horrocks family, thank you for your friendship. To Steve for uniquely understanding the inherent challenges involved in being both a student and parent, and to Melissa for being my very best friend. Your creativity, compassion, and strength are awe-inspiring. Harper and Henry, I love you both and am so grateful for the friendship you both have, or will have in Henry's case, with my own daughter. Katje Armentrout, I am proud to call you my friend and will forever be grateful that we decided to bring tacos to class and that you set me straight on the reality of narwhals. Thank you also for being so willing to field questions as one who has gone through this process before me. To my Lafayette Master Chorale community, thank you for letting me make wonderful music with you. To all my friends and colleagues at the Lafayette Family YMCA, thank you for helping me to strengthen my body as well as my mind and for being so supportive of me as a Zumba instructor and a scholar.

To my parents, Rene and Shelly LeBlanc, thank you for supporting me and instilling a love of learning in me. My brother Jimmy LeBlanc built the computer on which I finished the dissertation—thank you for your IT prowess and always helping your “one and only sister.” To the Gaarder clan—Laura, Roland, Kyra, Sophie, Stu, Duncan, Blake, Chanelle, and Valerie—thank you for welcoming me into the family and providing your support as well. Val, you are the best mother-in-law anyone could ask for. Finally, I truly could not have accomplished all that I have without the unconditional love and support of my husband Andrew and daughter Genevieve. They are my greatest joy, and this dissertation is as much theirs as it is mine.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS	8
ABSTRACT.....	9
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION: THE FEDERAL MUSIC PROJECT AND THE MIDWEST	11
Historiography	14
Organization.....	30
CHAPTER 2: AMERICAN IDENTITY AND CULTURE	36
Structured Leisure and Creating an Elite Palate	39
Politics and the Popular Front.....	47
Race and the Federal Music Project.....	51
Folk Song.....	62
Women in the Federal Music Project.....	68
CHAPTER 3: PERFORMANCE AND EDUCATION: THE FEDERAL MUSIC PROJECT IN ILLINOIS AND INDIANA	76
Illinois and Indiana in Context.....	76
The Federal Music Project Musician	84
Cooperation and Confrontation.....	86
Performance	89
The Federal Music Project Teachers' Project.....	100
Music Instruction in the Private Sector.....	111
The Federal Music Project and Radio Broadcasting.....	114
CHAPTER 4: MUSIC THERAPY: THE FMP IN MICHIGAN.....	132
Music in Michigan	132
Music Appreciation and Education.....	138
Altshuler and Eloise.....	142
Music Therapy and the Federal Music Project	145
Public Response	159
Further Scientific Studies: Deaf Children and Music Appreciation	163
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION: THE FINAL CADENCE.....	167

The War Effort and State Control.....	167
The Legacy of the Federal Music Project.....	173
Billy the Kid.....	175
Rodeo.....	178
Appalachian Spring.....	178
The Plow that Broke the Plains.....	181
APPENDIX.....	187
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	188

LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFM	American Federation of Musicians
CCC	Civilian Conservation Corps
CWA	Civil Works Administration
HRS	Historical Records Survey
HUAC	House Un-American Activities Committee
FAP	Federal Arts Project
FERA	Federal Emergency Relief Administration
FMP	Federal Music Project
FTP	Federal Theatre Project
FWA	Federal Works Agency
FWP	Federal Writers' Project
IRNA	Independent Radio Networks Affiliates
NAB	National Association of Broadcasters
NYA	National Youth Administration
RA	Resettlement Administration
RCA	Radio Corporation of America
WPA	Works Progress Administration, Works Projects Administration

ABSTRACT

The 1930s to 1940s saw an upsurge in nationalism and the quest to define American identity. The federal government sponsored and sanctioned a specific nationalist narrative within the programs of the Works Progress Administration, later renamed Works Projects Administration. Very little attention has been paid to the Federal Music Project (FMP) yet this program was an integral part of constructing American identity both nationally and regionally. In conjunction with popular music, and at times in opposition to it, the FMP formed the “soundtrack” of American life.

Although the messages were not as overt as those in other programs, such as the Federal Writers’ Project or Federal Theatre Project, the Federal Music Project played a large part in disseminating American ideals and identity, primarily through classical music, and to a lesser extent, popular, folk, and indigenous forms of music. The Federal Music Project strove to uncover, and at times create, America’s “genuine” musical heritage. The ideals of the New Deal took root in the musical expression of the FMP and impacted the development of American identity both musically and socially. It was not merely a relief program for those on its rolls; it was intended as an education program for the nation. Amid the push and pull of politics, war, and class conflict, American musicians forged and defined a unique style of music that was accepted by the American public.

The dissertation focuses on the FMP activities in the Midwest, or Region IV. Focusing on the Midwest as a region demonstrates how the FMP was interpreted and practiced and allows for a conversation with other the regional studies of the FMP. Three case studies of Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan provide a more detailed analysis of the activities and contributions of each state, and thus the region, offering depth over breadth. Each of these states had dedicated and active

symphonies, teaching projects, community outreach, radio broadcasting, and music therapy projects.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION: THE FEDERAL MUSIC PROJECT AND THE MIDWEST

The 1930s to 1940s saw an upsurge in nationalism and the quest to define American identity. The federal government sponsored and sanctioned a specific nationalist narrative within the programs of the Works Progress Administration, later renamed Works Projects Administration. Very little attention has been paid to the Federal Music Project (FMP) yet this program was an integral part of constructing American identity both nationally and regionally. In conjunction with popular music, and at times in opposition to it, the FMP formed the “soundtrack” of American life.

Initiated in 1935 as part of Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s New Deal for fiscal and economic recovery, the Federal Music Project was one of many cultural programs designated as Federal Project Number One, or Federal One. During his first 100 days, Roosevelt asked for and Congress passed legislation involving agriculture, banking, industry, and labor. Although many of these initial programs were intended as temporary fixes, at the time they were seen as revolutionary in the level of power given to the government. The WPA and FMP replaced the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), which had distributed federal monies to those in need through both state and local agencies between 1933 and 1935. Under the direction of Harry Hopkins, the WPA became a much more comprehensive employment agency that continued to utilize the ideals of previous work relief programs.¹

¹ Peter Gough, *Sounds of the New Deal: The Federal Music Project in the West* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2015), 1-2.; Kenneth J. Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation: The WPA’s Federal Music Project and American Society* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1995), ix.

The Federal Arts Project, or Federal Project One, was established on August 2, 1935 with the charge to create a nationwide arts program that would employ individuals on relief rolls while also meeting the artistic needs of the American people. The directors of the various projects recognized that the Federal Project One's primary task was to address unemployment, but also saw a larger culturally and politically complex problem of defining American cultural identity. This task was in some ways a double-edged sword—artists were expected to produce useful, nationalistic goods such as patriotic plays and a musically literate audience while at the same time enjoy the freedom to create and develop what they pleased. The production of nationalistic goods would do little to ease the effects of the depression, while the freedom of expression in art could prove the federal government as a financier of subversive material. Ultimately, the Federal Music Project employed more people than any of the other arts projects and reached more Americans through its artists' performances.²

Although the messages were not as overt as those in other programs, such as the Federal Writers' Project or Federal Theatre Project, the Federal Music Project played a large part in disseminating American ideals and identity, primarily through classical music, and to a lesser extent, popular, folk, and indigenous forms of music. Amid the push and pull of politics, war, and class conflict, American musicians forged and defined a unique style of music that was accepted by the American public. Though somewhat difficult to define, "American music," sometimes referred to as "American style," applies to compositional style and techniques as well as the intended audience. Many American composers in the 1930s to 1940s were actively attempting to break with traditionally accepted idioms of European music received in formal academic music education. Hallmarks of the American style include the use of open fifths, large

² Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation*, x-xiv.

but sparse sonorities, integration and quotation of folk materials or “cowboy tunes,” polytonality and polyrhythms, incorporation of jazz rhythms and harmony, and non-traditional harmonic progressions. In *Our American Music: A Comprehensive History*, published in 1929, John Tasker Howard defined the American musician as: “...an American if, by birth or choice of permanent residence, he becomes identified with American life and institutions before his talents have had their greatest outlet; and through his associations and sympathies he makes a genuine contribution to our cultural development.”³

American music of the 1930s and 1940s was a product of both cultural desire and economic need. The activities of the FMP illuminate American society during the Great Depression and early war years, especially insofar as concerned political realignment, ethnic awareness, social contradiction, and a renewed regional identification. In much of American culture, both then and now, the “mythic American” leaves little to no room for indigenous peoples and outsiders and ignores the valuable contributions of marginalized groups. Through the programs of the FMP, however, these groups were given a voice, albeit small and limited. The FMP eased the tensions of society, fostering compassion and empathy among its citizens. The FMP, in conjunction with all the Federal One programs, was an example of investment in American art and culture.

The dissertation focuses on the FMP activities in the Midwest, or Region IV. The FMP in the Midwest was unique in its approach to implementing national policy by focusing its efforts primarily on education, performance, and music therapy. Defining the “Midwest” is problematic because there is a wide difference in opinion regarding which states are included in this category

³ John Tasker Howard, *Our American Music: A Comprehensive History from 1620 to the Present*. Fourth Edition (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1965), xx. The first edition of this book was published in 1929.

and what classification data should be used. For the purposes of this study, the “Midwest” is defined as it was by the Federal Music Project—following the delineation of regions by the United States Census Bureau: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Wisconsin, North Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, and Kentucky. Kentucky is the only state included in Region IV that is not technically a “Midwestern” state according to the United States Census.⁴ A handful of “southern” states were added to Regions III and IV: Kentucky, Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia, and the “South” was excluded from much of the program. All but these few northernmost southern states belonged to no official district, and only a few of the southern states had a State Director. One possible argument for the inclusion of these particular states in Regions III and IV is that they shared cultural and economic commonalities with the North and Midwest. Practically, only those states that agreed to the terms of structuring state aid to receive federal aid were allowed participation in the WPA. Many southern states refused to agree to provide the necessary state aid to qualify for additional federal aid. Focusing on the Midwest as a region demonstrates how the FMP was interpreted and practiced and allows for a conversation with the regional study of the West undertaken by historian Peter Gough. Three case studies of Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan provide a more detailed analysis of the activities and contributions of each state, and thus the region, offering depth over breadth. Each of these states had dedicated and active symphonies, teaching projects, community outreach, radio broadcasting, and music therapy projects.

Historiography

Historians debate both the origins and impact of the New Deal in American politics, culture, and economy. Many argue that the New Deal was not completely “new,” and there were

⁴ Prior to 1984, the Midwest Region was called the North Central Region.

many challenges to the New Deal Order. In the 1920s, Americans dealt with the implications of a more “organized” society, and social tensions emerged that were reflective of nostalgic wishes for a society that was unsullied by conflicts of class and ethnic differences. Participation of women in the workforce was steadily rising among public hostility and fears that these women were “taking” jobs from men. These women became active participants in the New Deal, finding new opportunities in the expanding federal bureaucracy and assisting in shaping the New Deal’s social welfare policy. The New Deal was greatly affected by New Era themes, specifically ideas about individualism and local democracy as well as hostility to increased federal power. The 1920s set the stage for personal and community autonomy in an increasingly organized and corporate-dominated society.⁵ In addition, the United States government’s response to World War I was to create social and economic models that were then utilized in the New Deal. During the war, the American economy was controlled in an unprecedented fashion. The War Industries Board had a majority of the control of businesses and tightly regulated and managed the economy—the results of which provided proof of the value of a planned economy to many observers. Other precedents for the New Deal were set in wartime, including the mediation of labor conflicts by the National War Labor Board, the presence of an unbalanced national budget, and sharply increased taxation which included levies on corporate profits and a steeply graduated income tax.⁶

Though it changed many things at the local, regional, and national level, the New Deal’s genesis, influence, and demise are debated. Alan Brinkley argues that the New Deal should be thought of as a story of ideological adaptation, which is not new in the history of the United

⁵ Lynn Dumenil, *The Modern Temper: American Culture and Society in the 1920s* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995), 310-12.

⁶ Robert S. McElvaine, *The Great Depression: America, 1929-1941* (New York: Times Books, 1984), 11-12.

States. In response to certain stimuli, the nation's leaders and citizens were forced to adapt to the current situation. The 1930s and the experience of World War II significantly altered the environment in which liberals thought and acted. The reconstruction of New Deal liberalism was a result of two overlapping periods of adjustment, the late 1930s in which liberals sought to organize the achievements of Roosevelt's first term and create an agenda for the future, and the outbreak of World War II which muted liberal hostility to capitalism and the corporate world. In the aftermath of the New Deal a third form of liberalism emerged which focused less on the broad needs of the nation and modern economy and more on increasing the rights and freedoms of individuals and social groups. The importance of the New Deal lies in part in its legislative and institutional achievements, but also in its impact on subsequent generations of liberals and postwar government activism. By 1945, American liberals had reached an accommodation with modern capitalism that settled many of the divisive conflicts in the first decades of the twentieth century. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, American liberals began a retreat from many of the commitments that had once defined their politics—concerns about the problems of production and the limitations of the market.⁷ The severity and length of the Great Depression afflicted not only all sections of the American economy, but much of the world as well. Many middle-class families began to identify themselves with the unfortunate many rather than the fortunate few. It was an employers' market, and they increasingly hired or retained white men, meaning that the young, old, women, and African Americans were disproportionately represented within the

⁷ Alan Brinkley, *The End of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995).

unemployed. In an attempt to counter what was happening, New Deal programs embodied a multifaceted political approach to the management of the economy.⁸

The WPA and FMP were examples of Brinkley's claims for ideological adaptation by adjusting to cultural needs and improving upon previous programs. The WPA took over from FERA in 1935 with Hopkins as director. The program immediately drew criticism from those who said it was spending public money to pay "idle hands to do useless work poorly." In some part this was true; Roosevelt had ordered that the WPA hire as many people as quickly as possible. On the other hand, the projects were not allowed to do the same types of things that private enterprise and local governments were already doing so as not to substitute WPA jobs for existing jobs, thus stagnating unemployment. Congress imposed very narrow boundaries on the program limiting eligibility and the length of time one was allowed to receive aid. The WPA contributed to the idea that American workers deserved a certain degree of job security and a minimum standard of living, essential not only to their well-being but to their dignity.⁹

Most studies of FERA and the WPA are included within analysis of the New Deal politics, policies, and practices more broadly in studies published between the 1960s and early 2000s. For example, in *The New Deal: The Depression Years, 1933-1945*, Anthony Badger focuses on how New Deal policies impacted finance and industry, agriculture, welfare, and partisan politics rather than the intricacies of specific programs themselves. Other historians, such as Howard Zinn, look at New Deal programs through the lens of the policy makers

⁸ Eric Rauchway, *The Great Depression & The New Deal: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 3-4, 44.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 67-9.

themselves. In *New Deal Thought*, edited by Zinn, FERA and the WPA are discussed in a chapter on Harry Hopkins' role in policy creation and implementation.¹⁰

The most detailed and significant discussion of FERA and the WPA is found in William F. McDonald's exhaustive study of the Federal One projects and their tenure, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts: The Origins and Administrative History of the Arts Projects of the Works Progress Administration*. McDonald devotes the first half of the text to the politics and policy of the New Deal before giving an account of each Federal One project. He demonstrates government involvement in the administration of a program that valued employment within an individual's own field and saw the arts as equally valuable to business, agriculture, or labor to society. He highlights the continual need to establish the "worthiness" of individuals receiving aid as well as the projects themselves to retain funding and appease the American people.¹¹

The arts projects of Federal One and the WPA collected large amounts of raw material that have proved to be invaluable to later artists and historians. Additionally, it proved to be one of the leading examples of government recognition of the values of the American people during the Depression Era. The attitudes behind spending federal money on public buildings and art accessible to all Americans no matter socio-economic status reflected a decline in rigid

¹⁰ For a more detailed look at New Deal politics, policy, and practice see the following: Anthony J. Badger, *The New Deal: The Depression Years, 1933-1940* (London: MacMillan, 1989); Paul K. Conkin, *The New Deal* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1967); Kenneth S. Davis, *FDR: The New Deal Years 1933-1937* (New York: Random House, 1979); Robert Eden, ed., *The New Deal and Its Legacy: Critique and Reappraisal* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989); Bernard K. Johnpoll, *The Impossible Dream: The Rise and Demise of the American Left* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1981); William E. Leuchtenberg, *The FDR Years: On Roosevelt and His Legacy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995); Thomas P. Wolf, William D. Pederson, and Byron D. Haynes, eds., *Franklin D. Roosevelt and Congress: The New Deal and Its Aftermath* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2001); Howard Zinn, ed., *New Deal Thought* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1966).

¹¹ William F. McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts: The Origins and Administrative History of the Arts Projects of the Works Progress Administration* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1969).

distinctions among the American people. Rather than reserved for the higher classes, buildings, plays, concerts, and murals were to be accessible and shared by all.¹²

The FMP was caught in the cultural battle between the value of “high” and “low” art forms. Though at the regional level there was an interest in incorporating local culture and folk or jazz music, at the national level FMP National Director Nikolai Sokoloff opposed producing anything other than classical music. Sokoloff, a Yale graduate, was an accomplished violinist, conductor, and concertmaster and at the time of his appointment was retired and organizing local concerts in Connecticut. His extensive training and musical background meant that he was inclined to view European classics as the standard with which all FMP units should comply. He was also adamant that the program help those musicians who made it their life’s work and/or belonged to a professional society such as the American Federation of Musicians.

In *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America*, Lawrence Levine analyzes the transformation of popular culture in the nineteenth century from a heterogeneous shared culture to one that was hierarchical. For example, the scripts of many antebellum minstrel shows contain elaborate parodies of Shakespeare. The indication that Shakespeare might have been considered “popular culture” in the nineteenth century challenges cultural expectations of what is considered culturally valuable. Levine argues that because the

¹² Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 274-5. For a more detailed analysis of Federal One projects and what they produced, see the following: Heather Becker, *Art for the People: The Rediscovery and Preservation of Progressive and WPA Era Murals in the Chicago Public Schools, 1904-1943* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2002); Stephen Benedict, ed., *Public Money and the Muse: Essays on Government Funding for the Arts* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1991); Donna M. Binkiewicz, *Federalizing the Muse: United States Arts Policy & The National Endowment for the Arts 1965-1980* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Bruce I. Bustard, *A New Deal for the Arts* (Seattle: The University of Washington Press, 1997); Morris Dickstein, *Dancing in the Dark: A Cultural History of the Great Depression* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2009); Jerrold Hirsch, *Portrait of America: A Cultural History of the Federal Writers’ Project* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003); and David Taylor, *A Soul of a People: The WPA Writers’ Project Uncovers Depression America* (Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2009).

primary categories of culture—highbrow versus lowbrow—were products of ideologies that were subject to modification and transformation, our contemporary cultural divisions are also permeable rather than fixed. From the beginning, American culture was divided according to distinctions of ethnicity, class, and race. Ultimately for the FMP, regional needs and preferences held more weight in practice than what was contained in national directives. This conception of a difference in value between “classical” and “popular,” or “high” and “low,” music was key because it was adopted by Sokoloff in determining how to run the FMP as well as what type of music to promote and what caliber of musician to employ. Sokoloff’s main goal was to introduce the American public to what he considered to be the *right* type of music and in so doing elevate the nation’s musical taste.

Most studies of the New Deal and the WPA generally discuss the installation of programs and events chronologically. A majority, including David Taylor’s *Soul of a People: The WPA Writers’ Project Uncovers Depression America* and Nicholas Tawa’s *American Made: The Enduring Legacy of the WPA: When FDR Put the Nation to Work*, aspire to discuss the breadth of these projects, and as such, many contain a surface analysis of individual programs. Many scholars have chosen to go beyond this macro level and take a closer look at the social and cultural implications of the early twentieth century. A majority of these studies focus on politics or policy, analyzing the response of the American public to Roosevelt’s initiatives. For example, Lizabeth Cohen’s *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* examines what was happening with Chicago’s industrial workers in the 1920s. Social history during the interwar era, Cohen argues, explains the political activism of workers in the 1930s. She restores industrial workers—those experiencing policies firsthand—to the center of discussion about the New Deal, rather than focusing on the roles played by Roosevelt or union leaders prevalent in

much work on the era. Though Cohen does not discuss the FMP specifically, she argues that many people, especially African Americans, identified the WPA and its programs as a means of survival. Often, state aid was their only recourse. By narrowly focusing on Chicago as a case study, the book delves deeply into specific ways workers constructed interrelationships between different areas of their lives, including the workplace, neighborhoods, political and social affiliations, and ethnic culture.¹³

Similarly, Michael Denning's *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of American Culture in the Twentieth Century* connects politics to popular culture by identifying a relationship between labor and mass production and the Popular Front political movement. Denning reimagines the master narrative of the Popular Front by establishing the radical culture of the movement from a Marxist, interdisciplinary perspective. He innovatively uses a cultural studies framework drawn from European sources, such as Gramsci's "historical bloc," and American scholars like C. Wright Mills and the idea of the "cultural apparatus." A labor-based interpretation of the Popular Front helps to resituate the political context of many canonized figures, such as Orson Welles and John Dos Passos, as well as reveal the contributions of other lesser-known "leftist" cultural actors. Denning presents a compelling argument for the ways in which the ideals of the Popular Front affected jazz and musical theater but does not take the argument farther in discussing lasting effects and influences. Denning's discussion of the FMP specifically is brief, with most of his time spent discussing the other Federal One programs. He highlights the opportunities afforded to "radical composers" such as Marc Blitzstein, Hanns Eisler, and Ruth Crawford by the Composers Forum Laboratory, and identifies the most valuable FMP contribution as the

¹³ David A. Taylor, *Soul of A People: The WPA Writers' Project Uncovers Depression America* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2009); Nicholas Tawa, *The Great American Symphony: Music, The Depression, and War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009); Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

collecting and recording of folk music, primarily of Mexican Americans and the Southwest, initiated by Charles Seeger. While the folk collection done by the FMP in partnership with the Federal Writers Project is indeed valuable, focusing on this as the sole worthwhile accomplishment of the program negates other valuable aspects of the project and leads to a one-sided legacy.¹⁴

In works dedicated to the individual projects of Federal One, it is apparent that a regional approach is not exclusive to the literature of the FMP. In addition, most studies blend elements of other programs. The most common pairings are the Federal Arts Project and Federal Theatre Project, seen in the work of Barbara Melosh, or the combination of efforts of the Federal Writers' Project and Federal Music Project, such as the partnership of Alan Lomax and Charles Seeger in collecting folk music. As a whole, the projects of Federal One are seen as instrumental in the development and dissemination of an American identity that recognizes and celebrates various cultural contributions across race, class, and gender.¹⁵

The Federal Writers Project employed a diverse range of white-collar professionals, such as teachers and librarians, in addition to those who were, or claimed to be, writers. There were also many first-class writers attached to the project, including Richard Wright, Saul Bellow, Ralph Ellison, John Cheever, Jack Conroy, Conrad Aiken, Arna Bontemps, and Margaret Walker. Writers worked for the project roughly thirty hours per week, which allowed many to continue working on their own projects in their spare time. The largest contribution by the FWP was the series of State Guides which extended the work of the project into folklore, studies of

¹⁴ Michael Denning, *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of American Culture in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Verso, 1997).

¹⁵ Barabara Melosh, *Engendering Culture: Manhood and Womanhood in New Deal Public Art and Theater* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991).

ethnic groups, life histories, and former slave narratives. The project also absorbed the Historical Records Survey, which inventoried local government records across the country.¹⁶

Much of the literature concerning the FWP focuses on national culture built on diversity, and the attempts of the project to redefine American national identity through the embrace of this diversity. Some studies, such as Monty Noam Penkower's *The Federal Writers' Project: A Study in Government Patronage of the Arts*, assert that national values were reaffirmed at a regional level through the interest in specific minority groups and socio-ethnic studies. As such, the writers of the FWP were directly responsive to the cultural spirit of the 1930s. Other studies explore the multiculturalism prevalent in the oral history interviews gathered by FWP workers detailing how Americans across the country lived and specific details about their local histories and lore.¹⁷ Jerrold Hirsch breaks with the emphasis on FWP workers and instead focuses on national directors and administrators as intellectuals and the catalyst for change. These intellectuals, he says, were concerned with creating literature in an urban-industrial world and defining modernity and saw themselves as an integral part of a larger cultural project.¹⁸ Every study of the FWP, whether focused on individual aid recipients or administrators, views the State Guides as the most successful achievement of the program. These guides, just as the music of the FWP, were created by many unknown American writers and have left a lasting cultural legacy.

Director of the Federal Art Project, Holger Cahill, was a firm believer in the ideal of cultural democracy and expressed his goal for the program as "art for the millions." The FAP

¹⁶ Rauchway, *The Great Depression & The New Deal*, 269.

¹⁷ See David A. Taylor, *Soul of a People: The WPA Writers' Project Uncovers Depression America*. (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2009).

¹⁸ Jerrold Hirsch, *Portrait of America: A Cultural History of the Federal Writers' Project* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

employed many notable artists, including Jackson Pollock, Willem De Kooning, Anton Refregier, and Yasuo Kuniyoshi. Its most lasting and impressive achievement was the series of murals painted in public buildings across the nation. These murals were influenced by the Mexican painters of propaganda murals, notably Diego Rivera and Clemente Orzo, who spent the early years of the Depression painting anti-capitalist murals. The FAP murals represented a renewed interest in American life, but many were too labor oriented for conservatives in Congress and drew charges of communist ties.¹⁹ The FMP largely avoided these charges by programming music that was not overtly political or controversial. Most of the FMP's participation in subversive performances was in support roles for other projects, such as providing the band for a FTP musical. Additionally, a majority of FMP workers also belonged to the American Federation of Musicians which was decidedly anti-Communist.

Most of the scholarship centered on the FAP emphasizes the imagery produced and the cultural history of these images, especially the murals. More often than not, scholars of the FAP are dedicated to the technical aspects of the work and situate them within art history. Many books aim to preserve and compile the images into one space, such as *Posters for the People: Art of the WPA*. The Art Project is often linked to the efforts of the FTP, such as in Barbara Melosh's *Engendering Culture: Manhood and Womanhood in New Deal Public Art and Theatre*. She argues that New Deal artists and playwrights used specific imagery as metaphorical devices. The images produced by the FAP and FTP were self-conscious efforts to develop public art and shape a distinctive American culture. Similarly to the FMP, artists of the FAP aimed to appeal to the American public while maintaining high professional or academic standards.

¹⁹ Rauchway, *The Great Depression & The New Deal*, 271.

The most controversial, and shortest-lived, Federal One project was the Federal Theatre Project. Directed by Hallie Flanagan, head of the Vassar College Experimental Theatre, it sought to use drama to create public awareness of social problems and promised theater that was “free, adult, [and] uncensored.” The project boasted a number of famous employees including Orson Welles, Arthur Miller, Dale Wasserman, John Huston, Joseph Cotten, Jack Carter, E.G. Marshall, Will Greer, Arlene Francis, Canada Lee, Howard Da Silva, Burt Lancaster, John Houseman, Lehman Engel, and George Izenour. The FTP was generally unrestricted in what it performed, a prime example being the “Living Newspaper” series. These plays took on the form of documentaries which took a stand on current events, provided information about them, and then advocated for a specific course of action. Many right-wing critics charged the FTP with producing New Deal or Communist propaganda and from 1938-9 Flanagan and the FTP underwent a House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) “investigation” resulting in the complete dissolution of the program in 1939.²⁰

The most studied of the Federal One programs is the Federal Theatre Project. The literature of the FTP focuses on the FTP’s revolutionary theatrical conventions and imagery, the program’s push for a decentralized American theater, art as activism and the backlash the program received for it, and director Hallie Flanagan. In the introduction of *Voices from the Federal Theatre*, a compilation of oral histories, Bonnie Nelson Schwartz argues that the FTP revolutionized notions of the geography and purpose of the American stage. With the mission to produce plays with cultural value rather than mere entertainment, Flanagan was willing to use the theatre as a vehicle for propaganda if it meant exposing political corruption and unjust social conditions. Though the practices of the FTP came under fire by Martin Dies and the HUAC, it

²⁰ Ibid., 272-3.

was never explicitly used for the purpose of endorsing a specific political party. The struggle of producing art that appealed to the public, but that was deemed culturally valuable by national administrators was an issue for the FMP as well.

The Federal Music project is the least studied of the New Deal cultural programs and has received the least historical consideration of all the Federal One programs. This omission can be traced to a few factors, including the relative absence of high-profile personalities such as the Art Project's Jackson Pollock or the Writers' Project's John Steinbeck. The Music Project was also generally void of overt Depression-era radicalism and explicit display of biases, agendas, and assumptions which many find so compelling in the works and activities of other Federal One projects. Director Nikolai Sokoloff was seen by many as a cultural elitist, yet due to the nature of the project and the skill level of the musicians he was obliged to be a little more eclectic in his offerings. The FMP organized orchestras across the nation in cities that previously had not had such an ensemble and offered concerts and music lessons for free or nominal charge. Charles Seeger and Alan Lomax, of the FWP, also developed a project to collect and preserve America's folk music. Through the efforts of this collection Seeger hoped to integrate popular, folk, and academic music into a distinctively American idiom.²¹

Only two monographs focusing exclusively on the Federal Music Project have been published, Peter Gough's *Sounds of the New Deal: The Federal Music Project in the West* (2015), and Kenneth Bindas' *All of This Music Belongs to the Nation: The WPA's Federal Music Project and American Society* (1995).²² Bindas traces the entire tenure of the Federal Music

²¹ Gough, *Sounds of the New Deal*, 3-4; McElvaine, *The Great Depression*, 207-1.

²² The list of master's theses and PhD dissertations that deal with the subject of the Federal Music Project or Works Projects Administration Music Project exclusively is also short. Totalling just seven, four of these works focus on a single state or city.

Project from its precursors in the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) and the Civil Works Administration (CWA) to its transfer from federal to state control in 1939. The Roosevelt administration recognized that the New Deal was as much about the rebuilding and redefining of national will as it was about economic recovery. The FMP employed more people than any other arts project and reached a larger number of Americans by its performances while avoiding many of the political scandals that plagued the other Federal One projects. Led by the politically and culturally conservative Nikolai Sokoloff, the FMP extolled the positive social benefits of “cultivated” music, which favored classically trained players and forms. Though women and minority groups had a place in the project, it was limited and often tempered by segregation and stereotyping. As a whole, Bindas shows the FMP offers a unique profile of Depression-era culture.²³

Gough takes Bindas’s argument a step further to discuss the WPA Music Program, overseen by individual states after 1939, in what he defines as the “West.”²⁴ Gough argues that the decision to divide the program into geographic regions combined with the nature of musical performances in the Depression-era fostered a strong sense of regionalism rather than national unity. In fact, the *only* way that impact of the FMP and WPA Music Program can be understood, Gough adds, is through a regional lens due to its reflection of sectional realities. A regional analysis of the American West reveals musical traits distinctive to the time as well as music of the West itself. These distinctive “Western” traits furthered the direction of historical inquiry and the development of a new western history that emerged in later generations.²⁵

²³ Bindas, *All of This Belongs to the Nation*, vii-xiv.

²⁴ The “West” is defined following the delineations of the US Census: California, Colorado, Utah, Arizona, Idaho, New Mexico, Washington, Oregon, Montana, Wyoming, and Nevada.

²⁵ Gough, *Sounds of the New Deal*, 1.

Despite the positive improvements that stemmed from New Deal programs, not all of these programs succeeded. Significantly, the New Deal failed to substantially redistribute national income or challenge the fundamental tenets of capitalism, specifically, private ownership of the means of production.²⁶ One of the major issues that New Deal programs also failed to overcome was systemic racism, which can also be seen in the FMP. Ira Katznelson reveals how policy decisions dealing with welfare, work, and war during the 1930s and 1940s excluded and treated the vast majority of African Americans in the last vestiges of Jim Crow. Inequality increased at the insistence of southern representatives in Congress. As a result of legislation passed, blacks became even more significantly disadvantaged when the modern American middle class was fashioned during and after World War II. Katznelson argues that affirmative action was once “white” due to the public policies of the federal government in the 1930s and 1940s. When the New Deal began, a large majority of black Americans living in the South lacked civil and political rights as citizens. The absence of those rights significantly curtailed improvements. Without black political participation, southern representatives in the House of Representatives and the Senate were free to impede or veto the full and fair participation of African Americans in the welfare-oriented advances of the 1930s. In addition, the South’s political, social, and economic structure remained largely unchallenged by organized labor. Only with the introduction of the GI Bill did African Americans begin to see more benefits and opportunities, though it was still embedded in a larger discriminatory context.²⁷ Although African Americans were not barred from participation in the FMP, they were segregated and

²⁶ David M. Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945*. The Oxford History of the United States 9 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 364.

²⁷ Ira Katznelson, *When Affirmative Action was White: An Untold Story of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005).

employment records indicate that they were hired at a far lower rate and often only for specialized “novelty” groups.

The New Deal has an understandably complex and contradictory legacy in part due to its policy of forcing state and local governments to create public welfare agencies as preconditions to receiving federal aid. These agencies became permanent fixtures after the Depression, and constituted a major breakthrough in the creation of a limited welfare state. Yet despite these advances, traditional attitudes about relief and the “worthiness” of its recipients persisted. In spite of economic calamity, balanced budgets remained more important than offering relief which affected the efficacy of WPA programs.²⁸ Many states which could have benefitted from the FMP, such as Kentucky, were denied access to WPA programs due to the state’s inability or refusal to adhere to the conditions for federal aid.

One of the major challenges to the New Deal, and another area in which the administration received criticism, was the way in which Roosevelt handled involvement in World War II. John Morton Blum interrogates the role Roosevelt played in the wartime economy—specifically the president’s preoccupation with victory over renewed commitment to human rights and social justice. Republican and southern Democratic allies tried to reassert the power of Congress and reduce the power of the Presidency. At home, the American consensus to end the war was more a desire to avoid renewed depression than a commitment to liberal reform, and this stance helped conservatives lessen the efforts of liberals. With respect to foreign affairs, the influence of the war and long-standing national habits enabled conservatives to both limit American political flexibility and financial generosity in the postwar period.²⁹ America’s

²⁸ Roger Biles, *The New Deal for the American People* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1991), 112-14.

²⁹ John Morton Blum, *V was for Victory: Politics and American Culture during World War II* (London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976).

entrance into World War II was the death knell for the Federal One programs to the disappointment of many citizens, both within the FMP and without.

Organization

To be in conversation with the other regional studies of the FMP, the dissertation focuses on the American Midwest, or Region IV. Region IV was the largest assigned region and for this reason provides the best comparison to Region I, or the “West.” Comparison and contrast between a selective sampling drawn from the states comprising Region IV, as well as with previous works dedicated to the Federal Music Project, uncovers the underlying assumptions and definitions of national identity. It also exposes and helps explain differences between regions.

The focus on Region IV extends of the study of the regional nature of the Federal Music Program as well as tests larger claims regarding the function of the FMP as a program. Three states from Region IV serve as a sample or case study of the region: Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan. Previous regional studies have argued that rather than creating a mass, national culture, the FMP functioned to enhance and even further regional divisions. Gough asserts that a national approach to the FMP overlooks its most compelling and essential (regional) features. Though the character of specific regions and states is worthwhile, it is also important to determine how the regions worked together to accomplish larger, national goals and influence national identity. The activities of the states within the Midwest illuminates national rhetoric employed in practice not only by the individual states, but by the region as a unit. Comparison with other regions not only highlights individual contributions, but also sheds light on how the FMP was affected by social, economic, and even political concerns.

Initially, the dissertation sought to explore the issues of the impact of FMP initiatives and the authenticity of music performed and produced.³⁰ Director Nikolai Sokoloff's greatest goal was to introduce the "common" American citizen to cultivated music and to integrate this music into the country's "civic and cultural system." He argued that Americans were ignorant of quality music, overly dependent on vernacular forms, and once introduced to a higher caliber of music these tastes would change.³¹ Instead of evidence of conversation and contestation over the notion of authentic American music, the historical record reveals that the FMP in the Midwest was concerned with the technicality or caliber of the music it performed.

State and national records of the Federal Music Project are held in the National Archives in College Park as well as the Library of Congress and consist of narrative and activity reports, demographic reports, correspondence, and programs. In addition to these records produced by state and regional directors, Nikolai Sokoloff and George Foster both provided in-depth narrative reports on the progress and activity of the program during their respective tenures as National Director. Supplementary to governmentally-produced reports, many articles, editorials, and concert reviews were available in contemporary newspapers and magazines. While on one hand these sources helped to determine whether tastes did in fact change, on the other they are clearly a top-down approach. Often the reports lacked follow-up details, such as the results of composition contests, and merely regurgitated planned programs, ticket sales, and unit demographics. Focusing on the experience of rural communities allowed for an analysis of the

³⁰ The idea of musical "authenticity" is not a new concept and has been analyzed and debated since the mid-1800s. For a comprehensive analysis of problem of authenticity in music, see Martin Stokes, ed., *Ethnicity, Identity, and Music: The Musical Construction of Place* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1994).

³¹ Gough, *Sounds of the New Deal*, 5,10.

FMP experience in the demographics the program was specifically targeting, though further research into local and private archives is needed to fully gauge the success of the program.

The federally mandated and controlled production of music and art was seen by many as an opportunity to ring in a great American musical awakening, but this leads to issues of authenticity. In part, the FMP did create a desire for a unique American style composed by native artists, yet many of these same artists were not able fully to experiment within its regulations. The FMP saw itself as the arbiter of national culture, but largely ignored America's existing musical culture. Certain forms, such as folk, were deemed "lowbrow" or "subversive," while the contributions by indigenous peoples, people of color, and immigrants were actively whitewashed or diminished. The FMP answered the call for distinctly American art music and steered it in a specific direction that had long-lasting positive and negative consequences.

Chapter 2: American Identity and Culture in the Early Twentieth Century

Underpinning every facet of the Federal Music Project was an internal struggle between "high" and "low" art. Director Nikolai Sokoloff deemed classical or "cultivated" music as the best, and only, form of music worthy of performance and funding. This opinion was not necessarily shared by the entirety of the FMP staff, let alone other groups such as the American Federation of Musicians or the Composers' Collective, both of which played a part in the development of American music at the time. Moreover, the American public readily consumed both cultivated and popular music, often preferring popular forms. This chapter seeks to uncover how race, class, and gender informed the battle between "highbrow" and "lowbrow" music, and how this in turn played a part in the formation of American identity and the process of Americanization in the Midwest as a region.

Chapter 3: Performance and Education: The FMP in Illinois and Indiana

FMP units in the Midwest were focused primarily on performance and education, often combining the two through music appreciation concerts in public and parochial schools. Activities in Illinois were centered primarily around performance in the Chicago area. The Illinois Symphony Orchestra was the most active and actively promoted unit in the state. The Illinois Symphony Orchestra worked to foster collaboration with private enterprise by featuring many professional non-relief musicians in their concerts as well as offering premieres of compositions by American composers on almost every program. The Chicago Composers' Forum Laboratory also worked to raise Illinois' musical palate by providing an opportunity for the public to hear new works by American composers and then participate in a question and answer forum with the composer immediately following the performance. Perhaps more than in other Midwestern units, the divide between "classical" and "popular" musicians was seen and felt in Illinois.

The state of Indiana was focused primarily on music education and appreciation concerts. The Indianapolis Teachers Project was one of the largest and most prolific in the Midwest. Units in Indiana offered classes in music theory, history, appreciation, and instruction to areas that up until the 1930s had little engagement with classical music and formal music training. In addition to providing musical instruction, Indiana FMP units introduced music as an important social and community activity.

In the 1930s the radio became one of the central features of the American home. By 1934, radio had become the most essential tool for garnering New Deal support. The Federal Music Project believed that through utilizing the radio it could increase its sphere of influence and transmit "good" music to rural areas where the production of live shows was unrealistic. It

also hoped to return classical music to the forefront of programming.³² The FMP's radio presence was effective in furthering the performing and educational aims of the units in Illinois and Indiana, specifically serving rural audiences.

Chapter 4: Music Therapy: The FMP in Michigan

The Federal Music Project was actively engaged in music therapy experiments nationwide starting in 1935. Musicians on relief rolls fostered a partnership with medical providers in Michigan to advance research relating to the effects of music on the mental health of patients in area hospitals. The most prolific of these partnerships was between units in Detroit and Dr. Ira Altschuler of the Eloise Hospital in Wayne County. The partnership between Altschuler and the FMP provided the basis of much of his subsequent research and findings and helped to legitimize and advance the field of Music Therapy.

Chapter 5: Conclusion: The Final Cadence

The FMP officially ended in 1943 as the United States fully entered World War II. On September 1, 1939 the FMP discontinued its national oversight and was instead renamed the WPA Music Program with each state governing its function. Dr. Earl Vincent Moore took over as National Director, and the program focused primarily on music education and appreciation. The Federal Music Project strove to uncover, and at times create, America's "genuine" musical heritage. The ideals of the New Deal took root in the musical expression of the FMP and impacted the development of American identity both musically and socially. It was not merely a relief program for those on its rolls; it was intended as an education program for the nation. FMP educational programs continue to have an impact on music education today. Many American towns still have active symphonies that were organized as a result of the project which continue

³² Bindas, *All of This Music Belongs to the Nation*, 19-20.

to offer high-quality, low-cost concerts. Organizations such as the National Endowment for the Arts built upon the framework of Federal Project One and extend the legacy of the FMP into the present day. In a time of tumult and economic uncertainty, the Federal Music Project stood as a beacon of national hope in the American Dream.

CHAPTER 2: AMERICAN IDENTITY AND CULTURE

From 1935 to 1939, the Federal Music Project employed more people than any of the other Federal One projects and reached American audiences while largely disengaging from political scandal. Although its leadership was conservative, many American musicians from underrepresented groups were able to participate in the program. At its core, the FMP clung to the notion that the consumption of cultivated music produced positive social benefits which often led to providing more opportunity to classically trained musicians over popular players. The way the FMP handled itself mirrored the cultural tensions within Depression-era America.¹

The nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also saw a structural transition in American culture with a specific, more “cultured,” style of music favored by conductors and musicians in symphonic concerts. What emerged was a struggle between institutions backed by wealthy patrons and society at large to establish aesthetic standards and define “true art.” Through the establishment of American symphonies and the repertoire they played, the distance between the amateur and professional musician widened. Only the highly trained professional had the knowledge and ability to understand and perform music composed by the masters. This also worked to reinforce the ideal that the best source of music and art was to be found in Europe. The very word “culture” became synonymous with the Eurocentric products of the concert hall, opera house, museum, and library which were to be approached with discipline, knowledge, and a sense of reverence.²

¹ Kenneth J. Bindas, *All of This Belongs to the Nation: The WPA's Federal Music Project and American Society* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1995), xiii-xiv.

² Lawrence Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 137-144.

Culture, at its core, is primarily an ideological construct. Lawrence Levine reminds us that the primary categories of culture have been products of ideologies that were themselves modified and transformed, and the perimeters of these cultural divisions are permeable. America's culture has been divided along ethnic, social, and regional lines since the beginning. In the early nineteenth century, Americans sought to meld past culture with a shared public culture that was relatively fluid.³ In the beginning of the twentieth century, this quest for American national identity deepened and public culture became more regimented and specifically defined.

Culture and its appreciation became an essential tool that shaped critical ideals as well as the FMP. In the 1930s, the search for an authentic American cultural past became a new type of nationalism that reinforced conformity. The reliance on basic cultural patterns were stressed by the development of public opinion and the study of mythology, symbolism, and folklore. Additionally, technological advances and mass media fostered the idea that full engagement with culture necessitated participation in a group, community, or movement.⁴

Nikolai Sokoloff and his administrators drew upon these historical and cultural traditions of artistic interpretation when establishing the goals and methods of the FMP. The Project built upon the successes and failures of spreading genteel culture to the masses and the government regulation of leisure to offer the American public a specific type of music. Previous work relief programs, such as the Civil Works Administration (CWA), emphasized music as a supplemental recreational activity only. Sokoloff identified five major goals for the FMP: providing assistance for musicians on relief rolls, establishing high standards through the classification of musicians,

³ Ibid., 8-9.

⁴ Ibid., 164, 172.

stimulating community interest, creating an intelligent musical public, and demonstrating to the American public the constructive work that was being accomplished by the federal government to combat the Depression.⁵

In his 1935 report on the Federal Music Project, Nikolai Sokoloff wrote that,

For years, up until the World War, America had been almost completely under the tonal domination of foreigners, and this was true despite the love for the songs of Stephen Foster and the music of MacDowell, Nevin and two or three other native composers. Until the turn of the century there remained in America much of the pioneer spirit, of land and horizon hunger, and there were still frontiers. Our people were too busy, often too emotionally occupied with material advancement to concern themselves with great music. But after the Armistice there came a change over the American scene. Hundreds of thousands of Americans had been in Europe with the Expeditionary Forces and on that continent they had found nothing that seemed to them in anywise superior to the things at home. There had been a general quickening throughout the spirit of the nation. In 1918 and in the years immediately following new American orchestras of the first rank came into existence...; great festival choruses were formed; American artists were heard on more concert programs and even the American composer was given a chance to shape his shadow in the new sun.⁶

Sokoloff was himself a musical “foreigner” who was working to shape American musical tastes. Moreover, the idealization of the frontier was nothing new. Frederick Jackson Turner espoused his “Frontier Thesis” in his paper “The Significance of the Frontier in American History,” which he read at the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. According to Turner, American development can be explained through “the existence of an area of free land, its continuous recession, and the advance of American settlement westward.” American culture quickly appropriated Turner’s thesis through universities and popular literature. By 1910, his observations about westward expansion had become the authoritative view of the American past.

⁵ Bindas, *All of This Music Belongs to the Nation*, 1; William F. McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 1969), 592.

⁶ Nikolai Sokoloff, *The Federal Music Project* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1935), 9-10.

This frontier thesis became the model of American history in the United States educational system, was endorsed by politicians, and was even used in popular entertainment. American composers in the 1930s turned to this idealized frontier as a legitimate past on which to build national identity and character, seen for example in Aaron Copland's western ballets *Rodeo*, *Billy the Kid*, and *Appalachian Spring*.

The most common invocation of the frontier in the Depression years was a sentimental effort to retain the picturesque glamour and glory of the "Old West." With the alleged disappearance of the frontier, a growing market for articles and stories about the American West appeared. Americans searched for a native epic that espoused the virtues of individualism, courage, recklessness, and a break with social ties and obligation.⁷ The frontier was seen as a legitimate past on which to build national identity and character.

Structured Leisure and Creating an Elite Palate

The idea of structured leisure time activities began in the nineteenth century, when America was steeped in Victorian ideals. An elite class of primarily Protestant middle-class critics, ministers, educators, and reformers assumed cultural leadership by touting discipline, refinement, and instruction. Of prime importance was the development of "character," or moral integrity and self-control.⁸ All activities, whether work or leisure, were to be constructive as hard work improved both individual and society by keeping passions which were detrimental to society in check. As such, leisure should be spent in the pursuit of edifying activities rather than

⁷ Warren I. Susman, *Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century* (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1973), 30-1.

⁸ For a more detailed analysis of the role of social reform in the early twentieth century, see "The Persistence of Reform," in Warren Susman, *Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century*.

idleness. For these reasons the liberal arts were legitimized as being of moral and social activity, as being something more than “for art’s sake.”⁹

Advancement of leisure that served a moral and social purpose continued throughout most of the nineteenth century. Reformers founded museums, art galleries, libraries, and symphonies which worked to set the cultural tone of American life. John F. Kasson explains that this specific cultural life was supported by “influential shapers of the nascent mass culture, who echoed [reformers’] tone and carried their message to a broad audience.” The result was an alliance between members of the American cultural elite and those that catered to a more commercial, or popular, audience. Cultural entrepreneurs worked to develop a new market by popularizing genteel values and art criticism. Mass publishers, along with highly respected writers and artists, helped to commercialize this genteel American culture.¹⁰

Though moderately successful, genteel reformers never achieved complete control. Most problematic was their failure to influence the working class and new immigrant groups. These specific groups tended to favor their own cultural forms and values over new American ones. As the nineteenth century progressed, a new economic elite who were not as tied to these “custodian of culture” gained power and influence. More and more, genteel reformers found their social position overthrown by the nouveaux riches and rebellion from the rising generation.¹¹

Americans were becoming more aware of the difference between their public and private personas. Increasingly, Americans identified themselves primarily as consumers and were encouraged to spend rather than save. In the 1920s, the world shifted from scarcity to abundance

⁹ John F. Kasson, *Amusing the Million: Coney Island at the Turn of the Century* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), 4.

¹⁰ Susman, *Culture as History*, 4-5.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 5-6.

and leisure was becoming just as important as labor. While millions of Americans still labored to produce goods, fewer workers were needed for production and many traded factory jobs for professional, service, or clerical trades.¹² Working for a salary rather than an hourly wage offered security not afforded to those tied to the industrial time clock.¹³

In the early twentieth century there was a move to restore the purity of leisure through government regulation and supervision. Legislators and community leaders believed that recreation could serve as a constructive force in social integration and moral development. Public parks and gymnasiums were built to provide spaces other than city streets for play which also instilled habits of discipline and cooperation. Community centers were targeted primarily to recent immigrants as an alternative to pool halls, saloons, and other unsavory spaces. Recreation programs for factory workers and their families were created to help boost employee morale and job performance. All of these programs were enacted with the purpose of supplanting amusement parks and other commercial recreations with more orderly and regulated amusement which would serve to discipline and institutionalize its patrons.¹⁴

The champions of structured leisure, or the “play movement,” intended for their activities to be enjoyed by people of all ages but concentrated most of their attention on the development of young members of society. To these reformers, childhood play was the key to building culture and future American ideals. With this in mind, recreational programs featured “directed play” which included orderly activities with a clear schedule and teaching objective. The idea was that

¹² For a more detailed analysis of the shifting roles of the industrial worker and leisure see: Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

¹³ Susman, *Culture as History*, 111-2.

¹⁴ Kasson, *Amusing the Million*, 101-102.

from childhood to adulthood play would progress from imitative to competitive to cooperative play. Disciplined, structured play would provide the ideal atmosphere to develop self-control.¹⁵

In the 1930s, Americans began to think in terms of patterns of behavior and belief and the phrase “The American Dream” came into common usage. There was a concentrated effort to find, characterize, and then adapt to a specifically *American* way of life that balanced quality of life with the materials produced through technological achievement. Writers, artists, and critics engaged in a complex effort to seek and define America as a culture and to create a way of life worth participating in. One of the ways that culture was shaped was using systematic, “scientific” measurement of public opinion. Public polling became commonplace with the introduction of the American Institute of Public Opinion by George Gallup. Americans were presented “empirical” evidence of how they felt and thought regarding major issues of the day. Polling made it easier to find core values and opinions that united the American people and worked to mold and reinforce dominant cultural patterns.¹⁶ The Federal Music Project, as all of the Federal One units, would frequently find itself at the mercy of public opinion, forced to continually prove its value to the American public.

By the early decades of the twentieth century, the roles of performers and audience members had been cemented. Masterworks of classic composers were performed in their entirety by highly trained musicians on programs free from lesser works and genres. Audiences were to approach these concerts with respect and seriousness in order to receive more than mere entertainment. Partaking in the music of the European masters allowed for aesthetic and spiritual elevation. Audience behaviors and cultural predilections were trained in this way to coincide

¹⁵ Ibid., 103-104.

¹⁶ Susman, *Culture as History*, 154-8.

with those of the “elites.” Additionally, there was tight control over who could access music and culture and how they should be interpreted. What prevailed was the taste of one specific segment of the social and economic spectrum which convinced the nation that its interpretation of music, theater, and art was the only legitimate one.¹⁷

According to William F. McDonald, the push for art music led to a higher qualitative level of performance which meant greater musical appreciation and the desire for a formal music education. By the middle of the nineteenth century, music education had developed from private instruction to part of the public-school curriculum. First used as a model of academic discipline, music education and appreciation were soon seen as important to the aesthetic and cultural experience of children. Settlement houses also incorporated music into their activities when serving underprivileged groups.¹⁸

By 1900 the basic elements of the public-school music system were instituted, including bands, orchestras, choruses, and elementary or “general” music as part of institutionalized school music, though relatively few schools were able to offer a full program. The years leading up to World War I introduced extracurricular high school bands and orchestras. In 1919 only twenty-four percent of American high schools had a band, but by 1930 almost each high school in the nation supported a school band. Group instrumental instruction was emphasized in conjunction with private instruction. In the 1930s, music instruction in the public-school curriculum was justified as a worthy use of leisure time and a way to ensure students actively participated in “good” music and was often integrated with history, literature, and other subjects.¹⁹

¹⁷ Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow*, 146, 177, 229-31.

¹⁸ McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 585.

¹⁹ Richard Colwell, James W. Pruett, Pamela Bristah, and David G. Woods, *Music Education in the United States*. Grove Music Online, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.purdue.edu/10.1093/gmo.9781561592630.article.A224324>, accessed September 5, 2019.

To achieve these goals, the FMP functioned with three major divisions: the administrative branch, the concert branch, and the music education branch. The administrative branch was based in Washington, D.C. and worked with both national and local WPA offices to handle procedures, finances, unions, and travel. They also determined the administrative and technical organization including the scope of the program and set technical requirements and standards of work. This branch received the monthly activity and narrative reports from FMP state supervisors. The concert branch worked to offer services to the performing units as they gave concerts to their communities and outlying areas. Finally, the education branch worked to, in their words, “rehabilitate” music teachers and teach and train children and adults. This branch engaged in various research activities including music therapy.²⁰

The major goals of the FMP created a policy that favored high art over popular music and had significant consequences for those musicians who were not academically trained or who could not read music. During the 1930s, many American musicians performed in the popular realm, often providing the soundtrack for motion pictures. The growth of radio, recording, and mechanized sound music machines created an unemployment problem for a large number of musicians that was only heightened with the onset of the Depression. Additionally, private opera companies, orchestras, and theaters were forced to cancel or significantly reduce their performances as patronage and funding dried up.²¹

The favoring of art music over vernacular music was an extension of previous cultural struggles over what constituted “true art.” The rapid expansion of the United States led to a

²⁰ McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 608.

²¹ Bindas, *All of This Music Belongs to the Nation*, 1-2.

general lack of appreciation for art music as it was deemed unnecessary in frontier living. Once regions were settled and developing, the desire to elevate one's social status through culture expanded in kind. Art music necessitated education and contemplation to be fully understood and worked to separate those who appreciated it from those who favored vernacular or popular music. Rapid industrialization and the new wealth sprung from industrial capitalism entrenched the use of music and art as symbolic of social standing.²²

Whereas the symphony orchestra was symbolic of culture and social standing, vernacular forms were dominated primarily by gospel, spiritual, and minstrel songs. Though these musical traditions still required music competence for performance, its use for entertainment purposes made it less respectable. Cultivated music retrenched by establishing conservatories, journals, and concert halls that served to reinforce that "good" music was music that required discipline to both listen to and perform along with an understanding of history and the acceptance of European-based culture.²³

Nikolai Sokoloff began his tenure with the Federal Music Project determined to use the project to reinforce these ideals of "good" music. Scholars such as Kenneth Bindas argue that he did so without the consideration for the plight of the unemployed musician or the needs of American audiences. The ultimate goal was to provide musical relief through the creation of symphonies, chamber music groups, and other musical organizations deemed "serious" by the FMP. It was assumed that outside of large urban areas, there would be fewer trained "symphonic quality" musicians. The American Federation of Musicians (AFM) pushed for the project to dedicate more of the budget to rank-and-file unemployed musicians and constantly pushed

²² Ibid., 6-7.

²³ Ibid., 7.

against FMP policy. The AFM was initiated with 3,000 members in Indianapolis in 1896 for “any musician who receives pay for his musical services.” Its charter was granted by the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in the same year. Membership was extended to Canadian musicians in 1900 and was affiliated with the Central Labor Council in Canada. Local affiliates have jurisdiction over local areas of employment while the international union has jurisdiction over recordings, film, and network broadcasting. For this reason, it is difficult to know exactly how many members the AFM had nationwide in the 1930s. In 1909 the union reported a national membership of 20,000. Membership hit its peak in 1929 and began to decline by 1934, but larger metropolitan areas such as New York had a membership of 15,000 reported in 1933. Nationwide, the union disagreed with the FMP pay scale, which penalized those musicians who lacked “serious” music credentials with lower wages. As a result, the FMP decided to pay all musicians the same wage, save teachers who were paid at a lower scale. In 1936, after the first six months of operation, the FMP became the largest employer in the Federal Project One. Sokoloff and his administration quickly discovered that the American public preferred popular music but held fast to the assertion that once American audiences were exposed to better repertoire, they would choose cultivated music over popular forms.²⁴

Though clearly experiencing success, many still asserted that the FMP lacked empathy for the majority of unemployed musicians and accused the Project of catering to cultivated music at the expense of the American musician. Some more radical musicians took this a step further by arguing that the FMP’s elitist music was now part of the bankrupt culture that created the

²⁴ Bindas, *All of This Music Belongs to the Nation*, 8-10; “History,” American Federation of Musicians, accessed September 5, 2019, www.afm.org; McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 587; Rita H. Mead, “American Federation of Musicians”, *Grove Music Online*, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.purdue.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.00776>, accessed September 5, 2019.

Depression rather than providing relief from it.²⁵ AFM President Joseph Weber worried that the FMP's emphasis on "serious" music would not meet the needs of the majority of unemployed musicians, and that "no matter how praiseworthy these cultural educational efforts are, they should not be the reason [for the denial of] relief to the vast army of musicians who cannot possibly be placed in symphony orchestras."²⁶

Of all the organizations that cooperated with the FMP, the AFM was the most active and influential. From the very beginning Weber negotiated with Sokoloff over the AFM's role, specifically regarding who qualified for relief. According to presidential directive, only those people who appeared on relief rolls as of May 30, 1935 qualified for relief. This was an issue for musicians who had been denied relief up to that point; fewer than five thousand were listed on relief rolls. Through negotiations with Sokoloff Weber convinced the government to extend this deadline to November 1.²⁷

Politics and the Popular Front

The Popular Front largely reshaped American culture and influenced the FMP. The communism of the Depression created a long-lasting transformation in the idea of American modernity as well as mass culture. Most striking was the transparency of cultural production. The left was able to have a powerful impact on United States culture in the 1930s because it was not merely a product of individual political commitment but was rather a result of the marriage

²⁵ Bindas, *All of This Music Belongs to the Nation*, 11-13.

²⁶ "President's Report to the Detroit Convention: Federal Relief to Unemployed," *The International Musician* (June 1936): 22-4.

²⁷ Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation*, 6.

between the powerful democratic social movement of the Popular Front and the cultural devices of mass entertainment and education.²⁸

The heart of the cultural front of the 1930s to late 1940s was a new generation of working-class artists and intellectuals who had been raised in largely immigrant and black neighborhoods. They were often the second-generation immigrants, including ethnic Italians, Jews, Poles, Mexicans, Serbians, Croatians, Slovaks, Japanese, Chinese, Filipinos, and African Americans who had migrated north. As products of the public education system, they often found themselves caught between family histories and traditions and their own lived experiences. These artists and writers formed literary clubs, workers theaters, camera clubs, film and photography leagues, composers' collectives, dance groups, and revolutionary choruses. 1934 alone saw a swell in small magazines that published proletarian stories, songs, poems, and cartoons with Popular Front sympathies.²⁹

The Communist Party, which led the Popular Front, found considerable support from leading intellectuals in the early 1930s, though much of this participation was centered on the negativity of fascism and the dehumanizing effect the Depression was having on Americans. On the issues of power, strategy, and organization, the Party found that it was divided. The Communist movement of the 1930s used the various social and psychological needs of the time to its advantage. It was able to effectively recruit individuals with few options seeking for belonging. Many were drawn to its values and ideals rather than a complete understanding of Communist ideology. Moreover, the Party provided community through camps, discussion

²⁸ Michael Denning, *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of American Culture in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Verso, 1997), xvi-xviii.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, xv.

groups, magazines, social affairs, and writers' congresses. The Party aimed to organize writers and intellectuals and foster an exchange of political and aesthetic views.³⁰

The visual and performing arts drew their audience largely from the ethnic and working classes of large cities, but also attracted artists from within the working-class. An entirely new generation of working-class artists and intellectuals eventually staffed agencies of the federal government as well as studios within "cultural" industries such as the theater and film. The politics of art was two-fold, including what Michael Denning terms "cultural politics," or the politics of allegiance and affiliation, and "aesthetic ideologies," or politics of form. More pervasive and less overt was the cultural front and leftist ideals embodied in the works of these new artists. Novels, plays, films, and musicals were written and composed by these radical artists within an established repertoire of forms, styles, genres, and conventions.³¹

In the summer of 1938, the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) focused its attention on the programs of Federal Project One. The committee was originally formed to investigate the spread of Nazism and the expansion of the Ku Klux Klan, but shortly after its formation the committee decided that it lacked "sufficient data" to continue probing into these areas. Committee member John Rankin went as far as to call the KKK "an old American institution." The committee, which came to be known as the Dies Committee in reference to Democratic Committee member and chair Martin Dies, instead turned its attention to investigating the Communist Party USA (CPUSA) influence in the WPA Writers' and Theatre Projects. Much of the partisan assault hurled at the WPA cultural projects was an effort to derail

³⁰ Susman, *Culture as History*, 172-3.

³¹ Denning, *The Cultural Front*, xix-xx.

New Deal programs rather than motivated by concern about internal subversion. The transcripts of the Dies Committee show that much of the investigation was based on gossip and innuendo.³²

The FMP contained the least radical content of all Federal One projects but did not completely escape the radicalism of the Depression. Musicologist Barbara Zuck notes that the CPUSA played an important sociopolitical role in the 1930s. She asserts that this is most evident “in its organized agitation against groups fostering discrimination and racial hatred. Thus, political leftism in the 1930s simply became a common framework in which the American intelligentsia expressed their idealism and humanitarianism.”³³ Most radical musicians were involved as members of symphony and orchestra units rather than as directors in charge of programming. The FMP did provide a venue for radical composers to have their works performed in the Composers’ Forum Laboratory series, but unfortunately a full record of activities in the Midwest was not kept. Most radical involvement within the FMP occurred in units in California and New York, often in partnership with the Federal Theatre Project such as the production of *Take Your Choice*, a work which provided social commentary on the Depression as well as criticism of Hoover’s administration and praise of Roosevelt’s New Deal policies, in San Francisco. The claim that Sokoloff squashed all leftist expression in the program is unsupported. Although not enthusiastic about Charles Seeger’s appointment to the FMP in 1938 in part due to Seeger’s preference for traditional American folk music as well as his political leanings, Sokoloff nonetheless sanctioned the partnership with the Federal Writers’ Project to do so. Sokoloff never publicly expressed his own political views, but was known to

³² Peter Gough, *Sounds of the New Deal: The Federal Music Project in the West* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015), 129.

³³ Barbara Zuck, *A History of Musical Americanism* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1980), 107.

distribute positive reviews of FMP accomplishments in left-leaning periodicals to state supervisors.³⁴ This does not definitively prove Sokoloff's political leanings, and it could be that he was more focused on news of the FMP generally, but it does indicate that he was at least engaging with publications on both ends of the political spectrum.

Race and the Federal Music Project

The FMP acknowledged its responsibility to all unemployed American citizens, not just a white majority. From the outset, the Program sought to employ, include, and publicize African Americans in its national agenda. Though African Americans did have the opportunity to participate in the FMP, however, they were segregated, stereotyped, and often denied the pay and credibility afforded their white counterparts.³⁵

The characteristic affluence of the 1920s was not afforded to most African Americans who continued to occupy a lower socioeconomic status, holding the lowest paying jobs with the least amount of job security. Rigid systems of Jim Crow segregation in the South and caste structure in the North forced a very real second-class citizenship upon Black Americans. Political disenfranchisement guaranteed powerlessness while residential segregation and low budgets adversely affected education. As the Depression wore on, spreading unemployment virtually eliminated "Negro Work" as whites took over jobs traditionally reserved for African American workers.³⁶

While rhetorically promising, in reality many New Deal programs that were introduced during the first Hundred Days provided little assistance to African Americans and frequently

³⁴ Gough, *Sounds of the New Deal*, 21, 130.

³⁵ Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation*, 71.

³⁶ Roger Biles, *A New Deal for the American People* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1991), 172-3.

included racial discrimination. For example, the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) and the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) refinanced mortgages based upon a new system of appraisal that predicted neighborhood development. HOLC appraisers categorized neighborhoods based on income level, ethnicity, and population assigning each neighborhood as green, blue, yellow, or red, in descending order of desirability. HOLC created the practice of redlining by always designating Black neighborhoods as red, or least preferable. These maps were then made available to private lending institutions which provided the means for a defense of existing racial exclusionary policies.³⁷

New Deal legislation passed beginning in 1935 indicated a change in Roosevelt's attitude toward black Americans. While he never fully committed himself until the Fair Employment Practices Act in 1941, he started to use many techniques to encourage the participation of minorities in New Deal programs. Eleanor Roosevelt proved to be instrumental in supporting while not fully committing to the African American population through her endorsement of civil rights activities and the abolition of poll taxes as well as a strict anti-lynching law. Her attendance at NAACP meetings was given widespread coverage and many African Americans came to view her as an ally.³⁸

Nationwide, the FMP provided aid to African American musicians who performed spirituals and other traditional songs to multiracial audiences. For many of these musicians, the FMP created new musical opportunities. Director Sokoloff described the contributions of African American musicians to the FMP in many press releases during his time with the FMP. He wrote

³⁷ Ibid., 176-8.

³⁸ Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation*, 74.

that “composers of both races³⁹ have drawn deeply from his vernacular songs and tunes. Under the program of the Federal Music Project, however, new opportunities have been afforded the Negro musician, both as a composer and as executant artist.” Attitudes of musicians on FMP rolls seem to corroborate this sentiment. In a letter sent to the western regional director Bruno David Ussher, Los Angeles Negro Chorus member Edna Rosalyne Heard wrote,

Words are inadequate with which to express my most sincere gratitude and appreciation for the Government-sponsored music project.
I am writing you not as a musician or as a member of any particular music unit, but as one of the 12 million black Americans in this country who is indeed proud and most grateful for this great work.
Allow me to speak also for other members of my group here in Los Angeles who have expressed themselves both through the pulpit and press in terms of praising the present administration, and the cultural benefit they have derived from its educational program.
With best wishes for the continued success of this great movement, I am
Gratefully Yours,
Edna Rosalyne Heard⁴⁰

The WPA was under presidential stipulation that it not discriminate based on race or creed, but administrative personnel often acquiesced to local customs and pressures when enforcing federal relief policy. State and local officials frequently awarded aid to all available whites before considering people of color who in turn only received jobs that required unskilled labor. African Americans also received smaller stipends than their white counterparts.⁴¹ The FMP also displayed this racial disparity in its ranks. The 1935 Census of Usual Occupations revealed that out of all workers assigned as “Musicians and Teachers of Music,” 12 percent were African American. For workers in rural areas, this number plummeted to a mere 3 percent.

³⁹ This simplification of American culture and citizenship as black and white is obviously problematic and speaks to the issues other minority groups experienced within the FMP and WPA as a whole.

⁴⁰ Gough, *Sounds of the New Deal*, 89-90, 112.

⁴¹ Biles, *A New Deal for the American People*, 178-9.

Although this clearly demonstrates unequal treatment, most African American musicians worked in areas where the total population percentage was significantly lower than the national average meaning that based on state population density and percentile the black performer to possible audience ratio was equal to or slightly better than that of the white units.⁴²

The FMP's main challenge with regard to African American units was how to expose these musicians to white audiences without upsetting traditional racial attitudes. There were also entrenched racial barriers within musical styles themselves. Ragtime and jazz had demonstrated some of the musical contributions of African American artists, but, according to Kenneth Bindas, a large majority of the white population was unwilling to recognize these styles as worthwhile additions to American culture. African American composers of "serious" music faced even more obstacles than jazz musicians. They were often barred from attending white conservatories, and those who graduated from college were only able to obtain positions at low-paying segregated colleges and high schools. As a whole these musicians lacked the patronage reserved for white composers and faced "the white patron's de facto discrimination."⁴³

Activities in the Midwest reflected the legacy of minstrelsy and the segregation of musical experience beginning in the southern United States. In the 1880s to 1920s Southern scholars, artists, industrialists, and consumers compartmentalized music according to race in a process Karl Hagstrom Miller identifies as "segregating sound." Though Southern musicians played a more fluid complex of sounds and styles in the early twentieth century, southern music

⁴² *Workers on Relief in the United States in March 1935, A Census of Usual Occupations, Abridged Edition*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1935), Line #13: Musicians and Teachers of Music, 8-12; Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation*, 85.

⁴³ Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation*, 76.

was eventually reduced to distinct genres that were associated with specific racial and ethnic identities. In essence, music developed a “color line.”⁴⁴

Minstrelsy emerged out of northern working-class immigrant theaters in the 1830s to become the most profitable and popular form of entertainment in the country by the mid-nineteenth century. The minstrel show was comprised of the performance of supposedly African American song and dance by white actors in blackface masks of burnt cork. Dialect or malapropisms were used to represent black speech in addition to exaggerations of black physical deviations from white norms, often with comparisons to the animal kingdom. Shows presented southern slaves who were happy in their bondage while Africans who were free were shown as unfit for citizenship. Former slaves were always migrating, never arriving at a final new home, and longed for the safety, security, and interracial harmony of their old plantation. Most often, minstrel shows would highlight the character of “Zip Coon” who, try as he might, failed in his appropriation of white culture.⁴⁵

Though highly problematic, minstrelsy was the lens through which many nineteenth century Americans came to understand musical authenticity. From the beginning, white minstrels claimed ethnographic authority in their portrayals of black characters. These performers identified themselves as “students of the Negro,” assuring audiences that they were hearing authentic renditions of black song, and by extension, culture. Many early audience members made no real distinction between blackface and black music, teaching many white Americans all they knew of black culture. As a genre, minstrelsy identified its music as something that was

⁴⁴ Karl Hagstrom Miller, *Segregating Sound: Inventing Folk and Pop Music in the Age of Jim Crow*, Refiguring American Music (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2010), 1-2.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.

originally possessed by African Americans which provided the rhetorical framework that enabled white Americans to hear black music for the first time and then define these “negro melodies” as a distinct musical category while in reality it was the presentation of demeaning caricatures as genuine cultural artifacts.⁴⁶

Stereotyping and segregation of African American musicians in the FMP was deeply entrenched in audiences as well. Most white critics who responded to or publicized black units did so with the caveat that while they were talented, they should remain in their own domain. For instance, in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, critic Frances Boardman wrote of the Civic Jubilee Singers that “For years, I have listened to speeches about the democratization of music, many of them made by people who hadn’t the faintest idea how to set about its achievement. And now the thing has happened, almost overnight, through the agency of a project...so wise, so civilized, so humane that most of us can only wonder why it wasn’t undertaken long ago. Nothing was as moving as hearing ‘Let My People Go’ sung by members of a race whose physical bondage is still a thing of living memory.” African American musicians were often described as “joyous,” performing in a style or rhythm “typical of the Negro race,” or creating the “atmosphere of the Deep South.”⁴⁷ John Tasker Howard wrote that spirituals were “vital” to American musical culture because of their sincerity;

...they speak the Negro’s real nature. Some of them fervent, some superstitious, others shiftless and irresponsible, they all show some phase of the undeveloped black man’s childlike temperament. And when songs truly reflect the character of the people who sing them, they are folk songs, beyond all question of their origin. Everything the Negro sings about—“Norah” and the Ark, Daniel in the Lion’s

⁴⁶ Ibid., 4-5.

⁴⁷ Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation*, 81.

Den, or the ribald tale of Frankie and Johnnie (*Albert with the Negroes*)—he invariably reduces to his own experience.⁴⁸

Though these sentiments were often intended by music critics to be complimentary, they reveal the systemic racism in American culture of the 1930s.

Inherent racism and eugenic tendencies in the Midwest are most apparent in units operating in Indiana. As late as 1937, the Fort Wayne Dance Band cooperated with the Westfield Community Center to stage a minstrel show. In Indianapolis, area schoolchildren who played an instrument in public school bands and orchestras were organized into rhythm bands to allow them practice following a conductor. Of these rhythm bands State Director William Pelz wrote, “It is interesting to note the basic rhythmic difference between the music of colored [sic] children’s rhythm bands and those composed of white children. The contrast of musical character and idiosyncrasies is identical with that of corresponding adult white and colored [sic] musical groups.”⁴⁹

The notion that African American listeners were unable to truly appreciate music and were even ignorant of their own contributions to national musical culture is exemplified in a report from Earl Cheever, director of the Fort Wayne Dance Band, to State Director William Pelz. In November of 1939, the unit gave weekly programs and dances at three branches of the Fort Wayne YMCA “for the purpose of raising public standards of music appreciation.” Cheever was surprised that only a small percentage of those listeners in the black social centers were familiar with African American composer Paul Lawrence Dunbar. He wrote,

⁴⁸ John Tasker Howard, *Our American Music: A Comprehensive History from 1620 to the Present*, Fourth Edition (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1965), 680.

⁴⁹ August 1937 Indiana Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, 805 B2, National Archives.

In the branches of the colored [sic] social centers, remarkable progress has been made in music appreciation. As you may know they always enjoy the present popular numbers, but it was surprising to me to discover from my work in these centers that they knew very little, if anything of their own type of music. For instance, I was assigned the task of making an arrangement of one of the outstanding Negro Spirituals, "Lift Up Thy Voice and Sing," written by Paul Lawrence Dunbar when only a small percentage of the attendance knew it. Since that time, this number has always been requested at all of our Negro Programs. We have given these people several Negro Spirituals, one outstanding number being "Riding to Glory," with a special arrangement of a talk preceding the playing of the number on the motifs of the piece, then a piano introduction, full Glee Club singing, interlude to a brass quartet building up gradually with full band and rhythm characteristic of the Negro Race.⁵⁰

This report presented a double standard and was based on the assumption that all African Americans, regardless of background, would be familiar with Howard graduate and poet Dunbar based on their race alone. Familiarity with composers was not required of white audiences; rather, they were given the opportunity to hear a piece for the first time free from judgement or commentary on their intelligence.

Segregation and attitudes on "natural ability" also affected what and where African American musicians could perform. For example, in December of 1937 while white units of the FMP in Indianapolis were participating in music appreciation concerts in area schools and partnering with other musical organizations to provide music for the Christmas season, the Indianapolis Colored Quintette [sic] performed at the Poor Farm, the jail, community centers, hospitals, and the Detention Home for Children. Director Gerard Williams happily reported that over 4,000 people were reached through these performances. To contrast that with the white

⁵⁰ November 1939 Indiana Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, 805 B7, National Archives.

units, the December 1937 monthly attendance total for the Indianapolis Federal Band was 119,985 patrons.⁵¹

African American units in Illinois were much more integrated and suffered less from racial stereotyping. The repertoire of these units often included both popular and orchestral styles. Chicago's Negro Dixie Orchestra was identified by *Music News* critic Cooper Holsworth as one of the outstanding musical organizations in the whole city. Of specific importance was the band's ability to "jazz" up classical numbers with stylistic additions such as trumpet solos, cross rhythms, and clarinet cadenzas. Holsworth encouraged his readership to travel any distance to see them perform. In 1938, the white Detroit Civic Symphony featured baritone Joseph Cole and pianist Clyde Wakefield as their first black soloists with the unit.⁵² The demand for and representation of African American musicians by population accounts for the differences between units in Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan. The 1930 U.S. Census shows a higher percentage of non-white residents living in Illinois; Indiana and Michigan were not as ethnically diverse, especially in rural areas. [See Appendix A]

For the most part, race and ethnic difference was seen as a "novelty" rather than a legitimate contribution to national culture. The FMP tried to incorporate as many people and cultures as possible without "lowering" its musical standards. This meant that many ethnic groups were able contribute in ways that retained their musical heritage, but this also restricted these musicians who were labeled as "non-professionals" by the national office to performing in only narrowly defined situations.⁵³

⁵¹ December 1937 Indiana Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, 805 B2, National Archives.

⁵² Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation*, 79.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 96.

In a 1937 press release the FMP asserted that minus the indigenous peoples of North America, the “oldest folk music in America...came out of Spain.” The national staff wanted Hispanic units to retain their traditional culture, dress, and music, and perform on Mexican holidays with most of these displays taking place in the Southwest. Through this type of performance, the project was able to meet its goal of defining, retaining, and synthesizing a native American musical culture. To appeal to audiences outside of their communities, Hispanic and other ethnic groups were forced to present themselves as stereotypically happy, musical, and docile.⁵⁴ Although Indiana and Illinois had strong and sizeable Hispanic communities, there were no real efforts to display this type of performative “folk” music in the region.

Eastern European ethnic groups were well represented in the Midwest. In Detroit the Tamburitzans, comprised of seven Serbs and Croats, and the eight-member Hungarian Detroit Gypsy Orchestra gave many well-received concerts throughout the city. Most of their performances were for area hospitals, and according to the Detroit Federation of Musicians, “brought cheer to many who sorely need such a pleasant change of atmosphere.” These units also brought their ethnic and folk instruments into the public schools as part of special educational demonstrations. The Detroit FMP sent notices to local schools outlining the educational value of bringing the groups to the schools, suggesting that they not only represented the culture of another people but also the diverse culture of America as a nation.⁵⁵

Native Americans were grossly underrepresented or completely ignored in FMP programs. Prior to the 1930s a handful of reports and treatises on Native American music were produced, such as Alice C. Fletcher’s *The Indian in Song and Story*. These studies were

⁵⁴ Ibid., 97, 101.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 102.

primarily focused on the anthropological elements of indigenous music and the analysis of these songs according Western standards and notation. This type of analysis often reduced indigenous music to an approximation of an “accepted” scale, key structure, and rhythm, doing a disservice to both the musical tradition and researcher.⁵⁶ The primary engagement of the FMP was through the collection of recordings of songs and dance lines focused in Oklahoma, which collected over three hundred recordings. With the assistance and direction of Chippewa Bee M. Barry (Pe-ahm-e-squeet) the unit preserved music from the Cheyenne, Kiowa, Sac and Fox, Apache, Pawnee, Ottawa, and Osage tribes.⁵⁷ In the Midwest, there was no effort by the FMP to collect and preserve any aspect of Native American culture and music.

The disinterest in collecting and preserving the contributions of Native Americans reflected racist attitudes of the time. In discussing the role of “Indian Music” in American culture, John Taker Howard wrote,

Some say that Indian music is as much the heritage of Americans, as the music of the barbaric hordes of Russia is the heritage of cultured Russians. Not at all; the Russians of today are the descendants of those barbaric ancestors. Relatively few of us have Indian blood in our veins. Furthermore, as soon as composers attempt to idealize the songs of the Indian, and reduce them to a white man’s harmonization, their whole character is lost in the process. For there is a long distance between savage music and folk music. Folk song is a relatively polished product, and while it may be composed of the same basic material, this material is presented in coherent sentences instead of in ejaculations and recurrence of unchanging rhythms.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Howard, *Our American Music*, 672-4, 676.

⁵⁷ Biles, *The New Deal for the American People*, 104.

⁵⁸ Howard, *Our American Music*, 671.

This clearly demonstrates the contemporary dismissive attitude and complete refusal to acknowledge the music of indigenous peoples born and nurtured from white supremacy. Takser-Howard continues:

Indians sing differently from white men, and there has been much discussion of their relative musical abilities. Some hold that the Indian has a far greater developed sense of rhythm than the white man, shown by his ability to beat his drum in one rhythm while he sings his song in another. Some think that the Indian's scale is far in advance of ours; that his divisions into smaller intervals than we use give him far greater flexibility and expressiveness in his melodies. Yet there are cynics who say that these phenomena merely show that the Indian cannot keep time nor sing in tune. Maybe they are right, for it is but logical to believe that our musical scale, evolved through centuries, has been formalized by natural acoustic laws. Primitive music is no doubt an early groping for these natural effects.⁵⁹

Folk Song

In searching for a collective cultural history in the 1930s, Americans turned to folk materials. An alliance between anthropologists and literary studies scholars who were interested in promoting folklore as a legitimate field gave birth to the American Folklore Society in 1888. These folklorists provided an authoritative voice and methods for discussing racial and cultural authenticity. At a time when social standing, cultural continuity, and economic stability were being challenged, the work of the American Folklore Society offered fixed and identifiable racial cultures with longstanding historical roots. This extended to the musical sphere through the identification of southern music as a “compendium of distinct and ancient traditions, the collection of which could explain long histories of race, literature, and civilization.”⁶⁰

In the 1930s, folklorists identified folk music as emanating from a handful of sources in order to be considered authentic. According to John Tasker Howard, “True folk music is found

⁵⁹ Ibid., 675.

⁶⁰ Miller, *Segregating Sound*, 3.

among the Negroes, the mountaineers in the Southeast Appalachians, the cowboys, the lumberjacks and shanty boys, in the New England farm districts, among the wandering tribe of hoboos, among sailors and longshoremen, and often in the jails.” Folklorists were trained to be “discriminating” and to choose between what was traditional and what was new or “synthetic.” Of utmost importance to the classification of “authentic” American folk music was the ability of the tune to be reduced to Western harmonic standards. It was largely due to this that most Native American music was not considered for inclusion by folklorists. Though American in a “geographic sense,” they were not in line with the harmonic practices of those defining the American canon.⁶¹

Of particular interest to American folklorists in the early twentieth century were the mountain regions of Kentucky, Tennessee, the Carolinas, and Virginia which were seen as areas of “preservation by isolation.” Ethnographers often viewed the history of those living in the area through a romantic lens. The region was described as having been

...built into the mountains, and railroads are miles away. The people have been dependent on themselves alone. Each family has raised its own cattle and sheep. Money was unnecessary; when they traded, the mountaineers bartered in kind. For liquor they had their own stills, and made their own moonshine; hence, the feuds with revenue officers of the government. When disputes arose with neighbors, justice was a private matter, often requiring a gun. The revenge was in order, and blood feuds between families and clans were carried on for generations. Otherwise, they are a leisurely people, sociable and kindly when they are not suspicious.⁶²

The music from this Appalachian region consisted primarily of traditional English ballads and were first widely distributed in 1917 in a collection by Cecil Sharp, *English Folk Songs from the*

⁶¹ Howard, *Our American Music*, 677, 691.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 691.

Southern Appalachians. Folk songs in the region were generally sung without accompaniment. The most common musical instruments included the fiddle, guitar, and dulcimer.⁶³

From these musical traditions and romantic view of history many American composers incorporated “folk” materials into their work, such as Aaron Copland’s ballet *Appalachian Spring*. Written from 1943-1944, the one-act ballet tells the story of a newlywed couple who is celebrating the completion of their farmhouse in rural nineteenth-century Pennsylvania. Copland created the aura of the American frontier in *Appalachian Spring* not only by alluding to American folk styles and the quotation of a Shaker melody, but by conservatively handling open diatonic sonorities which are largely absent from his more abstract scores. The opening harmonizations of the folk tune “Simple Gifts” are transparently basic and are suggested by the melodic construction of the Shaker tune. The use of contrasting variations is based on clearly articulated changes in texture, key, dynamics, and tempo which coincide with Copland’s inclination toward a Stravinskian juxtaposition of structural blocks. The overall cumulative shape of the variations is produced by doublings of instruments that build to the full orchestra by the last variation.⁶⁴ Many of the themes and motives that Copland incorporated in the score reveal certain Shaker characteristics including repeated tones, melodies made from major arpeggios, tunes containing ascending and descending scalar passages, and other folk idioms. Regarding the inclusion of “Simple Gifts” in *Appalachian Spring* Copland wrote in his autobiography:

I found the Shaker song “Simple Gifts” in a collection of Shaker tunes published in 1940. The song had previously been unknown to the general public. It is sometimes known as “The Gift to Be Simple” or by the first line of the text, “’Tis the Gift to Be Simple.” I no longer recall who led me to this songbook, but I felt

⁶³ Ibid., 692.

⁶⁴ Elliot Antokoletz, “Copland’s Gift to Be Simple Within the Cumulative Mosaic Complexities of His Ballets,” *Aaron Copland and His World*, Edited by Carol J. Oja and Judith Tick (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 263.

that “Simple Gifts,” which expressed the unity of the Shaker spirit, was ideal for Martha’s scenario and for the kind of austere movements associated with her choreography...my research evidently was not very thorough, since I did not realize that there never have been Shaker settlements in rural Pennsylvania.⁶⁵

Efforts were made in the 1930s to collect and preserve folk material from the past as well as contemporary songs from the working class. These songs were seen as the authentic expression of the American people and were widely adopted by many middle-class Americans as part of their own culture in spite of the fact that the subject material of these folk songs was contrary to the middle-class lived experience. This appropriation of cultural materials had political connotations as well. For example, in 1939 the left-leaning John La Touche and Earl Robinson composed “Ballad for Americans” for the WPA Federal Theatre Project revue *Sing for Your Supper* which was later popularized when recorded by Paul Robeson and used at the 1940 Republican National Convention. The song served as a testament to the American way of life; one that involved all citizens no matter race, creed, or color.⁶⁶

The composition contains and suggests a variety of genres including African American spiritual call-and-response to 1930s contemporary musicals like *Porgy and Bess* which fuse nationalism, radicalism, and regionalism. The ballad also breaches a variety of subjects such as race, class and religion. It begins by espousing traditional values and American icons:

In seventy-six the sky was red
Thunder rumbling overhead
Bad King George couldn’t sleep in his bed
And on that stormy morn, Ol’ Uncle Sam was born.

Mister Tom Jefferson, a mighty fine man.
He wrote it done in a mighty fine plan.

Abraham Lincoln was thin and long,
His heart was high and his faith was strong.

⁶⁵ Aaron Copland and Vivian Perlis, *Copland: 1900 Through 1942* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1984), 32-2.

⁶⁶ Susman, *Culture as History*, 205.

The song then goes on to trace issues of race, class, religious, and ethnic diversity along with ideas of nationality and American citizenship:

A man in white skin can never be free
While his black brother is in slavery.

Say, will you please tell us who you are?
What's your racket? What do you do for a living?
Well, I'm an
Engineer, musician, street cleaner, carpenter, teacher
How about a farmer? Also. Office Clerk? Yes ma'am!
Mechanic? That's right. Factory worker. You said it.
Truck driver? Definitely!

Are you an American?
Am I an American?
I'm just an Irish, Negro, Jewish, Italian,
French and English, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Polish,
Scotch, Hungarian, Swedish, Finnish, Canadian, Greek and Turk and
Czech and double Czech American.

And that ain't all.
I was baptized Baptist, Methodist, Congregationalist, Lutheran,
Atheist, Roman Catholic, Jewish, Presbyterian, Seventh Day Adventist,
Mormon, Quaker, Christian Scientist and lots more.

Overall, the song is in line with Popular Front and New Deal sensibilities. At its core, the “Ballad for Americans” represents an affirmation of political and social entitlement against a backdrop of invisibility and marginality. It blended folk and art music traditions with Popular Front culture.⁶⁷

The collection of folk songs by WPA workers began soon after the start of the FMP. The 1937 national administrative report *Federal Music Project Activities in Folk Music* asserted that the Project was adding to the “story of American culture.” It went on to say, “the historian must absorb deeply, not only from the Federally sponsored program of assistance for the arts in 1935-37, but from the records and manuscripts of folk songs and tunes that have been collected and

⁶⁷ Gough, *Sounds of the New Deal*, 156-7, 161.

transcribed by WPA Music Project workers in a dozen regions.” Although this report was released with the approval of Sokoloff, his support for folk song collection and performance was inconsistent and based upon regional needs. Sokoloff viewed folk music in relation to social and ancestral hierarchy and agreed with contemporary folklorists, such as Annabel Morris Buchanan that there was a distinction between “pure” folk traditions traced from European lineage and “mixed race” folk traditions of African Americans and indigenous peoples. For these reasons, Sokoloff preferred the performance of “pure” Appalachian folk music and supported music festivals of this nature over music from other areas presented in rural or local music festivals.⁶⁸

FMP employees assigned to collect folk songs were engaged in a race against time to collect music which had up to that point only been an oral tradition. Many musicologists feared increased technology would prove fatal to indigenous music and that folk songs were already vanishing. By 1937, the FMP had collected and preserved more than 2,500 folk songs and melodies in the form of transcribed manuscripts. Most of these were old, but a few were new songs composed by New Deal workers often based upon traditional folk melodies. The bulk of what was collected was from the south and southwest and was comprised of African American spirituals and cultural songs and “occupational” work songs. For example, in California women in the WPA Sewing Projects were inventing work songs to help them through their shifts, boost morale, and provide a sense of accomplishment. “I must sew carefully/Thoughtfully, prayerfully/Never sew swearfully/Each pair a gem” was sung as each seamstress did her work.⁶⁹ There appears to be no official record of folk song collection in the Midwest by FMP workers.

⁶⁸ Gough, *Sounds of the New Deal*, 168, 177; *Federal Music Project Activities in Folk Music*, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, 815 B30, National Archives.

⁶⁹ Gough, *Sounds of the New Deal*, 168, 170; Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation*, 37.

Women in the Federal Music Project

The economic collapse took a great toll on women as well as men. Many families were able to maintain their living standards through women's housework in compensation for goods and services they could no longer afford. In 1930 over 10 million women were in the labor force, and of those 29 percent were married. Though the prevailing attitude was that women worked outside the home for extra spending or "pin" money, the U.S. Women's Bureau found that women worked outside of the home out of financial necessity. The Depression forced many women who had never previously worked to enter the work force, resulting in a 50 percent increase in married women workers over the decade.⁷⁰

The Roosevelt administration quickly developed a reputation for elevating women to highly visible positions within the government. For the first time women were being appointed to positions as judges, directors of federal departments, and administrators in New Deal agencies such as Hallie Flanagan as head of the Federal Theatre Project. From 1929 to 1939 the number of women employed by the federal government increased from 14.3 percent to 18.8 percent with a total of 175,000 women holding civil service jobs. New Deal administrators such as Harry Hopkins recognized the skills and knowledge women gained from positions in social work and hired them accordingly.⁷¹

Of all of the New Deal programs, the WPA was most favorable to women. An average of 300,000 women worked for the agency at various times, with a peak of 405,000 in 1938. Though the WPA rolls boasted a 19 percent employment rate for women, there will still be barriers to receiving aid. The WPA limited employment to one person per family. A woman could not be

⁷⁰ Biles, *The New Deal for the American People*, 194.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 195.

certified unless she proved that she was the economic head of her household. During the winter months when husbands could not work outside, wives were unable to obtain indoor projects because their husbands were considered household heads. If officials termed a husband as “undeserving,” meaning he was physically able to work but refused to do so, she was also barred from employment. Similarly to previous federal relief projects, women working for the WPA were paid lower wages than their male counterparts.⁷²

Married women often found themselves criticized on two fronts. First, they were accused of taking work away from male heads of household, and second, through working outside of the home they were shirking their traditional role as mother and homemaker. Societal pressures reinforced these roles and worked to keep many women in the home, but economic need saw a 50 percent increase in married women who joined the labor force. Though seemingly anomalous, the strict delineation between men’s and women’s work afforded a certain job security for “pink collar” employment. Jobs traditionally held by women such as clerical work, domestic and personal service, and nursing were less affected by the economic downturn, though still came with low wages.⁷³

African American women had a strikingly different experience in the 1930s. The seriousness of their socioeconomic situation had forced many women to seek work outside of the home even in times of national prosperity. In 1930 roughly two-fifths of African American married women were in the labor force as opposed to the less than 10 percent of white married women. The Depression led many white women to accept household employment, an area previously dominated by black women. Throughout the decade black female employment

⁷² Ibid., 200.

⁷³ Ibid., 201-3.

declined by 12.7 percent. In addition, black women continued to receive the least desirable jobs, as they were barred from working in sewing rooms and canneries. Often, they were left with landscaping and construction jobs involving strenuous physical labor.⁷⁴

Women found the most prosperity in the WPA special projects under the direction of Ellen Sullivan Woodward. Though there was significant female representation in many of the Federal One programs, only 1 in 7 musicians on FMP rolls were women.⁷⁵ At the same time, the exposure the FMP provided many women musicians, composers, and conductors was groundbreaking. Many of the barriers to women musicians were weakened with federal aid. For the first time, compositions written by women were seriously considered, women frequently conducted male orchestras, and many orchestras were sexually integrated for the first time. Although more could and should have been done for women musicians during the Depression, the FMP did make strides towards the acceptance of women musicians as equal to men.⁷⁶

At the end of the nineteenth century, women's participation in public-sphere activities such as musical performance was very limited. The societal expectation was that participation in public musical performances would have negative consequences on female physiological and moral health which detracted from women's musical skills while also presenting them as sexualized objects. In the article "Orchestral Women" from an 1895 issue of *Scientific American*, the author observed that even if women established themselves as "creditable soloists" they

⁷⁴ Ibid., 203.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 200.

⁷⁶ Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation*, 86.

simply did not have the stamina for orchestral performance and could handle “not more than a third, probably, of what men are able to do.”⁷⁷

In response to nineteenth century attitudes on public performances for women, a women’s orchestra movement formed which sought to provide avenues through which women could engage in public performance while still maintaining femininity and model musicianship. Rather than copying the model of all-male predecessors, these orchestral groups developed from women’s personal experiences with institutional structures and policies. Two models of women’s orchestras emerged: the “career” model which was based on women’s experiences as performers and paid its members enough to make musical careers playing instrumental music, and the “club” model which was based on women’s experiences in private women’s music clubs and focused on playing challenging classical repertory in respectable venues.⁷⁸

In the early twentieth century women musicians were still seen as not having the physical or intellectual attributes necessary to play the more “masculine” and complicated horns and strings in the orchestra. Moreover, musical education for women was restricted primarily to piano instruction to aid in the feminization process rather than produce performance virtuosi. In 1904 the *Musical Standard* asserted that, “Women cannot possibly play brass instruments and look pretty.” Save for the harp and music teaching, it was thought that women lacked the skills to become serious musicians.⁷⁹

In the 1920s, a new model of women’s orchestra developed from the earlier club and career models. Club-model orchestras were almost exclusively self-sufficient and as such often

⁷⁷ Anna-Lise P. Santella, “Modeling Music: Early Organizational Structures of American Women’s Orchestras,” in *American Orchestras in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. John Spitzer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 53.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 54-5.

⁷⁹ Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation*, 87.

did not need to respond to public demand making them insular. Career orchestras were often limited by economic need and depended on public tastes, often performing in less “dignified” spaces. A new “corporate model” of professional women’s orchestras emerged that more effectively combined paid work and challenging repertoire. These ensembles were often large, and its players were part of musician’s unions. Their repertoire consisted of complex symphonic works and they most often played at the center of the city in the same venues where other local orchestras played. The concert stage became a platform from which women were able to advocate for greater musical opportunities.⁸⁰

Sokoloff was adamant that the FMP be equal and fair in all its proceedings. In an interview with Utah’s *Deseret News* music editor Gail Martin he said, “WPA music projects are for all sexes, creeds, races, and colors. Women play alongside men in the orchestras... Thoroughly American in spirit, the Federal Music Project considers only the ability to perform...” When a prominent WPA conductor in Southern California attempted to prevent women from joining the symphony orchestra, Sokoloff and the regional director quickly overruled the attempt. Sokoloff’s support of women in symphony orchestras predated his time as FMP National Director; as director of the San Francisco People’s Philharmonic Orchestra from 1916 to 1917, he insisted on including women in the orchestra at the same pay scale as their male counterparts.⁸¹

As with the introduction of African American performing units, the FMP wanted to include women without overtly challenging cultural and musical attitudes. The largest adversary of increased female involvement was the American Federation of Musicians. In 1933 the union

⁸⁰ Santella, “Modeling Music,” 76-7.

⁸¹ Gough, *Sounds of the New Deal*, 15.

estimated that roughly two-thirds of American musicians were unemployed, the majority of these being members of the AFM. When the FMP was created in 1935, it drew most of its participants from AFM rosters. Although the AFM was nominally open to women, during times of crisis such as the Depression it favored its male membership. As a result the FMP decided that its employment of women would coincide with women's interest and participation in music "in the world at large." This meant that just as in the private sector, women musicians in the FMP were hired primarily as teachers within the educational division. By 1938, most of the 1,171 teachers listed on the FMP's rolls were women.⁸²

The FMP also understood the need to expose the American public to music written by women. The Project encouraged its orchestras to perform compositions from American women which administrators considered as "integral" to the national plan. Many women, including Ruth Crawford, Marian Bauer, and Alda Astori were able to have their compositions performed and critiqued in Composers' Forum Laboratories. In the Midwest, the Illinois Symphony Orchestra performed the premiere of a song cycle by Texan Radie Britain. According to FMP publicity, Britain "day-dreamed as [she] herded cattle on [her] snow-white cow pony" that she would hear her compositions played. In fact, Britain credited the FMP with launching her career as an orchestral composer citing conductor Albert Goldberg's willingness to perform every selection she gave to him. In sum, the FMP performed five different Britain compositions from 1936-1940 in Chicago and Los Angeles.⁸³

While women worked in the FMP in a variety of roles nationwide, in the Midwest women worked as teachers or appeared as guest soloists in band and orchestra concerts almost

⁸² Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation*, 90.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 93.

exclusively. The Indianapolis FMP Teachers' Project was one of the most active units in the Midwest and maintained detailed records of teacher activities. Haley Harold spent most of her time directing Mothers' Choruses throughout the city. The choruses were composed primarily of untrained voices and in her March 1938 monthly report Harold noted that she was "much impressed with the eagerness and desire expressed by members of the groups to know more about good music and take an active part in it." Grace Gibson reported on the value of private music instruction and made a case for individual needs taking precedence over national directives in her monthly report. She wrote that through her work with the FMP she had learned more about "people, their desires and needs, than I learned or could possibly learn from my years of teaching in the public schools..." When a little girl in Gibson's piano class expressed her dislike of an assigned piece, Gibson "resolved to be as careful as possible in the future to give music which is pleasing to the ear." She added, "music is the most spiritual and perfect of all the arts and why not teach it so the ones who are trying to master it may love it and get something from it to make their lives more beautiful and worth living."⁸⁴ Although women were afforded significantly limited employment opportunities in Midwestern FMP units, many more women took part in FMP activities as students and participants.

The FMP's focus on classical music almost exclusively had significant consequences for musicians seeking relief. Those who were not academically trained or unable to read sheet music, primarily those who performed popular music, were less likely to gain employment. Although not a priority at the national level, the Midwest did have a demand for jazz, gospel, and folk music. The FMP participated in radicalism more through recording and acknowledging Depression-era social strife rather than explicitly performing it. In spite of cultural pressures,

⁸⁴ March 1938 Indiana Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 805, B4, National Archives.

African American and “novelty” units demonstrated their musicianship and contributions to American culture and citizenship. Finally, the FMP contributed to the growth of the female labor force and reinforced the trend toward older, married women workers. Though many New Deal programs were biased in favor of men in both hiring and wages, more and more women joined the labor force. Many women who served as directors of New Deal programs came from a background of social reform and worked for expanded opportunities for women and societal improvement. Rather than aiding women as a special group, programs such as the WPA and FMP helped to provide aid to a large contingent of unemployed Americans. The FMP primarily placed women in “traditional” roles as teachers, harpists, or in choral groups, but some women were given the chance to play with a gender-integrated orchestra, conduct, and even have their compositions performed. These advances, while seemingly small, played an important role in the acceptance of women as musicians in America.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ Biles, *The New Deal for the American People*, 206; Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation*, 95, 104.

CHAPTER 3: PERFORMANCE AND EDUCATION: THE FEDERAL MUSIC PROJECT IN ILLINOIS AND INDIANA

Illinois and Indiana in Context

The FMP in the Midwest had a three-fold mission to promote music education, provide the public ample opportunity to attend performances, and to partner with music therapists. Performance and education were at the forefront of FMP activities in Illinois and Indiana. Nikolai Sokoloff optimistically insisted that audience numbers, bolstered by radio listeners, directly equaled success in changing the American public's musical palate. Advances in recording technology, radio, and motion pictures forced many musicians out of their jobs and, according to the FMP, made them "idle." In order to rehabilitate musicians with deteriorating skills, units in Indiana established a routine of rehearsals and performances. Class lessons were established for instrumentalists with the most qualified musician on each instrument instructing the other musicians for two hours per week. FMP teachers spent Saturday mornings in discussion forums which focused on pedagogical techniques and the exchange of ideas. Finally, units periodically met with the state director who made suggestions to improve project operation and musical technique. The project gauged success of this rehabilitation by the fact that a steady number of project musicians were securing private employment each month.¹

According to the Federal Writers' Project-produced *The WPA Guide to Illinois*, the state made "praiseworthy artistic contribution to a rapidly focusing national music picture." Music imported from Europe had the largest influence on the cultural development of Illinois and the

¹ *The Federal Music Project in Indiana*, W-5066, 1, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 825, B41, National Archives.

United States. Eastern settlers, trappers, and hunters brought with them the tunes, hymns, and ballads from which much of the music of the 1930s and 1940s grew. Several songs were imported to Illinois directly from New England, such as the versed ballad “Down, Down Derry Down.”² Much of the music being produced during the Great Depression made use of these folk tunes, while largely ignoring the music of Native Americans and people of color, as an attempt at authentic expression of American cultural history and experience.

By the 1920s Illinois ranked third in the United States in population, manufacturing, and wealth. It continued to lead the country in meat packing and slaughtering, and foundry and machinery products were a significant part of Illinois’ manufacturing. Chicago was an important center for many goods including printing, men’s clothing, farm implements, and electrical machinery. Agriculture declined as cities expanded and some contemporary economists looked to this protracted recession as partly responsible for the Great Depression.³

After 1830, Illinois settlers began to re-engage with “former modes” of their lives including church and singing schools, often with a traveling teacher who moved from post to post who taught the shape note singing method.⁴ Singing schools were first developed in New England in the 1730s to improve congregational singing in churches. Before this time the psalm tunes used during the worship service were sung from memory and individuals would embellish

² Federal Writers’ Project of the Work Projects Administration for the State of Illinois, *The WPA Guide to Illinois: The Federal Writers’ Project Guide to 1930s Illinois*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1939), 137.

³ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁴ Shape note singing, also known as buckwheat, character, or patent notation, is a compositional style that has similarities to sixteenth century contrapuntal practice, but which developed on its own largely without European influence. Shape notation associates a head of a certain shape to each of the solmization syllables fa, sol, la, and mi in the four-syllable “fasola” system or do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, and ti in traditional solfège. Most notations use key signatures and a five-line staff with conventional western rhythmic notation. This tradition provided the principal printed sources of folk hymns and “white spirituals.”

a tuned as they deemed appropriate leading to musical chaos. Leading musicians and singing instructors decided that the only possible remedy was to teach the congregation to sing note by note. Although singing schools were at first controversial, they became popular in communities for providing an “acceptable” social outlet.⁵

The end of the nineteenth century saw many popular musical forms and activities in Illinois including traveling musicians, the establishment of choral societies, minstrel shows, and philharmonic societies. Music schools and conservatories were established in Alton, Moline, Rockford, Elgin, and Chicago including the Chicago Conservatory of Music (1866), the Illinois Conservatory of Music at Jacksonville (1871), the Department of Music at Northwestern University with Peter Christian Lutkin as Department Head (1873), and Chicago Musical College (1887).⁶ Orchestral music flourished in the state after World War I, especially in Chicago, and the Chicago Civic Orchestra was organized in 1919 with the Women’s Symphony Orchestra following in 1925.⁷

The development of the Federal Music Project helped music in Illinois to reach a larger audience of people than it had previously. In communities rife with economic depression, the FMP promoted cultural development through symphony orchestra and band concerts, choral performances, and music instruction. The Illinois State Guide cites the mining area of Colp, in the southern part of the state, as a prime example of this cultural improvement. The city, “paralyzed by unemployment,” maintained a chorus of twenty-five persons employed by the

⁵ Marcus Lafayette Swan and W. Harvey Swan, *The New Harp of Columbia 1867* (Reprint, Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2001), vii.

⁶ The Chicago Musical College was founded by Dr. Florenz Ziegfeld whose son, Florenz Ziegfeld Jr., was the producer of the *Ziegfeld Follies*.

⁷ *The WPA Guide to Illinois*, 138-43.

FMP who traveled “about the countryside singing spirituals before enthusiastic crowds.”

Chicago and the Illinois Symphony Orchestra presented weekly concerts and, more than many programs, encouraged the performance of American composers.⁸

According to *Indiana: A Guide to the Hoosier State*, Indiana was “handicapped culturally” during the pioneer era through isolation and a slow rate of settlement. Churches disapproved of dancing, music, and “play-acting,” and many theatrical performances were not even advertised in local papers until as late as 1851. Settlers brought traditional “white spirituals” such as “What a Meeting,” with them from Virginia and Carolina.⁹ The influx of German settlers and increase in town living in the mid-1800s saw a sharp contrast in the musical tastes of rural and city dwellers. People in many rural areas favored songs and games, while those in the city preferred more classical music from Europe.¹⁰

The musical culture of Indiana in the last decades of the nineteenth century was greatly influenced by members various German-American vocal and instrumental groups in the German communities of Evansville, Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, and South Bend. In South Bend the Ebel family was active in the town’s musical leadership forming many musical organizations including the Ebel Band. Indianapolis was home to a number of German-born orchestral musicians which counted Mzx Leckner, Reinhold A. Miller, Adolph Schellschmidt, and

⁸ Ibid., 142.

⁹ From the 1890s until the mid-1980s the question of whether spirituals were a creation of white or black culture has been a topic of scholarly debate. George Pullen Jackson published *White and Negro Spirituals* in 1943 and largely argued that spirituals had white origins by matching 263 white spirituals to black cognates in printed song collections. This argument failed to recognize that the date of publication did not necessarily coincide with its origin in the oral tradition, and that many southern slaves were kept illiterate via law and/or edict. Nevertheless, Jackson identified three subcategories of “white spirituals” as religious ballads, folk hymns, and revival spirituals. (Sandra Jean Graham, “Spiritual,” 2012, *Grove Music Online*).

¹⁰ Writers’ Program of the Work Projects Administration in the State of Indiana, *Indiana: A Guide to the Hoosier State*. American Guide Series (New York: Oxford University Press, 1941), 133-4.

Bernhardt Vogt among their ranks. Many German singing societies such as the Liederkrantz, Saengerbund, and Maennerchor, were active in Indianapolis and provided much of Indiana's musical education in the late nineteenth century. These vocal groups were composed primarily of amateur performers, both men and women, and were directed by professional musicians.¹¹

A variety of English-language singing groups were also founded in Indiana in the last decades of the nineteenth century. The Terre Haute Oratorio Society was founded in 1877 after the pattern of previous societies such as the Indianapolis Choral Union and Indianapolis Harmonic Society established in 1869 and 1875 respectively. These singing societies performed oratorios and other religious works until more secular singing societies, including the Indianapolis Choral Society and Mendelssohn Society, began performing works by Gilbert and Sullivan and other composers of operetta.¹²

In their widely popular 1929 study of Muncie, Indiana, Robert and Helen Lynd observed that although art and music were not as emphasized in the school curriculum, they were nevertheless an important part of what children learned at school. Music in the Muncie schools grew from an "informal high school choir" in 1890 to work in ear training and sight reading in each grade and sixteen high school music courses in addition to "instrumental work." These classes covered instruction in harmony, music history, and music appreciation as well as a chorus, four Glee Clubs, three orchestras, and two bands. Victrolas were embraced as a necessary tool in the music classroom and were used for annual music memory contests.¹³

¹¹ Clifton J. Phillips, *Indiana in Transition: The Emergence of an Industrial Commonwealth, 1880-1920*, The History of Indiana, Vol. 4 (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1968), 574-5.

¹² *Ibid.*, 575-6.

¹³ Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd, *Middletown: A Study in Modern American Culture* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World, Inc., 1929), 201-2. In the Lynds' follow-up study *Middletown in Transition: A Study in Cultural Conflicts*, little attention is given to elementary and high school curriculum. The focus of their chapter on "Training the Young" discusses college exclusively.

After World War I and into the 1930s, Indiana had a greater interest in traditional forms of music from its musical clubs and societies. The Indiana Federation of Music Clubs was organized in 1916, church choirs gained membership, summer band concerts were instituted, and there was revived interest in folk materials. The State Symphony Orchestra was formed in 1930, supported by the Indiana Symphony Society and directed by Ferdinand Shaefer until his retirement in 1936. The State Symphony Society also supported the performance of concerts in many large cities throughout the state. The Indiana Federation of Music Clubs and privately sponsored concert series also greatly contributed to the growth of music in Indiana. The Federal Music Project in Indiana was able to expand upon these musical traditions when introducing the project to the state.¹⁴

Both Illinois and Indiana had active, and sometimes controversial, jazz communities. While popular with the younger demographic, most adults and traditionalists strongly opposed the genre because they equated it with the integration of races. The South Side of Chicago, known as the “Black Belt” and later as “Bronzeville,” was the center of jazz and African American culture. Venues on or around South State Street, or “The Stroll,” provided opportunities for musicians, many transplanted from New Orleans, to make a living. Jazz was performed primarily in dance halls, cabarets, and black-and-tan clubs that catered to a mixed-race audience. These venues, such as Chicago’s Sunset Café, helped to break down bourgeois prejudices toward jazz and brought enthusiastic white patrons on a nightly basis.¹⁵

¹⁴ Lynd, *Middletown*, 135-6; James H. Madison, *Indiana Through Tradition and Change: A History of the Hoosier State and Its People, 1920-1945*, The History of Indiana, Vol. 5 (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1982), 363.

¹⁵ Brian Harker, *Jazz: An American Journey* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc., 2005), 51-3.

The first decades of the twentieth century saw the development of jazz and ragtime music in Indiana composed and published across the state including in Indianapolis, Fort Wayne, Hammond, and Lafayette. Gennett Studios in Richmond played a major role in the production and dissemination of jazz music in the state. The small recording studio was owned by the Starr Piano Company and housed in a small shed near the railroad tracks of the Whitewater Gorge. Some of the nation's most popular artists cut their tracks at Gennett, including Louis Armstrong and Indiana-native Hoagy Carmichael.¹⁶

Increasingly in the 1920s to 1930s, white musicians appropriated jazz styles and offered the public a diluted form of jazz that had a wider appeal. In Indiana, Hoagy Carmichael drew from the style of ragtime player Reginald DuValle and formed his first band while attending Indiana University in Bloomington. He quickly composed many songs that became classics including "Washboard Blues" and "Stardust." In Chicago, a group known as "The Chicagoans" viewed jazz as a rebuke of middle-class hypocrisy. The group was a loose, constantly changing network of friends and performers across the age and social spectrums. Key members included Mezz Mezzrow, Eddie Condon, Muggsy Spanier, and Art Hodes. Mezzrow, a clarinetist, was especially devoted to the jazz from New Orleans and fully appropriated the culture of African Americans living in the South Side of Chicago, including clothing, slang, and leisure habits. Mezzrow and his friends would venture to the Lincoln Gardens to experience jazz culture. Through this immersion in Chicago's jazz, these white musicians developed a style of their own that appropriated black musicians' musical style, but with a more restrained character.¹⁷

¹⁶ James H. Madison, *Hoosiers: A New History of Indiana* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), 240.

¹⁷ Madison, *Hoosiers*, 240; Harker, *Jazz*, 82-4.

At the national level, the FMP did not view jazz as “legitimate” as classical music. In an interview published on May 8, 1936 in the *Times Herald* in Port Huron, Michigan, Sokoloff described classical music as “for the heart,” and jazz as “for the feet.” He went on to say that, “[the two forms] differ as much as ‘funnies’ differ from great paintings. One is to amuse and lasts but a short time. The other is for the soul and lasts for hundreds of years.” Other European-born and trained musicians and conductors viewed jazz musicians as musically illiterate and as catering to the lowest possible denominator.¹⁸

Another possible reason Sokoloff worked to distance the program from jazz was its ties to communism. Beginning in 1937 *The Daily Worker*, a Communist Party USA (CPUSA) newspaper published in New York City, began publishing articles sympathetic to jazz music and favorably reviewing swing and jazz albums. As early as 1935 the CPUSA saw jazz as an important vehicle for promoting the idea that African American culture was an integral part of American identity as well as democratic and progressive in nature. From 1938 to 1939, three major programs of black music were sponsored by organizations with ties to the Popular Front: a benefit for the Spanish Children’s Milk Fund at Carnegie Hall; “Negro Music, Past and Present,” sponsored by the American Labor Party; and Hammond’s “From Spirituals to Swing.” The Young Communist League featured a “Swing America” pageant at the 1939 convention and in the same year an article from *YCL Review* asserted that swing and jazz music was “as American as baseball and hot dogs.”¹⁹ Such avid support of the genre by the CPUSA would have been even more disturbing to Sokoloff, who constantly sought to avoid accusations of communist influence

¹⁸ “Classical Music For The Heart, Jazz For Feet, WPA Music Director Says,” *The Times Herald*, May 8, 1936; Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation*, 7, 62.

¹⁹ David W. Stowe, *Swing Changes: Big-Band Jazz in New Deal America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), 65.

within the FMP as was the case with other Federal One Projects, most famously the Federal Theatre Project.

The Federal Music Project Musician

The main goal of Federal Music Project national director Nicolai Sokoloff was to elevate the American public from a state of musical ignorance by introducing them to what he called “good” classical music. Sokoloff’s background shaped the way the FMP was run, and he viewed the European classics as the standard to which all music produced and performed by project units should comply. In order to groom an American public that was part of what historian Nick Taylor calls an “accepted civic and cultural system,” they needed exposure to the music of conservatories and concert halls. He established a classification system that rated musicians according to skill. This too was reflective of his background; those who could read music were hired over those who played by ear. Additionally, at the start of the program, those with classical training had an advantage over “popular” musicians and were paid more. Eventually in response to outside criticism, largely from American Federation of Musicians President Joseph Weber, the FMP paid all musicians a flat \$23.86 weekly wage. Sokoloff was supported in classical music circles, but not by all American musicians. Project directors in California openly called for a “native-born musician” to be at the helm of the FMP. Sokoloff preferred working with the units, often as guest conductor, rather than performing his purely administrative duties. Though he worked with many units throughout the nation, he primarily served as guest conductor for units in the Midwest, especially the Illinois Symphony Orchestra. His appearances with FMP

orchestras aided in the distinction and prestige of the project, and generally drew large audiences.²⁰

Assignment to the Music Project required that the applicant pass an audition. Sokoloff was adamant that only those who made a living as a musician and/or were members of a professional society like the American Federation of Musicians would be admitted for employment. Although in theory this would mean that professional standards were maintained on a national level, local auditions boards did not always comply with this standard. Standards were generally higher in the larger metropolitan areas than more rural areas. Over time the attitudes of the audition boards began to shift; so few applicants were able to meet the criteria that it was negating the primary purpose of the program to provide relief to unemployed musicians. As a result, boards who at first denied certain applicants would now have to accept those musicians who demonstrated a general competence on their instrument or in their teaching capacity. When quota reductions were ordered from Washington, more exacting auditions were used to separate those that were less musically competent.²¹

The adjustment in audition standards was as much a result of societal pressures as it was a result of bureaucratic ones. AFM president Joseph Weber added his voice to those of the many frustrated musicians attempting to receive aid and raised certain objections in an October 1935 letter to Sokoloff. Weber suggested that “the musical projects should not be confined to one class of music” but represent all genres from dance music to the symphony. He reminded Sokoloff that roughly eighty percent of the musicians attempting to receive aid did not need the level of

²⁰ Nick Taylor, *American Made: The Enduring Legacy of the WPA: When FDR Put the Nation to Work* (New York: Bantam, 2008), 284-5; William F. McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 1969), 605.

²¹ McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 609.

rigorous musical training the audition boards were requiring “for the purpose of following their profession.” Weber continued that the state of the musical profession was such that the auditions in their current state were robbing “the hungry musician of any opportunity for relief, even though he formerly did make his living, and a fairly good one, by following music as a profession.” He even went so far as to admit that he had played for circuses, dances, parades, picnics, concert bands, and finally with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra over the course of his own musical career. He urged Sokoloff to base the examinations on the realities of the professional field and recommended he turn his campaign into one for “better compositions in music” instead of losing sight of the goals of federal relief in the first place.²²

Cooperation and Confrontation

WPA administrators feared that a large volume of free concerts by FMP symphony orchestras would compete with private enterprise and train the public to expect their music for free. In order to counteract this, a low admission fee was instituted with the hope that it would also introduce symphonic music to a new listening public who had never before been able to afford to attend. With the return of economic stability this new, enlarged listening public would then bolster existing private orchestras. Concerts that charged admission were carefully monitored by the national administration to ensure FMP units did not engage in competition. Charging for admission had the immediate effect of raising the prestige of the FMP. What was once seen as simply a “relief program” was now a “Federal Program of culture.”²³

One of the largest issues the Federal Music Project faced was balancing the project with private enterprise and musicians’ unions. The American Federation of Musicians (AFM) in

²² Quoted in McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 609-10.

²³ George Foster, *Record of Program Operation and Accomplishment, The Federal Music Project 1935 to 1939, The WPA Music Program 1939 to 1943* (Washington, D.C.: WPA, FWA, 1943), 56-8.

particular tried to dominate the project by either compelling local units to accept all applicants certified by local AFM chapters, pressuring for the union scale of wages and working hours, or restricting the project to activities that were not in competition with musicians employed in the private sector.²⁴ One of the largest areas of conflict between the AFM and the FMP in Illinois, specifically the Chicago area, concerned the FMP's summer concert series in local parks. It was very difficult to obtain the necessary permits for performance in certain parks due to an alliance between the AFM and the park board. Not until August 1938 were the necessary permissions obtained.²⁵

In his final report on the operation and accomplishments of the FMP, George Foster noted that the AFM was "the only national organization that consistently gave active support" to the Project.²⁶ From 1935 to 1943 the AFM maintained special legislative committees in order to promote relief legislation, and representatives of the union attended the Appropriations Committee Hearings of the Senate and House of Representatives annually as well as during the consideration of the Emergency Relief Appropriation Acts. Many State Supervisors and local unit directors were also members of the AFM.²⁷

Not all relations between the FMP and the private sector were negative. Many professional societies and organizations were supportive of local and national aims and expressed a desire to work with the project. One of the first to express support was the National

²⁴ McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 610-11.

²⁵ August 1938 Illinois Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 805, B4, National Archives.

²⁶ It should be noted that George Foster held regular meetings with AFM President James C. Petrillo in his role as Director of the WPA Music Program in 1940, and thus some bias is inevitably attached to this statement and his view of FMP-AFM relations.

²⁷ Foster, *Record of Program Operation and Accomplishment*, 291-2.

Federation of Women's Clubs, and president Ruth Haller Ottaway had been pressing for government aid for musicians since the days of the Federal Emergency Relief Act (FERA). The Federation endorsed the activities of the FMP at each annual convention and local music clubs defended the project against political criticism and provided concert sponsorship. In turn, the FMP provided appearances with major symphony orchestra units for the winners of Federation contests.²⁸

The Pan American Union was another organization that worked closely with the music program in a variety of ways. Music copying units of the FMP provided the Union with materials. For example, the Philadelphia Copying Project's scores of Latin-American compositions were reproduced and given to the Free Library of Philadelphia as part of the Fleischer collection. Charles Seeger, who oversaw the FMP collection of folk music, and Earl Vincent Moore, Sokoloff's successor, both participated in the October 1939 Conference on Inter-American Relations in the Field of Music.²⁹

There are many examples of cooperation between the FMP and private enterprise in Illinois. Non-FMP artists would often be featured on programs. For instance, the August 17, 1938 ISO concert at the Wilmette Amphitheatre featured a number of distinguished guests invited by the sponsoring committee, including the noted opera star Edith Mason. During intermission Mason addressed the audience regarding the work of the FMP and called for public support of the project. The audience for that concert was the largest that had attended the series

²⁸ McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 612.

²⁹ Ibid.

up to that point, and later in the month the sponsoring committee announced plans to erect a permanent band shell to facilitate more concerts in the future.³⁰

The best example of cooperation between federal and private musicians in Illinois was the creation of the Peoria Philharmonic Orchestra composed of FMP musicians and volunteer musicians from the cities of Decatur and Peoria. Both cities previously had local symphony orchestras which had discontinued activities. Amateur and professional players in both cities donated their services for rehearsals and concerts in response to budgetary restrictions in order to be able to play standard symphonic music. Concerts were offered as an FMP presentation with all profits going to the project to fund the conductor, music, and other associated fees related to presenting the concert.³¹

Performance

FMP Director Nikolai Sokoloff's greatest goal was to introduce the average American citizen to cultivated music and to integrate this music into the country's civic and cultural system. He argued that Americans were ignorant of quality music, overly dependent on vernacular forms, and once introduced to a higher caliber of music these tastes would change.³² This seemingly rang true for many Americans, including a young thirteen-year-old Merrill Brooks from Chicago. In a letter to the Illinois FMP State Director Albert Goldberg, his mother recounted the experience her son had after a WPA concert at his school. She wrote that he son had never before shown interest in any type of music other than "swing and hillbilly" in spite of

³⁰ August 1938 Illinois Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 805, B4, National Archives.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Peter Gough, *Sounds of the New Deal: The Federal Music Project in the West* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015), 5,10.

her attempts to expose him to other forms of music on the radio or “at an occasional opera or concert.” She noted her surprise when young Merrill came home from Hyde Park High School one day to tell her that the “William Tell Overture” was his new favorite composition. When she asked how he knew so much about it, he told her that the WPA Orchestra had given a concert at school and provided some background on the pieces. She quickly “followed up with the stimulus by buying him the ‘William Tell’ records on the Victrola.” She expressed her relief that he was on the “right path” now that he was interested in classical music. She ended, “I am very grateful to the people who have made these WPA concerts available to our school children, for it would have seemed a tragedy to me if my son had gone through life with his mind and heart closed to the world of enjoyment the great music of the past and present offers.”³³ In correspondence with Sokoloff, Dr. William White, an acoustic engineer from Chicago, also referenced the transformative power of FMP concerts. Audiences full of people who had never before experienced a symphony concert, claimed White, became “instructed music lovers—in a word civilized beings instead of cultural barbarians.”³⁴

Sokoloff was not the only musician championing American music. Aaron Copland, in his book *What to Listen for in Music*, derived from his lectures of the same name at the New School for Social Research in New York City from 1936-1937, encouraged the American public to be “more alive to music on its sheerly [sic] musical plane.” Essentially, one should be an active listener, paying attention to the melody, rhythm, harmony, and tone colors. He continued, “Whether you listen to Mozart or Duke Ellington, you can deepen your understanding of music

³³ December 1938 Illinois Activity Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 803-804, B1, National Archives.

³⁴ Ibid.

not only by being a more conscious and aware listener—not someone who is just listening, but someone who is listening *for* something.”³⁵

Activities in Illinois were centered primarily on performance. Most composers in the 1930s and 1940s favored writing symphonies. As a result, a greater familiarity with classical music was growing not only in larger cities but in more rural areas as well through the efforts of radio and touring FMP ensembles which provided low cost concerts and music appreciation concerts in local schools.³⁶

The crown jewel of the FMP in Illinois was the Illinois Symphony Orchestra (ISO). Sokoloff often appeared with the unit as a guest conductor which helped to elevate its prestige in the Chicago area. The ISO’s weekly concerts often had audiences of 700 or more, and the orchestra also frequently played a series of children’s concerts. Premieres of new works were almost exclusively presented by the ISO and the Chicago press was generally favorable in its reception and publicity of the unit.³⁷

One of the reasons that the FMP in Illinois was so focused on the ISO and its other orchestras and bands was the belief of the state director that the only way to combat criticism of the FMP was with “high-grade performances” by these units in addition to the work being done by the educational units. Every effort was made to maintain exacting standards. In many instances, those who were unable to meet these expectations were removed from the relief rolls in times of quota reduction. This was felt most in units that were considered the most

³⁵ Aaron Copland, *What to Listen for in Music* (New York: New American Library, 1939), 14, 16.

³⁶ Nicholas Tawa, *The Great American Symphony: Music, The Depression, and War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 18, 26-7.

³⁷ November 1936 Chicago-Specific Illinois Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 803-804, B1, National Archives.

expendable, specifically “novelty” units. Most often only those players of exceptional skill were retained and combined with other units. In 1936 Chicago completely dissolved its vaudeville units with a select few musicians being incorporated into the Federal Theatre Project to play as a pit orchestra. Of the reduction procedure Illinois State Director Albert Goldberg reported that the general policy was to discontinue projects that were “not of a desirable standard, release such musicians as had not given satisfaction.” Sometimes, an excess of players on a certain instrument necessitated dismissal or reassignment to another unit. Goldberg described quota reductions as “opportunities” to make “a complete resume of the personnel, [and] release those musicians whose work was not up to strictly professional standards.”³⁸

The ISO also provided many opportunities for the work of American composers to be heard and allowed many young performers to play with the orchestra. In March of 1936 the ISO arranged a contest for young American artists to appear as a soloist with the ensemble. Some 175 entries were received and “much favorable attention” was given to the contest in the local papers. Regional Director Guy Maier judged alongside Leon Sametini and Shirley Gandell and chose five artists from the original 175. Five more were recommended to be invited as need arose. State Director Albert Goldberg noted that the most surprising feature of the contest was number of contemporary compositions each contestant played. Although the logistics of the contest were reported, there is no record of who the winners were.³⁹

One notable concert featuring the work of an American composer was the third concert in the ISO’s 1937 season featuring a program of “new and unusual” music. The highlight was the first Chicago performance of Edgar Stillman-Kelley’s symphony *Gulliver: His Voyage to*

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

Lilliput. Stillman-Kelley, composer, conductor, and former professor of music at Yale, was present at the performance. The symphony is in four movements and is programmatic in nature, describing Gulliver's adventures in Lilliput. This work is most often described by musicologists as witty and humorous. The combination of Stillman-Kelley's notoriety and the music's accessibility was surely not lost on conductor Rudolph Ganz when programming the work into the season's offerings. In his monthly narrative report Goldman noted that the area newspapers gave the concert ample publicity and favorable review. The symphony was "enthusiastically received" by the audience.⁴⁰

Another way in which the FMP strove to enhance the public's musical palate and feature American composers was through the Composers' Forum Laboratory, of which both Illinois and Indiana were active participants. Sokoloff reported that the goal of the Composers' Forum Laboratory was to "give the public a wide perspective of the work of each composer." It also afforded serious composers the opportunity to gain recognition, hear their own compositions, and gauge audience reaction.⁴¹

The Composers' Forum Laboratory was started in New York City by Ashley Pettis, and this model was used as a template for all other units. These units were directly in line with the FMP's goal of providing encouragement to American composers while developing American music and contributing to American musical culture. The laboratory was conducted informally, with a supervisor acting as presiding officer and introducing the program. After the musical program was completed the form was held with the composer fielding questions from the audience concerning the work or contemporary music more generally. Concerning the public

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Nikolai Sokoloff, *The Federal Music Project* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1935), 23.

question and answer format George Foster wrote, “One of the theories behind the public discussion was that it required the composer to do considerable soul searching before being prepared to take the public platform in defense of his musical deeds.”⁴² Overall, these laboratories allowed the public to come and engage with musicians on a very personal level while being introduced to more contemporary music.

Each unit sent reports to Washington outlining the laboratory programs and general reception, but only New York City and Boston provided transcripts of proceedings that contain evaluations of American compositions by the composers who wrote them. For instance, Aaron Copland was asked at a program on February 24, 1937, “What according to your own beliefs are the salient characteristics of your own music?” His reply was,

The salient characteristics, as I see them, are in the first place a certain massive sense and a certain attempt at quite large and grandiose effect. Not so much ‘effect’ but a large and grandiose feeling in the music. The second, is an attempt to get an alive rhythmic vitality in the music. And the third characteristic, I should say, is an attempt to write music which is always logically constructed.⁴³

The Composers’ Forum Laboratory afforded many composers the chance to revise and improve their work as a result of these public hearings. At its core, the Laboratory was most useful for the young American composer “who had not found himself, who needed a public hearing, and who might benefit from having to defend his own music.” Often the works performed for the Laboratories were never performed elsewhere.⁴⁴

The Composer’s Forum Laboratory in Indianapolis frequently featured works from Indiana composers as well as playing manuscripts that were loaned from other state units. These

⁴² Foster, *Record of Program Operation and Accomplishment*, 323-4; McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 625.

⁴³ Quoted in McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 626.

⁴⁴ Foster, *Record of Program Operation and Accomplishments*, 324.

concerts were also regularly broadcast on local radio station WIRE. The program from February 1937 listed “Nocturne” for Concert Orchestra by Indiana composer William Pelz and “Berceuse” String Quartet by Californian Leo Scheer among others as featured selections.⁴⁵

In addition to the Composers’ Forum Laboratory, the FMP had a policy allowing anyone who had written a manuscript to submit it to an audition board of recognized non-relief musicians in his or her district. Per the board’s approval, a composition would then be performed at a rehearsal of one of the units where the composer resided. If the conductor and musicians approved the piece after the rehearsal reading, it would be scheduled for public performance. Often favorable reception by an audience would lead to the composition being shared with other units throughout the country for performance on their programs. Sokoloff noted that “a work scoring success in Richmond might next be performed in New York, or a composition enthusiastically received in St. Paul would be heard in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Philadelphia, or Tulsa. Success in New York or Boston has meant performance in Detroit or Chicago.”⁴⁶

Many musicians and critics were impressed with what the FMP achieved in its Composers’ Form Laboratory programs in addition to including American composers on a majority of concert programs. In the December 1936 issue of the *International Musician*, Andre Pelah noted that through the performance of their compositions, “youthful and new composers are inspired to greater heights.” He saw the symphony orchestra as a “clinic” or “forum” in which an American composer was better able to analyze his or her work. “He hears the

⁴⁵ February 1937 Indiana Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, 805, B2, National Archives.

⁴⁶ Sokoloff, *The Federal Music Project*, 22-3.

possibility of new tonal colors and musical effects; he is able to review his own material in a new light, stamping his own personality upon the music, as he perceives [sic] it in his artistic mind.”⁴⁷

Illinois maintained high involvement in FMP activities, especially music festivals such as National Music Week which was held nationwide during the first week of May. First organized after World War I by the National Bureau for the Advancement of Music and underwritten by the piano industry, Sokoloff and the rest of the administration considered participation in this event to be vital to the success of the Project. Featuring the best of classical and light classical repertoire played before a guaranteed audience, the festival was a method to prove the worth of the arts projects to the public. During 1938, the FMP sponsored events in forty states and featured six-thousand musicians.⁴⁸ In Illinois, six major units of the FMP in Chicago alone appeared in programs throughout the week. The Illinois Symphony Orchestra presented the Chicago premiere of Randall Thompson’s *Symphony No. 2*. In reviewing the concert, music critic Janet Gunn of the *Herald-Examiner* said,

Conductor Solomon, in bringing another unknown work to Chicago music lovers, displayed again the visionary genius and musical progressiveness which are the crowning glory of his great talent and industry. The well-schooled instrumentalists of the Illinois Symphony Orchestra responded to his keen, dynamic direction with the impressive show of precision and distinctive musical taste that has earned the aggregation fame as one of the finest orchestral bodies in the community.⁴⁹

In February 1938 units in Illinois participated in the National Festival of American Music in over 144 concerts and student recitals. The festival was organized by Sokoloff and Ellen

⁴⁷ Andre Pelah, “The Importance to Musicians and Music of Federal Music Projects,” *International Musician* (December 1936), 6.

⁴⁸ Kenneth J. Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation: The WPA’s Federal Music Project and American Society* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1995), 40.

⁴⁹ May 1938 Illinois Activity Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 803-804, B1, National Archives.

Woodward, director of the Women's and Professional Projects of the WPA, to showcase FMP units performing American compositions and coincided with George Washington's birthday. The goal of the three-day event was to focus national attention on the FMP, and as such Sokoloff wanted the programs to be "All American." Sokoloff sought out state and local support of the event nationwide. Illinois Governor Henry Horner issued a proclamation calling on the people of the state to support the event, and many mayors in the towns and cities where concerts were given also issued statements to the press or official proclamations. Newspapers provided significant coverage of these concerts, the largest appearing in the *Peoria Star*. State Director Goldberg admitted that it was difficult for bands and orchestras in some of the smaller cities to "obtain representative American music suitable for their purposes," but each program in Illinois was successful in "awakening the public to consciousness of the American composer."⁵⁰

The American Music Festival was a strategic move that was a direct reaction to the heightened scrutiny of the WPA by Congress and accusations of radical affiliations in other Federal One programs. Using George Washington and American composers, the festival was a marked success and served to reinforce the organization's image as one dedicated to performing quality music for the American people. The two composers who were featured most prominently on programs nationwide were John Phillip Sousa and Stephen Foster. Sousa's marches and brass ensembles were nationalistic and often moved audiences to "clap, sing, and demonstrate their enthusiasm." Orchestras featured the antebellum and Civil War-era music of Foster on nearly every program featuring his songs "Swanee River," "Beautiful Dreamer," and "Old Folks at

⁵⁰ February 1938 Illinois Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 803-804, B1, National Archives; Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation*, 42.

Home” most often.⁵¹ More than other musical endeavors, the push for a specific definition of musical nationalism is clearly discernible here.

American composers often attempted to create musical nationalism through the quotation of folk materials and even popular music. In attempting to create a new “American” style of composition, composers distanced themselves from works steeped in European tradition and turned to folk, historical, or patriotic inspiration. Many composers asserted that America could find its musical identity in local versions of transplanted English folk ballads, Indian tribal melodies, spirituals, and slave work songs. Antonin Dvořák famously argued that the future music of America and the foundation upon which any serious school of composition should be founded was “negro melodies.” He claimed that Beethoven did the same by incorporating songs of common people. Dvořák wrote, “In the negro melodies of America I discover all that is needed for a great and noble school of music. They are pathetic, tender passionate, melancholy, solemn, religious, bold, merry, gay, or what you will...[to] serve any purpose.” Historian Barbara Tischler describes the early twentieth century composer as one who fully employed “the flexibility of his modern language.”⁵²

Although a second nation-wide festival never came to fruition, Illinois did observe a second Festival of American Music on February 22, 1939 in Chicago’s FMP Concert Hall and by other units throughout the state. Acting Governor John Stelle issued another proclamation urging citizen to attend the event. Ninety concerts and fifty-eight student recitals were given throughout the state. In Chicago, the American Concert Orchestra, directed by Ralph Cissne, and the Federal

⁵¹ Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation*, 44-5.

⁵² Barbara Tischler, *An American Music: The Search for an American Musical Identity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986),3-8; Alex Ross, *The Rest is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century* (New York: Picador, 2007), 131.

Jubilee Singers, conducted by James A. Mundy, presented works by Eric DeLemarther, Mabel Daniels, William Pelz, William Billings, Stephen Foster, and Francis Hopkinson.⁵³

The FMP in the Midwest, especially in Illinois and Indiana, was particularly interested in including so-called “authentic” music from “foreign lands,” i.e. Europe and Asia, to symphony and orchestra audiences. Harry High, director of the Evansville Band in Indiana, reported that his band received many requests for these “travel concerts,” primarily from church groups.

Audiences indicated that they most enjoyed the short historical lectures before a piece was played, such as a condensed life story of William Tell before the band played the “William Tell Overture” or the synopsis of “In a Persian Market.” The Illinois and Indiana Symphony Orchestras often invited guest soloists and small groups to play national music and dances on their programs. For example, the Romanian Orthodox Choir and Syrian Orchestra were frequent guests of the Indianapolis Concert Orchestra.⁵⁴

The only unit dedicated exclusively to the performance of American folk music in the region was the American Folk Music Ensemble organized in July 1938 in Terre Haute, Indiana. The group consisted of eight men who also played stringed or fretted instruments, reminiscent of the Tambouritza Orchestra in Chicago, Illinois. Rather than playing folk music from Europe or Asia, the group performed mountain songs, cowboy ballads, sea chanteys, spirituals, and modern popular songs. In 1939 the unit added a collection of Tipica orchestrations loaned by the Texas FMP to their repertoire.⁵⁵ The group maintained a steady travel schedule and performed

⁵³ February 1939 Illinois Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 805, B7, National Archives.

⁵⁴ March 1938 Indiana Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 803-804, B1, National Archives.

⁵⁵ An Orquesta Tipica, popular in the Western FMP units, is a Latin American ensemble that incorporates regional instruments with standard European instruments to play folk and popular music. In this case, the Orquesta Tipicas in Texas played folk music from Mexico.

throughout the state in a variety of venues in Brazil, Libertyville, and Seeleyville. Attendance at these concerts rivaled that of the dance bands in the state.⁵⁶

The Federal Music Project Teachers' Project

Across the United States, the Teachers' Project offered music education to millions who had never before had any music instruction through a combination of concerts and classes in music history, theory, appreciation, composition, choral and instrumental conducting, and folk music.⁵⁷ Prior to the start of the FMP it was estimated that two thirds of American school children in the nation's approximately 143,000 rural schools were without any form of music education, and those schools that did provide music education did so with outdated pedagogical methods. The FMP Teachers' Project worked to create new texts and techniques and extend them to the nation's rural areas. As of 1939, the majority of people enrolled in project classes were predominantly from rural and small urban communities.⁵⁸

Qualified music teachers who were registered on relief rolls had to demonstrate their abilities before an Audition Board as did musicians in other FMP units. Those who passed the audition were then assigned to projects to provide class instruction in schools with the stipulation that instruction could occur only after school hours in schools with no other funds designated for music instruction. FMP teachers were also assigned to groups of adults and children of relief

⁵⁶ March 1939 Indiana Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 805, B4, National Archives.

⁵⁷ Taylor, *American Made*, 289.

⁵⁸ McDonald. *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 627-8.

families in both rural and urban areas. Those on FMP rolls were only allowed to teach in a group setting in order to prevent competition with private music teachers.⁵⁹

One of the top priorities of the FMP and the Teachers' Project was the retraining and rehabilitation of music teachers on relief rolls at FMP "Institutes" or "normal schools." Teacher retraining was focused on pedagogy, theory, and leadership. First offered in New York, Florida, and California, music educators attended eight-week intensive work-study courses. For example, in New York City a series of lectures on harmonic development were added to its Institute scheduling. The course focused on principles of harmony, diction, phrasing, tone, dynamics, and ear training and the most effective methods to present these materials to students.⁶⁰ As early as December 1936 the Indianapolis Teachers' Unit formed an "In-Service Teaching Group" comprised of teachers and accompanists that met each Saturday and ran from December to February. It was conducted by the Supervisor of Indianapolis Units, Kelton Whetstine at the Indiana University Building of the State Fair Grounds. The group was organized as a seminar with discussion groups and focused primarily on the problems of individual choral directors.⁶¹

Many Americans outside of the WPA recognized the value of FMP programming for children. In his article "The Importance to Musicians and Music of Federal Music Projects," Andre Pelah argued that it was the nation's duty to "[supply] its children with fine music, for they are the future citizens of the land." The best way to do this was through supporting its own musicians and inspiring American composers. Pelah and others held music up as a universal

⁵⁹ December 1936 Indiana Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69 A1 811, B23, National Archives.

⁶⁰ Sokoloff, *The Federal Music Project*, 21.

⁶¹ December 1936 Indiana Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 803-804, B1, National Archives.

language that was able to foster unity and understanding between peoples and act as the harbinger of peace.⁶²

Project teachers taught in a variety of areas including group instruction for children who previously had no music instruction using simple rhythmic folk-dancing and folk-singing games and music courses in advanced theory, counterpoint, composition form, and analysis. Equally important was social and community music, such as Mothers' Choruses, in an effort to introduce music as part of community life through group participation. These community choruses allowed neighbors to engage in meaningful recreational exercise. Music appreciation activities were also extended to welfare houses, public schools, and hospitals as well as other WPA agencies such as CCC camps and the National Youth Administration.⁶³

Illinois established music teaching programs across the state starting in February of 1936 in conjunction with the Education and Recreation Project. Initially, those hired by the Education Project would work in the public schools while those on the Recreation Project and FMP rolls were primarily instrumentalists who shared conducting and performance activities. Many towns, including Bloomington, had not had music instruction in public schools since in the 1920s. State Supervisor Albert Goldberg noted that in the southern part of Illinois music instruction was especially valuable and enrollments were so high that classes were full to capacity. In Gillespie, Helen Daniels taught twenty classes per week including piano, rhythm band, orchestra, and choir, with an average attendance of twenty-five students. Throughout the state providing music education to rural areas was of primary importance.⁶⁴

⁶² Pelah, "The Importance to Musicians and Music of Federal Music Projects," 8.

⁶³ McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 630-1; Sokoloff, *The Federal Music Project*, 19.

⁶⁴ February 1936 Illinois Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69 A1 806, B13, National Archives.

From April to May, 1938, units outside of Chicago were heavily involved in music appreciation concerts in local schools. Of all the concerts performed, the music appreciation concerts in schools were the most successful. Letters of recommendation came flooding in to the State Director's office from students, school principals, school boards, and even local authorities. The typical music appreciation program would begin with an educational lecture on the lives and music of the composers on the program. The Fall and Winter schedules of many ensembles throughout the state of Illinois for 1938 included many of these programs, such as "Music in Nature," "Rivers and Music," "Europe in 45 Minutes," and "The Music of Our Land." In Chicago, the Illinois Philharmonic Choir; the American, Cicero, and Columbia Concert Bands; and Jubilee Singers included many musical appreciation concerts in both public and parochial schools on their performance schedules. The Federal Concert Band, of Joliet, played twenty-two appreciation concerts in the schools of Joliet and Lockport in the month of December alone.⁶⁵

Most of the FMP education unit's efforts were focused on children, but in September 1938 State Director Goldberg reported plans for the teaching projects to hold more classes for adults. Units throughout the state were receiving requests to present music appreciation programs in the evenings for adults. Evening schedules were planned to include these concerts for adults patterned after the concerts presented in the schools. Goldberg was confident that this would "open a new and useful field of activity" to supplement regular bookings.⁶⁶

Some of the most important music instruction occurred in the rural areas of Illinois. One example of how the FMP serviced rural areas was the town of Walpole and its surrounding areas. Walpole was a small rural community of roughly fifty people located in the center of a large

⁶⁵ May 1938 Illinois Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 805, B4, National Archives.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

farming area in Hamilton County. Prior to the FMP's inauguration in 1935, only the most prosperous families in the area were able afford music instruction. Mrs. Martha Graham was assigned to this area and taught music in seven rural schools in and around Walpole. She consistently reported that the music was enthusiastically received by the community and planned an annual music program "of outstanding interest to the community as a whole." For example, in 1940 the Helm School presented the operetta *Sunbonnet Sue* in which the entire student body participated. As an added feature to the children's program the Benton County FMP Orchestra gave a program which included a demonstration of instruments by director Ralph Swain. Graham noted that for several days prior to the program community members prepared for the occasion by installing a temporary stage and dressing rooms in the gymnasium as well as installing light fixtures, furniture, and stage curtains. The night of the program brought attendees by automobile, wagon, buggy, and horseback. The gym was filled to capacity with over 500 people, which was more than ten times the population of Walpole. A single musical program not only allowed the school children to participate, but also provided the entire community access to performance and musical instruction by FMP musicians.⁶⁷

The breadth of music education activities in the Illinois necessitated the appointment of Clarence Loomis as state supervisor over music education projects. Goldberg described Loomis as "a teacher of wide experience" and a "musician of fine reputation." He spent all of his time in the field with music teachers to devise a more systematic process and continuity in music appreciation concerts in the schools.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ "Rural School Music Program," November 1940 Illinois Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 805, B8, National Archives.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

The most active and effective FMP units in Indiana were those of the Teachers' Project. These units were largely responsible for establishing high standards of musicianship and educating the public to develop music appreciation. Indiana State Director William Pelz and Regional Director Guy Maier identified four types of audiences served by the FMP: public school classes, the radio audience, the "confirmed concert-goer" audience, and community groups which had never before had the opportunity to enjoy "good music." They also noted that the musical activities fostered by FMP units in the state showed an increased demand for concerts and musical instruction.⁶⁹

FMP teachers strove to include the entire community in its programs. In Indianapolis, the Teachers' Unit regularly held piano classes at the Rauh Library, Fletcher Avenue Kindergarten, Christamore House, the Jewish Community Center, the General Protestant Orphans' Home, and the Indianapolis Orphans' Home. Choral directors also worked with area schools to rehearse Parent-Teacher choruses. Most often these groups would perform in festival programs, such as the Indianapolis Spring Choral Festival, in conjunction with other FMP units and volunteer choral groups. Mothers' and Parent-Teacher Choruses also frequently sang for PTA meetings and other community events. Program schedules and notices of events were widely publicized in area newspapers. For example, the *Decatur Daily Review* in Decatur, Illinois reported on a series of four upcoming concerts featuring "instrumentation experiments." These concerts were presented using fretted instruments "foreign to symphony orchestras" like guitars or mandolins. Muted trumpets and clarinets were also used to produce "special effects." The experimental instrumentation necessitated the rearrangement of musical scores, and these "new" scores were then broadcast from the Orlando Hotel Ballroom over radio station WJBL. The article promised

⁶⁹ *The Federal Music Project in Indiana*, W-5066, 1-2, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 825, B41, National Archives.

its readership that these thirty-minute experimental programs would “give additional thousands of music lovers in Central Illinois an opportunity” to hear the FMP orchestra.⁷⁰

The Narrative Report for Indiana sent to Sokoloff for November 1937 outlines the typical activities of the Teachers’ Unit in Indianapolis. There were five choral directors who each directed an average of four choruses with eighteen singers each. The choruses were comprised primarily of people with “little to no vocal training.” The Mothers’ Chorus of School #58 gave two performances of the operetta *Miss Caruthers Returns* and the Mothers’ Chorus of School #61 was already in rehearsal for Christmas songs including traditional carols and an arrangement of “Jesu Bambino.” The report noted requests “from several members” for Music Appreciation and History of Music programs and classes. The average piano class attendance for the month of November was 369 people. The report also lists a “human interest” story in one of the piano classes of thirteen students. When classes began, only four students had access to a piano to practice. Since that time, “three girls have had pianos given them, one boy secured a piano with bonus money, [and] two more have been promised instruments.” Students who did not own pianos were able to practice on friends’ pianos, presumably the students who had been gifted the instruments from the class.⁷¹

FMP Teachers’ units in Indiana made efforts to retain student engagement in music education during the summer months. A summer program was developed to provide free concerts to both youth and adults who were “ordinarily deprived of the enjoyment of good music.” These concerts particularly focused on those who were unable to pay concert admission

⁷⁰ January 1937 Indiana Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 805, B2, National Archives; “Instrumentation Experiments Tried by WPA Orchestra,” *Decatur Daily Review*, August 9, 1936.

⁷¹ February 1937 Indiana Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 805, B2, National Archives.

or who did not have access to a radio. In April of 1937, summer rhythm bands were organized. These bands met in Indianapolis parks and playgrounds and worked toward a late summer festival showcase in Washington Park on August 27. A second concert was scheduled to be presented with the combined Marion County FMP units on August 31 at the Kirschbaum Community Center. In addition to rhythm bands, various “toy symphony orchestras” were created. These ensembles, who performed along with the rhythm bands, began learning by rote and progressed to playing from written scores.⁷²

The summer rhythm bands proved to be a great success for the FMP Teachers’ Project in Indiana. The Indiana FMP reported several conclusions from the work of organizing and training twenty-six children’s rhythm bands over the 1937 summer season. First, the activity was most successful in community centers and institutions such as orphanages that have a certain level of discipline. Rehearsals in parks and playgrounds were not as effective due to the high number of distractions. Second, though the purchase of rhythm band instruments was desirable, it was not always practical. Excellent results were garnered from instruments constructed by handicraft divisions of Recreation Departments or by the children themselves. Finally, the skills obtained in following the rhythm band conductor were transferrable to other ensembles such as school bands and orchestras.⁷³

Engaging children in crafting their own instruments was a frequent activity in the FMP teachers’ units. Teacher Frank Hendon reported in 1938 that some of his students were unable to purchase instruments so they made their own. “We have two bass violins almost finished. The other three instruments that have been completed cost less than one dollar for the lot. The wood

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

form which these were made was picked up from alleys and on dumps!” Other students proved just as resourceful. Alice Halpin relayed the story of a young girl without access to a piano of her own who crafted a scrapbook of hymns from discarded hymnals that she wanted to learn. Halpin noted that many of her students were inspired by a piece they heard somewhere, and it “awakens a desire to be able to play it themselves, and they are willing to work to be able to do so.”⁷⁴

Indiana FMP units were held to a high standard of musicianship including performance and repertoire. The Regional Director disseminated bulletins that included suggested outlines for public school music appreciation concerts. Many units, such as the Evansville and Clinton concert bands, developed a system of cooperation with the music teachers in area schools to have WPA musicians play the selections the students were currently studying in their classes. Pelz notes that “the fact that students are able to hear those works performed during the class by a living orchestra has undoubtedly increased tremendously the results of the music-appreciation teaching.”⁷⁵

The Indianapolis Concert Band was primarily responsible for providing music appreciation concerts in public schools and gave roughly four programs per week in 1937. The band prepared several types of concerts to cater to different grades and ranged in character from demonstrations of instruments to simple fugal analysis. The director’s policy was to have school children participate in each program from answering questions, identifying different instruments and tone qualities, and recognizing compositions and simple song forms. Two popular and effective activities were the “Blindfold Listening Party” where children were invited to identify

⁷⁴ November 1938 Indiana Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 805 B4, National Archives.

⁷⁵ *The Federal Music Project in Indiana*, W-5066, 2, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 825, B41, National Archives.

instruments by their sound, and “Music Under the Microscope” where a selection was broken up into smaller parts played by various instruments in the band to show how they come together to form the whole. Other programs included “Mood Recognition,” “Musical Pictures,” “Musical Zoo,” and “A Musical Trip Around the World.” Many bands, such as the Evansville Concert Band, took their music appreciation programs on the road and presented them in rural schools that previously had not had the opportunity to participate in these types of programs. These excursions to rural schools were very well received by the public and Carl J. Englebrecht, Superintendent of Spencer County Schools commented that the concerts were “an educational agency of great value and importance for our public schools.”⁷⁶

Indianapolis Teacher’s Project Director Robert J. Prine lamented that children of high school age were “restless, very inappropriate, [and] noisy” during music appreciation concerts and were “swing-minded” rather than caring to learn of “finer music.” In contrast, grade schoolers stayed in their seats, fully attentive to the conductor, with their “eyes glued to every move” of the conductor while the ensemble was playing. Their applause was “of sincere appreciation and not just a matter of courtesy.” For this reason, elementary school concerts were the primary focus of music appreciation concerts. Prine believed that continued performance in elementary schools would result in the children “[raising] our music here in America to a high standard, unbelievable and unpredictable to the music critics and teachers of 1938.”⁷⁷

By September of 1938, the Indianapolis FMP Teachers’ Project was functioning like a well-oiled machine. Each adult chorus was reorganized for the 1938-1939 season with new

⁷⁶ September 1938 Indiana Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 805 B2, B4, National Archives.

⁷⁷ March 1938 Indiana Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69 A1 805 B4, National Archives.

members added to each. Rehearsals were started on a series of Bach pieces which would be integrated with other FMP units in an all-Bach concert assisted by guest soloists. Music students presented three violin and piano recitals during the month of September at the Jewish Communal Building and Northwest Community Center in Indianapolis, and 377 classes were taught for the month. Additionally, teachers met on a weekly basis for short pedagogical presentations and talks.⁷⁸

In 1939, Sokoloff stepped down and was replaced by Dr. Earl V. Moore, who emphasized music education and teaching during his tenure. One of his first major steps was to ensure that each state had a teacher training program and was maintaining music education activities. He was adamant that teachers on the relief rolls who were not current in modern teaching techniques would not be allowed to continue working with the FMP unless they obtained continuing education from FMP-run training programs. He also inaugurated a series of Regional work conferences in order to facilitate networking between educators, the first of which was held in Raleigh, North Carolina from June 10-14, 1940 at Crabtree Creek Park. Over the course of the conference attendees discussed problems concerning the national organization and operation of FMP Education projects as well as improvements to policies and procedures.⁷⁹

Though cooperation and alliance with other non-FMP units allowed for more widespread music instruction, it often created problems and lacked the necessary oversight to ensure quality instruction was provided at all times. Foster noted that many state Recreation and Education Projects “operated almost entirely without technical supervision” because the rules for eligibility

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Foster, *Record of Program Operation and Accomplishment*, 196-8.

in these projects were much broader due to budgetary concerns and restrictions. Often a reduction in quota on the federal level applied to the FMP only. As a result, Foster explained,

...it was quite common for the Federal Music Project to reduce its State quotas in January while the recreation and education projects in the States might not be affected until May or June. Invariably the orchestrally-minded State Directors of the Federal Music Project would dismiss their music teachers to reach the new quota without throwing an orchestra out of balance. Consequently, the education and recreation projects, unaffected by the quota reduction, would employ these music teachers and continue them in their former capacity without technical supervision and without regard for technical standards.⁸⁰

Ultimately, this situation blurred the lines between the Projects and often the public identified all music instruction with the FMP. This meant that when a teacher was performing unsatisfactorily, the FMP was blamed. Many unsupervised music teachers on the Education Project rolls competed with private music teachers, an activity which was prohibited federally. The practice became so widespread that in 1938 the Music Teachers National Association openly attacked the FMP for soliciting pupils who could afford to pay for music lessons, thus driving many private instructors to relief rolls themselves as a result of the competition. When investigated it was discovered that in every instance the teachers in question were not employed by the FMP. In 1939 *Operating Procedure No. G-5* was enacted that clarified jurisdiction over music services. All courses other than “music which is incidental to recreational objectives” were under the supervision and “technical control” of the FMP.⁸¹

Music Instruction in the Private Sector

Many private sector music education efforts employed models used by the Midwestern FMP Teachers’ Project, often in direct competition with FMP performances and services. Often

⁸⁰ Ibid., 284-5.

⁸¹ Ibid., 285-7.

these productions were more interdisciplinary and politically charged than those from the FMP. One such example is the “play opera” *The Second Hurricane* by Aaron Copland. Intended for performance by high school students, the opera is set in the Midwest and celebrates the virtues of social harmony. It premiered in New York City on April 21, 1937 with Lehman Engel conducting and Orson Welles, who had worked for the Federal Theatre Project, directing.⁸²

Copland was excited to engage with a new audience of America’s youth. The inspiration for the opera was the “remarkable growth of school music organizations throughout the country, particularly those in the Middle West, the Far West, and the Southwest.” He had heard about the many outstanding performances, no doubt aided by the efforts of the FMP in those areas, but was worried about the lack of appropriate repertoire for school-aged groups. Copland saw the production of a school opera as an answer to this need, as well as a new source for the reception of his music.⁸³

Copland and librettist Edwin Denby operated with the goal of making the opera relatable to America’s youth in their “everyday lives and language.” Denby was inspired by newspaper accounts of floods and airplane rescues in the Midwest, and added in a hurricane for good measure before realizing “that hurricanes do not go inland.” The plot is relatively simple; a pilot comes to the principal of a high school and asks for volunteers to help with flood relief. The principal then chooses four boys (Butch, Fat, Gip, and Lowrie) and two girls (Gwen and Queenie) to assist. The plane they are all riding in is forced down to a deserted spot near a river, they unload the supplies, and the plane takes back off for help leaving the students alone, and a quarrel soon ensues over the supplies. A scared and lonely “Negro boy” named Jefferson Brown

⁸² Aaron Copland and Vivian Perlis, *Copland: 1900 Through 1942* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1984), 257.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

suddenly appears and dueling choruses of parents and students comment and reply about what is happening. Each student leaves in a different direction to look for the nearest town, are hit by the hurricane, and then find one another again just in time to be rescued by the pilot. The opera's moral is outlined in the epilogue, "...you belong together, With a sort of love making you feel easy...like freedom, real freedom."⁸⁴

Similarly to many FMP productions, like *Sunbonnet Sue* in Walpole, Illinois, this production relied on both adult and adolescent participation. The adult chorus came from the Henry Street Settlement House and the student chorus was from Seward High School, and daily rehearsals became part of the school curriculum. A professional orchestra was provided to supplement the small instrumental ensemble comprised of teachers from the Henry Street School. The leading parts were all cast from the Professional Children's School, with the only professional adult actor fulfilling the part of the pilot. As with FMP productions, *The Second Hurricane* received sponsorships and funds from donors.⁸⁵

Critical reviews of the opera were mixed. Some criticized the libretto for being too simple and the music for being "dull." Others recognized that the nature of the work for school-aged performers and an audience of their peers necessitated a simpler musical style and plot. Overall, it was seen as a positive contribution. Following the premiere Frances D. Perkins reviewed the performance for the *Herald Tribune* and commented, "It should prove a very appropriate vehicle for schools throughout the country wishing to present musico-dramatic performances with homegrown talents and without going to great expense for settings and properties. This it can be welcomed as a valuable contribution." It is important to note the

⁸⁴ Ibid., 259-60.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 257-8.

romanticized view of the Midwest in this production, which was true of most of Copland's "western" works. Overall, it demonstrated that the methods used in the FMP's Teachers' and Education Projects were applicable to the private sector. Additionally, both the FMP and the private sector were engaged in developing new pedagogical materials for school-aged children.⁸⁶

The Federal Music Project and Radio Broadcasting

The first radio licensing law was passed by Congress and signed by President Taft in 1912 outlining basic broadcasting laws. A station license issued by the Secretary of Commerce and Labor was required for transmission. Licensed transmissions were to be done and/or supervised by someone with an operator's license which was awarded after successfully passing an examination. A person had to be an American citizen to obtain a license, though a company incorporated in any state could be licensed. Up to the start of WWI, the general public was largely uninterested in broadcasting and viewed it as a rather eccentric hobby. WWI saw a vast coordinated effort to develop and expand radio technology, primarily by the government. The Navy oversaw most of this development, specifically for intelligence work. The British had cable connections with Germany, forcing the Germans to use airwaves for communication with their own ships and overseas agents. The American government spent considerable time recording and studying this coded material.⁸⁷

By 1921 Americans were buying components at electrical shops to assemble their own radio sets and many department stores opened their own radio departments. The assembling of radio sets became a national pastime. Complete sets were advertised for upcoming release, frequent bulletins about home radios were released, and columns of radio news appeared in local

⁸⁶ Ibid., 264.

⁸⁷ Erik Barnouw, *A Tower in Babel: A History of Broadcasting in the United States: Volume I—to 1933* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), 32-50.

newspapers. Businessman and the Radio Corporation of America (RCA) director David Sarnoff developed a business plan to make the radio a “household utility” just as the piano or phonograph was. In addition to receiving music, Sarnoff saw the potential for his “Radio Music Box” to broadcast lectures and recitals, servicing “farmers and others living in outlying districts removed from cities.” He also saw the potential for advertising revenue and partnerships with print industries. In outlining his plan to RCA founder Owen D. Young, Sarnoff noted that “every purchaser of a Radio Music Box would be encouraged to become a subscriber of the *Wireless Age* [magazine] which would announce in its columns an advance monthly schedule of all lectures, recitals, etc. to be given in various cities of the country.” The consumer would then be able to tune to the wave length that would be broadcasting the program they were interested in. In addition, the increase in magazine circulation would ensure a large volume of paid advertising. Sarnoff saw *Wireless Age* as performing in the same way that motion picture magazines operated.⁸⁸

In the 1930s the radio became one of the central features of the American home. The radio was seized upon as a tool that could bring the various constituents of the nation together, regardless of location or personal circumstance. More so than other cultural forms, the radio was available to those still working as well as those who were unemployed.⁸⁹ By 1934, radio had become the most essential tool for garnering New Deal support. The Federal Music Project believed that through utilizing the radio it could increase its sphere of influence and transmit “good” music to rural areas where the production of live shows was unrealistic. It also hoped to

⁸⁸ Ibid., 71-79.

⁸⁹ Kate Lacey, “Radio in the Great Depression: Promotional Culture, Public Service, and Propaganda,” in *Radio Reader: Essays in the Cultural History of Radio*, ed. Michelle Hilmes and Jason Loviglio (New York: Routledge, 2002), 29.

return classical music to the forefront of programming.⁹⁰ The Project also used radio as a vehicle for furthering the reach of the music education units, by broadcasting lectures on music history, harmony courses, and other subjects related to music education.⁹¹

Listening to the radio was a community building activity. In Chicago, for example, there was one radio for every two to three households in 1930, and people congregated in local shops and neighbor's homes to listen to programming. On average one radio had four to five listeners at any given time, and in eighty-five percent of homes, listening to the radio was a family activity. In many working-class communities, listening to the radio functioned to bring neighbors and relatives together in the same ways that shopping and movie-going did. Places with radio access became instant centers of social life, and communal radio listening mediated between local and mass culture as effectively as the neighborhood store or theater.⁹² In his 1988 memoir, *Gracie: A Love Story*, George Burns wrote of the ascendance of the radio. He states, "It's impossible to explain the impact that the radio had on the world to anyone who didn't live through that time. Before radio, people had to wait for the newspaper to learn what was happening in the world. Before radio, the only way to see a performer was to see a performer. And maybe most important, before radio there was no such thing as a commercial."⁹³

The Office of Radio Research published the study *Radio Research, 1941* edited by Paul Lazarsfeld and Frank Stanton, with three out of the six chapters focusing on radio and music.

⁹⁰ Bindas. *All of This Music Belongs to the Nation*, 19-20.

⁹¹ Foster, *Record of Program Operation and Accomplishment*, 337.

⁹² Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 133.

⁹³ George Burns, *Gracie: A Love Story* (New York: Putnam, 1988), 86-7 quoted in Timothy D. Taylor, Mark Katz, and Tony Grajeda, eds., *Music, Sound, and Technology in America: A Documentary History of Early Phonograph, Cinema, and Radio* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2012), 240.

The chapter titled “Invitation to Music,” written by Edward Suchman, outlined the way the radio had revolutionized one’s ability to listen to and appreciate music. The study showed that the radio had a dramatic change in men and those over thirty who now had classical music more available and permissible, and in many cases the radio initiated their interest in music. The radio also initiated interest in people of lower socioeconomic status by allowing them access to symphonies and recitals that had previously been prevented by family background, income, and education. Although much of America was actively engaged in jazz, blues, and “hillbilly” music, Suchman focused primarily on “serious music” which only represented twelve percent of all musical broadcasts.⁹⁴ Just as with much of the FMP, those discussing the power of radio were only engaged in a specific type of music.

Strikingly, Suchman noted that the radio was “more than three times as important for men as for women in initiating an interest in music.” Up to this point in American history musical activities had been designated as a “womanly grace.” Many men expressed their appreciation for the ease of radio listening; no longer was it required to go out to a concert hall to appreciate music. Many also cited music as their sole respite from the economic deprivation of the Depression. Both men and women gained a sense of knowledge and mastery through hearing the same classical pieces repeated on the radio. Radio commentators often explained the significance and history of the music played which, according to Susan J. Douglas, “provided listeners with immediate cultural capital previously reserved for the educated.”⁹⁵

Broadcasting classical music over the radio allowed people who otherwise could not experience music in a traditional concert setting to be able to do so. Helen Keller, for example,

⁹⁴ Susan J. Douglas, *Listening In: Radio and the American Imagination* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 149-50.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 150-1.

wrote to the *New York Times* in 1924 to relay her experiences with radio programming. Helen began by stating that she spent “a glorious hour” on the night of February 9, 1924 experiencing Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony performed by the Symphony Society of New York. After reading about the joy radio listening was bringing to the sightless everywhere in her “magazine for the blind,” Keller put her hand on the radio receiver to feel the vibrations. She discovered that she “could feel, not only the vibrations, but also the impassioned rhythm, the throb and urge of the music!” She reported that she was able to distinguish between the coronets, drums, “deep-toned” violas, violins, and human voices. She continued, “The great chorus throbbed against my fingers with poignant pause and flow. The all the instruments and voices together burst forth—an ocean of heavenly vibration—and died away like winds when the atom is spent, ending in a delicate shower of notes.” Most importantly, Keller was able to identify with Beethoven who was also deaf and she “marveled at the power of his quenchless spirit.”⁹⁶

Many musicians received radio broadcasting with open arms. In the September 12, 1926 issue of the *New York Times*, many prominent conductors were featured in the article “Programs Lauded by Bandmasters” including John Philip Sousa, Walter Damrosch (New York Symphony Orchestra), and Nikolai Sokoloff (Cleveland Symphony Orchestra). Each remarked on the opportunities radio created for citizens to gain access to music. Damrosch outlined a partnership with station WEAJ that included “explanatory comments” in between symphonic selections of “great masters.” Sokoloff asserted that radio broadcasting was “educating the American public to appreciate good music.”⁹⁷ Sokoloff reiterated this sentiment as FMP National Director and was

⁹⁶ Helen Keller, “Letter to the Symphony Society of New York,” *New York Times*, February 10, 1924, 8 in Timothy D. Taylor, Mark Katz, and Tony Grajeda, eds., *Music, Sound, and Technology in America: A Documentary History of Early Phonograph, Cinema, and Radio* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2012), 271-2.

⁹⁷ “Programs Lauded by Bandmasters,” *New York Times*, September 12, 1926, 2 in Timothy D. Taylor, Mark Katz, and Tony Grajeda, eds., *Music, Sound, and Technology in America: A Documentary History of Early Phonograph, Cinema, and Radio* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2012), 309-10.

clearly influenced by early radio programming when he began to develop FMP radio programming.⁹⁸

Not all musicians were comfortable with the prominence that radio was gaining. In September of 1937, the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) threatened a strike of all union members at radio stations in order to create new jobs for its members as well as increase their pay at network-affiliate stations. A series of conferences and meetings between representatives from the AFM, the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), and the Independent Radio Networks Affiliates (IRNA) were held in New York City in September and October. Eventually the NAB and IRNA would come to separate agreements with the AFM. The IRNA resolved to that stations affiliated with a network would employ AFM musicians at their stations paying them approximately 5% of their gross annual receipts for a period of two years beginning on January 17, 1938. It also approved the formulation of a national trade agreement for uniform adoption in the Locals. The NAB however agreed to hire AFM musicians with the stipulation that the contract would not prevent a station from including programming for civic, educational, and religious purposes. The NAB saw the agreement reached between the AFM and the IRNA as giving complete control of network and transcription programs to the AFM rather than the stations themselves.⁹⁹

The agreements made between the AFM, radio networks, and broadcasters was a resolution to just one of the many issues that would arise during this time. From August 1942

⁹⁸ For further insight into radio listening needs and habits, see Jann Pasler, "Writing for Radio Listeners in the 1930s: National Identity, Canonization, and Transnational Consensus from New York to Paris," *The Musical Quarterly* 98, no. 3 (Fall 2015): 212-62.

⁹⁹ Correspondence, Independent Radio Networks Affiliates, September 17, 1937, WBAA Records, MSP 211, Addition 1, B1, Purdue University Archives and Special Collections, West Lafayette, Indiana.

until the end of 1944, the American Federation of Musicians went on strike and banned members from making recordings for use on the radio. As a result of the issues in 1937, many stations were relying almost solely on recorded music instead of live musicians. The union went so far as to run advertisements in magazines and daily papers that warned the public of “the robot as an entertainer” and the negative effect radio programming had on children’s creativity. For better or worse, the radio was having a direct effect on how American composers were writing music and what they were writing.¹⁰⁰

The goal of transmitting music to rural areas was seen as a feasible and worthwhile goal, and in 1936 the FMP began recording the best of the FMP symphonies and sending these to any radio station that requested them. The FMP recorded 103 fifteen-minute segments of programs containing over 400 separate musical numbers ranging from symphonies, tone poems, and marches to spirituals, ballads, and choral music as well as dance recordings. A typical program consisted of ten minutes of music followed by a three-minute speech given by a “prominent person” outlining the objectives and accomplishments of the WPA, and two final minutes of program announcements. Of the programs, Director Sokoloff, who conducted a number of the recorded performances and oversaw the entirety of the recordings, said “a determining purpose in making these records was to afford a means by which persons in the more remote areas of the country to whom concerts by the large units were not accessible might share in this music.” The recordings were also made available to rural schools for use in musical instruction and appreciation courses. Joseph N. Weber, director of the American Federation of Musicians (AFM)

¹⁰⁰ Tawa, *The Great American Symphony*, 9; Daniel Gregory Mason, “Radio vs. the Virtuoso,” *The American Mercury* 20 (1930): 455.

expressed his agreement to the creation of these programs. Local stations donated the airtime for the broadcasts, allowing their listeners to hear “live” FMP radio programs.¹⁰¹

Radio programming helped to considerably bolster attendance numbers for FMP programs. In Indiana alone, the FMP broadcast more than fifty-one programs in 1937 to an estimated audience of 153,000 listeners. Director Sokoloff argued these numbers proved that the FMP was meeting the musical needs of the American people without having to cater to the “lowest musical denominator.”¹⁰² In other words, tastes were beginning to favor classical music over vernacular forms.

Sokoloff was not the only one arguing that American tastes were trending toward favoring classical music. In 1938 the Princeton Radio Research Project conducted a nation-wide survey and concluded that “classical” music had “more devotees in the city than in the country, in the higher income groups than in the lower, among women than among men, [and] among the older than among the younger.” Importantly, those who indicated a preference for “classical” music were in a clear majority that outnumbered those expressing a preference for “popular music” across the socioeconomic spectrum. The one exception listed was “the farm and at the bottom of the economic scale.” This increase in classical music’s popularity was attributed to greater opportunity to hear classical programming on the radio. In the magazine *The American Mercury*, Daniel Gregory Mason observed of radio listeners that “there seems to be a natural evolution of taste, from fondness for the most trivial jazz and other popular clap-trap to

¹⁰¹ Tawa, *The Great American Symphony*, 340-41; Sokoloff, *The Federal Music Project*, 29.

¹⁰² Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation*, 33; 1937 Indiana Narrative Reports, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 805 B2, National Archives.

appreciation of the great masterpieces, which takes place automatically whenever full opportunity combines with the desire for growth and the strength of mind to concentrate.”¹⁰³

Starting February 2, 1937, the Indianapolis Concert Orchestra and String Ensemble frequently presented educational broadcasts over station WIRE. Many prominent Indianapolis musicians were featured as guest soloists and a station staff member served as a commentator. One of the most popular broadcasts was the “Contemporary American” series which featured music sent in by the State Directors of New York, Massachusetts, and California. In July 1937, an FMP chorus broadcasted works by Tchaikovsky and Edvard Grieg and was so popular that each August program was set to feature an FMP chorus. All FMP radio broadcasts over station WIRE were discontinued at the beginning of November 1937 per the suggestion of Director Sokoloff at the 1937 Mid-West Conference of the State Music Project Directors due to licensing issues.¹⁰⁴ Though Indiana ceased all FMP broadcasts at this time, other states in the Midwest continued to broadcast.

According to George Foster in his official report on program operation and accomplishment for the FMP and WPA Music Programs, government programs were best served on municipal or university radio stations. “Over such stations programs addressed to specific audiences could be arranged in at the most appropriate periods and the length of the program was determined by its importance and not by the amount of free time the station had left over.” Programs in music history, band clinics, radio classes in harmony, form, and music appreciation, the geography of music, and other special lectures were more easily arranged, and often

¹⁰³ Dickson Skinner, “Music Goes into Mass Production,” *Harper’s Magazine* (April 1939): 486-7.; Mason, “Radio vs. Virtuoso,” 458.

¹⁰⁴ July 1937 Indiana Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 805, B2, National Archives.

supplemented correspondence courses. Foster did note, however, that the efficacy of the program was dependent upon regular broadcasting in order to build up a consistent audience.¹⁰⁵

Many educators saw broadcasting as a valuable tool to extend teaching, aid in fundraising, and even as an adjunct to degree study in the home. In 1930 two organizations were formed that were dedicated to the educational use of radio, the National Committee on Education by Radio supported by the Payne Fund, and the Council on Radio in Education funded by John D. Rockefeller Jr. and the Carnegie Corporation. Though differing in opinion of how broadcasting should be accomplished, both organizations were instrumental in promoting educational radio programming.¹⁰⁶

The WPA also recognized the educational value of radio for both music and general education. In 1936, the WPA in cooperation with the Wisconsin College of the Air and the National Youth Administration organized a radio study group to serve “out-of-school individuals of high school age and above.” The ultimate goal was to provide educational opportunities, specifically targeting “that group of people who cannot continue to or in college, a means of maintaining and gratifying their interests of a college level.” Radio Study Groups centers were developed in which a group of participants would hear the broadcasts under the direction and supervision of what the project titled a “Group Teacher.” The Group Teacher acted as instructor, presenting a lecture and/or pertinent information before each College of the Air broadcast and facilitating discussion and class work. The Group Teachers were employed by the WPA and the

¹⁰⁵ Foster, *Record of Program Accomplishments*, 345.

¹⁰⁶ Barnouw, *A Tower in Babel*, 117, 261-4.

Central Office was staffed and supervised by the NYA who also conducted quantitative tests which determined the program's efficacy.¹⁰⁷

The administration of the Radio Study Groups was an excellent example of state and government cooperation. The meeting places and radio sets were furnished by individual localities in cooperation with educational sponsors. Each group of ten to twenty participants of high school age or above met in public buildings such as libraries, public schools, churches, and town halls. A typical group meeting would include roll call, lecture, the broadcast, and follow up discussion. For the lecture, the teacher would give short talk to introduce himself or herself and then provide general information on the subject to be studied that day. The teacher provided suggestions to the students of what to listen for such as the broadcaster's viewpoint, the purpose of the broadcast, and any particularly important parts of the broadcast. In follow up discussion the teacher would ask six-to-ten additional questions and provide constructive criticism of the broadcaster and lecture. Each meeting included a quiz, though the instructor was given discretion to refrain from examinations as he or she saw fit.¹⁰⁸

Indianapolis units were the most prolific with regard to radio broadcasting. Beginning February 2, 1937, station WIRE broadcast fifteen-minute programs semi-weekly with many prominent guest artists appearing with the concert orchestra and string ensemble on-air. A station staff member would act as commentator for these live programs. According to the *Indianapolis Times*, the twice-weekly FMP broadcasts were the only "serious music emanating from

¹⁰⁷ Radio Study Group Plan, 1-2, WBAA Records, MSP 211, B2, Purdue University Archives and Special Collections, West Lafayette, Indiana.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 3-6.

Indianapolis.”¹⁰⁹ For areas with no active units to provide live music, such as the Greater Lafayette area, stations relied on the pre-recorded segments distributed by the FMP and WPA.

On April 4, 1922, West Lafayette’s WBAA became the first licensed radio station in Indiana. According to the National Committee on Education by radio, in 1936 WBAA was the “second most-listened-to station in Indiana.” Broadcasts in the 1930s and 1940s were split between music and educational programming, both for general adult education and broadcasts intended for use in the public-school classroom. The station attempted to balance programming so that the average listener would be able to find something of interest, and in lieu of commercial breaks the station inserted educational features. In 1944 the *Purdue University School of the Air* program began for high school students and consisted of courses in mechanical drawing, agriculture and Spanish. In the fall of 1947 nearly 50,000 students representing 7% of Indiana school children had enrolled in the program. By the 1960s they had expanded their offerings to include music, speech, Indiana history, and science.¹¹⁰

By 1941 the station was able to reach every county in the state under average weather conditions and provided the most extensive coverage of all the stations in Indiana. Due to this increased access, the station expanded their current programming and added many programs which became staples of the broadcast schedule. The program most expanded was “Farm Forum,” which grew from fifteen minutes three times per week to half an hour five times a week. This increased schedule was able to better serve the listeners across the state, including 100 high school vocational agriculture classes which used the program as part of their curriculum. Purdue

¹⁰⁹ Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation*, 21; *The Federal Music Project in Indiana*, W-5066, 2, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 825, B41, National Archives.

¹¹⁰ Report of Expanded WBAA Activities Since Sept. 27, 1941, WBAA Records, MSP 211, Addition 1, B1, Purdue University Archives and Special Collections, West Lafayette, Indiana.

also worked with farm organizations and other public agencies to aid in the broadcasts. Two popular new program additions for the year were the Associated Press wire and “After High School—What Next?” The installation of the Associated Press automatic printer increased the station’s popularity and credibility by allowing for hourly newscasts. The “After High School—What’s Next?” series was a question-and-answer format with questions taken from files in the Admissions office and answered by staff members. Each program was designed to meet the needs of potential Purdue students regarding requirements and enrollment. Programming also expanded to include more classroom lectures, journalism talks, and lectures on international relations.¹¹¹

Many of WBAA’s musical broadcasts expanded on the efforts of the FMP’s radio programming, including “Dinner Hour,” “Symphony Hall,” and “Story Behind Music.” “Dinner Hour” ran from 6:00 to 6:30 P.M. and was devoted to “the best in classical music.” Programs were planned one month in advance and copies of programs with the composers and compositions were available by request. These programs rarely featured American composers. For example, the program listing for the month of November 1941 listed selections from European composers such as Wagner, Chopin, Beethoven, Schumann, Brahms, Liszt, and Handel exclusively. Similarly, “Dinner Hall” presented an uninterrupted hour of symphonic music once a week during the 7:00 P.M. hour. Finally, “Story Behind Music,” much like FMP music appreciation concerts, provided a simulated “back stage” interview of a music authority by a music critic and reported to present facts and anecdotes about general musical concepts, artists, and composers.¹¹²

¹¹¹ Report of Expanded WBAA Activities Since Sept. 27, 1941, 1-4, WBAA Records, MSP 211, Addition 1, B1, Purdue University Archives and Special Collections, West Lafayette, Indiana.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 2-3.

WBAA's largely educational programming was very well received by its audience. The station reported a large number of requests for copies of lectures or programs given. Often the interest was for unscripted programming such as forums and panel discussions. According to its 1941 "Report of Expanded WBAA Activities," the station saw these requests as "a good indication of the effectiveness of the programs. Another indication is to omit something or make a mistake and it brings results immediately. Not long ago the market reporter omitted certain egg prices. The next day a farmer...wrote a card wanting to know why...He had been depending on Purdue egg prices."¹¹³ Clearly WBAA had become an integral part of the community and had helped to shape it culturally and economically.

The Radio Institute of the Audible Arts outlined several criteria for children's radio programming in its Winter 1935-1936 volume, and WBAA adopted these values. First, the programming should have emotional emphasis and include "excitement and adventure within reason." The programming should also be in good taste. "Low comedy" or offensive and loud noises were rejected as "unworthy behavior." The Institute promoted "truthfulness," or authentic and accurate background regarding history, science, and geography, and warned against fantastical concepts becoming too real. Broadcasters were also instructed to have integrity and not to include propaganda or partisan issues as well as avoid slang, bad grammar, "vulgarisms," and poor diction "unless in character." Finally, if advertising was to be included in the program it was to have "no unwarranted emotional appeal" to the young listeners. This final point was important due to the amount of programming sponsored by various corporations.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ Ibid., 4-5.

¹¹⁴ Radio Institute of the Audible Arts, Winter 1935-1936, WBAA Records, MSP 211, B1, Purdue University Archives and Special Collections, West Lafayette, Indiana.

Prior to the FMP's creation WBAA was engaged in children's programming that featured classical music sponsored by private enterprise. One such program was "The Singing Lady," sponsored by the Kellogg Company, that aired on Friday evenings. The show began with the "Kellogg's Supper Song" jingle and an advertisement for Kellogg's Corn Flakes by the announcer. "The Singing Lady" script #928 aired on September 28, 1934 and featured the French composer Claude Debussy. It began with "Clair de Lune" and took the form of a narrative story between young Claude and the shepherd Jacques to teach the students about Debussy, his life, and the song's genesis. It ended with the following line of encouragement, "When you hear that again you'll remember who composed it—Debussy—and you will remember the name of it—Clair de Lune—won't you." It ended with another advertisement for Kellogg's Corn Flakes and rendition of "Kellogg's Supper Song" with the Singing Lady telling her young listeners "Good night—and pleasant dreams." Though providing basic dramatized information that was heavily laden with advertisement, this is an example of the type of music instruction available over the radio prior to the efforts of the FMP.¹¹⁵

Specific reference to FMP programming at WBAA is only evidenced in one program guide, the *WBAA Programs and Broadcast Schedule*, dated 1935-1936. The "WPA Musicale" was slated from Thursdays at 2:45 and was described as being in cooperation with "the local organizations of the Works Progress Administration in presenting musical talent found among its personnel." Further reports and records allude to the use of FMP recordings, such as the 1948 Annual Report which indicated that the station had an "ever-changing file of 250 or more fifteen minute dramatized and musical programs which have been secured from various sources."

¹¹⁵ Kellogg Company, The Singing Lady #928 Transcript, WBAA Records, MSP 211, B1, Purdue University Archives and Special Collections, West Lafayette, Indiana.

Though regularly scheduled FMP broadcasts appear to have been discontinued after 1936, much of the station's educational and musical programming was in line with the national goals of the FMP, such as the nightly "Dinner Hour" expressly reserved for "the best in classical music," "Symphony Hall" which presented an hour of symphonic music, and "Exploring Music" targeted to public school children as part of the *School of the Air* curriculum.¹¹⁶

Similar to the efforts of the WPA, Purdue embarked upon its own program of broadcasts for schools in 1937 as a precursor to its "School of the Air." In June of 1937 Glenn Edgar Merriam presented the results of an extensive survey of Lafayette and West Lafayette school children and their listening habits in his thesis as partial fulfillment for a degree in Electrical Engineering. The study was conducted to determine the degree of usefulness of WBAA's special school broadcasts and more accurately understand the listening habits of children between the first and eighth grades. WBAA worked directly with area schools to present four weekly broadcasts. "Story Time" was expressly reserved for students between the first and third grade, while the remainder were geared toward fourth through eighth grade. "Geography in the News" was a travel series, "Great Inventions" focused on modern scientific developments, and "Men of Vision" was an electrically transcribed series that presented dramatizations from the lives of various inventors and "discoverers." The study found that seventy percent of the schools in Lafayette and West Lafayette received the broadcasts and the teachers in these schools were taking full advantage of them by incorporating the programming into their curriculum. In general, the teachers preferred dramatizations and discussions over programs that were strictly dialogue or skits. Additionally, teachers sent in recommendations for further programming including "health talks, music appreciation, social science talks and dramatizations, travelogues,

¹¹⁶ WBAA Programs and Broadcast Schedule, 1935-1936, WBAA Records, MSP 211, Addition 1, B1, Purdue University Archives and Special Collections, West Lafayette, Indiana.

dramatizations of historical events, current events, story telling, physical education, life drama of famous people, plays, famous pieces of literature dramatized, citizenship lessons, life customs of people in foreign lands, politics and government, english [sic], and better speech.”¹¹⁷

As the example of Indiana’s WBAA shows, there was a demand for classical music, but programming reports reveal an equal or greater amount of time devoted to educational, agricultural, and popular music. In the 1937 WBAA survey of school-aged listeners, it was found that they all preferred popular music most followed by band music, “old time songs,” hillbilly, Negro spirituals, religious music, and lastly symphonic and opera music.¹¹⁸ Moreover, the music often broadcast during “Dinner Hour” or “Symphony Hall” was that of the European “greats” rather than American composers. Issues with the American Federation of Musicians as well as the feud between the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP) and Broadcast Music, Incorporated (BMI) from 1940-1941 also negatively affected the amount of FMP programming that hit the airwaves. The case of radio broadcasting in Indiana indicates that even when official FMP broadcasts were no longer incorporated into regular programming, the goals and aims of the FMP were embraced by the stations themselves and disseminated through alternate means.

Activities in Illinois and Indiana centered primarily on performance and education, while other states in the Midwest had more special interest projects. The Illinois Symphony Orchestra and Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra were the most active and actively promoted performance units in their states. These and other units worked to foster collaboration with private enterprise

¹¹⁷ Glenn Edgar Merriam, “Study of Radio Listening Habits and Practices of Lafayette and West Lafayette School Children” (Thesis, Purdue University, 1937), 5-10, 18, 28-9, WBAA Records, MSP 211, Addition 1, B1, Purdue University Archives and Special Collections, West Lafayette, Indiana.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 29-30.

by featuring many professional non-relief musicians on their concerts as well as offering premieres of compositions by American composers on almost every program. The Chicago and Indianapolis Composers' Forum Laboratories also worked to improve the Midwestern musical palate by providing an opportunity for the public to hear new works by American composers and then participate in a question and answer forum with the composer immediately following the performance. Finally, efforts to provide music education to children and adults introduced many citizens to classical music and in many cases provided the opportunity for music education and instruction that was previously unavailable.

CHAPTER 4: MUSIC THERAPY: THE FMP IN MICHIGAN

Music in Michigan

The Federal Music Project in Michigan was active in performance and music education, but its greatest contribution was in the field of music therapy. The Michigan WPA Guide, *Michigan: A Guide to the Wolverine State*, chronicles the first instrument in Michigan as a harpsichord housed at the Detroit military post and imported by a German doctor in 1796. Early Michigan settlers allegedly developed very little in the way of folk music. Lumber workers “had their own songs, roared in the forests and in mill-town saloons, but the melodies were not original” and were adaptations of songs sung in Maine and Canada. Sailors on the Great Lakes however introduced indigenous elements into their chanteys, such as using the wind to predict weather conditions or seaworthiness of a vessel. For example, one chantey included the stanza, “The rats have left her one by one/ They tightroped to the shore/ And if we stay long on this old tub/ We’ll see our friends no more.”¹

A variety of musical groups playing either for their own pleasure or in public concerts started emerging in the 1880s. The St. Cecilia Society, first established in Great Britain in 1891, established a chapter in Grand Rapids in 1893. The Women’s Tuesday Musicale, organized ca. 1886, brought many musicians to Detroit including Edward MacDowell, Friedrich Kreisler, and Ignacy Paderewski. The Detroit Orchestral Organization was the forerunner to the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and brought a variety of orchestras to the city for subscription concert

¹ Writers Program of the Work Projects Administration in the State of Michigan, *Michigan: A Guide to the Wolverine State*, American Guide Series (New York: Oxford University Press, 1941), 118, 152.

seasons. Through the Detroit Civic Opera Society in cooperation with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the city experienced light opera, recitals, and ballet.²

The Federal Music Project in Michigan maintained concert and symphony orchestras, dance bands, jazz bands, concert bands, novelty units, a teacher's project, and a music copying unit. As was protocol nationwide, units largely played outdoors, usually in city parks, during the summer months and indoors during the winter. The two cities most active in Michigan's FMP were Detroit and Grand Rapids. Detroit's most active and recognized unit was the Michigan Symphony Orchestra, formerly the Detroit Civic Orchestra. Although often competing with the private Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the WPA unit was still able to draw sizeable audiences and find venues in which to perform. For example, in the summer of 1936 the Detroit Symphony Orchestra played a series of three public concerts in the outdoor shell at Belle Isle which forced the Civic Orchestra, per national mandate not to compete with private enterprise, to play outdoor concerts in another location without the benefit of a band shell. Nonetheless it was reported in the August 1936 Narrative Report that the playing was of an "excellent caliber" with finely crafted programs and positive audience reception. In October of 1936 the Detroit Civic Orchestra combined with musicians from Grand Rapids, Flint, Jackson, and Lansing to form the eighty-five player Michigan Symphony Orchestra.³

FMP units in Grand Rapids filled the need for a professional orchestra and band in the area. According to State Director Karl Wecker in 1936, "for many years there has been no adequate band here and it is very evident that the WPA concert band is filling a niche most adequately and to the great satisfaction of its audiences." The Grand Rapids Orchestra had a

² Ibid., 152-3.

³ August 1936 Michigan Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 803-804, B1, National Archives.

regular performance schedule which included free school concerts. Outstanding area students were also invited to perform with the ensemble as guest soloists on their programs. One of the most popular concert series the Grand Rapids Orchestra maintained were in the orchestra shells at John Ball Park and the Grecian Theater which featured local soloists and conductors performing works by local composers and arrangers.⁴

Iron Mountain was another example of national goals in practice. Called Michigan's "prize project" by Detroit Civic Orchestra conductor Izler Solomon in 1936, the Iron Mountain Band provided music to the rural Upper Peninsula. The unit boasted a large audience despite its location, in part due to its music appreciation concerts for schools and other organizations. In 1937 the Houghton County Band was formed to further service the Upper Peninsula and its surrounding areas.⁵ In Houghton County, the FMP was able to reestablish a private-sector band that had been dismantled due to the depression. Known as the "Copper County of Michigan," copper mining companies in the area had maintained a professional Italian band that had achieved a national reputation. Many talented musicians moved to the area to play in the band, but once the mines closed, they were left without employment. Most of them remained in the Upper Peninsula and were able to reform under the auspices of the WPA. The band was well received by the community and maintained an active schedule of concerts featuring local musicians as guest soloists, student music appreciation concerts, and a series of radio concerts.⁶

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ January 1937 Michigan Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 803-804, B1, National Archives.

One popular unit was the Tamburitza Orchestra in Detroit.⁷ The FMP oversaw the organization of America's first Tamburitza Orchestra, a "novelty" group that consisted of 30 musicians who played Yugoslavian music on tamburitzas, the family of fretted stringed instruments native to Croatia.⁸ This unit demonstrated the only real effort in Michigan to provide folk music outside of the symphony or orchestra concert setting and often participated in programs presented in partnership with other organizations. For instance, in December 1938 the orchestra played in a program organized jointly by the Council of Social Agencies and the American Association of University Women at the Detroit Art Institute presenting Christmas music from around the world. The members of the Tambouritza Orchestra were excellent singers and also maintained a quartet who would sing carols and songs to Tambouritza accompaniment.⁹

The units in Michigan were well received throughout the FMP's tenure in the state. A letter to the editor of the *Jackson Citizen* in September of 1936 said the following of a music appreciation concert given by the Lansing Concert Orchestra:

From a non-partisan point of view it would seem that the continuance of these art projects should exercise a gracious and lasting influence on the culture of our times. Counting the cost in terms of taxation, this one concert given free to our boys and girls is worth more than the entire amount spent on the development of

⁷ Michigan's narrative reports frequently mention the "Gypsy Orchestra" in conjunction with the Tambouritza Orchestra, but virtually no information is given other than the fact that the two groups often played on the same program. It appears that the Gypsy Orchestra was a distinct unit, but the reports do not include dedicated reporting to its activities like it does the Tambouritza Orchestra.

⁸ The fretted, lute-like tamburitzas come in five basic shapes and sizes. The smallest is the oval shaped "Prim" or "Bisernica" which plays melody and harmony in the highest octaves. The "Brac" or "Basprim" is shaped like a tenor guitar and plays melody and harmony in mid-range octaves. The "Celo" is roughly the size of a folk guitar and plays the counter melody in the lower octaves, similar to the cello in a standard Western symphony orchestra. Similar to the size and shape of the Celo is the "Bugarija" or "Kontra" which solely plays chords for the counter rhythm. Finally, the "Bas," shaped like a double bass plays the lowest octaves. Unlike the Western Bass, the Bas is fretted with wire strings and is played with a pick. Although the instruments gained prominence in the 1930s-1940s, today Tamburitza music isn't widely known or disseminated outside of folk music circles. ("What is a Tamburitza?," Detroit Tamburitza Orchestra, accessed May 7, 2019, <http://www.detroittamburitzaorchestra.com/index.php/what-is-a-tamburitza>.)

⁹ December 1938 Michigan Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 805, B5, National Archives.

the orchestra to date. Whether Democrats, Republicans, or Socialists ride in the saddle next November should make little difference with the continuance of these worthy projects. Jackson may well be proud of this WPA Orchestra.¹⁰

The private sector provided many musical opportunities as well. The 1930s saw an upswing in amateur orchestras and choruses as well as the formation of local symphonies in Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, and Lansing. Many large industrial enterprises such as Chrysler and General Motors organized employee choruses, much like the FMP Teachers' Project Mother's Choruses formed from in area school districts. As of 1941 there were eight large orchestras and eighty-five choral societies and organizations including a Scandinavian a capella chorus, the Jewish Halevy Society, the Bach Chorus, the Arbeiter-Maenner Chor [Choir], The Rheingold Male Chorus, the Verdi Choral Society, and the Detroit Negro Opera Company.¹¹

There was a high demand for jazz music in Michigan, especially in larger cities which had an active jazz community such as Grand Rapids. Roma Hall in downtown Grand Rapids frequently featured African American musicians. Herman Curtis, one of the first African American musicians to reside and perform in the city, was often billed as "The Clown Prince of Jazz" in Roma Hall advertising. Club Indigo, a nightclub organized for the "social, athletic, and civic advancement" of African Americans in Grand Rapids operated out of Roma Hall and opened in 1936 and frequently provided floor shows. Many musicians who played in the house band or acted as bandleader, including Gene Seals, Arnold Allen, and Bennie Carew, were employed for a time by the FMP. The Grand Rapids FMP Band also played for a charity dance for the Grand Rapids Youth Council held by Club Indigo in April 1939.¹²

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ *Michigan: A Guide to the Wolverine State*, 154.

¹² Kim Rush, John Russo, and Martin Starr, "Roma Hall, Club Indigo, and Jazz" www.historyandgrandrapids.org/article/4068/roma-hall-club-indigo-and-jazz, accessed September 7, 2019; "Roma Hall Story," West Mich Music Hysterical Society, www.westmichmusichystericalsociety.com/roma-hall-story, accessed September 7, 2019.

As in Illinois and Indiana, Jazz music and African American musicians were relegated to segregated dance bands or choirs in Michigan. These dance bands would also play for Federal Theatre Project productions, a task not assigned to members of symphony or orchestra units. These segregated dance bands were titled either the “White Jazz Band” or “Colored Jazz Band” and functioned solely to provide the music for outdoor street dances or dances in recreational centers. Michigan State Director Izler Solomon wrote in his August 1936 narrative report that these street dances were “rapidly heating up into one of the most popular forms of WPA music activities in Detroit.” Efforts were made to resurface an unspecified central downtown square with concrete wash and then coat it with wax to replicate ballroom conditions. The white and colored jazz bands also shared responsibilities for providing music for Federal Theatre Project engagements. Although Solomon noted the popularity of the Jazz Bands, very little attention was paid to these units in subsequent reports.¹³

In June 1937 two Jazz bands in Detroit were eliminated due to a reduction of quota. State Director Karl Wecker justified the dissolution of these units as being less “legitimate” as the other bands in the Upper Peninsula. He wrote of the decision to eliminate the jazz bands that “from that standpoint of public service it seemed far more advisable to maintain our legitimate units at the expense of the dance bands.” The decision was hotly contested by band members who picketed the supervisors’ offices in Detroit, but Wecker was adamant that nothing could be done to reinstate the units with the current quota. When an increase of quota did come a single “Colored Dance Band” was formed consisting of one band leader and thirteen members. Wecker

¹³ August 1936 Michigan Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 803-804, B1, National Archives.

described them as “[some] of the finest bandsmen in the city...second to none of the famous ‘dance bands’ one hears on the road and over the air.”¹⁴

A prime example of the Eurocentric musical priorities of FMP units in the Midwest is the energy afforded to the transcription for orchestra of a cello concerto by Austrian composer Mathias Georg Monn from the 1700s. Philip Abbas, conductor of the Grand Rapids Federal Symphony Orchestra, discovered the concerto, which had “lain dormant since the day of Bach” in a private library in Chicago. The first public performance of the work was scheduled for November 21, 1937 with the Illinois Symphony Orchestra in Chicago with Abbas conducting. State Director Karl Wecker highlighted the value of this “rediscovery” to musicologists and cellists.¹⁵

Music Appreciation and Education

The FMP units in Michigan were committed to providing educational experiences for both children and adults throughout the state. Soon after the inauguration of FMP activities in the state, requests from smaller communities outside of Grand Rapids, including Sparta, Hastings, Middleville, Grandville, Big Rapids, and Lowell, were received for musical performances at special occasions. The Grand Rapids Orchestra sent small ensembles to these events and provided a short program consisting of a lecture discussing the musical selections to follow. These small ensembles only participated in events that were open to the public and no fees were charged or received.¹⁶

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ October 1936 Michigan Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 803-804 B1, National Archives.

Many band and orchestra units were particularly active in providing music appreciation concerts and providing performance opportunities to school-aged children. Often these groups would play once during the school day for the children and then again in the evenings in an appreciation concert open to the general public. The Grand Rapids Orchestra maintained a regular schedule of free school concerts and often featured an outstanding instrumentalist from each school as a guest soloist. They also featured what State Director Karl Wecker, who replaced Izler Solomon in October of 1936, called “embryo conductors.” These conductors were students who were given the opportunity to appear with the orchestra in order to develop their interest in “making good music as well as listening to it.” Similarly, the Detroit Orchestra maintained a series of “instrumental-demonstration” concerts in area public schools in partnership with the music education curriculum.¹⁷

Wecker identified the children’s concerts of Detroit Civic Orchestra, conducted by Otto Krueger, as the unit’s most important work. Detroit had many schools comprised primarily of students from under-privileged areas who he described as “under-fed, poorly dressed, unbelievably dirty, and riotous.” The program for these concerts provided something of interest for most students, and they were given ample opportunity to sing along with the orchestra to familiar tunes. The concerts ran for an average of forty-five minutes and included both instruction and performance. Wecker noted that as a result, the audience “transformed into a thousand eager children, their faces alight, leaning forward with anticipation and greeting the orchestra with the most unusual signs of approbation.” Each concert ended by playing “The

¹⁷ Ibid.

Victors,” the official march of the University of Michigan, as the children marched “in soldierly order” back to their classrooms.¹⁸

The Grand Rapids Band played sixteen concerts for children only, and seventeen free public music appreciation concerts in the first four months of the 1936-1937 school year, which was representative of the average music appreciation schedule for FMP units in Michigan. Wecker noted that consequently, school children in the area were more interested in “good music.” He wrote that this was evidenced by “increasing instrument sales in music store and a rapidly mounting list of private lessons. It is interesting to read through the copies of these letters from school children...just how this music has appealed to them.”¹⁹

Michigan did not have as large or active FMP Teachers’ Project as Indiana, but it still found ways to provide music education to as many people as possible. In September 1939 the Upper Peninsula accommodated requests for music education by using a portion of the six-hour weekly work day of the bands in Iron River, Ironwood, Calumet, and Iron Mountain to develop a program of instrumental teaching. Rather than breaking the units down into individual teachers for a certain period of time each week, State Director Karl Wecker decided that the entire band would be assigned to a community for an entire six-hour day. The band would first provide an hour-long educational concert, and then those students who were interested in music and whose schedule permitted would remain in the auditorium for instruction. During instruction they were given the opportunity to participate in discussion sessions and to sit with the organization and play their own instruments. Those without instruments of their own were provided one from

¹⁸ March 1937 Michigan Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, 805, B2, National Archives.

¹⁹ Ibid.

sponsor donations. Wecker admitted that the schedule appeared to be “a grand compilation of concert, clinic, and teaching procedures,” but assured the national director that the result was an increased “desire for instruction which is obtainable under this arrangement to a greater degree than if we sent a single teacher at an appointed hour to a group for instruction.” Although a departure from accepted teaching procedure in units across the Midwest, Wecker was adamant that this type of program was successfully meeting the public’s musical needs.²⁰

The FMP in Michigan met the educational needs of isolated communities by providing individual musicians who were unable to become part of a performing unit without leaving their place of residence. At any given time approximately nineteen to twenty-five teachers held this type of position throughout the state and provided instrumental instruction and public school vocal and instrumental music instruction in rural areas. The service proved most valuable to the Upper Peninsula which contained rural schools with no music instruction whatsoever. According to the October 1939 narrative report, Front Creek, Michigan saved money over a period of “several years” to buy a set of band instruments that had been unused since 1930 due to the lack of funds to hire a music teacher. With the appointment of an FMP music teacher, “the dream of this little community [was] realized.”²¹

Many small communities were eager to integrate music instruction into the school curriculum. In early November 1939 two instrumental instructors were assigned by the FMP to Eastland High School and they immediately organized a band, orchestra, and instrumental classes. The PTA quickly voted to construct a music room since rehearsal in the gymnasium

²⁰ September 1939 Michigan Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 805, B7, National Archives.

²¹ Ibid.

proved to be disruptive to other classes in the building. Parents went to work gathering material contributions from local vendors and constructed the addition themselves. On December 12, 1939, the new band room was presented to the high school at an event attended by over 350 parents and friends as well as WPA officials and school board members.²²

Altshuler and Eloise

Of all the musical activities in the state, federal and private, arguably the most significant was the work done in the field of music therapy. The Wayne County Poor House was founded in 1832 and derived its nickname of “Eloise” after the postmaster of Detroit’s four-year-old daughter. Although it functioned under many names including the Wayne County House and Wayne County General Hospital and Infirmary, Eloise was most commonly associated with the campus located in Westlake, Michigan. At one time Eloise housed a poorhouse, large farm, tuberculosis sanitarium, infirmary, and general hospital, but it is most remembered for its work with patients at the mental asylum.²³

Eloise grew to be its own self-sustaining community complete with its own police and fire departments, railway, bakery, laundry, and power station as well as multiple farm buildings which included a swine barn, tobacco curing building, and multiple greenhouses. There were sixteen patient housing complexes which were given an alphabetical designation from “A” to “P,” but these designations were constantly changing with ongoing construction. Roughly twenty percent of the staff lived on-site in low-rent housing, and many staff members raised their families on the grounds.²⁴

²² Ibid.

²³ Patricia Ibbotson, *Eloise: Poorhouse, Farm, Asylum, and Hospital, 1839-1984*, Images of America (Chicago: Arcadia Publishing, 2002), 7.

²⁴ Ibid.

The institution grew exponentially from only thirty-five residents on 280 acres in 1839 to its population peak of 14,000 in 1933 during the Depression. There were 8,291 deaths between 1944 and 1949, which is another indication of the size of the population as a whole. Farm operations ceased in 1958 and the campus began to purchase all of its food rather than produce it on-site. The large psychiatric hospitals began to downsize in 1973, and the State of Michigan took over the psychiatric division in 1977. The complex was completely vacated in 1984 and all but five of the buildings and the cemetery were demolished and redeveloped.²⁵

Eloise is well-known for many of its pioneering scientific achievements, most notably its role in pioneering X-ray technology. In 1895, the year X-rays were discovered in by W.C. Roentgen in Germany, Eloise's Chief Bookkeeper Stanislaus Keenan loaned his own personal induction coils and static machine to the hospital in order to produce X-rays after Roentgen's method. Keenan was tasked with building a larger static machine to facilitate the hospital's needs and the end result was a twelve-plate, sector-less "Wimhurst" machine²⁶ that was ready for use in December of 1896. Many Detroit physicians began sending patients to Eloise for imaging and the institution was among the first in the nation to render radiographs for medical diagnosis.²⁷

As the services offered by Eloise grew, Michigan State University established a curriculum for training technologists which resulted in an affiliation with Eloise in January of 1938. This affiliation as well as the one with Wayne State University began a close relationship

²⁵ Ibid., 8.

²⁶ A Wimhurst machine is an electrostatic generator capable of producing high voltage developed by British inventor John Wimhurst between 1880-1883.

²⁷ Alvin C. Clark, *A History of the Wayne County Infirmary, Psychiatric, and General Hospital Complex at Eloise, Michigan: 1832-1982* (Michigan: Wayne County Board of County Institutions, 1982), 12-3.

between academics and medicine in practice.²⁸ Also in 1938 Dr. Ira Altschuler began one of the first large-scale music therapy programs for mentally ill patients in America at Eloise Hospital in Detroit, Michigan. Using musicians from the Federal Music Project, his program combined psychoanalysis and music therapy designed specifically for large groups of patients rather than individual therapy. Altschuler emphasized the importance of his experiments and his research garnered national and international recognition for the field of music therapy and the FMP by extension.²⁹

Altshuler was born June 2, 1883 in Ukraine and soon thereafter moved with his family to Switzerland to escape Jewish religious persecution. His uncle sponsored his medical education at Berne Medical School, and he worked as a general practitioner in Switzerland for two years after his graduation in 1917. In 1919 he moved to Detroit to join his brother Abraham and spent eight years in private practice before completing postgraduate work at Harvard University where he specialized in Freudian psychology and neurology. He completed additional graduate study at the University of Michigan and joined the staff of Eloise Hospital in 1932 as Director of Group Therapy. Altschuler was beloved by colleagues and patients alike, being described as “a diminutive man standing only five feet two inches tall” for which he “compensated with an authoritative attitude.”³⁰

²⁸ Ibid., 32.

²⁹ William B. Davis, “Ira Maximillian Altshuler: Psychiatrist and Pioneer Music Therapist,” *The Journal of Music Therapy* 40, no. 3 (Fall 2003), 247-8.

³⁰ Ibid.

Music Therapy and the Federal Music Project

The field of Music Therapy was beginning to push toward professionalization in the late 1930s. As of 2013 the American Music Therapy Association (AMTA) defines music therapy as,

An established healthcare profession that uses music to address physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs of individuals of all ages. Music therapy improves the quality of life for persons who are well and meets the needs of children and adults with disabilities or illnesses. Music therapy interventions can be designed to: promote wellness, manage stress, alleviate pain, express feelings, enhance memory, improve communication, [and] promote physical rehabilitation.³¹

Although the profession was not as clearly defined at the beginning of the twentieth century, Altshuler and others were working toward this in the various studies they conducted.

The earliest publications on music therapy are from the late eighteenth century and focused primarily on music's ability to alter one's mental state which in turn altered one's physical state. For instance, an article in *New York Weekly Magazine* dated August 10, 1796 cited an unnamed music teacher whose fever was cured over the course of two weeks by "command performances of music."³² One of the first experiments in music therapy was conducted in Great Britain in 1891 by the Guild of St. Cecilia, a group of violinists and female singers formed by composer Canon Frederick Kill Harford. Harford planned to have the musicians perform his compositions at any hospital in London per doctor's request to help alleviate pain and reduce anxiety. He believed that it was essential for the patients only to hear the music, and musicians were to play behind a screen or in an adjacent room to avoid contact. To test these theories Harford conducted a series of experiments in which selected patients were treated with music under doctor supervision. Patients reported that they felt better or were

³¹ George L. Duerksen, "Music Therapy," *Grove Music Online* (2014).

³² Peregrine Horden. "Commentary on Part V, with Notes on Nineteenth-Century America and on Mesmerism and Theosophy," in Peregrine Horden, ed., *Music as Medicine: The History of Music Therapy since Antiquity* (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2000), 321-2.

soothed, and one non-verbal patient suffering from depression spoke for the first time in two weeks after musical “treatment.”³³

Response to Harford’s findings was mixed. Many doctors supported Harford’s claims, but the press often ridiculed his experiments. One such skeptical response appeared in the October 1891 edition of *Musical Opinion and Trade Review*,

We have not the slightest wish to throw cold water on any enterprise, especially one with so laudable an object as attempting to alleviate the pain of the sick or soothe the crucial and critical hour of the moribund. But we have not much faith in Canon Harford’s plan of sending music through the telephone to people in the condition mentioned above. . . . As to the dying, let us hope Nature is kind, letting us down gently so to speak, and removing from our senses, stage by stage, the desire for any sensuous pleasure, music included.³⁴

Although never taken as seriously as Harford would have liked, his venture laid out five main precepts from which subsequent music therapists developed the field: music has the power to affect patients in emotional or physical distress; music is an effective form of treatment when used in tandem with medical methods; cooperation between medical and musical professionals is essential for treatment; musicians must be trained before engaging in therapeutic activities; and the efficacy of the work can only be established through systematic evaluation and publication of findings. These precepts were an extension of two contemporary theoretical stances. The first was the principle that music entering the nervous system neutralized stimuli such as pain and fear which in turn facilitated medical procedure. The second was the observable behavioral shift music had on patients, bringing comfort and staving off boredom and tension.³⁵

³³ Helen M. Tyler. “The Music Therapy Profession in Modern Britain.” in Peregrine Horden, ed., *Music as Medicine: The History of Music Therapy since Antiquity* (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2000), 376-7.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 377.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 378-9.

Studies in the therapeutic benefits of music corroborated Harford's early work and became more scientific at the start of the twentieth century. In his book *Awakenings*, Oliver Sacks famously recounted the experience of patients who contracted "sleeping sickness" in the 1920s. These patients were immobilized as a result, but music had a profound effect on them. Sacks wrote,

One minute would see Miss D. compressed, clenched, and blocked, or jerking, ticking, and jabbering—like a sort of human bomb; the next, with the sound of music from a wireless or gramophone, the complete disappearance of all of these...and their replacement by a blissful ease and flow of movement...It was necessary that the music be *legato*; *staccato* music (and especially the percussion bands) sometimes had a bizarre effect...³⁶

Music that serves a functional purpose is found in the myths, activities, and documents of many world cultures. For example, Native Americans traditionally used music for treating illness. The professionalization of music therapy in the United States began in earnest in the mid-1940s largely due to the work of individuals who provided recreational music for veterans of World War II. Many physicians and psychologists recognized the positive outcomes on the psychological and physical well-being of patients which directly translated to increased research. By 1950 many colleges and universities offered degree programs in music therapy at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Throughout the 1950s music therapists with backgrounds in education focused on group therapy, behavior modification, and uncontrolled observational methodology. Research was furthered through case studies and there was a trend toward de-institutionalization.³⁷

³⁶ Peregrine Horden. "Musical Solutions: Past and Present in Music Therapy," in Peregrine Horden, ed., *Music as Medicine: The History of Music Therapy since Antiquity* (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2000), 10.

³⁷ Duerksen, "Music Therapy."

Current twenty-first century music therapy practices draw from three main approaches, all of which contain aspects of Altschuler's methods; Guided Imagery and Music (GMI), Neurologic Music Therapy (NMT), and Nordoff-Robbins Music Therapy or Creative Music Therapy. GMI, developed by Helen Bonny, uses programs of specifically sequenced classical music to help facilitate the exploration of consciousness. The treatment process is generally individual and combines musical stimuli with verbal interaction between patient and therapist before, during, and after the listening session. NMT targets cognitive, sensory, and motor dysfunctions caused by neurologic disease. The treatment provides separate, structured techniques for sensorimotor training speech and language training, and cognitive training such as using tempo and rhythm as external cues to aid in organizing motor responses. Creative Music Therapy is built on the belief that every human is born with innate musicality that can be harnessed to develop a person's potential. Therapists and clients engage in improvisational music making together either individually or in a small group setting.³⁸

The FMP began participating in musical therapy experiments across the country as early as 1935. These musicians were seen as valuable partners by music therapists as evidenced by Dr. Laretta Bender, senior psychiatrist at the Psychiatric Hospital in Bellevue in her 1937 Panel Discussion on Music Therapy.

In the case of the Music Project, I have been fully satisfied from the beginning that there appears to be a specific value of a different type. It is that specific value which I want to discuss with you because I feel I can offer something significant and because it is a little different from what you have heard. In order to explain it let me re-define music, not as a musician knows it but as a child psychiatrist sees it. I look upon the music work for the children as offering an integrated pattern or to use the new term, a "Gestalt" of sensory-motor-emotional and social components. If we can succeed in integrating the child into these components, we have done an enormous amount towards integrating the personality. It is very clear to me that those children who have benefited most from the music program

³⁸ Ibid.

are those children who have failed to attain an integrated pattern of behavior through any other medium. So far you have heard that music is stimulating. I don't question that of course. But I would like to emphasize the pattern value of music, the integrating value. I am convinced that this is of particular value to the children who are benefitting the most from our music program.³⁹

Altshuler's research in music as therapy at Eloise in partnership with the FMP served as the catalyst to the further study and professionalization of the field in the 1940s. By 1934 half of the population at Eloise was classified as mentally ill making individual psychotherapy impossible, so a group therapy program was instituted. Altshuler introduced his group music therapy in 1937 using FMP musicians. The FMP and WPA provided \$25,000 to cover 75% of the costs associated with hiring and training hospital musicians. By 1940 approximately 850 patients were involved in group music therapy sessions.⁴⁰

Altshuler first developed his theories for music therapy after watching his two-year-old daughter Ilona move to Tchaikovsky's "Waltz of the Flowers." Her "graceful" and "natural" movements made him curious as to the reaction of mentally ill patients to similar musical stimuli. Altshuler believed that music was, and always had been, "an important factor in the instinctual, emotional, intellectual, cultural, and spiritual life of people, and as such, from time immemorial, exercised a sort of therapeutic influence." Music is both subtle and primitive in its appeal.⁴¹ These thoughts of music *as* therapy were heightened when he observed children performing in a kindergarten rhythm band.⁴²

³⁹ Quoted in William F. McDonald. *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 1969), 642-3.

⁴⁰ Davis, "Altshuler," 249-50.

⁴¹ Ira M. Altshuler, "A Psychiatrist's Experiences with Music as a Therapeutic Agent," in Dorothy M. Schullian and Max Schoen, eds., *Music as Medicine* (New York: Henry Schuman, Inc., 1948), 267.

⁴² Davis, "Altshuler," 249-50.

Altshuler taught that music possesses “definite therapeutic properties.” He cited William White’s “organism-as-a-whole” concept as crucial to understanding the therapeutic properties of the fine arts. The human being is conceived of as a “compact entity” which is affected by nature, time, and habit. The arts most strongly engage the organism-as-a-whole because they “accent human experience.” In many of his writings Altshuler contended that music originated as a primitive biological signal for danger, a mating call, or wail of death. Primitive man was forced to act upon these signals for physical protection, and in doing so developed emotional responses to music. This past explained why contemporary art “penetrates man’s senses and arouses emotions, feelings, the glands and intellect. It affects his entire past, his rites, ceremonies, his religion, his morale and his conduct.”⁴³

The “chief significance” of music therapy, according to Altshuler, is the way that music affects the mechanics of the human brain. Music is first perceived by the thalamus in the subcortical region, which differs from the way spoken word is perceived. Music attacks the thalamus which is the epicenter of all sensation, emotion and esthetic feeling, and then continues to travel to the cortex, where the spoken word is processed. Of this process Altshuler wrote,

When [musical sound] rebounds on this thalamic level it is called “thalamic response.” We have adopted the term “thalamic response” to identify this unconscious automatic response to music. This thalamic mechanism is of paramount importance for two reasons. First, it offers an opportunity to reach, through the medium of music, the mental patient at the ‘below awareness’ level, which is not involved...in psychosis, and second, a change to observe and study the effect of various music upon the patient...Constantly “contacting” the cortex by music and song through the thalamus it is possible to sow basic realities, realities devoid of the principle of aggression.⁴⁴

⁴³ Davis, “Altshuler,” 251-2; Ira M. Altshuler, “Rational Music-Therapy of the Mentally Ill,” *Volume of the Proceedings of the Music Teachers’ National Association* 63 (1939), 153; Ira M. Altshuler, “The Organism-as-a-Whole and Music Therapy,” *Sociometry* 8, no. 3/4 (Aug.-Nov. 1945), 227.

⁴⁴ Ira M. Altshuler, “The Part of Music in Resocialization of Mental Patients,” *American Journal of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation* (1940), 78-9.

In the 1930s most of the medicinal advances were focused solely on the physical side of therapy and the public's attitude toward the "insane" meant that they were detained and isolated. Very few psychiatric hospitals had well defined treatment plans or a dedicated psychiatrist in charge of mental patients. Within this climate Altschuler and his staff worked to "approach music in the fashion in which the modern pharmacologist approaches his field." In doing so, music and instruments were analyzed and prescribed based on its qualities and effect. The flute and violin were found to have the strongest appeal and a trio of violin, cello, and piano was more effective than a solo instrument or other combinations of instruments. Live performance was most effective and the therapists at Eloise avoided recordings at all costs. Patients were exposed to either "isotempic" or "isomoodic" music, terms that were coined by Altschuler and known as the "Iso Principle." "Isotempic" music matches the patient's current mental tempo, while "isomoodic" music coincides with the patient's current mood. After adjusted the music to meet the patient in their current state, therapists at Eloise would make "contact" in order to arouse attention, modify mood, and influence the mental tempo of the patient. Of this method Altschuler reported that the experiments showed "conclusively that specially selected and specially played music produces a quieting effect." The therapy proved thirty-five percent more effective than the standard practice of using wet sheet packs. The music was most effective if the tempo and mood were "equal to the mental mood and emotional tempo of the patient." The volume of the music matched the intensity of the noise the patients produced. For patients who shouted loudly, "the music which will attract their attention must be loud enough to reach their auditory apparatus."⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Altschuler, "Music and Resocialization," 80-1; Ira M. Altschuler, "One Year's Experience with Group Psychotherapy," *Mental Hygiene* 24, no. 2 (April 1940), 190-1.

This technique to use musical selections to arouse, hold, and redirect a patient's mood and elicit imagery, called the "Level of Attack," occurred in five stages facilitated by a therapist and FMP musicians. The first stage was Rhythm. The rhythmic component of music was thought to attract and retain a patient's attention through kinesthetic stimulation. Rhythmic movement was a subcortical function of the brain and was able to be expressed by even those with the most severe mental illnesses. Next was the introduction of the Melody stage. The therapist held the patient's attention by using a "good gestalt" or a succession of musical tones that made sense to them. If this "good gestalt" was successfully achieved, it would increase the patient's attention span. Third was Harmony. Harmony was a "higher level" of musical evolution and worked to increase self-awareness in the patient. Fourth was Mood-Modifying Music in which the "Iso principle" was used to direct the patient to a desired mood and state. Finally, Pictorial-Associative Music was achieved. Music in this stage was familiar to the patient and used to elicit extra-musical associations and recall past experiences. When used in sequence, these stages were useful for treating disease as well as a palliative care measure.⁴⁶

Group therapy at Eloise consisted of groups of thirty to fifty patients who met daily. In addition to meeting the practical needs of residents with a small staff, the group setting facilitated social unity. Individual patients were often asked to assist in group work and treatment was always given with education and integration in mind. Those who actively participated in group therapy strengthened rapport, self-confidence, self-expression, and work ethic. After first beginning with a "theme song" which is familiar to the group each patient was given a pair of wooden blocks or sticks. A march in two-four time would then be played with an instructor demonstrating how to clap the blocks together in time to match the tempo of the music. Patients

⁴⁶ Davis, "Altshuler," 251-2.

who were less alert were assisted by attendants while the instructor tried to focus the patients' attention to the movement of their hands as they clap the blocks together. Of the sessions Altshuler wrote, "In a short time the majority of patients will join in on the performance. This use of blocks has proved to be a valuable means of centering and developing attention span. Since the process involves rhythm, and the use of the visual, acoustic, and muscular senses, as well as the element of habit (daily activities), it becomes a valuable aid in group psychotherapy."

The next phase of the music therapy session was patient participation in music making. Each ward had a piano and the national anthem was played followed by various familiar tunes. Patients slowly joined in the singing and came to a circle of chairs placed in the center of the room. Thirty minutes were spent "in attacking the emotional sphere" and another thirty were "devoted to intellectual activity." The opportunity for self-expression was given to as many patients as possible. Altshuler noted that opening the sessions with music put the patients in a "good mood and receptive frame of mind." Participation in musical activities throughout the session allowed the patients to "drain off" their "disturbing mental material." Ending the sessions with music sent the patients away "in a cheerful mood and free from tension."⁴⁷

Each group was analyzed and grouped by age, nationality, intelligence, diagnosis, and residence hall to determine a therapy program. A typical program would include music for each stage of the "Level of Attack." Rhythm would begin with slow pieces such as "Marche Funebre" from *Sonata*, Op. 26 by Beethoven. This would be followed by *I Love You* by Edvard Grieg (Melody), the Choral Movement from *Ad nos ad salutarem undam* by Franz Liszt and adapted by Ferruccio Busoni (Harmony), and the *Prelude* in E-flat minor by Leonid Nikolaiew (Mood).

⁴⁷ Altshuler, "One Year's Experience," 192-3.

Finally, the session would end with excerpts from the overture to *William Tell* by Gioachino Rossini and arranged by Franz Liszt (Pictorial Effect).⁴⁸

It was important to Altshuler that the songs used in group therapy sessions were selected for variety and to reach the majority of patients. In order to ensure a “lingering sentiment,” a wide range of genres were used including national, patriotic, religious, folk, and regional songs. Booklets with numbered songs were given to patients to use during the session. Altshuler believed that the melody of a familiar tune allows the patient to reminisce on emotional memories and carries a specific meaning. These familiar songs also establish a “neurogram” or pathway in the brain. Dancing was often used in the women’s wards to help further stimulate self-expression. Altshuler also worked closely with Mark Gunzberg, noted Detroit concert pianist, to compose a number of “synthetic musical pieces” which accentuated certain stages of the “Level of Attack” more than standard classical compositions including *A Tonic in Scherzo Form* and *Prelude in Monotone (Rhythm)*, *Romance in Relaxation (Melody)*, *Integration Choral I (Harmony)*, *Meditation-Elegy (Mood)*, and *A Parade (Pictorial)*.⁴⁹

“Moral Treatment” was included in the music therapy at Eloise. This philosophy was based on the eighteenth-century belief that mental illness was caused by one’s failure to observe moral laws established by God and nature. Treatment included a variety of techniques such as occupational therapy, education, and job training and placement. Altschuler incorporated this into the music therapy treatments at Eloise by selecting songs with a moral or inspirational message. For example, patients were asked to ponder the words to the song “Pack Up Your Troubles” which suggested that patients could “wish away” their troubles. An inspiring message

⁴⁸ Altshuler, “Rational Music-Therapy,” 156-7.

⁴⁹ Altshuler, “Music and Resocialization,” 83-4.

or moral was written on the blackboard daily so that clients could consider it at the close of the music therapy session.⁵⁰

FMP musicians played an active role in group therapy. By 1939 twenty-four musicians in four units comprised of instrumentalists and choir conductors worked in groups of three to provide music therapy sessions to Eloise patients. From November to December 1939, FMP musicians had helped to provide 800 treatments to over 1,500 patients. State Director Karl Wecker had worked since 1937 to provide a full staff of musicians to the institution, citing its “humanitarian value” to Director Sokoloff. The FMP also worked in cooperation with the Detroit Civic League to provide forty instruments for use with the music therapy program. In asking the national director to increase Michigan’s quota for 1937 to allow more musicians to participate in Altshuler’s research Wecker wrote of the program that, “If you could but see one of the many classes I witnessed, where music was the subject of instruction and could see the almost pathetic interest being evidenced by these unfortunate people, no contention of mine would be necessary to urge...the necessity for additional quota.”⁵¹

Live music was an integral part of the music therapy process because they were able to assess patient needs in real time. This also allowed for more accurate documentation. Altshuler cited five main attributes of music therapy: the capacity to produce changes in metabolism, respiration, blood pressure, pulse, endocrines, and muscular energy; the ability to increase attention span; diversion and substitution of mental states; modification of mood; and the ability to stimulate “pictorially” and intellectually.⁵² Altshuler and his staff worked with FMP musicians

⁵⁰ Davis, “Altshuler,” 251-2.

⁵¹ February 1939 Michigan Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 805, B7, National Archives.

⁵² Altshuler, “Music and Resocialization,” 85-6.

to teach them how to interact with patients.⁵³ The following guidelines were used to train incoming musicians:

1. Choose a quiet area on the ward and let the clients naturally form a group; be especially welcoming of new members.
2. The therapist is the leader, and but do not hesitate to use the more talented and outgoing patients as part of the therapeutic experience.
3. Make an effort to encourage the participation of ward staff and attending physicians.
4. If there are visitors present ask them to join the group.
5. Select a variety of therapeutic music experiences including singing, rhythm band activities, listening to music and dancing.
6. Encourage all patients to participate in the music experiences; use their first names.
7. Maintain a good attitude toward the client.
8. Avoid disruptions if at all possible. Minimize telephone calls, patients being removed from the group by ward staff and the “clanging of dishes.”
9. Clients should be encouraged to dress nicely.
10. The use of a trio and/or piano is fine. Use no brass as this can be upsetting to the patient.
11. The therapist should act naturally.⁵⁴

In his publications Altshuler cited many other examples of success stories involving Eloise patients. Patients would progress through their therapy in three stages, indifference, empathy, and then integration. In his article in the April 1940 issue of *Mental Hygiene* Altshuler describes the progress of “F.G.,” age fifty and diagnosed with schizophrenia, who had been an Eloise resident since 1921. The patient had initially been unresponsive and sat in a corner of the ward. After several months of group therapy F.G. “began to show empathy—to tap certain tunes.” One day he “spontaneously seated himself at the piano, opened the song book, and

⁵³ The historical record is full of documentation on policies, procedures, and training materials for the programs, but there is no mention of how it was received by staff, FMP musicians, and patient families. Altshuler’s main focus was outlining and justifying medical procedure. Narrative reports sent to Sokoloff go no further than providing details relating to how many personnel and instruments were assigned to the project.

⁵⁴ Davis, “Altshuler,” 253-4.

played *Carry Me Back to Old Virginny*.” Since that day he was invited to play for the group and shortly after that he began to “hum and then to sing to his own accompaniment.” After he performed for the group, he would then take a seat within the circle of chairs and participate in group singing. Altshuler continued,

Lately he has begun to play his own selections, which he obviously learned in his childhood. From his facial expression, it is evident that he greatly enjoys the playing and is pleased with the applause he receives. He has begun to take a keener interest in his surroundings and to talk a little. The chances are that under ordinary routine this patient would still be frozen in his chair.⁵⁵

Music therapy at Eloise also resulted in increased cooperation among patients. Many in group therapy would cut out articles, poems, and quotations from newspapers or magazines to share with the group. Others wrote their own articles and poems which Altshuler took as an indication of accepting their psychiatrist, the hospital, and its staff and methods. The therapies at Eloise also provided a means to treat those patients who otherwise would not succeed in individual therapy. Altshuler cited the case of “M.S.” a forty-five-year-old Polish man diagnosed with “manic-depressive psychosis with some paranoid projections.” He had been at Eloise since 1931 and was described as “pale, dejected, stooped, and slow-moving” and would often whine and beg staff to let him return home. Once group therapy sessions began in his ward, he was invited to join. Of his experiences Altshuler wrote,

[Group therapy] was a novelty to him; it rather pleased him. Instead of being avoided, he was approached, was asked to join, was given a seat and an opportunity to talk with an audience. His attitude gradually changed. His social drives found new impetus; he began to feel more secure...In a remarkably short time he started to take part in the group discussions and learned to listen. His style of behavior was favorably modified. When Polish tunes were played, he would brighten up and occasionally hum. As his interests gradually increased, his outlook upon life brightened. Three months later he was paroled...⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Altshuler, “One Year’s Experience,” 194.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 194-5.

The studies using music as a therapeutic agent at Eloise led Altshuler to conclude that it was more practical than hydrotherapy because it was a “more practical, easy, and pleasant procedure.” There were multiple studies involving schizophrenic patients who were currently undergoing hydrotherapy. The most significant involved four schizophrenic women who “had been treated for extended periods previously with continuous tubs or cold wet sheet packs” without much noticeable change or benefit and were deemed to be “chronic, inaccessible cases.” These women had music introduced fifteen to thirty minutes into their hydrotherapy sessions by a violinist who played behind a screen to the women who were also separated from the other patients by screens. The amount of vocal production and head movements of the women was used as a basis of comparison, termed “output.” The women were observed for thirty-minute periods and their vocal productions and head movements were recorded. During the first ten to twenty minutes no changes were noted in the patients, but it was soon discovered that familiar tunes were the most effective at gaining and focusing their attention. Altshuler observed that patients who were “very noisy and upset” often responded to the violin which kept “their output of energy at about the same level but changing from irrelevant, purposeless activity to the directed activity of singing or humming the tune.” Familiar tunes seemed to have far-reaching effects beyond therapy sessions, “as manifested by continued singing long after the music had ceased.” Familiar waltzes were found to be the best type of music to calm patients and were most effective when preceded by more “lively” tunes which grabbed the patients’ attention. Altshuler reported that during the first two or three weeks of the experiment the patients showed more active responses and in the latter half of the experiments they were more likely to relax when the violin was played. For example, one patient “who previously had talked continually while receiving hydrotherapy slept comfortably after listening to the music for about one-half

hour...During the course of the experiments, patients, even those previously very antagonistic, expressed their appreciation of the music and soon grew to expect music with their treatments.”⁵⁷

Arguably the biggest “success” Altshuler and the FMP had was the patient Horace Flinders, or “Mr. X.” Flinders was a skilled pianist who suffered from schizophrenia and had undergone nine years of failed treatments including conventional psychotherapy, electroconvulsive therapy, and occupational therapy prior to beginning his music therapy. After several months of piano lessons, he was able to regain most of his technical abilities. Although not completely cured, Flinders was able to spend time away from Eloise on occasion, either at home or attending Detroit Symphony concerts. He made national headlines in March of 1946 after he performed a recital of music by Chopin, Mozart, and Beethoven in Eloise’s T.K. Gruber Memorial Auditorium that was broadcast nationwide.⁵⁸

Public Response

There is no doubt that Eloise provided much needed medical care to many in need, but not everyone had a favorable view of the institution. As early as 1904 the *Detroit Journal* ran a satirical cartoon on its front page—“Hotel D’Eloise: The Winter Resort at Eloise”—which depicted a great room overrun with indigent residents at odds with the grandeur of the architecture and furnishings. Known as “pogies” (Poor Old Guys in Eloise) by the staff, one man read an article titled “How to Live without Working” under a sign that said “If you are too proud to work bring your trunk”. Across the room three seemingly inebriated men howl along with the piano player to the tune “In the Good Old Summer Time.” Most damning is the resident who

⁵⁷ Altshuler, “Music as a Therapeutic Agent,” 276-7, 279.

⁵⁸ Davis, “Altshuler,” 255-6.

used a marble bust of “The Taxpayer” as a foot rest.⁵⁹ It was true that the population did rise during the colder months of the year and that many homeless persons survived on the street during the summer months, but often Eloise was their only option for survival. Additionally, any physically-able resident was required to work at least four hours per day as part of the terms of their stay.⁶⁰

The derogatory view of residents in “The Winter Resort at Eloise” also exemplified societal attitudes toward the disabled poor and needy. Across the United States city codes contained “Ugly Laws” or ordinances that specifically targeted and criminalized this marginalized group. The Chicago City Code from 1881 read, “Any person who is diseased, maimed, mutilated, or in any way deformed, so as to be an unsightly or disgusting object, or an improper person to be allowed in or on the streets, highways, thoroughfares, or public places in this city, shall not therein or thereon expose himself to public view, under the penalty of a fine of \$1 for each offense.” In many Midwestern cities these ordinances served to provide a solution to overcrowding and the “unsightly beggar.”⁶¹

When private organizations were unable to provide for the poor and needy, the only recourse was charity run by the state, county, or local governments. At the beginning of the twentieth century Michigan’s poor law assigned responsibility for the care of the indigent to county Boards of Superintendents of the Poor. The law allowed counties to levy a property tax

⁵⁹ Ibbotson, *Eloise*, 98.

⁶⁰ Janet Langlois, Thomas B. Jankowski, Mary Durocher, and Elizabeth Chapleski, “Otherwise Destined for Eloise: Dread, Contentment, and the Public Alternative to Private ‘Relief’ in Old Age,” *Journal of Aging, Humanities, and the Arts*, no. 2 (2008): 190.

⁶¹ Susan M. Schweik, *The Ugly Laws: Disability in Public* (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 1-2. For more on the use of law as a way to identify and “other” this group of people in order to then “care” for them, see chapters three and four.

and to bill the township or city for the cost of their care. In Detroit there was little to no allowance for forms of outdoor relief such as food and heating fuel assistance. In Wayne County, legal obligations to the indigent were met through Eloise.⁶²

For many people Eloise was a place to be feared, and many who moved there for geriatric care expressed a feeling of dread. The extraordinary size and population of the campus was daunting for many who were accustomed to their own homes, privacy, and independence. Many who came from Detroit's middle and upper classes were often faced with class, ethnic, and racial diversity for the first time. The pervasive attitude in the community was that becoming a resident of Eloise was synonymous with failure. The contemporary stigma of insanity and the reality of often brutal treatment practices, such as shock therapy, were placed upon any resident regardless of the treatment received.⁶³

Not everyone had a favorable view of the music therapy program at Eloise, specifically the practice of showcasing certain patients such as "Mr. X." Albert Deutsch criticized Altshuler and other mental health professionals for this in an article for the *New York Star* in 1948. He wrote,

the poor piano-playing schizophrenic who was put on a nation-wide radio hookup to demonstrate the miracles of music therapy...has not improved a whit...any music therapist worth his salt will tell you that one thing is definitely out as music therapy—the collection of diverse kinds and types of mental patients into a central auditorium...is not music therapy and it is a disservice to the profession and a hoax on the public to present it as such.⁶⁴

⁶² Langlois et al., 188.

⁶³ Ibid., 190-2.

⁶⁴ Davis, "Altshuler," 257-8.

Many musicians were also hesitant to accept what Altshuler and the FMP were doing as scientific fact. Arnold Elston, in his chapter from *Music as Medicine* titled “The Musician’s Approach to Musical Therapy,” questioned whether the findings reported by Altshuler and others were fair representations of music as instrumental to the cure or exceptional cases that “depended on the patient’s idiosyncrasy or upon factors unknown and hence beyond control.” He, and others, argued that the curative powers of music were something that could not be controlled and contemporary music therapy lacked the same scientific control that the medical practice had. Elston remarked that “the musical therapist has little knowledge of musical pharmacology” and as such administered music to patients “guided solely by hit-and-miss empiricism and subjective reasoning.” He warned that musical therapists could not, and it was implicit that he believed they *should* not, prescribe music the same way a doctor prescribes a pill. Rather, the individual needs and tastes of the patient should be taken into account and an individualized program should be administered.⁶⁵ Clearly Elston felt that individualized therapy, not group therapy, was the only successful avenue for music therapists.

Some of the criticism came from within the FMP itself. George Foster was quick to point out a lack of statement from Altshuler and Eloise psychiatrists as to the effectiveness of the therapies and whether anyone was “cured.” He described Altshuler’s experiments as simple and questioned their validity. He commented, rather harshly, that “the sum total effect of the experiments seems to have been that when Schubert’s ‘Ave Maria’ was played the patients were

⁶⁵ Arnold Elston, “The Musician’s Approach to Musical Therapy,” in Dorothy M. Schullian and Max Schoen, eds., *Music as Medicine* (New York: Henry Schuman, Inc., 1948), 283.

inclined to be quiet and when the orchestra broke into the ‘Stars and Stripes Forever’ the patients became excited. The same results have been obtained at the zoo.”⁶⁶

Further Scientific Studies: Deaf Children and Music Appreciation

The work at Eloise was not the only instance of FMP musicians working with scientific studies. In Jackson, the Lansing Concert Orchestra under the direction of Frederick Lewis worked with school officials to provide concerts to deaf children beginning in February of 1936. Children were seated at a table with individual ear phones and tuning, or receiving, devices. Vibrations from the orchestra were picked up by a microphone and were then transmitted to the receiving devices which had a control dial that regulated the intensity of the vibration in the ear phones and could be adjusted by the child. After a short time, the children were able to beat in time with the music. Of the experiment State Supervisor Karl Wecker reported that even though the children were not hearing the orchestra as “melody or harmony” they were hearing them as “regularly recurring vibrations.” A curtain was placed between the orchestra and the children to ensure that they were not observing the conductor “thru [sic] sight.” All of the children “stopped beating at precisely the same time the orchestra stopped playing.” The children were also able to accurately deduce changes in tempo and even differentiate between different sections of the orchestra. Wecker wrote that it was “apparent [the] youngsters...have now developed their sensitivity to varying vibrations to the point where they are able to recognize the color of individual instruments.” Wecker also observed that it was apparent that these children were enjoying these experiments and plans were being made to create recordings of the orchestra for further use by the children. In addition to recordings of the full orchestra, additional recordings

⁶⁶ George Foster, *Record of Program Operation and Accomplishment, The Federal Music Project 1935 to 1939, The WPA Music Program 1939 to 1943* (Washington, D.C.: WPA, FWA, 1943), 331-2.

of smaller ensembles and individual instruments were provided. It was concluded in 1937 that deaf children were able to be taught to recognize various orchestra and band instruments.

Wecker and Lewis also surmised that these experiments awakened “latent musical abilities which have lain dormant because of deafness.” Some of the deaf children were able to differentiate between pitches and in some instances sing back the music “pitch for pitch.”⁶⁷

In 1940, the Michigan FMP submitted a proposal for a Braille Music Project, headed by Helen P. Stickle. The proposed unit would provide materials for use with piano, organ, voice, and orchestra instruments including violin, clarinet, and saxophone. Piano materials would be compiled under the supervision of Mildred James Kemler, who was using the New Vibrato Method of Braille technical studies at the Michigan School for the Blind. The work would also include preliminary instruction in Braille music notation by grade level. Vocal materials would include selections for beginner, intermediate, and High School practice, and would transcribe materials currently in use by the FMP Teachers’ Project. The proposed Braille Unit would also print a quarterly music magazine or pamphlet in the form of a “Symposium on Modern Music in Braille” selected from magazines, books, and contemporary histories. Although no record of the creation of this proposed unit exists, the proposal does indicate engagement with and support for these activities in Michigan and across the Midwestern region.⁶⁸

Units in Chicago routinely played concerts for patients of the “Psychopathic Hospital,” presumably the Cook County Psychopathic Hospital, but they were not part of music therapy at the institution. Illinois State Director Albert Goldberg reported that performances typically

⁶⁷ June 1937 Michigan Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 803-804 B1, National Archives.

⁶⁸ Teaching and Other Material Needed in Proposed Program for Braille Music Project, 1940, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 805, B8, National Archives.

occurred in the Neurological and Mental Wards. He reported a favorable response from patients and medical staff, commenting that the doctors assured him that these concerts helped the patients take their minds “off themselves, with something cheerful and impersonal,” and that this was “the finest thing that could be done for them.” One mental patient who had been in vaudeville, seemed reluctant to listen to the performance but quickly “sang as loud as the rest [of the audience] and was conducting with his cane during the whole program.”⁶⁹

Indiana also instituted a regular schedule of concerts at hospitals, including the James Whitcomb Riley Hospital, the Julietta Hospital for the Insane, the Indiana State Insane Hospital, and the Central State Insane Hospital. Similar to Illinois these concerts were performances only and were not incorporated in formal music therapy practices. Dr. S. L. Bahr, Superintendent of the Central State Insane Hospital, issued a statement that the performances by FMP units at the institution “compose an activity that is definitely beneficial to inmates.” Psychologists and staff at the Evansville State Hospital for the Insane noted the presence of FMP musicians at the institution’s dances and parties provided recreational activities that required active participation and as such were “of great value as a therapeutic measure for the improving of psychotic conditions.” It was also noted that patients participated at a higher rate when live music was played versus phonograph records.⁷⁰

A handful of other experiments and partnerships with music therapy were led by FMP units nationwide including at Bellevue Hospital in New York City, and Worcester State Hospital in Massachusetts. The project that was most similar to Eloise Hospital was instituted in five

⁶⁹ December 1936 Chicago-Specific Illinois Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Program, Central Files, RG 69, A1 806, B13, National Archives.

⁷⁰ August 1937 Indiana Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Program, Central Files, RG 69, A1 805, B4, National Archives.

hospitals in New York City under the supervision of Isabel Parkman. Experiments with deaf children similar to what was being done in Lansing occurred at the Chinchuba Institute for the Deaf in Marrero, Louisiana. As a whole, the Midwest had the broadest range of music therapy participation.⁷¹

Of all the Federal One projects, only the FMP maintained active participation with the medical community in arts therapies. The Federal Art Project (FAP) did not have units pursuing art therapy but were quite active in art education. Art instruction was available in community art centers nationwide and the fruits of these labors were presented in galleries and exhibitions. Just as the FMP participated in National Music Week, the FAP created National Art Week, which in 1940 and 1941 resulted in the greatest mass display of art ever attempted in the United States.⁷²

Altshuler declared that “of all the services of the music project this one bids fair to become the most far-reaching and sensational in time to come.”⁷³ Through partnerships with Elosie Hospital and schools in Jackson, the FMP in Michigan significantly aided in the professionalization of the field of music therapy. Though not always well received by critics, music therapy had a significant and positive impact on both patient and musician. Of equal importance in the state was the educational and performance of FMP units in disseminating music to underserved areas.

⁷¹ McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 642-3.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 464-5, 479.

⁷³ September 1939 Michigan Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 805, B8, National Archives.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION: THE FINAL CADENCE

The War Effort and State Control

As the United States inched closer to participation in World War II, the Federal Music Project began its demise as a federally funded project. At the inception of the WPA and Federal Project One, then-director Jacob Baker believed that the arts programs and budget should be turned over to the states rather than run from Washington. Project directors were adamant that while this arrangement was better for bureaucratic and political reasons, a lack of national oversight would lead to a dilution of artistic standards. Federal oversight would also allow underserved areas to receive musical performances and instruction. On September 1, 1939 the Federal Music Project became the WPA Music Program with Dr. Earl Vincent Moore replacing Nikolai Sokoloff as national director, and all programming and budgetary concerns turned over to the states. Congress had called for the abolition of the Federal Theatre Project but allowed all remaining Federal One projects to continue under state and local sponsorship. Moore resigned to resume his academic duties at the University of Michigan in August of 1940, and George Foster, who had been involved with the FMP in some capacity since its inception in 1935, took responsibility for the project until its official dissolution in July of 1943.¹

There was a clear difference between the two administrations. Sokoloff (1935-39) emphasized technical competence and performance, primarily via the symphony orchestra, and Moore and Foster (1939-43) advocated for the integration of musical activities through education

¹ Nick Taylor, *American Made: The Enduring Legacy of the WPA: When FDR Put the Nation to Work* (New York: Bantam, 2008), 249; Alex Ross, *The Rest is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century* (New York: Picador, 2007), 314.

and recreation. These emphases were a direct relation of the musical background of each director. Sokoloff was a classically trained musician, and Moore was a music educator and director of the School of Music at the University of Michigan.²

The change in emphasis of FMP activities can also be attributed to the social and economic climate during its tenure. When it was first initiated, the project strove to provide better relief and musical quality than previous projects, specifically FERA. By 1939, the social climate necessitated an educational approach. According to William F. McDonald, “the attempt of the professional musician to achieve a position of public power and responsibility had failed. Earl Moore...had no alternative but accept and practice the social service philosophy of the arts.”³

At the start of state control of the WPA Music Program, many units encountered difficulties. Securing state and local sponsorship was problematic; a large number of musicians also had to leave the program due to the eighteen-months rule which stipulated that a worker could not be employed on relief rolls for more longer than eighteen consecutive months. Projects throughout the United States lost many of their most experienced performers, leaving their orchestras, bands, and ensembles with weaker musicians. The project was able to overcome its initial issues with the support of Washington as well as the loyalty and resourcefulness of local units and supervisors.⁴

Many State Directors were concerned with how the changes being made to the FMP were affecting its employees and program operations. Many had to undergo reexamination to

² William F. McDonald. *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 1969), 615.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 616.

determine if they were still eligible to receive aid. These bureaucratic decisions often led to a disruption in performances and undermined the integrity of the projects. There was often a large margin of error which led to what Michigan State Director Karl Wecker described as “human misery.” In his state report dated March 1939 he wrote that the investigators were wrong roughly fifty percent of the time. In Grand Rapids, four of the eight musicians who were scheduled to have their certifications cancelled were removed “in error.” He added that the error was apparently “a very complex one to correct...so complex in fact, that when the error is discovered and acknowledged the victim is faced with the necessity of again going through the humiliating process of a re-investigation...and the project in the meantime is deprived of his services.”⁵

In Illinois, the disruption of services and changes in employment status led to strikes. State Director Albert Goldberg assured the national office that although the musicians on the Illinois FMP projects “didn’t want” to join the strike against the new provisions of the Relief Appropriation Act, they were “pressured to do so” by workers from other projects. Goldberg reported that rehearsal and concert schedules were rearranged to avoid any “serious difficulties” within the music projects, indicating the desire of local leaders as well as Sokoloff to avoid sensationalism in the FMP.⁶

The most pressing reason for FMP leadership to avoid sensationalism of any form was the constant assertion from New Deal critics that the WPA was an example of communism’s infiltration of the American government. As early as November 1936, New York National Emergency Council director George Combs accused Federal One of harboring subversives and actively attempting to “bring political and social matters to the public who resent this type of

⁵ March 1939 Michigan Narrative Report, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 805, B7.

⁶ Ibid.

propaganda.” Martin Dies and his House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) continually identified the arts projects as “hotbeds” of pro-Red ideology. Dies was convinced that the WPA was “the greatest financial boon which ever came to the Communists in the United States.” Matters were complicated even further when Ralph Easley, chairman of the National Civic Foundation, wrote to President Roosevelt in June 1937 charging the WPA with communist infiltration. He claimed that after studying the arts projects in New York City he found that eighty-six percent were members of the pro-Red Workers’ Alliance and thirty-four percent were members of the Communist Party.⁷

The FMP escaped guilt by association throughout all of the HUAC investigations, though some challenged it because of the large number of foreign-sounding names on the payroll, Sokoloff included. The FMP’s tendency toward “acceptable” music and its conservative nature allowed it distance from the more radical and innovative projects that were performing overtly political materials, such as the children’s play *The Revolt of the Beavers* performed by the Federal Theatre Project. In the play the working beavers of Beaverland revolt against their oppressive leader, Boss Beaver, to overthrow him and live happily ever after. Additionally, a majority of those employed by the FMP were also members of the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) which had a zero-tolerance policy for ties to radical organizations. The FMP sought to provide employment first and foremost, and this often led to less artistic expression and avant-garde activities. When the HUAC subcommittee reinvestigated the WPA in 1940, the FMP was excused from the investigation entirely because “there was nothing of particular [radical] interest” to report.⁸

⁷ Kenneth J. Bindas, *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation: The WPA’s Federal Music Project and American Society* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1995), 27-8.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 29-30.

In 1940 the WPA Music Program began to engage with and help the armed forces. The Music Program provided the Army Air Corps with bands and played for drill exercises of the newly formed state militias. By January 1941 twenty-one state music projects participated in some form of defense activities. As mobilization efforts increased orchestras and bands were called upon to provide entertainment. In June of 1941 forty-two state units were involved with defense activities and in some states all civilian music services were discontinued to provide services for the war effort. The most popular units were dance bands which devoted a full-time schedule to military bases and their surrounding communities. Equally popular, especially among young recruits, were symphony concerts. Illinois and Indiana were among a handful of states that provided the most music services to the armed forces. The Music Program lost most of its musicians to the armed services and defense industries with America's entrance into World War II. Though not officially terminated until 1943, most programs ended shortly after the U.S. declaration of war against the Axis powers.⁹

Many Americans saw the WPA Music Program as instrumental to the war effort and pushed for its continuance. In May of 1942, Aaron Copland, as acting president of the American Composers Alliance, wrote to WPA Director Florence Kerr to protest the curtailment of the FMP. He argued that the cessation of Music Projects would have negative consequences for composers of serious music in America and would rob the public of important cultural experiences. He wrote that musical expression was arguably more necessary than in peacetime as a recreation for war workers and to show the country that art is integral to the American experience rather than merely a luxury.¹⁰

⁹ McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 616-7.

¹⁰ Peter Gough, *Sounds of the New Deal: The Federal Music Project in the West* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015), 152.

Copland was most concerned with the discontinuance of the Music Copying Project which had published and distributed music written by American and South American composers.

He reminded Kerr that cultural relations were a large part of diplomacy. He wrote,

This is not only a war of tanks and guns and bombers, but one of spiritual values as well. It is the task of our country to do everything in its power to offset nazi [sic] and fascist propaganda in South America. We shall certainly never succeed if we snub their cultural achievements because we do not wish to spend a relatively small sum on each project. The high morale of our own people and those of South American countries will be as instrumental in winning this war as munitions and men on the battlefield.¹¹

Though beneficial to the war effort, most Americans called for the continuance of the FMP due to its positive role in communities across the nation. William H. Dress, the mayor of Evansville, Indiana, wrote to the director of the Evansville WPA Band to express his desire that the band continue to serve the town. He wrote of the community engagement as well as employment opportunities it offered and added that he was “only too glad to add my name to the many others that recommend the continuance of this project.” The mayor of Rockford, Illinois, Charles F. Brown, echoed this sentiment in his letter to Sokoloff stating the project “for some time past has been rendering a very real service to the thousands of children in our public school system...I would like to urge very strongly the continuation of the Federal Music Project in this locality.”¹² Ultimately, the increased public demand for symphonic music remained even after the FMP was dissolved. Many symphonies and orchestras that had begun with WPA sponsorship remained with local citizens groups providing the funds to maintain the ensemble.¹³

¹¹ Ibid., 152.

¹² Correspondence, WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files, RG 69, A1 811, B23, National Archives.

¹³ Nicholas Tawa, *The Great American Symphony: Music, The Depression, and War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 16.

The Legacy of the Federal Music Project

The FMP has an enduring legacy, though it is most likely not the one that Sokoloff envisioned. When asked what was the long-term impact of the units of the FMP, Sokoloff answered that many units had become a “recognized part of their communities” which leads to permanency. He also noted that there was high demand for the continuation of music teaching and group instruction in schools and public institutions that up to that time had had no formal programming. Despite these achievements, most historians and scholars of the WPA associate the FMP with folk music primarily and largely omit the other educational and performance aspects of the program. This identification with folk music as the FMP’s most enduring legacy is most likely due to the popularity of American composers such as Aaron Copland as well as many of the WPA films produced such as *The Plow that Broke the Plains* with a score written by Virgil Thomson whose “Americana” sound became to gold standard of American musical composition.

The FMP was often overshadowed by or erroneously equated with the work of private composers in part due to the constraints of the FMP itself. The FMP was not permitted to hire due to the way that WPA payroll procedures were handled. Creative work done at home or in a studio away from the standard project site and immediate supervision was problematic for the “force account” that the WPA operated under. This type of accounting created a timekeeping a payroll system that was predicated on the “force” of workers working together, supervised, at the same time on a single site. Project activities in a private setting complicated these timekeeping and supervisory procedures. FMP orchestras fit into the normal proceedings of the “force account” as they were all engaged in performance or rehearsal together under the supervision of their conductor. FMP music teachers were able to mail time sheets to headquarters which were then checked against the teacher’s regular schedule in addition to occasional work checks by

supervisors. Only in 1938 did Sokoloff arrange for composers to be certified to write music for WPA performing units, prepare educational materials, and do research work, but by then it was too late to have a lasting effect before the FMP's federal dissolution in 1939.¹⁴

In the years following World War I, the United States saw the emergence of a group of native composers with professional training and technique but who were categorically American in their outlook and musical expression. Almost all of these composers, including Aaron Copland, Roy Harris, Virgil Thomson, and Marc Blitzstein, received their training in Europe under the tutelage of Nadia Boulanger in Paris. Rather than viewing the European model as something that should be strictly followed, these American composers used the European model as a starting point for their own musical outlook and to extend their own musical capabilities. Of his training and musical development Copland wrote that he and his colleagues were more concerned with wanting to find "a music that would speak of universal things in a vernacular of American speech rhythms" rather than quoting hymns and spirituals.¹⁵

Most music written by American composers in the 1920s was heavily influenced by jazz, and little effort was made to exploit other popular and folk resources. The outset of the Great Depression transformed social and political life and heightened concern for music's role in society. Internationalism in American music quickly gave way to conscious nationalism with political undertones. Composers actively assumed political responsibility and began to write simplified music that was accessible to a larger audience. These new works also often incorporated folk and popular elements.¹⁶

¹⁴ George Foster, *Record of Program Operation and Accomplishment, The Federal Music Project 1935 to 1939, The WPA Music Program 1939 to 1943* (Washington, D.C.: WPA, FWA, 1943), 349-50.

¹⁵ Robert P. Morgan, *Twentieth Century Music: A History of Musical Style in Modern Europe and America*, Norton Introduction to Music History (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1991), 283-4.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 284-5.

Aaron Copland has been heralded as one of the most enduringly successful composers in the United States in part because he created a distinctively American musical style and esthetic in the diverse mediums and genres represented in his works. In addition to being a composer and conductor, Copland played a significant role in the growth of serious American music in the twentieth century through his activity as a mentor, critic, and advocate of the arts. Three of Copland's most popular works were his "Frontier" ballets *Billy the Kid*, *Rodeo*, and *Appalachian Spring* which helped to establish a precedent for the evocation of the American pastoral and American frontier. They combine to form the basis of Copland's reputation as a composer of Americana and aided in defining the type of musical nationalism Sokoloff desired to establish.

In 1930 Copland began to create a new means of musical expression through absorbing and developing a variety of American folk tunes into a contemporary musical language. His goal was to enhance the basic construction of the tunes using contemporary rhythmic, textural and structural techniques to create a new American compositional idiom to satisfy the demand of a more simplified and accessible 1930s musical taste. He turned to the use of folk songs in the midst of public reaction against the avant-garde style of music. While the tunes he set remain recognizable, they are often set within complex textures. For example, in *Billy the Kid* and *Appalachian Spring*, complex rhythmic and textural procedures surround the tunes and are based on fugal interactions of several thematic statements.¹⁷

Billy the Kid

Copland's first frontier ballet is based on the story of William Bonney, known as Billy the Kid, who went west with his mother, killed twenty one men before reaching twenty one years

¹⁷ Elliot Antokoletz, "Copland's Gift to Be Simple Within the Cumulative Mosaic Complexities of His Ballets," in Carol J. Oja and Judith Tick, eds., *Aaron Copland and His World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 255-6.

of age, and was eventually shot by his best friend who had become a sheriff. The ballet opens and closes with a trek across the stage, marching in the silhouette of pioneers to invoke the millions who went west following the end of the Civil War. Choreographer Eugene Loring chose to start the ballet with the empty prairie full of the bare silhouette of cactus columns instead of with the main character, Billy. The following scenes are concise, rapid, and cinematic in nature. Billy appears as a child clinging to his mother as she moves west among pioneer women, dance hall girls, cowhands, and Mexicans. His mother is the accidental victim of a brawl and falls dead before Billy's eyes. Immediately Billy avenges his mother's death by plunging his knife into the man who murdered her. In following scenes he kills again and again, the victim always being the same man, Alias, who is sometimes a cowhand, a land agent, sheriff, or Indian guide. Alias has been described as both the symbol of the men that Billy has killed without remorse as well as Billy's evil nature from which he tries to break free but cannot. The climax of the ballet sees Billy captured and taken to jail, escape, make love to his sweetheart on the edge of the desert, and then shot. The Mexican women grieve, and in a reprise of the opening scene the pioneers continue their trek making Billy the Kid nothing more than a minor episode in the course of history.¹⁸

In collaborating with Copland, Loring first conducted the research and then made a dramatic outline. Next he wrote all of the incidents, complete with timings, and a draft was given to Copland to use as material for the initial composition of his "musical ideas." In an interview with Marilyn Hunt, Loring remarked, "I was rather astounded when the march was in 3/4 and I questioned that because I had an idea that a march should be in 6/8 or 4/4...He reminded me that

¹⁸ Ibid., 126-7.

‘My Country, ‘Tis of Thee’ is in three.”¹⁹ Once the order was finalized, Copland began to compose and as the ballet neared completion made small cuts or additions to accommodate Loring’s choreography. Kirstein gave Copland a collection of cowboy tunes to use in composing *Billy the Kid*, and many of them were incorporated into the music including *Old Granddad*, *Git Along Little Doggies*, *The Old Chisholm Trail*, *Old Paint*, and *Oh Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie*. The incorporation of these songs gave a distinct American texture to the ballet.²⁰

Billy the Kid premiered to consistently favorable reviews. For example, *Time* magazine ran a review of the ballet on June 5, 1939 in their music section that read:

His music for the ‘character ballet’ *Billy the Kid*, much of it based on cowboy songs, was close-knit, percussive, incisive, wasting not a grace note in its evocation of the dapper, New-York born killer who flourished in the Southwest in the ‘70s and ‘80s. The choreography of Eugene Loring and the dancing of the Ballet Caravan were no less exciting.²¹

The success of this ballet was due in part to the approach of World War II when Americans were suddenly drawn to their past. The Office of War Information disseminated nostalgic visions of hearth and home. In his 1941 State of the Union address, Franklin Delano Roosevelt spoke of the “Four Freedoms” depicted by Norman Rockwell in the *Saturday Evening Post*—the freedoms of eating together, worshipping together, from fear, and of the circumscribed space of home.²² The appropriation of Copland’s American style into popular culture started to take hold.

¹⁹ Marilyn Hunt, interview with Eugene Loring, 1975, Dance Division, New York Public Library, Oral History Archive, 35-6, quoted in Lynn Garafola, “Making an American Dance: *Billy the Kid*, *Rodeo*, and *Appalachian Spring*.” Carol J. Oja and Judith Tick, eds., *Aaron Copland and His World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005): 127-8.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Quoted in Aaron Copland and Vivian Perlis, *Copland: 1900 Through 1942* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1984), 283.

²² Garafola, “Making an American Dance: *Billy the Kid*, *Rodeo*, and *Appalachian Spring*,” 131-2.

Rodeo

Four years to the day after the premiere of *Billy the Kid*, the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo premiered *Rodeo*, subtitled “The Courting at Burnt Ranch.” Copland’s second ballet, written and choreographed by Agnes de Mille, was set in Texas circa 1900, an idyllic land of open space, cowboys, and sweethearts. The plot of the ballet was described in the program notes:

Throughout the American Southwest, the Saturday afternoon rodeo is a tradition. On remote ranches, as well as in the trading centres and the towns, the “hands” get together to show off their skill in roping, riding, branding, and throwing...The afternoon’s exhibition is usually followed by a Saturday night dance at the Ranch House. The theme of the ballet is basic. It deals with the problem that has confronted all American women, from earliest pioneer times, and which has never ceased to occupy them throughout the history of the building of our country; how to get a suitable man. The material of the ballet is redolent of our American soil.²³

Rodeo could be considered more of a folk ballet than *Billy the Kid*. Copland uses folk tunes throughout and they appear in their entirety in fairly traditional settings. The score also uses original music composed in a folk style to the point where both original and borrowed sources blend and are difficult to separate. The choreography was developed in the same way, with de Mille incorporating certain dances directly from vernacular sources with little change. Among these appropriated dances was the “running set” which entailed a classic square dance performed to clapping hands, running feet, and a “caller.” In addition to this de Mille used the tap cadenza, hoedown, waltz, one-step, and Texas minuet.²⁴

Appalachian Spring

In many ways *Appalachian Spring* was presented as the image of an ideal nation.

Copland creates the aura of the American frontier in *Appalachian Spring* not only by alluding to

²³ Program, Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, Metropolitan Opera House, New York, October 16, 1942, Dance Division, New York Public Library, Programs (Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo).

²⁴ Garafola, “Making an American Dance: *Billy the Kid*, *Rodeo*, and *Appalachian Spring*,” 132-3.

American folk styles and the quotation of a Shaker melody, but by conservatively handling open diatonic sonorities which are largely absent from his more abstract scores. The opening harmonizations of “Simple Gifts” are transparently basic and are suggested by the melodic construction of the Shaker tune. The use of contrasting variations is based on clearly articulated changes in texture, key, dynamics, and tempo which coincide with Copland’s inclination toward a Stravinskian juxtaposition of structural blocks. The overall cumulative shape of the variations is produced by doublings of instruments that build to the full orchestra by the last variation.²⁵ Many of the themes and motives that Copland incorporated in the score reveal certain Shaker characteristics including repeated tones, melodies made from major arpeggios, tunes containing ascending and descending scalar passages, and other folk idioms.²⁶

Through a critically affirmative approach to American history, *Appalachian Spring* displays a leftist perspective. Although usually regarded as primarily sentimental and nostalgic, there are many instances of contemporary cultural politics. Copland’s biographer Howard Pollack asserts that the abstract narrative of domesticity echoes a scenario that is related to the crises of the Civil War, and reading the finished ballet with this in mind allows for an interpretation that restores a sense of social engagement. The ballet evokes the rural American past not as a hermetic space which is removed from the past but rather in a contemporary context. It captures the anxieties of individuals and their communities involved in a war with the potential to redefine the character of American democracy. It poses the question of what might

²⁵ Antokoletz, “Copland’s Gift to Be Simple Within the Cumulative Mosaic Complexities of His Ballets,” 263.

²⁶ Copland and Perlis, *Copland: 1900 Through 1942*, 32-2.

have been and what might be. World War II provided another opportunity to reclaim the lost legacy of the Lincoln Republic and refashion the American collective.²⁷

In all of Copland's frontier ballets, space was a source of ambivalence. Open space was bound up in the myth that the West was the epic of American expansion with promised freedom. In reality, this open freedom came with danger. In *Billy the Kid* the range became a killing ground where sheriffs exemplified the cause of American expansion, and cleared the land of its native peoples as well as desperados who dared to live outside the imposed law. In *Appalachian Spring*, the frontier home (and impending marriage) restricts space and possibilities. In their own way, each of Copland's frontier ballets created a unique dance for Americans that coincided with the liberal-left's ideas about nationality, provided a way to incorporate vernacular, or lowbrow, materials into the medium of high art, and carved out a definition of Americana.²⁸

A leader in the use of vernacular materials in American musical composition was Virgil Thomson. Born in Kansas City, Missouri in 1896, Thomson produced a significant body of original music rooted in American speech rhythms and hymnbook harmony. During World War I he enlisted in the Army in a field artillery unit and was also trained in radio telephony at Columbia University. He studied organ with Nadia Boulanger in Paris and came to be known as a formidable music critic. He wrote about the quality of music and often clashed with other critics who venerated certain performers, notably in his disdain for conductor Arturo Toscanini. Thomson prominently featured popular and folk music of the nineteenth century in his compositions, sometimes directly quoting melodies and others creating new settings or using them as a framework for new works. He was described by his contemporaries as "one who plays

²⁷ Ibid., 166-7.

²⁸ Garafola, "Making an American Dance: *Billy the Kid*, *Rodeo*, and *Appalachian Spring*," 136-141.

games with context, who handles moods, genres, whole forms with the objectivity that makes of them stylizations.” Some of his most well-known works are the two nationalistic film scores *The Plow that Broke the Plains* and *The River* written in the 1930s. These film scores used cowboy songs, traditional southern spirituals, and old popular tunes.²⁹

Copland and Thomson had a long and close friendship which began in 1925 while they were both studying with Boulanger. During the 1930s they founded the cooperative publishing company Arrow Music Press along with Marc Blitzstein and Lehmen Engel as well as the American Composers’ Alliance which worked to license the performance of serious music. Though each composer had their own distinct style, many similarities can be seen between the work of Copland and Thomson, especially in Copland’s western ballets and Thomson’s film scores.³⁰

The Plow that Broke the Plains

Films in the 1920s established the “cine-poem” as the preferred mode of filmmaking, especially those who were independent and non-fiction filmmakers. By the 1930s, this mode of expression was used by socially concerned documentarians. The WPA recognized the effectiveness of documentary films with a symphonic soundtrack and quickly commissioned the film *His Hands* which dramatizes the role the WPA played in helping citizens find work. The film opens with a shot of idle hands folding a slip of paper, with fingers tapping in boredom. This is followed by employed hands sawing a plank of wood and changing a car battery,

²⁹ Richard Jackson, “Thomson, Virgil,” *Grove Music Online*, Published online 2001, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/978156592630.article.27885>; P. Glanville-Hicks, “Virgil Thomson,” *The Musical Quarterly* 35, no. 2 (April 1949), 209.

³⁰ Kathleen J. Moretto and Harold E. Samuel, “Virgil Thomson: Portrait of a Composer,” *The Yale University Library Gazette* 55, no. 1 (July 1980): 40.

followed by a closeup of a check from the Treasury Department held in a worker's hands. A montage sequence shows hands producing goods and performing services such as a seamstress at a sewing machine, a doctor bandaging an arm, and hands typing checks and exchanging money. As a demonstration of the fruits of this labor, hands are also shown fishing, playing a violin, and receiving a diploma. This would not be the last time that a government agency used an art form to help defend itself against political criticism.³¹

In 1936, the Resettlement Administration, which was relocating displaced farmers to model communities around the country, commissioned Pare Lorentz to direct the documentary film *The Plow that Broke the Plains* with a score written by Thomson. The short, roughly thirty-minute film relates the story of the Great Plains and the soil and shows what happened as a result of settlement and farming practices. Lorentz chose to focus on the land and only deal with people symbolically or in long-shot. Thomson's score interweaves hymns, ballads, fugues, and jazz to support what happens on-screen. For example, in the scenes showing the exodus from the Dust Bowl, Thomson quotes the hymn *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow* while the scenes depicting logs rolling down the river are accompanied by whimsical quotations of popular songs.³² Each symbolic representation has its own corresponding musical style; cowboy tunes are used to represent the cattlemen and cowboys, the plowmen do their work over popular "hillbilly" music, and bugle calls create a backdrop for the military and America's involvement in World War I. What emerges when looking at the output of American composers such as Copland and Thomson, is the fact that the trajectory of the composer differed from that of WPA

³¹ David Davidson, "Depression America and the Rise of the Social Documentary Film," *Chicago Review* 34, no. 1 (Summer 1983): 69, 73-4; Ross, *The Rest is Noise*, 309-10.

³² Ross, *The Rest is Noise*, 309; Glanville-Hicks, "Virgil Thomson," 221; Davidson, "Depression America and the Rise of the Social Documentary Film," 75.

musicians. Through connections and collaborations with private enterprise their activities, though similar to or the same as the WPA, produced a longer-lasting legacy.

Although the FMP's actions are not as well-known today as other Federal One projects, its legacy is still felt in the United States today. Throughout its tenure the FMP strove to stimulate popular interest in music, and one of the ways it did this was through the encouragement of music festivals and National Music Week which Sokoloff deemed vital to the success of the FMP. Harry Hopkins received requests to establish national folk festival projects as early as June of 1935. The FMP never established a national program of folk festival activities, but units did participate in several music weeks playing folk music and music written by American composers. In February 1939 a three-day nationwide festival of American music was sponsored by the FMP. Over the course of the festival the entirety of American musical history was explored, from music of the colonial and revolutionary periods to contemporary musical compositions. Supplemental concerts of native compositions were presented as part of the music appreciation program in public and parochial schools.³³

National Music week remains a current annual event held the first full week of May and sponsored by the National Federation of Music Clubs (NFM). The objective of the festival is "to create an understanding and appreciation of the value of music in the home, the community, the nation, and the world." Membership in the NFM is not required, and a variety of community groups and organizations are encouraged to participate including scout troops, chambers of commerce, churches, choral groups, bands, orchestras, libraries, music clubs, schools, recreation centers, and theater groups. Just as when the FMP participated, each state has a chairman that asks for a Proclamation for National Music Week by the Governor and then makes copies of the

³³ McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 634-5.

proclamation available. Those participating in National Music Week activities add their voices to the NFM's assertion that "music can serve as a great force for maintaining peace and harmony among peoples...it is the language of all peoples."³⁴

Perhaps more importantly, the WPA and FMP's process of providing aid to musicians and artists has been used as a template for other organizations such as the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). The NEA is an independent federal agency, established by Congress in 1965, that gives Americans the opportunity to participate in the arts. Its mission states that the agency "funds, promotes, and strengthens the creative capacity of our communities by providing all Americans with diverse opportunities for arts participation." The NEA partners with state art agencies, local leaders, and the philanthropic sector to support arts learning, affirm and celebrate America's rich and diverse cultural heritage, and promote equal access to arts in communities across the nation. Many of the agency's initiatives are an extension of the activities and programs of Federal One Projects including the Citizen's Institute on Rural Design, Shakespeare in American Communities, Poetry Out Loud, and the Arts Education Partnership. Of particular significance to the legacy of the FMP are the Creative Forces and Musical Theater Songwriting challenge which both build upon FMP activities. Creative Forces: NEA Healing Arts Network serves the special needs of military patients, veterans, and their families through art, music, and dance therapies. Similarly to the work of Altshuler and the Detroit FMP units, arts therapies are at the core of patient-centered care at eleven sites throughout the country. The Musical Theater Songwriting Challenge is a national composition competition open to High School students in partnership with Disney Theatrical Productions and Samuel French. The agency also has an Arts and Development Task Force that, similarly to Federal One Projects, works across multiple

³⁴ "National Music Week," National Federation of Music Clubs, accessed August 28, 2019, nfmcc-music.org.

federal units to encourage more quality research on how the arts help people achieve their full potential at all stages of their lives. The unit, which meets quarterly, is comprised of members from a variety of agencies including the United States Department of Health and Human Services, the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, and the United States Department of Education.³⁵

The aims of the Federal Music Project were at once both simple and complex; to employ out-of-work artists around the nation in a way that would enrich the lives of American citizens and bring forth a great American musical repertoire no longer dependent upon Europe. Although Alex Ross considers the FMP as “a well-meaning, hardworking organization that never quite defined its purpose,” the output of the FMP indicates that its purpose was defined both by Sokoloff and by the words of the program at large. Nikolai Sokoloff enshrined the FMP in the following statement, “All of this music belongs to the nation. Whether it presages the creation of a public audience; whether it is establishing the groundwork for a native musical tradition, rests with the future. Certainly it has disclosed a desire for music and a creative musical talent that was not anticipated when the Federal Music Project came into existence.”³⁶ In writing the final report of the FMP, George Foster considered what the program accomplished to be groundbreaking. He described the heyday of FMP activities as “amazing.” He wrote,

[By 1936,] Symphony orchestras were performing, operas were being rehearsed, choruses were preparing the great oratorios, and children who had never dared to hope for the privilege of music lessons and who could not afford to pay for them, were receiving first class instruction in any subject of their choosing... Valuable instruments were withdrawn from pawn shops to serve the purpose for which they were built... Sometimes the workers grumbled about over-zealous timekeepers and sometimes they murmured about young, inexperienced conductors, but when

³⁵ “About; National Initiatives,” National Endowment for the Arts, accessed August 27, 2019, arts.gov.

³⁶ Nikolai Sokoloff, *The Federal Music Project* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1935), 30.

time came to perform these musicians gave of their best *and their best was good.*³⁷

³⁷ Foster, *Record of Program Operation and Accomplishment*, vii. (Emphasis added)

APPENDIX

Compiled from the 1930 U.S. Census, accessed September 5, 2019 from
<http://usa.ipums.org/usa/voliii/pubdocs/190/pubvols1930popv3.shtml>

Illinois Population 1930

	Total	“White”	“Negro”	“Other”
State	7,630,654	7,266,361	328,972	35,321
Urban	5,635,727	5,300,343	304,036	31,348
Rural	1,994,927	1,966,018	24,936	3,973

Indiana Population 1930

	Total	“White”	“Negro”	“Other”
State	3,238,503	3,116,136	111,982	10,385
Urban	1,795,392	1,682,994	103,042	9,856
Rural	1,442,611	1,433,142	8,940	529

Michigan Population 1930

	Total	“White”	“Negro”	“Other”
State	4,842,325	4,650,171	109,453	22,701
Urban	3,302,075	3,126,763	159,704	15,608
Rural	1,540,250	1,523,408	9,749	7,093

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Archives

American Federation of Musicians Records. Local 3, Indianapolis, Indiana; Local 10-208, Chicago, Illinois; Local 554-635, Lexington, Kentucky.

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library (formerly the Illinois Historical Library). Federal Writers' Project Records, 1935-1944; Oral History Program. Springfield, Illinois.

Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library. WPA Files; the Papers of Harry Hopkins; the Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt. Hyde Park, New York.

George Mason University. Special Collections and Archives, Institute on the Federal Theatre Project and New Deal Culture Oral History Program; Federal Theatre Project Playscript and Radioscript Collection. Fairfax, Virginia.

Indiana State Library. Rare Books and Manuscripts. Ross Franklin Lockridge Collection; Folklore Collection. Indianapolis, Indiana.

Indiana University. Archives of Traditional Music. Bloomington, Indiana.

Library of Congress. The Federal Music Project, Works Progress Administration, Music Division; the Federal Theatre Project Collection, Music Division. Washington, D.C.

National Archives. Record Group 69, Works Progress Administration, Federal Music Project General Files, 211.1; WPA Federal Music Project, Central Files: State 651.311-651.3113. College Park, Maryland.

Purdue University. Archives and Special Collections. WBAA Records, MSP 211. West Lafayette, Indiana.

Smithsonian Institution. Archives of American Art; Folkways Recordings. Washington, D.C.

Books

Federal Writers' Project of the Work Projects Administration for the State of Illinois. *The WPA Guide to Illinois: The Federal Writers' Project Guide to 1930s Illinois*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1939.

Federal Writers' Project of the Work Projects Administration for the State of Kentucky. *The WPA Guide to Kentucky*. F. Kevin Simon, ed. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1939.

Writers' Program of the Work Projects Administration in the State of Indiana. *Indiana: A Guide to the Hoosier State*. American Guide Series. New York: Oxford University Press, 1941.

Writers' Program of the Work Projects Administration in the State of Michigan. *Michigan: A Guide to the Wolverine State*. American Guide Series. New York: Oxford University Press, 1941.

Periodicals

Barrell, E.A. "Notable Musical Women." *Etude* 47 (November 1929): 805-6, 897.

Buchanon, Annabel Morris. "The Function of a Folk Festival." *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 1 (March 1937): 30.

"Classical Music For The Heart, Jazz For Feet, WPA Music Director Says." *The Times Herald*, May 8, 1936.

Davis, John P. "A Survey of the Problems of the Negro Under the New Deal." *Journal of Negro Education* 5, no. 1 (January 1936): 3-12.

"Federal Music Project." *Current History* (September 1938): 42-4.

Halpert, Herbert. "Federal Theatre and Folksong." *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 2, no. 2 (March 1938): 32-6.

Harris, Roy. "American Music Enters a New Phase." *Scribner's* (October 1934): 218-21.

Hirschmann, I. D. "The Musician and the Depression." *Nation* (November 15, 1933): 565-6.

"Instrumentation Experiments Tried by WPA Orchestra." *Decatur Daily Review*, August 9, 1936.

Mason, Daniel Gregory. "The Radio vs. The Virtuoso." *American Mercury* (June 1934): 224-31.

"Music and Government." *Musician* 41 (February 1936): 43.

"Music and Nationalism" *Musician* 44 (January 1939): 14.

"Music in America." *Harpers Magazine* 90 (February 1895): 433.

Overmyer, Grace. "The Musician Starves." *American Mercury* (June 1934): 224-31.

Pettis, Ashley. "The WPA and the American Composer." *Musical Quarterly* 26 (January 1940): 101-12.

Seeger, Charles. "Grassroots for American Composers." *Modern Music* 16, no. 3 (March-April 1939): 143-9.

_____. "Music." In *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*. Vol. 11. New York: Macmillan Company, 1933.

_____. "Music in America." *Magazine Art* 31 (July 1938): 411-13.

_____. "On Dissonant Counterpoint." *Modern Music* 7, no. 4 (June-July 1930): 25-6.

_____. "On Proletarian Music." *Modern Music* 11 (March 1934): 121-7.

Skinner, Dickson. "Music Goes into Mass Production." *Harpers* (April 1939): 485-90.

Sokoloff, Nikolai. "America's Vast New Musical Awakening." *Etude* (April 1937): 221-2.

"Unemployed Artists." *Fortune* 15 (May 1937): 108-17.

"WPA Melody for Twenty Millions." *Literary Digest* (September 19, 1936): 22.

Government Documents and Publications:

An Analysis of Women in the WPA. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1936.

Assigned Occupations of Persons Employed on the WPA Projects, 1937. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1939.

Final Report on the WPA Programs, 1935-1943. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1939.

Foster, George. *Record of Program Operation and Accomplishment, The Federal Music Project 1935 to 1939, The WPA Music Program 1939 to 1943*. Washington D.C.: WPA, FWA, 1943.

Hopkins, Harry. "Activities of the WPA." Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1936.

_____. *Principal Speeches of Harry L. Hopkins*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1938.

_____. *The Realities of Unemployment*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, n.d.

House Committee on Appropriations, 1938. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1935.

House Special Committee on Un-American Activities, Hearing, 1938. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1939.

House Subcommittee of Appropriations, Investigation of WPA Activities. Pts. 1 and 3, 1939, 1940. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1939-1940.

Inventory: An Appraisal of Results of the WPA. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1938.

Music as Recreation. Washington, D.C.: Works Progress Administration, 1940.

Report on the Progress of the WPA. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1942.

Sokoloff, Nikolai. *The Federal Music Project.* Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1935.

Summary of Work and Relief Statistics, 1933-1940. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1941.

U.S. Congress House Committee on Appropriations. *Additional Appropriations for Work Relief and Relief, Fiscal Year 1939.* Hearings before a subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, on H.J. Res. 83, 76th Cong., 1st sess., 1939.

U.S. Congress Special Committee on Un-American Activities. *Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the United States.* Hearings before the Special Committee on Un-American Activities, House of Representatives, on H.R. 282, 75th Cong., 3rd sess., 1938, vols. 1 and 4.

_____. *Report of the Special Committee on Un-American Activities—Pursuant to H.R. 282.* 75th Cong., 4th Sess., 1939.

Usual Occupations of Persons Eligible for WPA Employment, 1936. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1937.

Workers on Relief in the United States, March 1935. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1935.

Oral Histories:

Bacon, Ernst. By Marion Knoblauch-Franc. April 23, 1982. George Mason University, Oral History Program.

Schuman, William. By Marion Knoblauch-Franc. May 3, 1982. George Mason University, Oral History Program.

Seeger, Charles. By Richard Reuss. June 8, 1967. Sound Recording. Indiana University, Archives of Traditional Music.

_____. "Reminiscences of an American Musicologist." By Adelaide G. Tusler and Ann M. Briegrib. 1972. University of California, Los Angeles, Schoenberg Music Library Archives and Collections.

Siegmeister, Elie. "Interview with Elie Siegmeister." By Marion Knoblach-Franc. 1982. George Mason University, Music Library.

Secondary Sources

Books

Allswang, John. *The New Deal and American Politics: A Study in Political Change*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1978.

Alexander, Charles C. *Here the Country Lies: Nationalism and the Arts in Twentieth-Century America*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980.

Alexander, J. Heywood, ed. *To Stretch Our Ears: A Documentary History of America's Music*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002.

Arieli, Yehoshua. *Individualism and Nationalism in American Ideology*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964.

Badger, Anthony J. *The New Deal: The Depression Years, 1933-40*. London: McMillan, 1989.

Barnouw, Erik. *A Tower in Babel: A History of Broadcasting in the United States: Volume I—to 1933*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1966.

Becker, Heather. *Art for the People: The Rediscovery and Preservation of Progressive and WPA Era Murals in the Chicago Public Schools, 1904-1943*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2002.

Benedict, Stephen, ed. *Public Money and the Muse: Essays on Government Funding for the Arts*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1991.

Biddle, George. *An American Artist's Story*. Boston: Little, Brown, & Co., 1939.

Biles, Roger. *The New Deal for the American People*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1991.

Bindas, Kenneth J. *All of this Music Belongs to the Nation: The WPA's Federal Music Project and American Society*. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1995.

Binkiewicz, Donna M. *Federalizing the Muse: United States Arts Policy & The National Endowment for the Arts 1965-1980*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004.

- Blum, John Morton. *V was for Victory: Politics and American Culture during World War II*. London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976.
- Bohlman, Philip V. *The Music of European Nationalism: Cultural Identity and Modern History*. ABC-CLIO, Inc., 2004.
- _____. *The Study of Folk Music in the Modern World*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988.
- Bold, Christine. *The WPA Guides: Mapping America*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1999.
- Borgwardt, Elizabeth. *A New Deal for the World: America's Vision for Human Rights*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005.
- Brinkley, Alan. *Culture and Politics in the Great Depression*. Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 1999.
- _____. *The End of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995.
- Burns, George. *Gracie: A Love Story*. New York: Putnam, 1988.
- Bustard, Bruce I. *A New Deal for the Arts*. Seattle: The University of Washington Press, 1997.
- Cantwell, Robert. *When We Were Good: The Folk Revival*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996.
- Carter, Ennis. *Posters for the People: Art of the WPA*. Philadelphia, PA: Quirk Books, 2008.
- Chafe, William H. *The Achievement of American Liberalism: The New Deal and Its Legacies*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.
- Clark, Alvin C. *A History of the Wayne County Infirmary, Psychiatric, and General Hospital Complex at Eloise, Michigan: 1832-1982*. Michigan: Wayne County Board of County Institutions, 1982.
- Clurman, Harold. *The Fervent Years: The Story of Group Theatre and the Thirties*. Rev. ed. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1957.
- Cohen, Lizabeth. *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Cohen, Ronald D. *"Wasn't That a Time!": Firsthand Accounts of the Folk Music Revival*. Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1995.
- Conkin, Paul K. *The New Deal*. New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell Company, 1967.

- Cruz, Jon. *Culture on the Margins: The Black Spiritual and the Rise of American Cultural Interpretation*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999.
- Copland, Aaron and Vivian Perlis. *Copland: 1900 Through 1942*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984.
- Copland, Aaron. *What to Listen for in Music*. New York: New American Library, 1939.
- Davis, Kenneth S. *FDR: The New Deal Years 1933-1937*. New York: Random House, 1979.
- Davis, Ronald L. *A History of Music in American Life*. Vol. 3, *The Modern Era, 1920-Present*. Malabar, Fla.: Robert Krieger Publishing Company, 1981.
- Degler, Carl. *Out of Our Past: The Forces That Shaped Modern America*. New York: Harper, 1959.
- Denning, Michael. *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of American Culture in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Verso, 1997.
- Dickstein, Morris. *Dancing in the Dark: A Cultural History of the Great Depression*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2009.
- Diggins, John Patrick. *The American Left in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Harcourt Brace Javanovich, Inc., 1973.
- _____. *The Rise and Fall of the American Left*. 2nd ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992.
- Dorman, Robert L. *Revolt of the Provinces: The Regionalist Movement in America, 1920-1945*. Chapel Hill: The University of Northern California Press, 1993.
- Douglas, Susan J. *Listening In: Radio and the American Imagination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004.
- Dumenil, Lynn. *The Modern Temper: American Culture and Society in the 1920s*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1995.
- Dunaway, David King. *How Can I Keep from Singing: Pete Seeger*. Cambridge, Mass.: De Capo Press, 1981.
- Eden, Robert, ed. *The New Deal and Its Legacy: Critique and Reappraisal*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1989.
- Ekirch, Arthur A., Jr. *Ideologies and Utopias: The Impact of the New Deal on American Thought*. Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1969.

- Flanagan, Hallie. *Arena: The History of the Federal Theatre*. New York: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, 1940.
- Fowler, Gene and Bill Crawford. *Border Radio: Quacks, Yodelers, Pitchmen, Physics, and Other Amazing Broadcasters of the American Airwaves*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002.
- Fredrickson, George M. *The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817-1914*. Reprint, Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1987.
- Garson, Robert A. and Stuart S. Kidd, eds. *The Roosevelt Years: New Perspectives on American History, 1933-1945*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999.
- Gilmore, Glenda Elizabeth. *Defying Dixie: The Radical Roots of Civil Rights, 1919-1950*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2008.
- Gough, Peter. *Sounds of the New Deal: The Federal Music Project in the West*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015.
- Greer, Taylor Aitken. *A Question of Balance: Charles Seeger's Philosophy of Music*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.
- Harker, Brian. *Jazz: An American Journey*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson Education, Inc., 2005.
- Hareven, Tamara K. *Eleanor Roosevelt: An American Conscience*. Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1968.
- Hawley, Ellis W. *The New Deal and the Problem of Monopoly*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1966.
- Hicks, Michael. *Henry Cowell, Bohemian*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002.
- _____. *Mormonism and Music: A History*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989.
- Hilmes, Michele. *Radio Voices: American Broadcasting, 1922-1952*. Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1997.
- Hirsch, Jerrold. *Portrait of America: A Cultural History of the Federal Writers' Project*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003.
- Hofstadter, Richard. *The Age of Reform: From Bryant to FDR*. New York: Knopf, 1955.
- Howard, John Tasker. *Our American Music: A Comprehensive History from 1620 to the Present*. Fourth Edition. New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell Company, 1965.

- Ibbotson, Patricia. *Eloise: Poorhouse, Farm, Asylum, and Hospital, 1839-1984*. Images of America. Chicago: Arcadia Publishing, 2002.
- Johnpoll, Bernard K. *The Impossible Dream: The Rise and Demise of the American Left*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1981.
- Kalaidjian, Walter B. *American Culture between the Wars: Revisionary Modernism and Postmodernism Critique*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993.
- Kallen, Horace M. *Culture and Democracy in the United States*. New York: Transaction Publishers, 1924.
- Kasson, John F. *Amusing the Million: Coney Island at the Turn of the Century*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1978.
- Katznelson, Ira. *When Affirmative Action was White: An Untold Story of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005.
- Kaufman, Will. *Woody Guthrie: American Radical*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011.
- Kazin, Michael. *American Dreamers: How the Left Changed a Nation*. New York: Knopf, 2011.
- Kennedy, David M. *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Kingman, Daniel. *American Music: A Panorama*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1998.
- Klein, Joe. *Woody Guthrie: A Life*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980.
- Kruger, Loren. *The National Stage: Theatre and Cultural Legitimation in England, France, and America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- Leuchtenburg, William E. *The FDR Years: On Roosevelt and His Legacy*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995.
- _____. *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1932-1940*. New York: Harper and Row, 1963.
- Levine, Lawrence. *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.
- _____. *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988.
- Levine, Rhonda F. *Class Struggle and the New Deal: Industrial Labor, Industrial Capital, and the State*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1988.

- Levy, Alan Howard. *Musical Nationalism: American Composers' Search for Identity*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1984.
- Lieberman, Robbie. "My Song is My Weapon": *People's Songs, American Communism, and the Politics of Culture, 1930-1950*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989.
- Linn, Karen S. *That Half-Barbaric Twang: The Banjo in American Popular Culture*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991.
- Lowitt, Richard. *The New Deal and the West*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993.
- Lynd, Robert S. and Helen Merrell Lynd. *Middletown: A Study in Modern American Culture*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World, Inc., 1929.
- Madison, James H. *Hoosiers: A New History of Indiana*. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2014.
- _____. *Indiana Through Tradition and Change: A History of the Hoosier State and Its People, 1920-1945*. The History of Indiana, Vol. 5. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1982.
- Manchester, William. *The Glory and the Dream: A Narrative History of America, 1932-1972*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1974.
- McDonald, William F. *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*. Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 1969.
- McElvaine, Robert S. *The Great Depression: America, 1929-1941*. New York: Times Books, 1984.
- Melosh, Barbara. *Engendering Culture: Manhood and Womanhood in New Deal Public Art and Theater*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991.
- _____, ed. *Gender and American History since 1890*. New York: Routledge, 1993.
- Milikis, Sidney M. and Jerome M. Milheur, eds. *The New Deal and the Triumph of Liberalism*. Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002.
- Miller, Karl Hagstrom. *Segregating Sound: Inventing Folk and Pop Music in the Age of Jim Crow*. Refiguring American Music. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2010.
- Morgan, Robert P. *Twentieth Century Music: A History of Musical Style in Modern Europe and America*. Norton Introduction to Music History. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1991.

- Nettl, Bruno. *An Introduction to Folk Music in the United States*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1960.
- Patterson, James T. *The New Deal and the States: Federalism in Transition*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1969.
- Pells, Richard H. *The Liberal Mind in a Conservative Age: American Intellectuals in the 1940s and 1950s*. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1985.
- _____. *Radical Visions and American Dreams: Culture and Social Thought in the Depression Years*. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1973.
- Peress, Maurice. *Dvořák to Duke Ellington: A Conductor Explores America's Music and Its African American Roots*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Perkins, Dexter. *The New Age of Franklin Roosevelt, 1932-45*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957.
- Pescatello, Ann M. *Charles Seeger: A Life in American Music*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992.
- Phillips, Clifton J. *Indiana in Transition: The Emergence of an Industrial Commonwealth, 1880-1920*. The History of Indiana, Vol. 4. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1968.
- Radano, Ronald. *Lying Up a Nation: Race and Black Music*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000.
- Rauch, Basil, ed. *The Roosevelt Reader: Selected Speeches, Messages, Press Conferences, and Letters of Franklin D. Roosevelt*. Chicago: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964.
- Rauchway, Eric. *The Great Depression & The New Deal: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Reuss, Richard A. with Joanne C. Reuss. *American Folk Music and Left-Wing Politics, 1927-1957*. Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2000.
- Reyes, Adelaida. *Music in America: Experiencing Music, Expressing Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Robinson, Edgar Eugene. *The Roosevelt Leadership 1933-1945*. New York: J.B. Lippencott Company, 1955.
- Rosenweig, Roy, ed. *Government and the Arts in Thirties America: A Guide to Oral Histories and Other Research Materials*. Fairfax, Va.: The George Mason University Press, 1986.
- Ross, Alex. *The Rest is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century*. New York: Picador, 2007.

- Rozwenc, Edwin C., ed. *The New Deal Revolution or Evolution?* Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1959.
- Schlesinger, Arthur M. *The Age of Roosevelt: The Politics of Upheaval*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1960.
- Schwarz, Jordan A. *The New Dealers: Power Politics in the Age of Roosevelt*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993.
- Schweik, Susan M. *The Ugly Laws: Disability in Public*. New York: New York University Press, 2009.
- Seeger, Charles. *Studies in Musicology II, 1929-1979*. Edited by Ann M. Pescatello. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.
- Seeger, Ruth Crawford. *The Music of American Folk Song and Selected Other Writings on American Folk Music*. Edited by Larry Polansky and Judith Tick. Rochester, N.Y.: University of Rochester Press, 2001.
- Sitkoff, Harvard. *A New Deal for Blacks: The Emergence of Civil Rights as a National Issue: The Depression Decade*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.
- _____, ed. *Fifty Years Later: The New Deal Evaluated*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985.
- Sklaroff, Lauren Rebecca. *Black Culture and the New Deal: The Quest for Civil Rights in the Roosevelt Era*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009.
- Smith, Catherine Parsons. *Making Music in Los Angeles: Transforming the Popular*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.
- Sporn, Paul. *Against Itself: The Federal Theatre and Writers' Projects in the Midwest*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995.
- Stokes, Martin, ed. *Ethnicity, Identity, and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*. Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1994.
- Stowe, David W. *How Sweet the Sound: Music in the Spiritual Lives of Americans*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004.
- _____. *Swing Changes: Big-Band Jazz in New Deal America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994.
- Susman, Warren I., ed. *Culture and Commitment 1929-1945*. New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1973.

- _____. *Culture as History: The Transformation American Society in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1973.
- Swan, Marcus Lafayette and W. Harvey Swan. *The New Harp of Columbia 1867*. (Reprint, Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2001.
- Szwed, John. *Alan Lomax: The Man Who Recorded the World*. New York: Penguin Books, 2010.
- Taylor, David A. *Soul of a People: The WPA Writers' Project Uncovers Depression America*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2009.
- Taylor, Nick. *American Made: The Enduring Legacy of the WPA: When FDR Put the Nation to Work*. New York: Bantam, 2008.
- Taylor, Timothy D., Mark Katz, and Tony Grajeda, eds. *Music, Sound, and Technology in America: A Documentary History of Early Phonograph, Cinema, and Radio*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2012.
- Tawa, Nicholas. *The Great American Symphony: Music, The Depression, and War*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009.
- _____. *Serenading the Reluctant Eagle: American Musical Life, 1929-1945*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1984.
- Terkel, Studs. *Hard Times: An Oral History of the Great Depression*. New York: Avon Printing, 1970.
- Tischler, Barbara L. *An American Music: The Search for an American Musical Identification*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Weinstein, James. *Ambiguous Legacy: The Left in American Politics*. New York: New Viewpoints, 1975.
- Weisman, Dick. *Which Side Are You On? An Inside History of the Folk Music Revival in America*. New York: Continuum, 2005.
- Whisnant, David. *All That Is Native Is Fine: The Politics of Culture in an American Region*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983.
- Wilgus, D.K. *Anglo-American Folk Song Scholarship since 1898*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1982.
- Wilson, Charles Reagan, ed. *The New Regionalism*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1998.

Wolf, Thomas P., William D. Pederson, and Byron D. Haynes, eds. *Franklin D. Roosevelt and Congress: The New Deal and Its Aftermath*. Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 2001.

Wolfskill, George. *Happy Days Are Here Again! A Short Interpretive History of the New Deal*. Hinsdale, Ill.: The Dryden Press, 1974.

Yung, Bell and Helen Rees, eds. *Understanding Charles Seeger, Pioneer in American Musicology*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999.

Zinn, Howard, ed. *New Deal Thought*. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1966.

Zuck, Barbara. *A History of Musical Americanism*. Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1980.

Periodicals:

Altshuler, Ira M. "A Psychiatrist's Experiences with Music as a Therapeutic Agent." In *Music as Medicine*, edited by Dorothy M. Schullian and Max Schoen. New York: Henry Schuman, Inc., 1948: 266-81.

_____. "Four Year's Experience with Music as a Therapeutic Agent at Eloise Hospital." *American Journal of Psychiatry* 100, no. 7 (May 1944), 792-4.

_____. "One Year's Experience with Group Psychotherapy." *Mental Hygiene* 26, no. 2 (April 1940), 190-6.

_____. "The Organism-as-a-Whole and Music Therapy." *Sociometry* 8, no.3/4 (August-November 1945), 227-32.

_____. "The Part of Music in Resocialization of Mental Patients." *American Journal of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation* (1940), 75-86.

_____. "Rational Music-Therapy of the Mentally Ill." *Volume of the Proceedings of the Music Teachers' National Association* 63 (1939), 153-7.

Antokoletz, Elliot. "Copland's Gift to Be Simple Within the Cumulative Mosaic Complexities of His Ballets." *Aaron Copland and His World*. Edited by Carol J. Oja and Judith Tick. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005: 255-274.

Berghahn, Volker R. "Historiographical Review: The Debate on 'Americanization' among Economic and Cultural Historians." *Cold War History* 10, no.1 (February 2010): 107-30.

Billington, Ray Allen. "Government and the Arts: The WPA Experience." *American Quarterly* 13 (Winter 1961): 466-79.

- Bohlman, Philip V. "On the Unremarkable in Music." *19th-Century Music* 16, no. 2 (Autumn 1992): 203-16.
- Colwell, Richard, James W. Pruett, Pamela Bristah, and David G. Woods. "Music Education in the United States." *Grove Music Online*. Published online 2013, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.purdue.edu/10.1093/gmo.9781561592630.article.A224324>.
- Copland, Aaron. "Music in the Star-Spangled Manner." *Music and Musicians* 8 (August 1960): 8.
- Davidson, David. "Depression America and the Rise of the Social Documentary Film." *Chicago Review* 34, no. 1 (Summer 1983): 69-88.
- Davis, William B. "Ira Maximillian Altshuler: Psychiatrist and Pioneer Music Therapist." *Journal of Music Therapy* 40, no. 3 (Fall 2003): 247-63.
- Denisoff, R. Serge. "Folk Music and the American Left: A Generational-Ideological Comparison." *British Journal of Sociology* 20, no. 4 (December 1969): 427-42.
- Duerksen, George L. "Music Therapy." *Grove Music Online*. (2014)
- Elston, Arnold. "The Musician's Approach to Musical Therapy." In *Music as Medicine*. Edited by Dorothy M. Schullian and Max Schoen. New York: Henry Schuman, Inc., 1948: 282-92.
- Fogel, Jared A. and Robert L. Stevens. "The Canvas Mirror: Painting as Politics in the New Deal." In "The Great Depression," ed. Michael A. Bernstein. Special Issue, *OAH Magazine of History* 16, no. 1 (Fall 2001): 17-25.
- Garafola, Lynn. "Making an American Dance: *Billy the Kid*, *Rodeo*, and *Appalachian Spring*." *Aaron Copland and His World*. Edited by Carol J. Oja and Judith Tick. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005): 121-147.
- Glanville-Hicks, P. "Virgil Thomson." *The Musical Quarterly* 35, no. 2 (April 1949): 209-25.
- Horden, Peregrine. "Commentary on Part V, with Notes on Nineteenth-Century America and on Mesmerism and Theosophy." In *Music as Medicine: The History of Music Therapy since Antiquity*. Edited by Peregrine Horden. Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2000: 315-37.
- _____. "Musical Solutions: Past and Present in Music Therapy." In *Music as Medicine: The History of Music Therapy since Antiquity*. Edited by Peregrine Horden. Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2000: 4-40.

- Hemingway, Andrew. "Cultural Democracy by Default: The Politics of the New Deal Arts Programmes." *Oxford Art Journal* 30, no. 7 (2007): 271-87.
- Jackson, Richard. "Thomson, Virgil." *Grove Music Online*. Published online 2001.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/978156592630.article.27885>
- Kivy, Peter. "Charles Darwin on Music." *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 12, no. 1 (Spring 1959): 42-8.
- Lacey, Kate. "Radio in the Great Depression: Promotional Culture, Public Service, and Propaganda," in *Radio Reader: Essays in the Cultural History of Radio*. Edited by Michelle Hilmes and Jason Loviglio. New York: Routledge, 2002: 21-40.
- Langlois, Janet, Thomas B. Jankowski, Mary Durocher, and Elizabeth Chapleski. "Otherwise Destined for Eloise: Dread, Contentment, and the Public Alternative to Private 'Relief' in Old Age." *Journal of Aging, Humanities, and the Arts*, no. 2 (2008): 186-206.
- Lomax, Alan. "The Folksong Revival: A Symposium." *New York Folklore Quarterly* 19 (1963): 121.
- Mason, Daniel Gregory. "Radio vs. the Virtuoso." *The American Mercury* 20 (1930): 454-61.
- Mathews, Jane De Hart. "Arts and the People: The New Deal Quest for Cultural Democracy." *Journal of American History* 62, no. 2 (September 1975): 316-39.
- Mead, Rita H. "American Federation of Musicians." *Grove Music Online*. Published online 2001, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.purdue.edu/10.1093/gmo.9781561592630.article.00776>.
- Mendoza, Vicente T. and Norman Fraser. "The Frontiers between 'Popular' and 'Folk.'" *Journal of the International Folk Music Council* 7 (1955): 24-7.
- Moretto, Kathleen J. and Harold E. Samuel. "Virgil Thomson: Portrait of a Composer." *The Yale University Library Gazette* 55, no. 1 (July 1980): 31-45.
- O'Reilly, Kenneth. "The Roosevelt Administration and Black America: Federal Surveillance Policy and Civil Rights during the New Deal and World War II Years." *Phylon* 48, no. 1 (First Quarter 1987): 12-25.
- Pasler, Jann. "Writing for Radio Listeners in the 1930s: National Identity, Canonization, and Transnational Consensus from New York to Paris." *The Musical Quarterly* 98, no. 3 (Fall 2015): 212-62.
- Pelah, Andre. "The Importance to Musicians and Music of Federal Music Projects." *International Musician* (December 1936): 6-8.

- Peterson, Richard A. and Paul DiMaggio. "From Region to Class, the Changing Locus of Country Music: A Test of the Massification Hypothesis." *Social Forces* 52, no. 3 (March 1975): 497-506.
- Santella, Anna-Lise P. "Modeling Music: Early Organizational Structures of American Women's Orchestras." In *American Orchestras in the Nineteenth Century*, edited by John Spitzer, 53-77. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012.
- Skinner, Dickson. "Music Goes into Mass Production." *Harper's Magazine* (April 1939): 485-90.
- Steiner, Michael C. "Regionalism in the Great Depression." *Geographical Review* 73, no. 4 (October 1983): 430-46.
- Tyler, Helen M. "The Music Therapy Profession in Modern Britain." In *Music as Medicine: The History of Music Therapy since Antiquity*. Edited by Peregrine Horden. Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2000: 375-93.
- Warshow, Robert. "The Legacy of the Thirties." In *The Immediate Experience*. New York: Atheneum, 1971.

Theses and Dissertations

- Abate, Jason Scott. "'Eager and Hungry for Music': The WPA Music Project in New Orleans, 1935-1943." MA thesis, University of New Orleans, 2005.
- Canon, Cornelius Baird. "The Federal Music Project of the Works Progress Administration: Music in a Democracy." PhD dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1963.
- Findley, Janelle Jedd Warren. "Of Tears and Need: The Federal Music Project, 1935-1943." PhD dissertation, The George Washington University, 1973.
- Greenlee, Wendell William, Jr. "The WPA Federal Music Project in Los Angeles, 1935-1942: Three Performing Units." MA thesis, California State University, Los Angeles, 1987.
- Jarvis, Arthur Robert, Jr. "Cultural Nationalism in an Urban Setting: The Philadelphia Experience with Federal Project Number One of the Works Progress Administration, 1935-1943." PhD dissertation, Pennsylvania State University, 1995.
- Woodworth, William Harry. "The Federal Music Project of the Works Progress Administration in New Jersey." PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 1970.

Websites

- American Federation of Musicians. "History," accessed September 5, 2019, www.afm.org.

Detroit Tamburitza Orchestra. "What is a Tamburitza?" accessed May 7, 2019,

<http://www.detroittamburitzaorchestra.com/index.php/what-is-a-tamburitza>.

National Endowment for the Arts, "About; National Initiatives," accessed August 27, 2019,

[arts.gov](http://www.arts.gov).

National Federation of Music Clubs, "National Music Week," accessed August 28, 2019, [nfmc-](http://www.nfmc-music.org)

[music.org](http://www.nfmc-music.org).