

The Historic Sites & Structures Program at Texas State Parks (Texas Parks & Wildlife Department) has recently been successful receiving grants from several private foundations and the National Endowment for the Arts to interpret the CCC state parks that the agency operates. The funding has resulted in award-winning websites (www.texascccparcs.org), several short publications, and upgraded brochures for the individual parks. Moreover, a major university press in Texas will be publishing two volumes on Texas's CCC parks. The first is rich historical and color photographs embedded in and embellished by recently completed oral histories, recovered architectural drawings, and CCC artifacts; the accompanying narrative extends the CCC story past its 1942 conclusion and shows the parks through the intervening decades. The second is an edited volume that takes a look at the celebratory and largely uncritical literature about the CCC and seeks to provide a more nuanced evaluation of the CCC in Texas. Although certainly not a sustained lament, the volume will include contemporary accounts by CCC'ers who hated the food, fled home on weekends to ease homesickness, and judged CCC craftsmanship to be shoddy.

All of these efforts are designed to bring attention (of both internal and external audiences) to the parks constructed between 1933 and 1942 with an eye toward funding their repair and rehabilitation. That is not easy in a state that traditionally underfunds public works. I would enjoy the opportunity to talk with others who face the same dilemma and share with the group how this agency has sometimes succeeded (and occasionally failed) and what steps it is taking toward securing a future for these remarkable parks that we are fortunate enough to steward.

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The Living New Deal: Excavating Our Lost Civilization

Gray Brechin, Ph.D.

The Living New Deal is an online inventory of New Deal public works built in the United States during the Great Depression in a successful effort to extricate the nation from that calamity. The Roosevelt administration's attack upon the Depression was so extensive, ingenious, and multi-pronged — and its artifacts are so ubiquitous and indispensable — that such an inventory could not be contained in a book nor could it be undertaken by a single person as originally intended. It has thus evolved into a collaborative effort based at the University of California Berkeley Department of Geography but utilizing a growing nationwide network of informants as well as archival sources. In the nature of the *public* works it is revealing, its results are freely available to all.

The UCB Department of Geography is an ideal home for the LND; the discipline seeks to teach landscape literacy, to encourage people to read the landscape critically, and to constantly reveal new meanings within it. The Living New Deal progressively makes visible what until recently has been unseen — a far-flung matrix of public buildings, spaces, and infrastructure that Americans have come to take for granted since shortly after they were inaugurated but without which the nation we know would largely return to the 19th century. We liken it to an archaeological dig that is uncovering a lost civilization — our own.

As its name implies, the Living New Deal is not an antiquarian exercise. Although the New Deal's artifacts are often astonishingly beautiful and well crafted, they serve to remind us of how we once extricated ourselves from a financial, social, and environmental catastrophe so that we might do so again. They counter the myths propagated by those such as Amity Shlaes that the New Deal didn't end the Depression (the War did) if it did not actually prolong the Depression, and that government is ineffectual in creating jobs. In fact, the U.S. economy had so improved by 1937 that Roosevelt felt he could stanch federal funding. By doing so, FDR plunged the nation back to near depression levels before reviving his public works agencies. New Deal infrastructure greatly helped to win the Second World War and laid the foundations for post-war prosperity. By the 1950s, however, the origin, ubiquity, and indispensability of those public works began to be forgotten by those who benefited from them

The New Deal stimulated public education in all of its dimensions by building and renovating schools, college campuses and academic buildings, museums, and libraries as well as by hiring teachers, artists, and other professionals. In doing so, it vastly democratized educational opportunities while creating a literate and well-informed citizenry without which democracy itself cannot survive. These structures, along with their inscriptions and art — as well as the archival record of educational initiatives such as art, music, and citizenship classes — serve as a reminder and warning of what Americans are losing as they permit their cultural infrastructure to be privatized and dismantled by those who profit from doing so.

Another controversy that the New Deal confronts is that of the pending closure of thousands of U.S. post offices. Many of those buildings were built during the New Deal. As physical manifestations of the federal government and of universal service, they are often the finest buildings in many small towns and contain the only art in rural areas. In larger cities, postal facilities are often housed in monumental structures that occupy potential prime real estate. How should preservationists respond to the progressive atrophy of the USPS and the loss of its properties?

That an innovative administration once confronted and overcame an economic crisis similar to our own through a massive public works program should serve as a lesson to public officials today, especially when years of deferred maintenance is taking its toll on badly deteriorating infrastructure. Opponents of government intervention have so successfully depicted the New Deal as a boondoggling failure that direct-pay programs such as the CCC, WPA, and CWA were never considered as options for mainlining the economy in President Obama's stimulus program. A recovery of the New Deal legacy not only provides researchers with aesthetic pleasures but reveals an *ethical* language — that of the public good — almost entirely lost with the triumph of neoliberal economics and governance in the last thirty years. Its recovery and reevaluation is long overdue.

The Living New Deal is conducted within a public university with the aid of public and private funding. Dr. Gray Brechin is its founder and Project Scholar.

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New Deal Art and the Canadian Legacy

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As a historian of cultural relations between Canada and the United States I hope to contribute a transnational dimension to the *Reconstructing the New Deal* working group's examination of New Deal art projects as "public sources" and to their consideration of New Deal art "in relation to public policy." Specifically, I aim to contribute a comparative perspective to discussion of the impact of the New Deal arts programs on subsequent cultural policy in the United States, by exploring their legacy in the Canadian context. As I argue in *Rockefeller, Carnegie, and Canada: American Philanthropy and the Arts and Letters in Canada* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), in the late 1930s and the early 1940s New Deal art projects arts were influential models for emulation by Canadian artists and arts administrators as they fought to win systematic federal state support for the arts. Indeed, New Deal arts veteran muralist Thomas Hart Benton and administrator Edward Rowan, were honoured guest speakers at the first national conference of Canadian artists held in 1941 at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. With the New Deal as a focus of discussion, the Kingston conference led directly to the formation of Canada's first national artists' lobby, the Federation of Canadian Artists. The FCA, in turn, was a critical force in bringing about the formation of the federal government arts council, the Canada Council, and with it a permanent infrastructure for federal support of the arts. In the same way that New Deal arts served as precedents for early Canadian public arts initiatives like the Kingston conference and the Canada Council, their legacy is often employed (though seldom by name) in the contemporary Canadian context to highlight the value of the arts in modern urban economies.

More specific to the collective project of the working group *Working Group on Reconstructing the New Deal: Toward a National Inventory of New Deal Art and Public Works* I am presently researching the Canadian reception of the *Exhibition of Murals Designed for Federal Buildings form the Section of Fine Arts* which toured major Canadian art galleries in the spring and summer of 1941. With discussion of my research on this exhibition and of the broader cultural policy context in both Canada and the United States the Canadian legacy of New Deal art projects. Although this may seem historically and topically removed from contemporary inventory gathering in the United States, my hope is that knowledge of the images (the mural designs) that circulated so powerfully in Canada's authoritative art centers will be a useful contribution.

Case Statement for Reconstructing the New Deal/ the Living New Deal

My interest in this work—rediscovering and recovering New Deal Art—began when I taught a class on the New Deal at the University of Southern Maine. One project for students was for them to read about the art project, or public works projects, on the national level and then see what they could find in Maine. They went out and found things especially in Southern Maine that had not been listed anywhere (that we could find), so we have a local inventory (not necessarily complete) and we know some others in Maine who have been doing searches in their parts of the state. The students' enthusiasm, and some [publicity from it in the local press, lead to expanding searches and to contacts with people, like Gray Brechin, in other states with organized and extensive projects.

Recently a controversy over a labor mural in the Maine Department of Labor building demonstrated the educational and political implications of such art, especially in relationship to government sponsorship.

This has combined with my ongoing project on historical representation (and sometimes the lack of it) of women in public art and monuments in the US and Canada. So the idea of developing an inventory of New Deal art nationally seems very useful from an educational and academic point of view. It certainly informs our discussion of historical representation and memory . It also seems highly relevant in a time of debate over the role of government, and the question of whom government (and government sponsored art) should represent, and what the American past really tells us.

Middle Tennessee's New Deal Legacy: Raising Consciousness

Zada Law

I first became aware of the WPA's imprint on the Middle Tennessee's cultural landscape in the mid-1990s when I served as the archaeological consultant on the master plan for resurrecting a WPA-reconstructed Civil War fort. In 1934, the WPA began reconstructing Fort Negley on its original site in Nashville. The reconstructed stone fort and its grounds functioned as a municipal park until the mid-1940s when it closed for repairs. The park and reconstructed fort remained closed for another sixty years, partly due to the fort's contested nature as a symbol of the Union Army's occupation of Middle Tennessee. However, in 2004, the city reopened the park to the public. I worked on the design and construction of the park's visitor facilities and interpretive panels, and I presently serve on the city's Technical Advisory Committee for the park.

During my years of involvement with this historic property, I have observed how teachers, tourists, and even scholars overlook the fort's WPA connection and focus on its association with the Civil War. This was occurring even before the park became the center of Nashville's Civil War Sesquicentennial even though interpretive materials clearly point out that the WPA reconstructed the fort. As a tangible artifact of the WPA and the agency's historic preservation efforts, the fort could be an entry point for interpreting the local New Deal cultural landscape as well as for interpreting the Civil War experience in Middle Tennessee. In Middle Tennessee, New Deal agencies built a number of public buildings and park architecture from the ubiquitous limestone of our region, and these structures continue to function in our daily lives. To raise public consciousness about the Middle Tennessee's New Deal architectural legacy, the technical advisory committee for the fort is recommending updating to the site's interpretive plan to include more detail on the fort's WPA reconstruction and highlight the regional New Deal-era structures featured in *Tennessee's New Deal Landscape: A Guidebook* (Carroll Van West, 2001). I also envision that a community's New Deal cultural landscape could

be a platform to engage with questions concerning economic history and the roles of government in our country's fiscal welfare. I would welcome discussion with this working group on using the New Deal cultural landscape to inspire civic discourse on social and economic issues in the community.

The second issue I have encountered by working with this WPA-reconstructed fort is how little primary source evidence exists for determining how much reconstruction the WPA did at the fort and learning more about the reconstruction methods in order to stabilize and conserve the dry-stacked stone structure. Although we have obtained all available documentation from public sources, many conversations with archivists at NARA and local archives suggests that in the case of Middle Tennessee, the agencies returned project records to their local affiliates. The individuals who worked on the reconstruction would like have had information pertinent to stabilization and conservation of the structure, but these individuals are likely deceased. I am examining the extent of reconstruction using GIS to make digital comparisons, but I am hoping my interaction with this working group will open doors to other sources.

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My dissertation in landscape history focused on the design and construction of the town of Window Rock, Arizona, during the New Deal. Window Rock was established in 1933 as the Bureau of Indian Affairs' headquarters on the Navajo reservation, with fifty buildings and a dam in its first phase of construction; today it serves as the Navajo Nation's capital city. One chapter of my dissertation focused on several art projects completed under the auspices of the New Deal, related to Window Rock: murals painted by Navajo artist Gerald Nailor, both in Window Rock and in Washington, DC, in the Department of the Interior Building; and a diorama of Window Rock to be displayed in the DOI Museum in Washington. This particular chapter located these art projects within the New Deal arts programs, but also interpreted them as narratives constructed by Navajo and non-Navajo artists for both Navajo and non-Navajo audiences, within two very different capital cities.

I am beginning to rework my dissertation into a book manuscript, and I am very interested in working with others on New Deal studies. In particular, I am hoping to find other historians who are concerned about identifying New Deal projects completed within the boundaries of Indian reservations throughout the US, the potential loss of these buildings and artworks, and the acknowledgement of Native American artists and laborers who worked under these programs. Personally, I believe that the mural cycle painted by Gerald Nailor in Window Rock, "The History and Progress of the Navajo Nation," which he completed in 1943—at the end of the Works Progress Administration's run—is one of the most important works of art created by any indigenous artist in the first half of the twentieth century. The Navajo Nation's Historic Preservation Department has secured limited funding to restore Nailor's mural cycle, which has been badly damaged by water from a leaking roof, but the murals need further protection.

Community centers, hospitals, schools, and housing were built on reservations throughout the United States during the New Deal, with much of it designed by the New York City-based firm of Mayers, Murray, and Phillip. Further, many Native American artists produced works under the auspices of the New Deal, from Florida to Alaska. Generally, there seems to be little attention paid to New Deal works on reservation lands, whether by scholars in academic settings, or by historians and preservationists in state historic preservation offices and tribal historic preservation offices; this neglect may be simply because many do not know that these works exist, or because of a lack of appreciation for New Deal-era (and other) government programs.

Any opportunity to discuss New Deal programs affecting the built environments of reservations is greatly appreciated.



Figure 5.34 Gerald Nailor preparing cartoon for mural of Chee Dodge and Dugal'chee Bekis, 1943. Photograph by Milton S. "Jack" Snow. Bureau of Indian Affairs photograph 75-NG-4-NC-2-1, Prints and Photographs Collection, National Records and Archives Administration, Washington, D.C.



Figure 5.37 Navajo land: the Allotment Act of 1887; the discovery of oil in 1922; the Boundary Bill of 1933, and erosion and soil conservation. Photograph by the author, July 2004.

Note the terrible streaks due to water damage!!!



Figure 5.36 Defending Diné Bikéyah against the U.S. Army in Canyon de Chelly. Photograph by the author, July 2004.



Figure 5.21 Gerald Nailor at work in Window Rock, 1943, by Milton Snow. Bureau of Indian Affairs photograph 75-NG-4-NC-2-9, Prints and Photographs Collection, National Records and Archives Administration, Washington, D.C.



Figure 5.26 The left side of “The Hunting Ground,” by Gerald Nailor, centered around the light switch. Photograph by the author, 2006.

This mural by Gerald Nailor was completed in 1940, in the Department of the Interior Building in Washington, D.C., in the employees’ lounge (with soda fountain!).



Figure 5.22 Gerald Nailor, "Preparing Yarn for Weaving." Interior Building, 1940. Photograph by the author, 2006

A second mural by Nailor in Washington, D.C.

Case statement for “Reconstructing the New Deal” – Sean Lent

My interest in research associated with New Deal/WPA artwork and public works projects began to really take shape during the same class that Eileen Eagan was teaching at the University of Southern Maine during the spring semester of 2009, a class in which I was a student. For the summative assessment for that class, several fellow students and I began documenting works of public art (as well as public works projects associated with the WPA and the CCC) around not only the city of Portland, but also the larger region and beyond. This work generated some recognition in the local media in Maine, as well as a small inventory of examples of artwork and public works projects associated with the New Deal from which to continue research.

In the years since my initial research in Professor Eagan’s class, I’ve taken a particular interest in how New Deal-related projects reflected regional identity. For example, two large murals created by the artist Ralph Frizzell portray the fishing and farming industries (in fact, they are simply titled “Farming” and “Fishing”), and another mural, which was housed in the Westbrook, Maine Post Office for a number of years before its relocation to the Portland Museum of Art, pays homage to another long-standing backbone of the Maine economy - logging. While on the surface these represent obvious examples, deeper analysis of the works offers the chance for various interpretations of how artists, writers, etc. viewed the regions in which they lived.

The Frizzell murals will be relocated to the new Ocean Avenue Elementary School in Portland, Maine, after the school they were previously housed in was closed. Several media outlets in Maine reported the relocation in a rather celebratory fashion. There is a real support for preservation and awareness due to a tangible sense of the importance of regional identity in Maine (and surely this is the case in other regions around the country). Conversely, current Maine governor Paul LePage controversially ordered the removal of a large labor mural from the walls of the Maine Department of Labor, which demonstrated that the Governor is not only out of touch with the economic diversity and history of Maine, but also the willing to, by extension, attack Maine’s strong sense of regional identity. While the Department of Labor mural was not a New Deal project, existing sentiments of anti-regionalism (as well as periodic negative analysis of Roosevelt and the New Deal in the media) in a politically charged modern America underlines the importance of creating an inventory of New Deal/WPA-related projects.

New Deal Working Group: Preserving Public Housing

Elizabeth Milnarik, Ph.D, AIA

From the poorhouse to the settlement house, in America private groups, local and state governments had a long history of attempting to improve living conditions for the poor, but the Great Depression brought about the federal government's first foray into low-rent housing. In 1933, as a part of his sweeping New Deal initiatives, Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Congress approved funding for low-rent housing and established the Housing Division within the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works (or PWA) to expend these funds. The program had three essential goals; to reinvigorate the stalled construction industry; to clear inner-city slums; and to create good-quality, low-rent housing. Organized by Robert Kohn and inspired by the regionalist community-building vision of Clarence Stein and Henry Wright, the Housing Division initially offered discounted loans to community groups for low-rent housing construction, but a lack of qualified applicants forced them to abandon their role as loan-provider and construct low-rent housing directly. Between 1933 and 1937, this direct build program constructed fifty-three projects across the country and in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Although located in small towns like Enid, Oklahoma and big cities like New York, housing from fifty to sixteen hundred families, all of these projects followed a core set of principles developed by the regionalists who formed the Regional Planning Association of America and established as policy by Kohn's staff. From one-story row houses to four-story apartment buildings, high-quality construction and fully equipped baths and kitchens promised improved conditions for nearly all working class families. In addition, these projects were marked by a careful orchestration of exterior spaces, providing front and rear yards for residents, and many enjoyed ambitious art programs.

The New Deal public housing projects are widely understood as the best designed and best located of our nation's building stock, and are viable, ideally as public housing, but also for mixed-income housing or other adaptive reuse. In the past two decades, however, the Department of Housing and Urban Development has moved definitively away from managing public housing in favor of Section 8 and other private construction and management approaches. For example, Atlanta has demolished all of its public housing, and Chicago has eliminated great portions of its public housing building stock. Rather than a public asset, housing projects have become market-rate development opportunities, and the problem of poor conditions and expensive rental housing are inadequately addressed. As local preservation depends heavily upon local action and the institution of public housing suffers from an overwhelmingly negative popular opinion, it has proven difficult to encourage communities to advocate for the preservation of their public housing complexes. At this point, thirty-one of the forty-eight original continental projects remain operational, and several of those have been significantly altered (see attached Table 1). As many of these projects served as urban renewal projects in the 1930's, many are currently in highly desirable locations and face significant development pressure. There have been some successes (Memphis' Lauderdale Courts), but plenty of failures as well (Memphis' Dixie Homes). In this working group, I'd like to make sure that the public housing output of the New Deal is well-integrated into the scholarly understanding of the New Deal, and to discuss possible preservation approaches.

Current Status of New Deal Public Housing Projects					
Project #	Project Name	City	State	Operational?	Current Status
H-1001	Cedar-Central Apartments	Cleveland	OH	Yes	Few Changes
H-1002	Outhwaite Homes	Cleveland	OH	Yes	First Hope VI Project--Minor Aesthetic Changes
H-1003	Lakeview Terrace	Cleveland	OH	Yes	Recent Renovation--Private Entrance for each unit--Significant Interior Alterations
H-1101	Techwood	Atlanta	GA	No	Demolished prior to 1996 Olympics Single Building Survives, operating as office space
H-1102	University Homes	Atlanta	GA	Yes	Hope VI grant altered buildings to enlarge units. 2008- Slated for demolition.
H-1201	Brewster	Detroit	MI	No	Demolished
H-1205	Parkside	Detroit	MI	Yes	1/2 Units Demolished, New Rowhouses Constructed
H-1301	Williamsburg	New York City	NY	Yes	Renovated 1996
H-1302	Harlem River Houses	New York City	NY	Yes	
H-1401, 1405	Jane Addams Homes	Chicago	IL	No	Demolished, 2006. 1 Building remains, slated to become public housing museum.
H-1406	Julia C. Lathrop Homes	Chicago	IL	2006, Being Cleared of Renters	Slated for Demolition, 2006
H-1408	Trumbull Park Homes	Chicago	IL	Yes	Undergoing significant rehabilitation, Buildings and Units retained, construction stalled early 2008.
H-1502	Parklawn Homes	Milwaukee	WI	Yes	Apartment units at center of project demolished to make way for houses for purchase.
H-1601?	Lockefield Garden Apartments	Indianapolis	IN	Yes	Row Houses and 1/2 Apartment Buildings Demolished 1983, Interior changes, operating as Student and Some Low Income Apartments
H-1706	Langston Terrace	Washington	DC	Yes	Few Changes
H-1801	Laurel Homes	Cincinnati	OH	No	Three Buildings remain on north part of site
H-2001	Logan Fontenelle	Omaha	NE	No	Demolished
H-2101	Cheatham Place	Nashville	TN	Yes	Few Changes, threatened by gentrification
H-2102	Andrew Jackson Courts	Nashville	TN	Yes	Few Changes, redevelopment proposed, 2005
H-2201	Riverside Heights	Montgomery	AL	No	Slated for Demolition, 2006
H-2202	William B. Patterson Courts	Montgomery	AL	Yes	Few Changes
H-2502	LaSalle Place	Louisville	KY	Yes	Operating as Private Condos, minor changes
H-2503	College Court	Louisville	KY	Yes	Operating as Private Condos, minor changes
H-2601	Brand-Whitlock Homes	Toledo	OH	No?	Demolition announced winter 2011
H-2902	Smithfield Court	Birmingham	AL	Yes	Few Changes
H-3001-C	Hill Creek	Philadelphia	PA	Yes	Few Changes
H-3302	Old Towne Court	Boston	MA	Yes	In operation as Mary Ellen MacCormack, Few Changes - Art removed
H-3401	Dixie Homes	Memphis	TN	No	Slated for Demolition, 2006
H-3403	Lauderdale Courts	Memphis	TN	Yes	Exterior preserved, interior alterations, Operated by Private Developer as Market-Rate Apartments
H-3600	Caserio Lagranja	Caguas	PR		
	Caserio Mirapalmeras	Caguas	PR		
H-3801	Lincoln Gardens	Evansville	IN	No	Single building remains, operating as Evansville African-American Museum
H-4201	Sumner Field Homes	Minneapolis	MN	No	Demolished
H-4602	Liberty Square	Miami	FL	Yes	Few Changes
H-4702	Durkeeville	Jacksonville	FL	No	Demolished
H-4900	Bassin Triangle	St. Croix	VI		
	Marley Homes	St. Croix	VI		
	H.H. Berg Homes	St. Thomas	VI		
H-5001	Stanley S. Holmes Homes	Atlantic City	NJ	Yes	In operation
H-5103	Blue Grass Park/Aspendale	Lexington	KY	No	Demolished, 2002
H-5201	University Terrace	Columbia	SC	No	Demolished, 1995
H-5401	Cherokee Terrace	Enid	OK	Yes	Operating as private apartment complex, few changes
H-5801	Schonowee Village	Schenectady	NY	Yes	In operation, few changes
H-6001	Westfield	Camden	NJ	No	Demolished, 2000
H-6202	Baker Homes	Lackawanna	NY	Yes	In operation, few changes
H-6703	Kenfield	Buffalo	NY	Yes	Renovated
H-7901-B	Cedar Springs Place	Dallas	TX	Yes	RFP issued, 2006 Original portion slated for retention
H-8101	Will Rogers Courts	Oklahoma City	OK	Yes	In operation, few changes
H-8501	New Towne Court	Cambridge	MA	Yes	In operation, changes made to reorient entrances to street frontage.
H-8901-B	Meeting Street Manor/Cooper River Court	Charleston	SC	Yes	In operation
H-9001	Highland Homes	Wayne	PA	Yes	Demolished 2002
H-9600?	Fairfield Court Apartments	Stamford	CT	No	2003 Hope VI Grant to Demolish

Working Title:

Mapping a New Deal for New Orleans Artists & Writers

Michael Mizell-Nelson, University of New Orleans

Abstract:

Proposes to create an online database of video and print resources and interpretive exhibits spotlighting the careers of five New Deal-era New Orleans artists whose works have generated some notice yet demand more scholarly and public attention: Enrique Alférez, Marcus Christian, Caroline Durieux, John McCrady, and Jimmy Callaway. We are now working with Drs. Mark Tebeau and Mark Souther as they expand their mobile historical tour builder software to other cities. The project will develop along lines similar to the one launched by the Cleveland State University Center for Public History and Digital Humanities:

<http://ax.itunes.apple.com/us/app/cleveland-historical/id401222855?mt=8#ls=1>

Both the online exhibits and the tours will be created for iPhone and Android apps using the open-source Omeka software and tour building technology licensed to us by Cleveland State.

Phase One:

The first objective is to create an online exhibition and mobile historical tour centering on the life and work of one of the most visible of the city's New Deal artists: Enrique Alférez. He is the most prolific of the city's New Deal artists, and his public and private commissions are found in parks and buildings throughout the city.

Phase Two:

The broader initiative will lead us to build upon the Alférez materials and begin to develop a database of video and print resources and interpretive exhibits spotlighting the careers of other New Orleans artists.

The project would provide an online map interface and a scholarly finding aid for videotaped material (both interview excerpts and transcription excerpts) produced for broadcast documentaries regarding New Orleans artists. The scholarly portal can be accomplished via the ongoing project that Mizell-Nelson is a founding member of: the New Orleans Research Collaborative project <http://nolaresearch.org/>. Those not engaged in scholarship are far more likely to encounter information about these artists while using their smart phones.

Ideally, the map-based interface would integrate images from Sanborn Insurance maps for the city from the early 1930s through the mid-1950s. The pasted overlays characteristic of insurance maps might be replicated digitally and offer tour app users transitions in time. This same interface would elucidate the artists' private residences, studios, and public exhibition spaces (both temporary and permanent).

In addition to cataloguing information about these artists and more readily sharing interpretive treatments with the public, the project also intends to spotlight examples of threatened, damaged, and destroyed New Deal artwork (Sample below). We also would like to make more aware of Caroline Durieux's career as Director of the Louisiana Art Project. Finally, the same approach can be applied to New Deal era construction projects located throughout the city and the region.



John McCrady, early 1940s, late New Deal, likely under Caroline Durieux's direction. Big canvas, disappearing LA wetlands on wall in New Orleans public school building. A wall was erected down the center about 20 years ago to divide the room without concern for the artwork.

This travesty is found in a public school building that tourists pass daily on the St. Charles Avenue streetcar. While transit passengers are presently oblivious to the problem, the smart-phone tours will make many more people aware of this and similar problems throughout the city.

This concludes the short version of our proposal. The entire proposal follows. My apologies for its length, but it does offer work samples and artist bios.

Preserving New Deal properties in Kansas Case Statement

Jon E. Taylor, Ph.D.

In 2001 I served on a National Register team that was charged with drafting a multiple property and multi county National Register nomination for New Deal projects in Kansas. Two counties were surveyed for their unique characteristics. Crawford County, in southeastern Kansas, was selected because its economy was based on mining while Dickinson County in central Kansas had an agriculturally based economy. The survey determined that Crawford County, because of its struggling mining economy, received more New Deal funding and had more New Deal projects than were carried out in Dickinson county; however, by 2001, only a fraction of those projects in Crawford County were still extant on the landscape. In contrast, in Dickinson County, which saw fewer New Deal projects, retained a much higher percentage of those resources in 2001 than Crawford County. I would like to explore with the discussants how other states that received significant funding for New Deal projects have retained those resources and why and who has been involved in the preservation of those resources into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

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Reconstructing the New Deal: Case Study from Arthurdale Heritage, Inc.

Jinny Turman-Deal

I became involved with Arthurdale, the first New Deal homestead community, in 2010 as an associate member of the Board of Directors. Arthurdale is located in Preston County, West Virginia, and, while situated in a rural area, it is only about twenty-five minutes away from Morgantown, the home of West Virginia University. WVU and Arthurdale have formed a solid partnership over the years, and a number of students in WVU's Department of History, myself included, and other departments have become involved with the institution through internships, employment, volunteering, or by becoming part of their board. In 2011 I became a full board member and assumed leadership of Arthurdale's HELM (History, Education, Library, and Museum) committee. Being so new to Arthurdale, I feel that I am still learning the ins and outs of the historic site, so I will probably have less advice and insight to provide to the rest of the working group than I will have questions. Still, by joining this group I hope to connect Arthurdale to a broader conversation about the need to preserve New Deal-era art, sites, and public works. Arthurdale also faces some challenges that might sound familiar to other New Deal sites, particularly those in rural areas, so I hope to engage in conversations about those as well.

Arthurdale is perhaps best known for having been part of the federal government's most extensive attempt at social engineering. As such, it received widespread criticism and, to some extent, still does. (A good example is C.J. Maloney's book *Back to the Land: FDR's New Deal, and the Costs of Economic Planning*, which essentially uses the community to try to demonstrate why socialism doesn't work). But its

existence speaks to a number of other historical trends as well, including 20th century back-to-the-land impulses and ongoing interest in reviving traditional arts and crafts. In the spirit of fostering self-sufficiency in Arthurdale, Eleanor Roosevelt envisioned a community composed of partially self-sufficient farmers engaged in light industry for cash. The Mountaineer Craftsmen's Cooperative, originally organized by American Friends Service Committee in 1931 to help the stranded miners who would later, in 1934, settle Arthurdale, was reorganized to meet this end. While it ultimately failed to provide residents with long-term and steady employment, it helped to furnish homes and gave people an opportunity to engage in productive labor during the initial years of settlement. Craftsmen and women worked in wood, fibers, metals, and other media. According to Blanche Weisen Cook, the Civil Works Administration also employed women to produce bedding and curtains for homesteaders. Arthurdale owns a number of artifacts from this cooperative and, as funding allows, is moving to catalog and preserve all of these items.¹

The challenges facing Arthurdale will likely not be unique to others in this working group: fundraising, increasing visitation, and generating public interest and concern for preserving the site. Our problems likely stem from a variety of circumstances: the contested nature of Arthurdale's creation, the aging population that had personal connections to the community, and ideological views among some local officials that limit their willingness to provide support. So I'm curious to know how others are working around these types of stigmas and are finding ways to convey the message that regardless of whether or not one agrees with the ideological underpinnings of the New Deal and its programs, these sites are worthy of preserving because of what they can teach us about the past and who we are as a society today.

¹ Blanche Wiesen Cook, *Eleanor Roosevelt, Vol. 2: 1933-1938* (New York: Penguin Books, 1999), 137.

Case Statement – LaDale Winling, Virginia Tech

As other members of the working group have noted, academic historians and popular audiences alike tend to recognize the importance of the New Deal and much of its legacy.¹ In the course of my research, however, I have come to believe that both scholars and the public *underestimate* the extent and scope of the New Deal's work relief and public works projects. The PWA, for example, provided grants and loans to public institutions of higher education for housing, administrative, instructional and maintenance facilities. In total, the PWA enabled the creation of 1286 [college buildings](#) worth \$747 million² through \$83 million in grants and \$29 million in loans.³ At my institution, Virginia Tech (then Virginia Polytechnic Institute), the PWA helped fund the construction or expansion of 14 buildings, including what is now the [administration building](#), the student center, and several dormitories — Virginia Tech, in terms of its physical plant, is a New Deal institution.

Owing to this underestimation, I am interested in building out such a national inventory to help reinvigorate popular appreciation of the New Deal, making it publicly accessible through the web, and enriching it with historical data and media including photographs, oral histories, film, and audio, where possible. While a number of recent controversies and the broader conservative effort to roll back the New Deal have rallied defenders to the Roosevelt administration's relief and infrastructure efforts, my experience indicates that a broader-based effort to reconnect the public with New Deal public and art works would be more effective in building public support than targeted defense of particular projects or the Roosevelt administration.

In pursuit of this project, I would like to suggest a mixed strategy of centralized and decentralized efforts including building a central inventory through National Archives research, but enriching it through state-level efforts or crowdsourced contributions led by working group participants. I could contribute my PWA higher ed database, for example, and lead groups in photographing or researching the history of individual VA sites. While such a strategy would lead to uneven enrichment, it would provide a central spine of information to build from, and would allow for school groups, college courses, or communities of interest at the public history grassroots to make a meaningful contribution to a national effort that also expressed local or regional pride.

1. Jason Scott Smith, *Building New Deal Liberalism*; Robert Leighninger, *Long-Range Public Investment* [↔](#)
2. Approx. \$11.4B in 2011 dollars [↔](#)
3. Records of Projects, 1933-1950; List of Alotted Non-Federal Projects as of May, 1942 RG 135 NARA II [↔](#)