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PRESERVING THE PAST: LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT IN FLORIDA AND THE NEW DEAL, 1933-1942

By

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ABSTRACT

Public library development in Florida greatly benefited from the New Deal relief programs that emerged out of the Great Depression. Historians and librarians had advocated for expansion of state support for libraries and the creation of a state library since the nineteenth century, but little progress occurred until 1925 when the Florida legislature passed a bill funding a state library. Although the early years of the Depression curtailed some activities of the state library and other public libraries around the state, Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal agencies helped advance these institutions. The State Library Board of Florida and the State Librarian, William Cash, eagerly sought federal relief money to start library and historical preservation projects. The State Library Board eventually sponsored three Works Progress Administration (WPA) projects: the State Archives Survey (later the Historical Records Survey), the Statewide Library Project, and the Rare Books Project. All of these programs enriched Florida's culture by discovering new material, providing easier access to library possessions, and expanding library service.

The support during the New Deal for these historical and cultural preservation projects came out of intellectual traditions and actions during the nineteenth century. Progressive thought helped spur New Deal thinkers into defending the need for intervention by the federal government to solve economic and social problems and experimentation in relief and recovery programs. The intellectuals of the 1920s who turned away from pragmatism brought forth a new appreciation for the arts and American history. In addition, the work of Progressives to improve the education and lives of the poor, such as through settlement houses, provided visible examples of how to accomplish goals. The New Deal brought all these ideas together with the creation of work relief programs that provided federal funds for cultural and historical projects. Despite the hardships that the Depression brought to Florida and the rest of the country, in the long-run the economic troubles provided the opportunity to gain valuable historical knowledge and preserve cultural traditions to be available for future generations.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, new ideas emerged about the significance of American culture and history. As the United States shifted from an agricultural to a more industrial society, intellectuals debated the meaning of what it meant to be "American" and how this concept could best be expressed. The results of these debates produced a group of thinkers who saw value in collective action as way to experience culture. In addition, they viewed education as a vehicle for progress and self-improvement; more educated and enlightened citizens would lead to a better society. Progressives, such as Herbert Croly and Van Wyck Brooks, sought to use American culture as the nexus to create a new sense of community among the populace. In addition to this new thinking, many citizens actively pursued the ideas of Progressive intellectuals by establishing their own networks and programs to expose a broader number of people to educational opportunities and cultural institutions. Women held an especially important role in these developments, as society's traditional view of women's "sphere of influence" emphasized the guardianship of culture. Bright, college-educated women began establishing settlement houses in the late nineteenth century as a way to assist and educate the poor through the process of becoming part of their community. Increasing educational opportunities for immigrants and other members of the working class through classes and libraries was one of many services settlement houses offered.[1] Establishing these settlements allowed women to use their education and expand their contributions to society without completely breaking the boundaries of their prescribed gender roles. While theoretical discussions helped spur debate among intellectuals and spread new ideas to college and university classrooms, the work of the settlement houses and other grassroots organizations created practical models for future library development and historic preservation activities.

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1. Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Jane Addams and the Dream of American Democracy* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 91-92, 99-100. For example, Jane Addams's Hull House offered reading groups, language classes, theater and music workshops, and the eventual establishment of a local branch of the Chicago Public Library in 1891. Ruth Hutchinson Crocker in *Social Work and Social Order: The Settlement Movement in Two Industrial Cities, 1889-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1992) also shows evidence of libraries established in three Indianapolis settlement houses: Christamore, Foreign House, and the Neighborhood House.

At the same time that new ideas fermented among intellectuals and women labored to improve the standard-of-living of the poor, librarians and archivists also formed professional organizations to promote their own ideas about the value of expanding cultural and educational opportunities. Concern for the preservation of records and other historical material in the United States stretched back to its colonial days, but the movement never gained national momentum until the twentieth century. Early advocates of preservation were often amateur historians and untrained librarians who also were members of a local historical society. Partly due to the Progressives faith in education, the number of libraries in the country dramatically increased during the latter part of the nineteenth century. The need for trained librarians and historians helped spark a new effort to organize and professionalize these occupations. Increasingly, these professionals sought to expand library service to all members of society and saw preservation of the local history of individual communities as a valid and worthwhile endeavor. As a result, many states opened libraries or archives and planned for public library extension services. Professional organizations like the American Historical Association and the American Library Association also sought legislation on a national and state level that would make preservation a priority for government entities. While these organizations had ambitious ideas about how to fulfill their goals, lack of funding often made realization difficult.

Ironically, the economic crisis of the Great Depression finally provided the impetus and funding to put these preservation and library plans into action. The economic relief and recovery programs of the New Deal created a renaissance for various cultural institutions by providing the financial support and staff to embark on new projects. Work relief programs, organized through the federal government, gave desperately needed jobs not only to those capable of public works construction projects, but also to white-collar workers. More specifically, the New Deal was a boon for women working in “pink-collar” jobs. Pink-collar occupations, such as clerical work, nursing, and teaching, were usually in the service industry and traditionally dominated by women. By the 1900s, women primarily worked in libraries, although men often held upper level managerial and leadership positions. When state and local organizations were able to take advantage of these programs to accomplish their own goals for library development and historic preservation, women benefited by securing positions on work relief projects.

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) was the largest federal agency designed to deal with white-collar and pink-collar work relief during the New Deal and was the culmination of the work of earlier agencies. In particular, the Women's and Professional Division oversaw the non-manual labor projects within the WPA. As noted by the name of the division, agency planners considered jobs for women in a distinct category from other "professional" occupations. Within this larger division, a group of cultural projects known as Federal One emerged. While scholars have devoted much attention to the creative work of Federal One's Writers' Project, Music Project, Arts Project, and Theater Project, this division also included the Historical Records Survey (HRS). The HRS devoted itself to collecting and indexing historical materials to improve the research capabilities of local libraries, archives, and courthouses. This project was also intended to impress upon local record-keepers the importance of proper organization and storage of documents. In addition to Federal One, the Women's and Professional Division also included various statewide library projects that provided a similar function to the HRS by cataloging and indexing books, newspaper clippings, journals, and other materials. The library project workers also managed local libraries during the Depression and developed library extension services to provide access to books in areas lacking a public library. Much of the HRS and library work was clerical in nature and fit within the expectations of pink-collar jobs suitable for women.

Individual HRS and library projects were part of a greater national effort to increase educational opportunities and to allow citizens greater access to historical materials in order understand their own heritage. The work accomplished on these projects reflected the efforts of previous generations' men and women who sought to use their progressive philosophy to improve the lives of those with fewer opportunities. As Ruth Hutchinson Crocker argues, progressives saw their work to spread education and culture, such as through settlement houses, as a method to curb the disorder seen as inherent in modern cities.[2] A shared culture would create a sense of community. Thus, the establishment of free, public libraries in settlement houses was an important step in the establishment of public libraries supported by municipalities. The New Deal programs continued this early work by provided a greater source of funding and workers able to coordinate and carry out large-scale projects.

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[2] Crocker, *Social Work and Social Order*, 8.

This thesis will focus on how New Deal programs helped Florida's historians and library professionals in their struggle to establish a State Library, encourage historical preservation, and expand the system of public libraries in Florida. From the mid-nineteenth century, interested citizens petitioned the state in order to preserve Florida's heritage but received little aid. Private libraries and local historical societies became the main source of cultural knowledge in many communities. There were various factors contributing to the paucity of libraries and state support. First, unlike industrial cities in the Northeast and Midwest, Florida had few settlement houses. Thus, the library services and cultural activities provided by the settlements that encouraged interest in public libraries and historic preservation as whole in other regions of the country failed to have much of an influence in Florida. There were a few early libraries in the state, but they were largely founded by private individuals. For example, Governor David S. Walker established Tallahassee's first library in the mid-1800s through his private funds.[3] Florida was a largely rural state in the late nineteenth century, a factor which also contributed to its lack of library development. Libraries often developed in urban regions where there was sufficient population to support and visit the library. Isolated agricultural communities were not fertile ground for starting libraries.

In addition, the issue of race provided another obstacle for public library development in Florida. While other regions of the United States certainly had racial tension, the legal codification of inequality in the South made public service even more difficult. First, it was twice as expensive to maintain two separate school systems, public works, and other services as "Jim Crow" laws required. Few funds were available for luxuries such as public libraries or other cultural institutions, especially if separate facilities were maintained. In addition, the mere fact of providing services to African-Americans, especially in integrated buildings, was enough motivation to dissuade legislative or local support for libraries. For example, the city of Tallahassee refused Carnegie funds because of the requirement for an integrated library. The money eventually went to the establishment of a library at the State Normal and Industrial Institute for Negroes (later Florida A&M University).[4] Subscription libraries, such as the Pensacola Library Association founded in 1885, were another alternative to public libraries in

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[3] Springtime Tallahassee, "About Us," http://www.springtimetallahassee.com.

[4] John Gilmore Riley Center and Museum of African American History and Culture, "Guide to Tallahassee's African American Heritage," http://www.rileymuseum.org/tallyguide.htm.

Florida.[5] Subscription libraries were able to restrict access to members; such policies were another excellent way to enforce segregation. In Florida, it was not until New Deal agencies stepped in that state and local organizations could fulfill their plans to expand and preserve historical knowledge throughout the state. While the New Deal agencies certainly aided library development in all regions of the country, it was especially important in the rural, segregated regions of the South that lacked service.

The expansion of the State Library and public libraries in Florida was accomplished mainly through the efforts of the Florida State Library Board, which sponsored several WPA projects. The State Library Board organized in 1927 and from the beginning had ambitious goals about the future of the State Library and other libraries in Florida. The State Librarian, William Cash, had particular interest in building up the Florida Collection in the State Library and in creating new libraries throughout the state. At the start of the New Deal, the Board searched for ways to fund various library projects and eventually sponsored three WPA projects: the State Archives Survey (later the Historical Records Survey), the Statewide Library Project, and the Rare Books Project. Through these endeavors, the State Librarian succeeded in gaining an impressive amount of valuable material for the State Library and expanded the circulation of books throughout Florida. In addition, the WPA projects provided workers to run libraries in order to keep them open during the Depression years. When the projects ended in 1943 because of World War II, the Florida State Library had gained thousands of new books, newspapers, manuscripts, and other material, as well as hundreds of inventories describing state and county records. Without the WPA, these accomplishments would likely have been impossible within a similar timeframe.

The available literature on Florida and the New Deal is not abundant. Two of the most relevant sources are William Dunn's Ph.D. dissertation on Florida politics during the New Deal and David J. Nelson's master's thesis on the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Florida Park Service.[6] Nelson's work touches on the tension between the National Park Service's goals of conservation and the Florida Park Service's desire to promote tourism. There are also several books that focus on politics in Florida, although not specifically on the New Deal, such as Wilson Doyle's *The Government and Administration of Florida* and David Colburn and Richard Scher's *Florida's Gubernatorial Politics in the Twentieth Century*.[7] In addition, there are a few books that concentrate on the New Deal in the South, which focus on issues that also apply to the situation in Florida, such as poverty, race, and tourism.[8]

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[5] Library of Congress American Memory Project, "Today in History: November 14," http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/today/nov14.

[6] William Dunn, "The New Deal and Florida Politics," Ph.D. diss., Florida State University, 1971; David J. Nelson, "Relief and Recreation: The Civilian Conservation Corps and the Florida Park Service, 1935-1942," Master's thesis, Florida State University, 2002.

No secondary literature exists on the Historical Records Survey in Florida. The few available works on the Historical Records Survey tend to focus on the national level and the organizational structure of the program, but no comprehensive work exists on the subject. For example, several chapters describe the HRS in William F. McDonald's seminal book, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts: The Origins and Administrative History of the Arts Projects of the Works Progress Administration*.[9] As the title suggests, the book mainly deals with the administrative structure of the projects and details the procedures relief workers and administrators followed.[10] Another book, *The WPA and Federal Relief Policy*, also examines the administrative structure and procedure of the WPA, evaluating the relief projects of the agency.[11] Although helpful for understanding how the WPA functioned, it does not specifically mention the Historical Records Survey.

There is a similar dearth of information about the library projects. Edward Barrett Stanford conducted the most comprehensive study in 1944. His book, *Library Extension Under the WPA*, examines the history of library relief work and the organization under the WPA, using

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[7] Wilson Doyle, et. al, *The Government and Administration of Florida* (New York: Thomas Crowell, 1954); David Colburn and Richard Scher, *Florida's Gubernatorial Politics in the Twentieth Century* (Tallahassee: University of Florida Press, 1980); see also David Colburn and Lance DeHaven-Smith, *Government in the Sunshine State* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999). For books on general history of Florida see Michael Gannon, ed., *The New History of Florida* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996); and Charlton Tebeau, *History of Florida* (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1971).

[8] Roger Biles, *The South and the New Deal* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1994); James C. Cobb and Michael V. Namorato, eds., *The New Deal and the South* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1984); Paul Mertz, *New Deal Policy and Southern Rural Poverty* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978); and Douglas L. Smith, *The New Deal in the Urban South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988).

[9] 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).

[10] Written during World War II through sponsorship of the American Council and Learned Societies and the Rockefeller Foundation, the book was not published for twenty years because of conflict over some its passages.

[11] Donald S. Howard, *The WPA and Federal Relief Policy* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1943).

South Carolina and Minnesota as case studies.[12] Brief mentions of the library projects appear in other works relating to the WPA, such as Martha H. Swain's *Ellen S. Woodward: New Deal Advocate for Women*; however, no other book really delves into the specifics of any of the programs.[13] Several books deal with the development of relief projects, other books describe the development of archives and libraries in the United States; neither goes into any detail about the surveying or library projects.[14]

A few other sources of literature exist about the Historical Records Survey. Scholars have written articles in professional journals, such as the *American Archivist* and *Library Quarterly*. Some articles shed light on projects in different states, such as Wisconsin and Iowa, while others lament the lack of a coordinated project today.[15] In addition, a few graduate students have written monographs regarding the HRS. These works focus mainly on administrative issues and work relief; there is little discussion of how the Works Progress Administration helped to create and build up libraries and archives through the HRS and library projects.[16] The exception is Edward Francis Barrese's dissertation in which he argues that Historical Records Survey was a conservative force because it looked toward the past as a guide to the future. Finally, there are brief mentions of the Historical Records Survey in memoirs written by key New Dealers, such as Harold Ickes, Raymond Moley, and Harry Hopkins.[17] Again, these writers give scattered information among the greater account of the New Deal. This thesis, therefore, will help expand our knowledge on the creation and implementation of these WPA projects.

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[12] Edward Barrett Stanford, *Library Extension Under the WPA: An Appraisal of an Experiment in Federal Aid,* The University of Chicago Studies in Library Science (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944).

[13] Swain, *Ellen S. Woodward: New Deal Advocate for Women* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1995).

[14] John Braeman, Robert H. Bremner, and David Brody, eds., *The New Deal: The National Level*, Vol. 1 (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1975); Richard Cox, *American Archival Analysis: The Recent Development of the Archival Profession in the United States* (Metuchen: Scarecrow Press, 1990); H. G. Jones, *The Records of a Nation: Their Management, Preservation, and Use* (New York: Atheneum, 1969); Ernst Posner, *American State Archives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964); and David Smiley, "The W.P.A. Historical Records Survey," in *In Support of Clio: Essays in Memory of Herbert A Keller,* eds., William B. Hasseltine and Donald R. McNeil (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1958), 3-28.

[15] Chester W. Bowie, "The Wisconsin Historical Records Survey, Then and Now," *American Archivist* 37, no. 2 (April 1974), 247-261; Trudy Huskamp Peterson, "The Iowa Historical Records Survey, 1936-1942," *American Archivist* 37, no. 2 (April 1974), 223-245; and R. W. Kidder, "The Historical Records Survey: Activities and Publications," *Library Quarterly* 13 (April 1943), 136-149.

[16] Edward Francis Barrese, "The Historical Records Survey: A National Acts to Save Its Memory," PhD diss., George Washington University, 1980; John Robert Hollis, "The WPA's Historical Work in Texas: The Federal Historical Records Survey, 1936-1939," Master's thesis, Baylor University, 1981; Gerald R. Virgilio "The WPA Historical Records Survey in Virginia, 1936-1939," Master's thesis, George Mason University, 1974; and Elizabeth Jean Wellshear, "The Historical Records Survey," Master's thesis, University of Illinois, 1943.

The available literature on general library development in the United States is also sparse, but a few books provide great insight into the history of early library history. For example, Dee Garrison's classic work, *Apostles of Culture*, explores the cultural meaning of libraries and argues that what it meant to be a librarian shifted from the early days of the United States through the professionalization of American Library Association.[18] To understand the impact of Andrew Carnegie on library development, George S. Bobinski's *Carnegie Libraries: Their Histories and Impact on American Public Library Development* gives a detailed explanation of the grant process.[19] In addition, looking at literature regarding social work during the Progressive Era can shed light on the influence of settlement houses and other organizations supported by women that encouraged library development and educational opportunities.[20] There is one manuscript on the history of library development in Florida, but it lacks analysis of how development occurred and focuses mostly on post-1940 history.[21] While most of these books do not specifically focus on Florida, they provide a general framework for understanding trends in library development in the United States. By examining the role of the New Deal on library development in Florida, therefore, this thesis will not only provide new information about events in the state but also help show broader changes in library development nationwide.

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[17] Ickes, *The Secret Diary of Harold Ickes*: *The Inside Struggle, 1936-1939*, Vol. 2 (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954); Moley, *After Seven Years* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1939); and Hopkins, *Spending to Save: a complete story of relief* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1936).

[18] Dee Garrison, *Apostles of Culture: The Public Libraries and American Society, 1876-1920*. Print Culture and History in Modern America (1979. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003).

[19] George S. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries: Their Histories and Impact on American Public Library Development* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1969).

[20] Ruth Hutchinson Crocker, *Social Work and Social Order: The Settlement Movement in Two Industrial Cities, 1889-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1992); and, Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Jane Addams and the Dream of American Democracy* (New York: Basic Books, 2002) For more information on the history of social policy in the United States, see Michael B. Katz, *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse: A Social History of Welfare in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1996); and, Theda Skocpol, *Social Policy in the United States: Future Possibilities in HistoricalPerspective* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), and Michael B. Katz, *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse: A Social History of Welfare in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1996).

[21] Pamela Russell Mason, "A History of Public Library Development in Florida" (Master's thesis, University of Chicago, 1968).

The experiences of Florida during the New Deal show that, despite an interest among intellectual in "American" culture and the federal government's involvement in local and state affairs, the cultural and historical projects sponsored did not emphasize the creation of a completely homogenous American culture. Although the federal government sponsored and coordinated the projects, they aimed at preserving local history and capturing the traditions of various cultures. Through the guidebooks and oral history interviews of the Federal Writers Project to the cataloging of local and state archives of the Historical Records Survey, relief workers revealed and preserved the unique lives and history of Americans in different communities. The structure of the New Deal relief programs, particularly in the WPA, allowed communities to develop and administer most of their own projects; this flexibility helped to address local relief needs as well as create and preserve local culture. Of course, the projects that fell under the authority of Federal One remained under tighter control by the federal administrators, but the focus of the projects remained on the local level. In Florida, the involvement of the state library in obtaining federal aid allowed the library to amass an impressive collection of materials relating to Florida history. In addition, the surveying and library work in various communities helped raise awareness of the importance of historic preservation in towns across the state. The work of the New Deal cultural projects established that Americans shared not one common culture, but that various experiences and traditions combined to form the whole United States.

In addition, the work of the cultural and historical projects ultimately failed to act as a conservative force in American society as Edward Francis Barrese argued. While there was a focus on the past, whether through recording narratives or carefully digging through the contents of state archives, this was not necessarily an attempt to turn back the clock and return to a more idyllic era. In fact, the work of the projects resulted in breaking many previous assumptions about American history. Instead of focusing only on majority cultures, elites, and national leaders, project planners and administrators made a concerted effort to explore a diverse section of the American populace. Among other projects, relief workers recorded slave narratives in the Federal Writers' Project and folk music in the Federal Music Project, capturing the culture of previously ignored people whose history was missing from the traditional written form of preservation. Without the work accomplished during the New Deal, many of these traditions would have been forgotten or at least unavailable to most Americans.

In light of the other cultural projects, the Historical Records Survey and the library projects acted in some ways as a more conservative force since they focused on preserving traditional written history. Since recorded history failed to recount the experiences of many minority groups, these projects did not contribute as much to the discovery of different cultural traditions that could challenge previously held assumptions. In addition, certain projects focused on indexing and preserving the records of traditional ideas of American culture. For example, the HRS eventually began the indexing of early American imprints, church archives, and American portraits. The emphasis on these particular projects revealed what project organizers considered important resources worthy for preservation.

Nevertheless, the projects helped change the status quo because the systematic research and indexing performed by workers on both projects revealed new knowledge and insight into local and state history. In communities where government records had previously laid haphazardly on the floor of an attic or basement, never to be examined again, the surveying projects brought greater clarity into the work of governments and the history of each town. In addition, various state HRS projects focused on gathering historical material of different cultures. In Florida, for example, workers recovered Spanish texts, documents, and maps relating to its colonial heritage.   The library projects tried to challenge the established order in another way by expanding its services beyond its usual clientele. Public libraries were usually confined to cities or large towns because of the need for a tax base to support their expense. This meant that citizens who lived away from the city and could ill afford the money to travel remained deprived of library services. During the New Deal, library projects gained funding to start traveling libraries to rural communities and to create programs that would teach larger communities the value of establishing their own library. These projects helped expose new groups of people to knowledge and resources that could help them in their personal and professional life, as well as provide entertainment. Both projects had the effect of democratizing history, both by exploring the differing stories of local communities and by making this knowledge more accessible.

CHAPTER II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE HISTORICAL RECORDS SURVEY AND STATE LIBRARY PROJECTS

The acceptance of the Historical Records Survey and Library Projects as relief programs into the WPA reflected an understanding among New Deal planners that the unemployed consisted of not only those capable of construction work, but also white-collar and pink-collar workers in need of employment. Among the general populace, however, acceptance of any work relief remained low at the beginning of the Depression. People turned first to their families and local support systems for help. As poor economic conditions in the United States dragged on into the 1930s, many Americans began to change their traditional opinion about the role of unemployment aid and work relief. They welcomed Roosevelt’s plans for economic relief and recovery under the New Deal. Despite gradual acceptance of more relief and social security programs, many of the white-collar work programs found difficulty gaining sponsorship or public acceptance. It was easier for construction and other manual work programs, such as building roads or schools, to have a tangible effect on citizens’ lives, and the public often deemed these programs more worthy. White-collar workers had to defend themselves from accusations that they were completing worthless projects or make-do work just to get relief money. Since many relief workers were women, many critics accused these workers of taking money away from male workers. Fortunately for its advocates, historical surveying and library projects faced less criticism than other projects.

After the stock market crash of October 1929, most business and national leaders refused to recognize that major financial problems lay ahead for the United States. Structural flaws in the economic system, however, made this depression more than a minor hiccup in the business cycle. During the height of the stock market boom, banks had loaned money to stock market brokers in order to help them finance loans “on the margin” to investors. When the market abruptly declined and investors defaulted on their loans, banks had to call in other loans and refuse new ones in order to gain cash. This created a vicious cycle in which people were unable to conduct business with credit in the manner they were accustomed. As more and more companies began to lay off workers, consumption dropped, and people had even more trouble paying off their bills. Within a year, unemployment rose from 1.5 million to 4.5 million Americans, and people began looking towards their leaders for relief.[1]

President Herbert Hoover led the nation in the first three years of the Depression. Despite criticism that Hoover was unresponsive to the crisis, he did eventually recognize that there was a problem and suggest solutions. In many ways, however, Hoover represented the traditional American citizen who valued individualism, self-reliance, and rejected intrusion by the federal government. As a result, his solutions to the Depression and unemployment relied on voluntarism and individual efforts of businessmen and local communities. The problem with such methods emerged early in the Depression. In his first attempt to fix the crisis, Hoover met with and encouraged businesses to continue as if the Depression had not occurred. He managed to get business leaders to agree not to reduce wages, lay off employees, or lower production. Similar promises not to reduce expenditures were extracted from state and local officials. This seemed to be a promising solution until businessmen began cutting production and laying off workers due to worries about declining sales. Similar problems emerged when states and municipalities cut back on their spending because of decreased tax revenue.[2] Hoover's plans to respond to Depression with voluntary action from businessman proved insufficient to solve the economic crisis.

When it came to providing relief, Hoover believed that private charities and local disaster organizations should be the proper place for the unemployed to seek aid. Hoover created the President's Emergency Committee for Employment (Woods Committee) and the President's Organization on Unemployment Relief (Gifford Committee) to advise these efforts. The committees reported that the federal government should encourage relief programs by states and local government. In a radio address on October 18, 1931, Hoover acknowledged that work relief through the expansion of public works project might be necessary by states, counties, and

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1. Michael E. Parrish, *Anxious Decades: America in Prosperity and Depression, 1920-1941* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1992), 233-235. For more detailed analyses on the causes of the Depression, see Ben S. Bernanke, *Essays on the Great Depression* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004); Michael A. Bernstein, *The Great Depression; Delayed Recovery and Economic Change in America, 1929-1939*, Studies in Economic History and Policy (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Barry T. Eichengreen, *Golden Fetters: The Gold Standard and the Great Depression, 1919-1939*, NBER Series on Long-Term Factors in Economic Development (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); John Kenneth Galbraith, *The Great Crash 1929*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972); Barry T. Eichengreen, *Golden Fetters: The Gold Standard and the Great Depression, 1919-1939*; and Murray N Rothbard, *America's Great Depression* (Kansas City: Sheed and Ward, 1975).

2. Parrish, *Anxious Decades: America in Prosperity and Depression*, 244-250.

municipalities. He hastened to add, “Yet, beyond all this, there is a margin of relief which must be provided by voluntary action. Through these agencies Americans must meet the demands of national conscience that there be no hunger or cold amongst our people . . . .”[3] The president opposed direct federal aid, however, fearing it would weaken the people’s self-reliance. Hoover only departed from his voluntarism model after 1932 when the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) won Congressional approval. The RFC had authorization to lend up to $2 billion to help banks, trust companies, credit unions, and insurance companies. In the summer of 1932, after at first resisting, Hoover finally supported the Emergency Relief and Construction Act that would allow RFC funds to go to states in order to finance public works projects. To the end of his administration Hoover resisted expanding aid into direct federal relief and work projects.[4]

By the time of the 1932 national elections, it was clear that Hoover’s economic policies had failed to lift the country out of the Depression and Americans were looking for a change. This change came with the election of the Democratic candidate, Franklin D. Roosevelt, to the American presidency. Roosevelt had gained a substantial reputation as a reformer when he served as governor of New York during the early years of the Depression. In particular, New York’s Temporary Emergency Relief Administration (TERA) started spending $20 million for work relief in the winter of 1931. Directed by Harry Hopkins, an experienced social worker, TERA was an innovative program and the first of its kind in the nation. Both Roosevelt’s and Hopkins’s interest and experience with work relief programs during this time in New York helped inspire the federal relief programs of the New Deal.[5]

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3. Herbert Hoover, “Radio Address to the Nation on Unemployment Relief,” October 18, 1931, *Hoover Online Digital Archives* <http://www.ecommcode.com/hoover/hooveronline/text/37.html>.

4. Parrish, *Anxious Decades*, 248-257. On Hoover’s handling of the Depression, see also William Barber, *From New Era to New Deal: Herbert Hoover, the Economists, and American Economic Policy,* Historical Perspectives on Modern Economics (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Gene Smith, *The Shattered Dream; Herbert Hoover and the Great Depression* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1984), Robert Sobel, *Herbert Hoover at the Onset of the Great Depression, 1929-1930* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1975); and, Harris Gaylord Warren, *Herbert Hoover and the Great Depression* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1967).

5. For works on Franklin D. Roosevelt, see Conrad Black, *Champion of Freedom* (New York: Public Affairs, 2005); Kenneth S. Davis, *FDR: The New Deal Years, 1933-1937* (New York: Random House, 1986); William Leutchtenberg, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1932-1940* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963); and, Jim Powell, *FDR’s Folly: How Roosevelt and His New Deal Prolonged the Great Depression* (New York: Crown Forum, 2003).

Soon after his inauguration, Roosevelt called Congress to Washington for a special session in order to enact new legislation for Roosevelt's relief and recovery plan coined the "New Deal." During this time, Congress passed laws authorizing federal aid to states and creating work relief programs, such as the Civilian Conservation Corps. Some early New Deal relief agencies, such as the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and Civil Works Administration, had white-collar work programs that helped to serve as models for later programs under the Works Progress Administration (WPA).[6]

When the previous years of relief work finally culminated in the creation of the WPA, the nation gained an agency devoted to coordinating and supervising the relief activities of projects across the nation. Created by Executive Order No. 7034 on May 6, 1935, the new agency both provided relief money to states and directed its own federal relief projects. Except for limited supervisory positions, the WPA restricted jobs on its projects to people certified for relief; this reflected the traditional American need to prove the worthiness of those receiving aid. White-collar workers especially benefited under the WPA, as its director, Harry Hopkins, had great interest in creating those types of projects. Under the aegis of WPA, the Historical Records Survey emerged and library projects came to their greatest fruition.[7]

The movement to preserve government documents and other historical materials in the United States originated, however, not in the 1930s but stretched back to the colonial period. The main problem for early record keepers was simply finding safe storage. Preserving records proved extremely difficult because natural disasters, such as hurricanes or fires, often destroyed the public buildings where officials stored the records.[8] Concerned citizens began to pressure the national and state legislatures to improve the quality of their record repositories. In the early nineteenth century, one advocate, David Bartlett, wrote, "To provide for the safe and perfect keeping of the Public Archives, is so obviously one of the first and most imperative duties of a legislature that no argument could make it plainer to a reflecting mind."[9] Around the turn-of-the-19th century, state governments took the lead in archival development when they started to consider their own records and began creating state archives. Not long after this, the Public Archives Commission, which was part of the American Historical Association (AHA), passed its first resolution calling for a national hall of records.[10] This effort eventually led to the creation of the National Archives in 1934.

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[6] For a broader understanding of the New Deal, see Anthony J. Badger, *The New Deal: The Depression Years, 1933-1940* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: MacMillan, 1989), John Braeman, Robert H. Bremner, and David Brody, *The New Deal: The National Level*, Vol. 1 (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1975); Alan Brinkley, *The End of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War* (New York: Knopf, 1995); Paul Keith Conkin, *The New Deal*, American History Series (New York: Crowell, 1967); and Patrick D. Reagan, *Designing a New America: The Origins of New Deal Planning, 1890-1943* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999).

[7] On other aspects of the WPA, see Christine Bold, *WPA Guides: Mapping America* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1999); Donald S. Howard, *The WPA and Federal Relief Policy* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1943); Jerre Mangione, *The Dream and the Deal: The Federal Writers' Project, 1935-1943* (Little Brown, & Co., 1972; Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1996); and 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)

[8] Richard J. Cox, *Closing an Era: Historical Perspectives on Modern Archives and Records Management*, New Directions in Information Management, No. 35 (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2000), 34-35.

During this time, historians worried not only about preserving the records, but also about having a systematic method of describing and inventorying materials in libraries and archives. In 1896, the Historical Manuscript Commission of the American Historical Association published in their first annual report a "List of Printed Guides to, and Descriptions of Historical Manuscripts in the United States and Canada." Lack of funds prevented the AHA from creating a more extensive manuscript guide. The above mentioned Public Archives Commission, established in 1899, also investigated state and local archives, publishing forty-six reports between 1900 and 1911.[11] Probably the most influential committee, however, was the Joint Committee on Materials for Research (JCMR), established by the American Council of Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council in 1930. Dr. Robert C. Brinkley of Western Reserve University served as chairman and Dr. Theodore R. Schellenberg was the executive secretary. The advent of New Deal relief programs soon provided the means to accomplish their goal of creating a records survey. In 1934, JCMR committee member Dr. Francis Philbrick first suggested a nation-wide, coordinated records survey of state and local records as relief work. Various states, including Florida, used the plans JCMR drew up to request funds from the Civil Works Administration and the Federal Emergency Relief Administration.[12] Members of the

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[9] H.G Jones, *Records of a Nation: Their Management, Preservation, and Use* (New York: Atheneum, 1969), 5.

[10] Jones, *Records of a Nation*, 6; and Victor Gondos, Jr., *J. Franklin Jameson and the Birth of the National Archives, 1906-1926* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), 12.

[11] Elizabeth Jean Wellshear, "The Historical Records Survey," Master's thesis, University of Illinois, 1943, 2; 5-7.

[12] David L. Smiley, "The W.P.A. Historical Records Survey," in *In Support of Clio: Essays in Memory of Herbert A. Kellar,* ed. William B. Hesseltine and Donald R. McNeil (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1958),

JCMR tried to organize a national surveying project under the CWA, but their attempt failed because federal law only permitted state sponsorship of CWA projects. The results of these early efforts, however, assisted the creation of the Historical Records Survey under the Works Progress Administration.

Another impetus behind the HRS came from an unexpected source: Luther Evans, a Political Science professor at Princeton University. Apparently unaware of the efforts of the JCMR and the other state and local projects, Evans had contemplated a similar idea. In early 1935, Raymond Moley, whom Evans knew through one of his Princeton students, encouraged him to approach Harry Hopkins in Washington. Since he had no practical experience in archival administration, Evans contacted his friend Robert Brinkley for advice. Brinkley informed him of the work the JCMR had done, and Schellenberg then turned over the committee's plans and files. In his correspondence with Hopkins, Evans argued that surveying projects of state and local government archives would not only provide employment and training for thousands of white-collar workers, but also lift the morale of the unemployed.[13] After receiving approval from Hopkins, Evans began outlining the project and created an administrative plan. On October 1, 1935, Evans was appointed director of the national Historical Records Survey.[14]

As he worked on plans for the HRS and corresponded with historians and archivists, Evans received tremendous encouragement on his endeavor. Lurking in the correspondence he received, however, remained skepticism among professionals that the American public would accept the necessity for the project. Robert Brinkley remarked that the American people are "not archive-conscious" and the condition of local archives put the United States on the level of "backward nations." He reminded Evans that for historians the HRS was not merely a work relief project but an opportunity to achieve research that might not have been otherwise accomplished for fifty years.[15] The Archivist of the United States, R. D. W. Connor, agreed with

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5-6; and Cora Miltimore to Marcus Fagg, February 24, 1934, S 1505, "Joint Committee on Materials for Research of the American Council of Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council," Box 5, State Librarian William T. Cash Administrative Files, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida (hereafter cited as Cash Administrative Files).

[13] Evans to Hopkins, Memo, July 6, 1935, "Luther H. Evans, 1935-1938," Central Files General 1935-1944, RG 69.

[14] McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 759-766.

[15] Brinkley to Evans, July 20, 1935, "Luther H. Evans, 1935-1938," Central Files General 1935-1944, RG 69.

Binkley's assessment of the HRS. In a July 1935 letter to Evans, Connor also wrote that he hoped the project would stimulate state and local officials to improve their preservation and cataloguing methods.[16] Considering the dismal support for their projects in the past, advocates of historical preservation were keenly aware that this was a unique opportunity to advance their goals.

The Historical Records Survey originally came under the administration of the WPA's federally-sponsored Federal Writers' Project. The Federal Writers' Project, along with the Music, Theater, and Art Projects all fell under the umbrella of Federal Project No. 1. Unlike the other Federal One programs, the HRS was not really an arts project; however, the project did have a national scope. The first task of the HRS was to make a list of all depositories of public records and historical manuscripts in each state. Workers on the project followed the precise procedures and regulations established in Evans's 1936 *Manual of the Survey of Historical Records*.[17] Administrative conflict eventually led to the separation of the Historical Records Survey from the Federal Writers' Project. Part of the problem was the difference between the more structured technique required by Evans for his HRS workers and the more creative approach of Federal Writers' Project Director Henry Alsberg. The primary purpose of the Writers' Project was to create guides of each state, while the HRS personnel had more clerical duties. After battling with FWP workers in order to increase work on HRS projects, Evans finally requested separation from the Federal Writers' Project in September 1936. On October 15, 1936, the Historical Records Survey became an individual project under Federal One.[18]

When Evans first held a meeting in December 1935 to discuss the Historical Records Survey, disagreement broke out over the scope of the survey. Most scholars, eager to accomplish a something tangible, wanted to limit the project to a specific goal. The conflict emerged over what those goals should be. On the one hand, Evans suggested surveying only state and county records, while Brinkley wanted to concentrate on a specific geographic area but

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16. Connor to Evans, July 23, 1935, "Luther H. Evans, 1935-1938," Central Files General 1935-1944, RG 69.

17. Smiley, "The W.P.A. Historical Records Survey," 12-14.

18. McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 765

have unlimited scope. Finally, Evans decided to start with the state and county surveys, but eventually agreed to widen the project into other areas as states finished those projects.[19]

Manuscript and newspaper indexing projects began in August 1936, and eventually the HRS included other surveying projects: the Early American Imprints Inventory, the Inventory of Church Archives, and the American Portraits Inventory. In addition, some states tackled special projects such as creating a Union List of Newspapers, microfilming public records and newspapers, creating an annotated bibliography of American history, and producing an Atlas of Congressional Roll Calls. Most of these inventories were reproduced by mimeograph or multilith by the state projects and often were given to public libraries, archives, and universities.[20] The inventories created by the HRS remain in many libraries to the present day.

While the development of archives in the United States succeeded through the support of both professional and amateur historians, the development of public libraries in the United States flourished through the efforts of professional librarians. In particular, the organizational strength of the American Library Association (ALA) greatly contributed to the success of public libraries. The first professional library organization in the United States, the ALA attracted some of the most influential men and women in the library profession to its leadership, and managed to shape the profession as a whole. The ALA organized in 1876 during the centennial celebration in Philadelphia at the Historical Society. This was the first successful attempt to organize librarians in the country. An unsuccessful attempt to organize the library profession had been made in 1853 in New York at the persuasion of publisher Charles B. Norton and the librarian of the Smithsonian Institution, Charles C. Jewett. In 1870, the Commissioner of Education reported that there were two hundred and nine librarians in the United States. The majority of the librarians in the country were in the North, ninety-nine worked in New York and Massachusetts alone.[21] Of these, one hundred and three people attended the Philadelphia meeting; there were ninety men and thirteen women.

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19. McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 791-793.

20. McDonald, *Federal Relief Administration and the Arts*, 827.

21. Dee Garrison, *Apostles of Culture: The Public Libraries and American Society, 1876-1920*. Print Culture and History in Modern America (1979; Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 3.

While libraries had existed since the early days of the United States, library development boomed between the first attempt at organizing the library profession in 1853 and the creation of the ALA in 1876. By way of comparison, note that between 1825 and 1850, 551 libraries opened in the United States, but between 1850 and 1875, 2,040 new libraries opened. Most of these new libraries were not public libraries; in 1876, only 188 public libraries, defined as "free municipal institutions supported by general taxation" existed in 11 states.[22] The new libraries were mostly private "subscription" libraries sponsored by various civic clubs and open only to their members. Subscription libraries could be effective barriers to prevent people from unwanted races and social classes from interacting with the majority culture. Thus, these early libraries enforced a sense of elitism among those privileged enough to afford their services.

As more and more libraries opened across the nation, the need arose for more trained librarians. In turn, as new challenges emerged, increasing numbers of librarians clamored to organize and professionalize their occupation. As Dee Garrison points outs, however, the drive towards professionalization was not unique among librarians, but part of a national movement of professionalization in the late nineteenth century. For example, at the same time librarians were meeting at the Historical Society in Philadelphia, dentists, and lawyers also joined together in professional groups.[23] Within the library profession, many early leaders of the ALA wanted to maintain their own moral standards (and thinly veiled elitism) that comprised current library practices. These older leaders clashed with some of its bright young members intent on modernizing the organization.

In order to understand this conflict, one must consider the composition of early ALA leadership. First, the New England members dominated the leadership of the early American Library Association. This is unsurprising since most librarians in United States at that time worked in that region. Other areas in the country, the South in particular, lagged in library development; the other regions' inexperience contributed to their lack of influence within the organization.[24] In addition, only one-fourth of early leaders began the library profession as their first career field. In a country where libraries were only beginning to develop and librarianship was not considered a professional field, many of the leaders fell into library positions after dissatisfaction with other jobs. Unlike later ALA leaders, such as Melvil Dewey, who focused on library education and professionalization, many early leaders worried more about librarians' role as guardians of culture and morality. As Dee Garrison wrote, "active in educational, charitable, municipal, and civil service reform, this recognizable group of civic leaders and literary figures was of native, usually New England, stock and often had graduated from eastern colleges. In cities across the nation, they embarked in the late nineteenth century upon an effort to educate and uplift the unfortunate."[25]

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[22] Garrison, *Apostles of Culture,* 4.

[23] Garrison, *Apostles of Culture,* 7.

[24] James V. Carmichael, Jr., "Southerners in the North and Northerners in the South: The Impact of the Library School of the University of Illinois on Southern Librarianship," in *Women's Work: Vision and Change in Librarianship: Papers in Honor of the Centennial of the University of Illinois Graduate School of Library and*

Many librarians in the late nineteenth century were part of the reform movements of the Progressive Era. Although men dominated national library leadership, women played an enormous role in the development of early libraries. Not only did women oversee the day-to-day operations of libraries, but women who founded settlement houses often opened libraries as part of their organization. Not only believing in education as an end in itself, these progressive librarians thought their work would help fight against vice in saloons and prevent juvenile delinquencies. They also viewed their work as a way to correct the traditional public school system, which they saw as weak and ineffective. Libraries became community centers as librarians sponsored "extension work," such as classes, lectures series, clubs, and other activities not directly related to their regular duties.[26] Ultimately, during a time of economic change existed the optimistic hope that education and knowledge could change the lives of the lower classes for the better and prevent the violence and disorder that led to social upheaval.[27]

Related to ideas about libraries' role in reform missions was the connection between libraries and philanthropy in the late nineteenth century. As industrialization spread across the United States, causing economic dislocation for many Americans and rapid urbanization in many areas, great wealth accumulated in the hands of only a few men. At this time the government imposed no income or corporate taxes, and most of the wealthy elite spent much of their excess

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Information Science, Occasion Papers (Nos. 196/196, July 1994), (Champaign, IL: Graduate School of Library and Information Science University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1994), 30.

[25] Garrison, *Apostles of Culture*, 18; 10.

[26] Garrison, *Apostles of Culture*, 38; 207.

[27] Garrison, *Apostles of Culture*, 43-46.

wealth on a variety of charitable causes. Libraries were one of the major beneficiaries of this *noblese oblige.* From 1880 to 1899, $36 million was given to libraries, including money given by Walter L. Newberry (1887) and John Crerar (1889) in Chicago and by Enoch Pratt (1882) in Baltimore. Then in 1895, the private Astor, Lenox, and Tilden libraries joined together to form the New York Public Library. The largest and most famous library philanthropist, however, was U.S. Steel baron Andrew Carnegie, who donated more than $40 million for 1679 public library buildings in 1412 communities in the United States.[28]

Andrew Carnegie, Scottish immigrant, became the richest man in the world through a "rags-to-riches" story that seems cliché now. He began working as a bobbin boy in a cotton mill in Pennsylvania at thirteen and then moved through a series of jobs at the Western Union and the Pennsylvania Railroad. In 1865, he started his own business and eventually organized the Carnegie Steel Company (which later became U.S. Steel). Carnegie sold the company to J.P. Morgan for $480 million in 1901 at age 65, and dedicated the rest of his life to his philanthropic endeavors.[29] Even before his retirement, however, Carnegie had advocated the position that the wealthy should use their wealth to help the less fortunate. In 1889, he first propounded his "Gospel of Wealth" philosophy in two essays. The first, entitled "Wealth," and published in *North American Review* in 1889, explained how the rich had a duty to help the poor and to share their wealth. Although Carnegie believed the wealthy should not live extravagantly and horde their possessions, his motivations were not completely selfless. As is made clear in the essay, Carnegie clearly believed in unfettered capitalism and opposed the rumblings of socialism that industrialization had stirred up in the United States. The "Gospel of Wealth" philosophy maintained the poor's reliance on the rich for their well-being. As Carnegie wrote in his essay, "Individualism will continue, but the millionaire will be but a trustee for the poor; entrusted for a season with a great part of the increased wealth of the community, but administering it for the community far better than it could or would have done for itself."[30] In his second essay, "The Best Field for Philanthropy," he described the best ways wealthy families could spend their

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28. George S. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries: Their Histories and Impact on American Public Library Development* (Chicago; American Library Association, 1969), 3-7.

29. "About Carnegie Corporation," Carnegie Corporation of New York Website, http://www.carnegie.org/sub/about/biography.html (accessed August 19, 2006).

30. Andrew Carnegie, "Wealth," *North American Review* Vol. 148, no. 391 (June 1889), 664.

money in their communities. The seven fields included the funding of universities, public libraries, medical centers, public parks, meeting and concert halls, public baths, and churches.[31] At this point, Carnegie decided to focus his much of his efforts on the development of public libraries in English-speaking countries. He established his first library in Dunfermline, Scotland in 1881. This was the Scottish town where Carnegie grew up and watched his father pool money with other weavers to start a small library.[32] Like the reformist library leaders of the ALA, Carnegie saw public libraries as a way to help the poor and give them an opportunity to lift themselves out of their poverty through education and culture. Since Carnegie himself had made such a huge transformation, he saw no reason why others could not do the same.[33]

Carnegie's library philanthropy can be divided into two periods. During the first early period, from 1881 to 1886, the industrialist gave the libraries as endowments without expecting the communities to financially support them. He gave $1,860,869 for fourteen buildings in six communities in Pennsylvania and Iowa. After this initial gift-giving, Carnegie began to rethink his plans and developed a policy whereby communities had to agree to support the library with ten percent of the total amount contributed by Carnegie. George Bobinski calls this Carnegie's "wholesale" period of library building. During this second period, Carnegie's money built library buildings in 1406 communities spending $36,172,981. Carnegie's belief in helping public libraries influenced his willingness to help certain communities. For example, Carnegie grants were usually rejected to help subscription libraries; Carnegie was reluctant to even contribute to state libraries or state historical society libraries. Funding restrictions became more and more stringent as the years went on.[34]

While the Carnegie libraries certainly benefited many communities, in some ways they did not accomplish what their founder intended. Did the Carnegie libraries really open library

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31. Carnegie, "The Best Fields for Philanthropy," *North American Review* Vol. 149, no. 397 (December 1889), 687-696).

32. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries*, 12.

33. On 19th century philanthropy, see Robert H. Bremner, *American Philanthropy*, The Chicago History of American Literature (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988); Lawrence J. Friedman and Mark D. McGarvie, eds., *Charity, Philanthropy, and Civility in American History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); and, Judith Sealander, *Private Wealth and Public Life: Foundation Philanthropy and the Reshaping of American Social Policy from the Progressive Era to the New Deal* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

34. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries*, 13; 39.

development in new communities? One of the main ways to examine this is by looking at the regions of the country that received Carnegie grants. The Northeast received the most funds ($14,501,133), while the South ($3,061,601), and Southwest ($1,210,000) received far less.[35] The latter regions of the country were already farther behind in library and educational development, and were poorer regions than the industrialized Northeast. Rural areas in the South and Southwest could have greatly used money towards library development. Why did these regions receive fewer funds?

Several factors contributed to discrepancies between different regions of the country. One reason is Carnegie's sense as a businessman. With his new formulation of the "10 percent" rule, Carnegie, or more likely, his private secretary James Bertram, who was in charge of the day-to-day operations, was unwilling to give large sums of money to communities that would be unable to maintain the libraries after they were built. In addition, the rural nature of the South and Southwest made it more difficult for a natural community to form in order to decide to apply for a Carnegie grant in the first place. In the Northeast, many state library associations or state library boards helped communities prepare Carnegie grant applications – but neither of these organizations were common in the South or West.[36] Finally, the segregated society of the South contributed to both the lack of support for public libraries overall and the paucity of Carnegie funds. Maintaining separate public services for two separate populations was expensive and drained funds for "non-essential" services such as libraries or other cultural institutions. In addition, outside funding sources, such as the Carnegie Foundation, often required integrated services as a condition for their donations. Some southern communities were unwilling to accept this condition and turned down money.[37] Overall, it seems that the lack of cohesion of the library profession, segregation in the South, and the rural nature and economics of the South and West prevented these regions from taking advantage of the Carnegie grants. At the same time, these same factors made the applications from these regions seem unattractive to Carnegie and the Carnegie Foundation, who wanted to make a good investment, as well give back to the community.

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[35] Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries*, 17.

[36] Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries*, 22.

[37] "Guide to Tallahassee's African American Heritage," John Gilmore Riley Center and Museum of African American History and Culture, http://www.rileymuseum.org/tallyguide.htm. Tallahassee, Florida refused money for a Carnegie Library because of the integration requirement.

Indeed, not all communities welcomed Carnegie libraries, even those who had grant applications approved. Some towns questioned the need for a public library in the first place, especially since Carnegie only gave money for the building, not for any of the books or supplies needed to run the operation. Often opposition arose because in the view of many people Carnegie was an “outsider” trying to take over and who only wanted to build fancy buildings across the country in order to memorialize himself. In addition, many poor communities, especially in urban areas, resented Carnegie’s attempts to make up for his earlier shoddy treatment of workers through his philanthropy. Finally, some communities simply could not afford the extra tax burden or citizens were unwilling to tax themselves to support a public library.[38] Since Carnegie firmly insisted communities pay ten percent of the total grant per annum, lack of tax support killed any possibility for a Carnegie library in several locales, including Florida. Carnegie’s hands-off approach to the libraries after the initial grant doomed library development in many areas.

In fact, as the library philanthropy projects continued, the Carnegie Corporation began to hear about towns that failed to live up to their pledges to support their libraries as well as other problems. As a result, the corporation hired Alvin S. Johnson, an economics professor at Cornell University, to examine the libraries in 1916. Johnson criticized many of the Corporation’s practices that led to the policy of granting libraries without thinking about efficient library service. He recommended several changes and additional expenses, including funding library schools, creating model libraries, assisting the ALA, and funding a field staff. These suggestions infuriated Bertram, who wanted to cut down expenses and keep running the operation himself. By November 7, 1917, the Carnegie Corporation decided to end the library building grant program. In the end, however, several of Johnson’s recommendations were implemented, such as the model libraries, assistance to library education, and assistance the ALA. For example, Carnegie had given $100,000 in endowment funds to the ALA in 1902, and then gave $549,500 for general support from 1924 to 1926. Finally, in 1926 he added $2 million to the endowment funds. In addition, he gave an endowment fund to the first graduate library school, located at the University of Chicago.[39] While Carnegie's most famous library philanthropy program ended, he continued to support public libraries in other ways, giving money to professionals and educational institutions rather than the public.

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[38] Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries*, 95.

How important was Carnegie to the development of public libraries in the United States? Certainly, he brought much needed publicity and awareness to the idea of public libraries to many cities and towns. For many communities that could afford the extra tax burden, the Carnegie grant was a blessing. On the other hand, as one can see, not everyone responded well to the idea of a wealthy industrialist bestowing his "gift" on a distant town. In addition, the problems that arose after the libraries were built, especially involving maintenance, staffing, and proper library techniques, soured many people on the idea of supporting libraries. It is important to remember that during the same time that the Carnegie libraries were being built, the American Library Association, as well as a myriad of state library associations and state historical societies, struggled to organize and professionalize as well as promote public libraries. In regions of the country where the Carnegie Corporation did not reach as far, these individuals in professional organizations had an even greater influence in shaping the development of libraries.

By the 1920s, the South lagged behind much of the nation in library development. Much of this resulted from the economic conditions in the South, as well as the racial tensions of segregation. Many southern towns could not afford to support a library or communities were too rural to really consider a centralized library. The major library school in the South was attached to the Carnegie Library of Atlanta; this library school was only open to women until after 1930.[40] Most of the students who attended the Atlanta school were from the South; less than 3 percent of students were from outside the region between 1905 and 1930. Some librarians in the South (and outside the region) criticized the Atlanta school for being too insular and homogenous, and strived to improve library standards. Mary Utopia Rothrock, librarian of the Lawson McGhee Library in Knoxville, was one of those who held the Atlanta school with little regard. She founded the Southeastern Library Association (SELA) in 1920 and helped create an affiliation between the Atlanta school and Emory University. This union resulted in a formal admissions procedure for a bachelor's degree and helped secure a type II accreditation from the Board of

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[39] Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries*, 143; 154-159; 198.

[40] Carmichael, "Southerners in the North," 27.

Education. The Carnegie Library of Atlanta finally received endorsement from the ALA as a graduate library school in 1928.[41]

The Southeastern Library Association wanted to be a vital force in the region and managed to accomplish some of its goals during the 1920s. The 1926 SELA conference covered a comprehensive review of the needs of the region in every phase of library activity – an important step in identifying what the organization needed to focus on.[42] Then in 1927, the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools adopted standards for high school libraries. Meanwhile, librarians carried out county library demonstration work funded by the Carnegie Corporation in Louisiana in 1925 and by the Julius Rosenwald Fund in several southern states in 1929.[43] Demonstration work showed towns how to set up libraries and then organized support for them before moving on to the next town. The adoption of a program for southern library development by SELA was agreed upon one week before the stock market crash of October 29, 1929. The first step of this plan was a survey of library education in southern states. Unfortunately for SELA, library development slowed in the first years of the Depression.

During this time, a regional field agent of the ALA, Tommie Dora Barker, oversaw the library development in the South through state agencies. She promoted national efforts in library development in the region and helped bring a southern point of view to the ALA. Barker found it difficult to accomplish most of her goals due to the economic hardships of the Depression. She wrote in a 1936 report, “Whether for better or worse, [the depression] required adaptation of thinking to new conditions and influenced the choice of new objectives for library development in long-time programs.”[44] While the New Deal had beneficial effects for long term library development, during the early years of the Depression it stalled many plans.

On a national level, leadership of the ALA had changed since the early days of the organization. No longer was the organization focused on morality, but rather on professionalization and education. The man responsible for this change was Melvil Dewey.

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41. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries, 29; 32-37*.

42. Tommie Dora Barker, *Libraries of the South: A Report on Development, 1930-1935* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1936), 1.

43. Barker, *Libraries of the South*, 1-2; and, Carmichael, “Southerners in the North,” 32.

44. Barker, *Libraries of the South*, 3.

Unlike the early library leaders who had often slipped into the library profession late in life, Dewey started in the profession quite early. At age twenty-two, he created the Dewey Decimal System while working as an assistant at Amherst College Library. He then became the new librarian at Columbia University in 1876 and created there one of the first modern college libraries in the United States.[45] In 1888, Dewey resigned from Columbia and became the director of the New York State Library, which soon underwent the same modern changes as the library at Columbia. By 1903, the New York State Library had become the fourth largest library in the country. Dewey focused on efficiency and mechanization of library work, which he thought professionalized and standardized librarianship. He met strong resistance from older leaders who thought librarians should focus more on scholarship and theory. In addition, Dewey sought to democratize the ALA by voting with ballots instead of a nominating committee and forbidding a member from being chosen president two years in a row. In 1890, Dewey was elected president of the American Library Association. Due to Dewey's influence on the ALA, library education focused on mechanics on library work and apprenticeship.   Students paid little attention to theory for over three decades.[46] This concentration on the technical aspects of library work made it easy for librarians later on to come up with useful projects during the New Deal. Many of the tasks, such as cataloguing or indexing, were easily taught and their methodical nature made them easy to supervise.

Unlike the Historical Records Survey, the WPA library projects were not created on a national scale. In fact, the library projects lacked a national coordinator until 1938. Most of the library projects of the WPA continued work started under earlier relief agencies. Individual localities devised the projects so there was little coordination with other areas of the state or country. Various state agencies often sponsored projects and operated on a state-wide basis, and there was little national uniformity or direction. In 1938, officials created a Library Service Section (LSS) within the Professional and Service Division of the WPA (now the Works Projects Administration) after they saw the usefulness of trained librarians as advisors on library projects. Unlike the HRS, the administrators of the LSS never intended to tightly control the work of their projects; instead, the new division acted as a clearinghouse for library project proposals and gave field services to advise state agencies. After the creation of the LSS, statewide library projects tended to focus more heavily on library extension services to areas lacking public libraries.[47] The new division helped states coordinate their efforts to better serve the needs of underserved regions.

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[45] Garrison, *Apostles of Culture*, 126-128.

[46] Garrison, *Apostles of Culture*, 137-145;168.

Before the WPA, libraries used relief funds from early New Deal agencies to assist with projects and services. These were usually projects quickly conceived in an effort to both create work and prevent libraries from closing. FERA was the first federal agency to give relief money towards library projects, although states controlled the operation of the program. Between April 1934 and May 1935, the Women's Division of FERA's Emergency Work Relief Program devoted its efforts to library projects. In addition to more clerical duties such as indexing and cataloging, libraries benefited also from construction projects. Under the Civil Works Administration, workers completed building renovations, roof repairs, new plumbing, and landscaping. Later under the Public Works Administration, the agency finished one hundred-thirteen public library building projects and sixty college/university library projects.[48] Relief officials desired library work for white-collar workers because of its low labor costs. According to a FERA release, by 1935 almost 1,000 library projects had been established, providing jobs to 10,000 women in 42 states.[49] Hoping to benefit from relief funds, the American Library Association submitted a proposal for a "Federal Emergency Library Project" in 1935 that would have provided employment for 50,000 people in extension library services throughout the United States.[50] Despite the efforts of the American Library Association, however, the WPA did not create an organized library relief project at that time.

The final agency involved in library work during the New Deal was the National Youth Administration (NYA). Although established in June 1935 as part of the WPA, the youth program operated virtually independently. The unit was specifically intended as a work program for sixteen to twenty-four year olds. Library projects under the NYA included jobs in both the

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[47] Edward Barrett Stanford, *Library Extension Under the WPA: An Appraisal of an Experiment in Federal Aid,* The University of Chicago Studies in Library Science (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1944), 35-37.

[48] Stanford, *Library Extension Under the WPA*, 24-25; 30.

[49] FERA, Release, Series NO-1027, January 1935 in Stanford, *Library Extension Under the WPA*, 28.

[50] Stanford, *Library Extension Under the WPA*, 36.

Out-of-School Work Program and the Student Work Program. Some states, including Florida, created library service projects under the NYA as part of a program that would provide job training for students in the clerical field. These NYA library programs, however, failed to provide enough training to students so that they qualified for professional library work. Workers also completed manual construction projects, such as building desks, shelves, and new libraries.[51] The NYA transferred to the Federal Security Agency in 1939 and then moved to the War Manpower Commission in 1942. The agency eventually shifted all activities to war preparation with the onset of World War II, and the program officially ended in 1943.[52]

Although the library projects never received as much national attention as the Historical Records Survey, federal work programs greatly benefited public libraries during the Depression. The American Library Association and state library associations worked with state agencies to develop projects that would gain relief funds. Before the New Deal, there were approximately 30,000 librarians and assistants in the United States; at one point, the WPA alone employed 38,324 full-time people on library and book-repair projects, excluding NYA workers.[53] The creation of the Library Service Section helped focus library projects on increasing public library service throughout the country. Ultimately, most of the projects relied on local initiative and interest rather than national direction.

Despite their differences, both the Historical Records Survey and the various library projects relied heavily on the support of professionals in their respective fields. The endorsement of the Roosevelt administration helped propel these projects from theory to reality, but most of the ideas came from historians and librarians. Dreams of a vast archival surveying projects and increased public library service had circulated among professionals for years; these plans needed only financial resources and labor to emerge as viable projects. Non-historians, such as Luther Evans, relied on the knowledge and advice of scholars and historians to organize his plans for the Historical Records Survey. Similarly, the ALA assisted local librarians and sponsors to apply for federal funds and create useful relief projects. As the WPA developed, historians and librarians also worked within the agency as project supervisors or advisors. Ultimately, the ability of the Roosevelt administration to implement these kinds of cultural and historical projects under the emergency conditions of the Great Depression relied heavily on the fact that professionals had planned for such programs years in advance.

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[51] Stanford, *Library Extension Under the WPA*, 39-44.

[52] For additional information on the National Youth Administration, see Palmer O. Johnson, *The National Youth Administration* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1938; New York: Arno Press, 1974), and Betty Grimes Lindley and Ernest Lindley, *A New Deal for Youth: The Story of the National Youth Administration* (New York; Viking Press, 1938); and George P. Rawick, "The New Deal and Youth: The Civilian Conservation Corps, the National Youth Administration, and the American Youth Congress," Master's thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1957.

[53] Stanford, *Library Extension Under the WPA*, 57.

CHAPTER III

THE NEW DEAL AND AMERICAN INTELLECTUAL THOUGHT

The development of the Historical Records Surveys, State Library Projects, and other library extension projects during the New Deal did not emerge from a vacuum in American intellectual thought. Various ideas involving the status of American history, culture, and progress churned around the country for decades before the eruption of the New Deal programs in the 1930s. During the latter part of the nineteenth century, the Victorian collided with modernism, which denied the authority of the past and advocated science as a method to find truth.[1] Partly from these ideas, Progressivism emerged. While having different goals, those who shared the Progressive philosophy had a common belief in the scientific method, education, using the government to further social goals, and optimism in science and technology. The ferocity and tragedy of World War I devastated many Progressives, who then lost faith in their philosophy of progress, and the movement stalled after the war.

During the 1920s, many intellectuals rebelled against the ideas of Progressivism. These post-war intellectuals now criticized the coldness of the technology that the Progressives had praised; they blamed science for war and destruction. The intellectuals also condemned the poor state of American culture, and blamed the Progressives for a having a single-minded focus on science and materialism. These new thinkers wanted to create a new “American” culture, and scorned attempts to look towards Europe to find civilization. During the New Deal, many of these alienated writers became part of community projects to create and preserve American culture. The desperate times of the Depression resulted in the ingenious ideas to create work relief programs and created a systematic way to capture American culture. Of course, professional men and women had been clamoring for cultural and historic preservation projects from states for years, but the ideas did not reach the national governmental policy level until the New Deal.[2]

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1. Peter Watson, *The Modern Mind: An Intellectual History of the 20th Century* (New York: HarpersCollins, 2001),53.

2. For an overview of American intellectual history, see also Robert M. Crunden, *A Brief History of American Culture* (New York: Paragon House, 1994) and Lewis Perry, *Intellectual Life in America: A History* (New York: F. Watts, 1989). For more on American culture during the Depression, see Alan Brinkley, *Culture and Politics in the*

The planners of the New Deal managed to combine both intellectual elements of the earlier Progressives and the later critics of the 1920s. From the former, the New Deal gained its emphasis on experimentation, scientific method, efficiency, progress, community, and faith in the national government. From the latter, the planners acquired an appreciation for the idea that there is an art and culture indigenous to the United States and that communities can be strengthened through art. The Federal One projects were distinctive because they not only employed artists, writers, musicians, painters, and other workers, but that these people also created works of art and preserved historical records in a systematic way. In the case of the Historical Records Survey, the detail of organization and standardization demanded by its director Luther Evans was remarkable considering that the government had never before attempted a project of this scale. The genesis of these projects rested on legacy of the intellectual thought of the previous decades.

The intellectual trends of the Progressive Era, particularly in a group of intellectuals known as pragmatists, grew out of shifting world views regarding science and religion in the nineteenth century. In the early part of the century, most Americans had a firm belief in God and the inevitable progress of man. In 1859, however, Charles Darwin published *Origins of Species* and soon shook up the traditional belief systems. Darwin's theory of natural selection seemed to deny man's natural progression according to God's plan. As Robert M. Crunden writes, "Nothing seemed to separate men from animals, and the warmth of a personal God who actually cared was suddenly absent from the lives of millions."[3] Opposition immediately arose from many scientists and clergymen who rejected Darwin's ideas. Others began applying Darwinism to social thought, combining it with Calvinist beliefs about divine election and the Protestant work ethic in order to justify refusing aid to the poor and opposing reform efforts. Against this attitude, emerged the "reform Darwinists," such as sociologist Lester Frank Ward and settlement worker Jane Addams. These reformists became known as Progressives and associated with a variety of causes. Unlike the Social Darwinists, who saw society as made of individuals fighting

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Great Depression (Waco: Markham Press Fund, 1999); Terry A. Cooney, *Balancing Acts: American Thought and Culture in the 1930s* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995); Richard H. Pells, *Radical Visions and American Dreams: Culture and Social Thought in the Depression Years* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973); and Warren Susman, "The Thirties," in *The Development of an American Culture*, Stanley Coben and Lorman Rather, eds. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1970).

3. Crunden, *A Brief History of American Culture,* 131.

for themselves out on the streets, Progressives believed that society was one organism, and everyone must aid each other or no one would survive.[4]

Progressivism also emerged out of changing economic conditions at the end of the nineteenth century. As the country began to industrialize after the Civil War, the "robber barons" tried everything possible to prevent the government from taxing or regulating their profits. While thousands of impoverished Americans struggled to adjust to the harsh working conditions of urban, industrialized life, a privileged few gained most of the nation's wealth. Then in the mid-1890s, the United States suffered a serious depression, and more and more Americans began doubting the word of the wealthy.[5] Industrialists became the enemy in the eyes of many; the wealthy people needed to be guarded against. Writers such as Herbert Croly started advocating the intervention by the federal government and a strong nationalism as a remedy to industrial problems. In *Promise of American Life* and *Progressive Democracy*, Croly described his ideal society, which saw the government and community as necessary for individuals to achieve their true potential.[6] After achieving reforms on a local and state level, many Progressives saw the federal government as a valid avenue to turn to when faced with a daunting social or economic problem.

Croly, who became known as an advocate of the progressive cause, had been influenced by another group of thinkers, the pragmatists, who would also influence the New Deal planners. Pragmatism was not so much a philosophy as a method and a faith in the scientific process. It praised the importance of action over thinking and emphasized results over theory. The development of pragmatism came from the meeting of several young men, including Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, and Oliver Wendell Holmes. In the 1870s, their "Metaphysical Club" met in Boston near Harvard to discuss philosophical issues including Alexander Bain's definition of belief as "that upon which a man was prepared to act." Peirce was the first to publicly describe the ideas of pragmatism in "Fixation of Belief" in *Popular Science Monthly* in

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[4] Crunden, *A Brief History of American Culture*, 132-135. On Social Darwinism, see also Carl N. Degler, *In Search of Human Nature: The Decline and Revival of Social Darwinism in American Social Thought* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); and Mike Hawkins, *Social Darwinism in European and American Thought, 1860-1945: Nature as Model and Nature as Threat* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[5] Crunden, *A Brief History of American Culture*, 140.

[6] Croly, *The Promise of American Life* (1909; Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1989); and, Croly, *Progressive Democracy* (Macmillan, 1914; New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1998).

1877. Peirce argued that the main reason for inquiry was to relieve doubt and that there were several methods of "fixing belief." He rejected the methods of "tenacity," or stubbornly holding on to opinions despite all evidence to the contrary; the appeal to authority; and the *a priori* method. Peirce finally concluded that beliefs must be determined only by external means, not influenced by human biases. The scientific method was the only process which was neutral enough to determine beliefs because it could be independently tested and verified.[7] Peirce, James, and later, John Dewey were the three men most famous for pragmatism.[8]

While Peirce, James, and Dewey all shared similar ideas about pragmatism they did not completely agree with one another, and the idea changed in the public's mind from when it was first introduced by Peirce in the 1870s. Peirce and James were contemporaries and both came from the same New England background; Dewey was a generation younger. For Peirce, pragmatism was a reaction against the Emersonian ideal of self-reliant individuals who do not need society to know truth. He believed that collective action and inquiry would eventually bring men closer to "truth" or, at least, further from error.[9] Unlike those who saw Darwin's discoveries as threatening and feared doubt, Peirce saw it as an important part of intellectual life and necessary for new discoveries.

William James developed his ideas of pragmatism from Peirce, and it was James's concept of pragmatism that quickly became well-known. James had a broader idea of pragmatism than Peirce and elucidated his thoughts in several journal articles and lectures. In "The Will to Believe," James explained, much like Peirce did earlier, why the scientific method was a valid way of inquiry. James divided men into "empiricists" and "absolutists"; the former believe we cannot know when we know the truth, while the latter believe we can. He declared that men are naturally absolutists. The article defended against criticism that science and advocates of science destroyed religion; the belief that science can coexist with traditional views of morality imbued the writing. James boldly declared, however, "The question of having moral beliefs at all or not having them is decided by our will."[10] This statement sharply contrasted Peirce's conviction that the community is essential to determine truth. In fact, James's "Will to Believe" was much more Emersonian and individualistic than Peirce's original theory. Then in 1904, James wrote in "The Pragmatic Method" that "the whole function of philosophy ought to be to find out what definite difference it will make to you and me, at definite instants of our life, if this world-formula or that world-formula be the one which is true."[11] In this essay, James admits that he has a broader conception of pragmatism than Peirce, believing that an idea should have a specific practical consequence, not a general one as in Peirce's theory.

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[7] Peirce, "Fixation of Belief," *Popular Science Monthly* 12 (Nov. 1877), 1-15, <http://www.peirce.org/writings/p107/html>.

[8] On pragmatism, see also John P. Diggins, *Promise of Pragmatism: Modernism and the Crisis of Knowledge and Authority* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999); Christopher Hookway, *Truth Rationality, and Pragmatism: Themes from Peirce* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); James T. Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory: Social Democracy and Progressivism in European and American Thought, 1870-1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); and, Edward A. Stettner, *Shaping Modern Liberalism: Herbert Croly and Progressive Thought* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1993).

[9] Diggins, *Promise of Pragmatism*, 163-164.

At this point, Peirce felt he must clarify his own thoughts and responded with an article in *The Monist* in 1905. He acknowledged the validity of the other forms of pragmatism that had developed, even wryly announcing that he would now be using the word "pragmaticism," "which is ugly enough to be safe from kidnappers."[12] Peirce revealed that he developed his theory from the belief that scientists thought scientifically and performed experiments in all aspects of their lives unconsciously; he determined the name pragmatism from the "inseparable connection between rational cognition and rational purpose."[13] He again reiterated that belief was a habit of mind, which is satisfied until is meets with doubt. Peirce insisted that anything which people did not doubt, they must regard as "infallible, absolute truth."[14] Overall, Peirce believed that his original, narrower focus of pragmatism was preferable.

In 1906, James gave a series of lectures at the Lowell Institute in Boston, which he eventually published in 1907 as *Pragmatism*. While James had written and talked about the subject before, this was his first grand effort to detail his theory and explain his thoughts. In "What Pragmatism Means," he repeated his ideas from previous articles that the pragmatic

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10. James, "The Will to Believe," *New World* (June 1896) in *Pragmatism and Other Writings*, ed. Giles Gunn (New York: Penguin Books, 2000), 212-213.

11. William James, "The Pragmatic Method," *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Method* 1, no. 25 (Dec. 1904), 674- 675.

12. Charles S. Peirce, "What Pragmatism Is," *The Monist* 15 (April 1905), 161-181 in "The Maxium of Pragmatism (Lecture I) in *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*, Vol. 2 (1893-1913), Eds, Nathan Houser, et. al. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 335.

13. Peirce, "What Pragmatism Is," 332-333.

14. Peirce, "What Pragmatism Is," 336-337.

method should be used to settle metaphysical arguments that would otherwise be unsolved. One should ask: "What difference would it practically make to any one if this notion rather than that notion were true?"[15] According to James, facts and experience are essential to discovering truth, but unlike Peirce, he was willing to accept personal experience as a valid measure of truth. Peirce firmly saw truth validated through experimentation, as in a laboratory through peer review. He was opposed to, as James put it, pragmatism as "democratic" with "her resources as rich and endless as friendly as those of mother nature."[16] James had a loose concept of truth whereby individuals could determine what they believed; Peirce believed that there was an external truth even if one did not know what it was.

The third major thinker to influence pragmatism was John Dewey. In a way, Dewey was perhaps more influential than either Peirce or James not only because of his particular ideas, but because he was younger and was able to bridge the gap between the Victorian generation and the later New Deal leaders. Dewey attended graduate school at Johns Hopkins University and began his philosophical career as a Hegelian idealist, but changed direction after reading James's *Principle of Psychology* (1890). By 1894, when he was teaching at the University of Chicago, he was virtually a pragmatist, even if he did not identify himself as such. More than the other two pragmatists, Dewey took great interest in social and political reform. He became well-known for his educational reform efforts at the University of Chicago and the Chicago Laboratory School, and supported progressive reform projects such as Hull House.[17] In 1904, Dewey resigned his position at Chicago because of disagreements with the University administration and took a job at Columbia University. During these years Dewey wrote many books and contributed to several journals and magazines, including the *New Republic* and the *Nation*, sharing his philosophic insight and commenting on the social and political issues of the day.

Dewey combined elements of both James's and Peirce's thinking in his own conception of pragmatism. When James expanded Peirce's focus to also philosophical questions, he also broke free of the rigidity of the scientific method. One's personal experience was a perfectly satisfactory test in James's mind. No one else needed to validate the experience. Dewey, on the other hand, agreed with Peirce's original idea of the importance of the scientific method and validation by the community. James had a much more individualist idea of pragmatism than the other two intellectuals. Nevertheless, James did develop the idea of pragmatism into more practical applications, which Dewey in turn expanded upon. One of Dewey's major contributions to American thought in later years was the idea of the government using experimentation in a concrete manner to solve problems. He based this on his early idea that experience was only valid if it involved action, not just thinking.[18] He argued, "An ounce of experience is better than a ton of theory simply because it is only in experience that any theory has vital and verifiable significance."[19] The government should test its theories to see if they produced good results; if the experiment failed, then officials would have definite proof and could try something else. This idea built upon decades of work by previous intellectuals who had similar ideas. This kind of thinking contributed to the willingness of New Deal planners to experiment with new programs and policies during the Depression.

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[15] William James, "What Pragmatism Means," Lecture II, *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking* (1907; New York: Barnes & Noble, 2003), 23.

[16] *James*, "What Pragmatism Means," 41.

[17] Crunden, *A Brief History*, 152-153.

In addition, Dewey explicitly stated the study of history was vital because one cannot separate the past, present, and future; he believed "the past is the history of the present." Dewey saw the rote memorization of historical facts pointless and useless because this type of learning failed to make greater connections. Current problems always had a connection to the past, so studying that past gave greater insight on what action to take. Only by tracing developments between different events could historical knowledge be useful. He wrote, "An experience, however trivial in its first appearance, is capable of assuming an indefinite richness of significance by extending its range of perceived connections."[20] As fitting with his pragmatic philosophy, Dewey supported historical research and study not for its own sake, but for its useful application in the present world.

Pragmatism certainly had its critics from the beginning, but the real backlash against the philosophy came in the 1920s with the disillusionment of progressive reform following World War I. After the war, many intellectuals wrote about their bitterness over the war and alienation from American culture. One group of writers, who would be particularly important in the 1930s, mourned the fact that the United States lacked its own national culture. This was a cry that had been heard since the early days of the republic and echoed in famously in Alexis de Toqueville's *Democracy in America*. This new generation of intellectuals believed that Americans still strained towards Europe to find art and culture instead of turning inward to create their own national masterpieces. In part, they blamed the pragmatists and the Progressive movement for their emphases on science and technology to the exclusion, in their opinion, of the fine arts.[21]

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[18] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (1916; New York: Free Press, 1944), 139.

[19] Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, 144.

[20] Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, 214; 217.

Early critics of American culture often looked back to the nineteenth century as an era when American culture had the most potential. Van Wyck Brooks, for example, acknowledged the greatness of much of the writing of the period, but criticized the idealism of writers such as Emerson, feeling that they were too abstract and removed from society. Brooks believed that one needed to be involved in society in order truly understand one's self and create great art. He wrote, "It is the moral and the nemesis of all unattached idealism: that the more deeply and urgently and organically you feel the pressure of society the more deeply and consciously and fruitfully you feel and you become yourself."[22] On the other hand, Brooks also loathed the ethos of modern business culture that prized accumulation of private wealth over all else. He believed business had absorbed the talents of Americans better suited to other arts.[23] The only American who had come close to capturing the heart of America in Brooks's eyes was Walt Whitman. Whitman possessed this organic character that Brooks sought in American culture. It was a middle ground, "a tradition which effectively combines theory and action, a tradition which is just as fundamentally American as either flag-waving or money-grabbing . . . ."[24] Although Brooks abhorred the individualistic direction of American society when he wrote *America's Coming of Age* in 1915, by the 1930s it was increasingly popular for writers to write on behalf part of a larger community. In fact, the cultural programs of the New Deal embraced the ideas of the artist's involvement in the community and the creation of community art through music, visual arts, theater, and writing. These projects seemed to embody many of the artistic qualities Brooks sought in his critical writings.

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[21] For information on American intellectuals in the 1920s, see also Loren Bartiz, ed., *The Culture of the Twenties* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970); Robert M. Crunden, *From Self to Society, 1919-1941*, Transitions in American Thought Series (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972); and Joan Hoff, ed., *The Twenties: The Critical Issues* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1972).

[22] Brooks, *America's Coming of Age* (New York: B. W. Huebech, 1915), 92.

[23] Brooks, *America's Coming of Age* (New York: B. W. Huebech, 1915), 40, 78, 137.

[24] Brooks, *America's Coming of Age*, 112.

Criticism of modern industrial society grew stronger throughout the 1920s as intellectuals grew even more disgusted with the intellectual and cultural life surrounding them. Many young artists and intellectuals left for Europe during this time, although the older generation often stayed in the United States. There was a deep feeling that most Americans did not appreciate true art and intellectual writing; cultural appreciation had been stomped out by cold, practical science and technology. As Harold E. Stearns deplored in "The Intellectual Life," Americans only like *applied* intellectual activities. He wrote scathingly, "The most hopeful thing of intellectual promise in America to-day is the contempt; it is not yet kindled by any real love of intellectual values – how could it be?"[25] What the United States needed was a renaissance of art and culture that looked inwards towards what Americans had to offer, not across the ocean towards Europe.

One prominent intellectual who was highly critical of American culture in the 1920s was Lewis Mumford. Like Stearns, Mumford saw modern technology as killing American culture. In particular, Mumford blamed pragmatism for weakening the idealism of the post-Civil War generation. He wrote that it created an "attitude of compromise and acquiescence" that eventually became the "spirit of the whole age." In contrast, Mumford looked to the "Golden Days" of the antebellum era during which great authors such as Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, Melville, and Hawthorne graced American literature. Unlike Brooks, Mumford admired Emerson and believed he was the first American with a "fresh doctrine."[26] According to Mumford, the writers of the Golden Day were important because they were the first American authors to use their own experiences in their writings instead of trying to restore the past. He believed, like Van Wyck Brooks, that Walt Whitman was the poet with the greatest sense of America; however, Mumford could not see the United States Whitman wrote about. Criticizing the America of his day, Mumford wrote, "The work [Whitman] conceived still remains to be

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25. Stearns, "The Intellectual Life," *Civilization in the United States: An Inquiry by Thirty Americans*, ed. Harold E. Stearns (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1922), 135-150 in *Culture of the Twenties*, ed., Loren Baritz (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill-Company, 1990), 347.

26. Mumford, *The Golden Day: A Study in American Experience and Culture* (New York: Boni and Liverright, 1926), 92- 94; 184.

done: the America he evoked does not yet exist."[27] By the late nineteenth century, Americans had ceased to look inside themselves for their culture but instead blindly looked towards Europe or the past. As an example, he criticized popular museums that merely reproduced European art or randomly threw objects together without any historical interpretation. Instead, Mumford advocated a more honest look at history. Using the writers of the Golden Day as models, he believed current intellectuals should use their own experiences as Americans to create a unique culture. Without its own culture, he proclaimed, Americans would never be whole because "a complete culture leads to the nurture of the good life; it permits the fullest use, or sublimation of man's natural functions and activities."[28]

Towards the end of the decade one of the most pessimistic and critical works came from Joseph Wood Krutch in *The Modern Temper*. In this book, Krutch endeavored to sum up the mood of his generation by bitterly looking back at the changes the industrial era had brought. Instead of the optimism of the pragmatists and Progressives, Krutch felt despair; he failed to share the Progressives' faith in science to make the world a better place. Science was only another religion, like all others that had come and gone.[29] It was no panacea to cure the world's ills. Like many intellectuals of his generation, Krutch was horrified by the atrocities of World War I, as well as the general changes of industrialization. He knew that technology was responsible for many of the changes on the battlefield. In *The Modern Temper*, he was quick to point out that science "began to destroy more than it knew it was destroying . . . ."[30] As did the previous critics, Krutch believed people could not be complete if they only have their physical needs taken care of; he believed intellectual and spiritual needs were also important. Ultimately, however, he saw no hope for Americans, "Ours is a lost cause and there is no place for us in the natural universe, but we are not, for all that, sorry to be human. We should rather die as men than live as animals."[31] With Krutch's pessimism, at this point in American intellectual life the

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27. Mumford, *The Golden Day*, 130.

28. Mumford, *The Golden Day*, 214; 279.

29. Krutch, *The Modern Temper: A Study and A Confession* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1929), 75-76.

30. Krutch, *The Modern Temper*, 222.

31. Krutch, *The Modern Temper*, 249.

teachings of the earlier pragmatists started to look fairly dim. With onset of the Depression, however, the old writings would come in a new light.

Another set of intellectuals who proved especially influential in shaping New Deal cultural programs were social scientists. In particular, the fields of anthropology and sociology made new strides in the beginning of the twentieth century that would deeply impact the way middle and upper-class Americans viewed history and culture by the 1930s. At Columbia University, Franz Boaz and his student Ruth Benedict stirred the intellectual community with their research in anthropology. In 1934, Benedict published *Patterns of Culture*, which introduced the idea of cultural relativism to the public for the first time. The book was popular and caused many Americans to reevaluate exactly what was "culture."[32] Instead of culture originating or being defined by upper class elites, a new definition emerged that gave validity to the heritage and customs of all communities. During the New Deal, projects to record indigenous American art and music were partly inspired by the ideas brought up in this book. More "primitive" folk art became popular and became considered more authentically American.

In sociology, William F. Ogburn influenced New Deal thought. While at Columbia University, he taught Rexford Tugwell, who became one of Roosevelt's chief New Deal planners.[33] Ogburn developed an important social theory that explained "cultural lag," or the gap between the development of one part of a changing culture and the slower change of another part of that culture. He explained this theory in his book *Social Change* in 1922. He theorized, "The various parts of modern culture are not changing at the same rate, some parts are changing much more rapidly than others; and that since there is a correlation and interdependence of parts, a rapid change in one part of our culture requires readjustments through other changes in the various correlated parts of cultures."[34] Ogburn's theory was used to explain why Americans still lacked what its intellectuals considered "high" culture and gave hope to many that change would eventually come.

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32. Robert M. Crunden, *From Self to Society, 1919-1941*, Transitions in American Thought Series (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1972), 10; and Terry A. Cooney, *Balancing Acts: American Thought and Culture in the 1930s* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995), 106-107.

33. Crunden, *From Self to Society*, 115.

34. William F. Ogburn, *Social Change With Respect to Culture and Original Nature* (B. W. Huebsch, 1922. Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1950. Reprint 1964), 201.

In addition, Ogburn was important because he believed culture influenced personality and success in life as much as biology. Today, debate still rages over the control of "nurture versus nature." In the 1920s, Ogburn argued that Darwinism gave undeserving authority to biology. There was evidence that a child's upbringing also had an influence on their later achievement. He cynically commented, "Especially among the wealthy classes it is customary to attribute their position almost solely to ability and to make the converse interpretation for those not at the top – a very comfortable theory."[35] Ogburn's theories helped knock another blow to the foundation of those who still supported Social Darwinism, which would be important when it came to ideas about Depression relief aid. They also assisted those who fought for cultural programs, such as public libraries, museums, and community art centers. Although his ideas were not aimed at "culture" in a narrow sense of art or literature, advocates of those kinds of community programs could use his theories to promote their own agendas. Supporters argued that having these kinds of cultural institutions would enrich the community and help people to grow and become more educated, well-rounded citizens. These ideas tied into earlier Progressive thoughts about the power of education to transform individuals and improve society, leading to a growing interest in libraries in the late nineteenth century.

By the early 1930s, the economic devastation of the Depression had hit the United States full force and many intellectuals began focusing on more themes relating to community. During the 1920s, intellectuals felt a sense of isolation and alienation from the art and culture of mainstream American, but during the 1930s, intellectuals and others began to seek to integrate the individual artist into the community. Several of the critics of the previous decade embraced a new community spirit during the Depression. Joseph Wood Krutch, for example, wrote in *Experience and Art* that people could find meaning in their lives by creating and sharing art, such as watching a play or listening to a concert.[36] Krutch saw this as a way to replace the lost sense of community once created by strong religious bonds in the United States. Considering his utter pessimism in *The Modern Temper,* the fact Krutch advocated a faith in art was quite extraordinary in 1932. Van Wyck Brooks began a series of books on American literary and cultural history in the 1930s; he began with *The Flowering of New England* for which he won the

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[35] Ogburn, *Social Change*, 26, 36-37.

[36] Joseph Wood Krutch, *Experience and Art* (New York: H. Smith and R. Haas, 1932).

Pulitzer Prize in 1936. Brooks's interest in preserving American culture extended to becoming the editor of the Federal Art Project's *Index of American Design*, working with Constance Rourke, author of *American Humor*.[37] During the prosperity of the twenties, intellectuals had tried to hold themselves aloof from American society at the same time that they recognized the need for American culture to rise from the people. It seemed that only the common tragedies of the Depression propelled them to embrace a role in creating and preserving America's cultural heritage as a community. In *Exile's Return*, Malcolm Cowley revealed the experiences of young intellectuals, including himself, who left the United States following World War I. At the end of the book, he describes how the Depression created a feeling of solidarity between the writers and made them feel a part of a common struggle. Instead of being exiles, "they had acquired friends and enemies and purposes in the midst of society, and thus, wherever they lived in America, they had found a home."[38] In addition, it was a perfect opportunity for intellectuals and artists to step forward and take a leadership position in many places, as well as to make money. For these Americans a shared history and culture was a common thread to bring them together in a time of economic hardship.

It is important to note that while intellectuals renewed their interest in community participation and embraced commonality, this thinking failed to result in a great push to focus solely on national history and culture through New Deal programs. In fact, the focus of community spirit and participation remained largely on the local level. WPA projects, while receiving federal aid, concentrated on documenting local history and preserving local art customs. In addition, the various theater and music projects varied from city to city and from state to state according to the needs and interests of individual places. There were certainly projects that attempted to look at American history through a broader lens; several of the later indexing and surveying projects, for example, aimed at creating lists of important national works of art or writing. On the whole, however, a sense of American culture came from exploring the varieties of American life and allowing these traditions to exist as part of a greater whole.

In addition, the influence of intellectuals on American thought and ideas about culture probably had the greatest influence in academic circles and among middle- and upper-class

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[37] Cooney, *Balancing Acts*, 108.

[38] Malcolm Cowley, *Exile's Return: A Literary Odyssey of the 1920s* (New York: Viking Press, 1965).

Americans who had a rigid ideas about what constituted “American culture.” The development of New Deal programs, and the work relief projects in particular, were largely a result of the planning of the college-educated members of Roosevelt’s inner circle. These individuals were a product of their own exposure to Progressive ideas and new theories in sociology and anthropology about education and culture. It is important, however, not to dismiss the influence of the working classes, especially immigrant populations, on the development of New Deal programs. Ethnic groups within the United States often maintained their own cultural traditions and institutions at the same time they absorbed middle-class values and culture.[39] They did not passively absorb “American” culture, nor did they cling to their separate identities. An exchange of cultural ideas between various groups helped defined what popular culture considered “American.” During the New Deal, the ability of many local groups to plans and execute cultural and historical projects allowed communities to explore their own definition of culture. The publicity that various projects received revealed the diversity of American life to a larger public.

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[39] See Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 5-6, 145-147.

CHAPTER IV

FLORIDA LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT AND THE NEW DEAL

Some of the most serious obstacles in creating a state library and expanding public library services in Florida lay in the structure of Florida's state government. From the beginning of statehood, Floridians were suspicious of strong executive power and tended to favor a conservative government. For example, the first territorial constitution of 1838 restricted the governor to one four-year term, with no possibility of reelection. Every county had one-year representatives who could be re-elected, and senators who served two-year terms. There was a new constitution in 1868, enacted after the Military Reconstruction Acts of 1867, that strengthened the power of the governor, but a new constitution in 1885 removed these powers. The constitution of 1885 introduced the cabinet system to the Florida government, prevented the governor from being re-elected, and abolished the position of lieutenant governor. At the same time, Democrats re-established racial control in Florida through Jim Crow laws and instituted a poll tax. The poll tax was partially a measure to smother any alliance between poor black and white farmers that might initially have been possible through populism. The imposition of the two dollar poll tax in 1889 had a huge impact on preventing not only poor blacks but also poor whites from voting. Between 1888 and 1892, the percent of all white voters fell from 86 percent to 59 percent.[1] By the turn of the century, Florida was a one-party state, with the Democrats in the control of the mostly conservative North Florida elite.

Florida had major fiscal problems after Reconstruction that dogged many of the state's plans through the Depression and partially explains its leaders' conservatism. Fiscal conservatism became the overriding goal for many state politicians and leaders, who saw cutting spending as the only way to save Florida from financial ruin. Programs deemed unessential were sacrificed for the greater good. Unfortunately for advocates of education and historical preservation, the state's leadership saw these as unessential. During this period the legislature dramatically cut support for public schools in an attempt to meet fiscal goals; at one point Governor George F. Drew advocated eliminating public high schools. Even compared to the rest of South, Florida was an isolated and rural state, dominated by an agricultural economy and a

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1. David R. Colburn and Lance DeHaven-Smith, *Government in the Sunshine State: Florida Since Statehood* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999), 7-12.

poor education system.[2] Given the little support for even basic public education at the time, it is no wonder that special projects such as the State Library were not exactly high priority for the legislature.[3]

Improving Florida's economy always remained the elusive goal for Florida's leaders. At the end of the nineteenth century, certain Floridians searched for ways to expand the state's traditional agricultural economy and seized upon the "New South" movement that sought to industrialize and modernize the region. Florida leaders embraced industrialists and railroad magnates such as Henry Flagler as investors in the state. These modernization plans clashed with the goals of many Progressives in Florida.[4]

In the Florida state government, conflicts of power emerged between the executive and legislative branches. Usually the more conservative Florida legislature tried to block the plans of the Florida governor. This is precisely what happened during the administrations of Governor William Jennings (1901-1905) and Napoleon Bonaparte Broward (1905-1909). Both governors espoused the Progressive philosophy of the early twentieth century, urging the state to limit the influence of the railroad barons in state development, to promote public education, and to encourage a state-planned drainage program in the Everglades. They were concerned with the needs of Floridians living in rural poverty and not just demands of the elite. These Progressive governors succeeded in having the state legislature pass protective laws, including a child labor law, a pure food law, and an auto speeding law.[5] Nevertheless, they faced opposition from representatives and state senators regarding the need for taxes versus the need for cheap land and development. As in other states, Progressivism had a limited an impact on Florida on a state level because it conflicted with its need for conservative need for economic development based on pleasing business interests and encouraging industrialization.

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2. Samuel Proctor, "Prelude to the New Florida, 1877-1919," *The New History of Florida*, ed. Michael Gannon (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996), 267-268.

3. For more on Progressivism in Florida, see James Thomas Brooks, "A Rhetorical Study of the Campaign Speaking of Selected Southern Governors During the Progressive Era," Ph.D. diss., University of Florida, 1974; Ric A. Kabat, "Albert W. Gilchrist: Florida's Progressive Governor," Master's Thesis, Florida State University, 1987; Kim Jules Frosell, "Booster Altruism: Motivations and Restraints on Progressive Reforms in Tampa, FL 1900-1921," Master's thesis, University of Southern Florida, 1994; and Ronald K. Goodenow and Arthur O. White, *Education and the Rise of the New South* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1981).

4. Also see Paul M. Gaston, *New South Creed: A Study in Southern Mythmaking* (New York: Knopf, 1970).

5. Charlton W. Tebeau, *A History of Florida* (Coral Gables: FL: University of Miami Press, 1973), 332.

Florida’s population and economy expanded when a land boom hit in the 1920s. Following World War I, real estate values in the state began to rise, beginning in Miami. People flocked to the state to take advantage of rising prices and to make a fortune. For example, in 1896, Henry Flagler had built a railroad from West Palm Beach to Miami. Dade County had only 383 people in 1885; but had 12,000 people by 1905. Between 1919 and 1925, thirteen new counties, nine of them in south Florida, were created in the state, and fifty-three new cities sprouted up.[6] From 1920 to 1930, Florida’s population increased by half a million, from 968,470 to 1,468,211.[7]

The boom became an unexpected bust in 1925. Land prices started to tumble in mid-1925 due to newspaper warnings of land fraud, and by 1926, Florida’s economy was in ruins. The depression that eventually affected the whole country by 1929 came to Florida four years earlier. Measures taken during the heady days of the land boom only exacerbated problems. The Florida constitution prohibited the state from acquiring debt to pay off its obligations, so it could not borrow money to help with its financial problems. In addition, citizens had voted in 1924 to abolish income and estate taxes, which would have been an additional source of state revenue. The only sources of income now were ad valorem taxes and gasoline taxes.[8] Then, three events in the last years of the 1920s dispelled the notion that Florida would quickly recover from its problems. First, a hurricane in 1926 struck Miami Beach and killed 392 people. No hurricanes had hit Florida since 1910 and many people living in the southern part of the state did not know how to prepare for such an event. An even greater tragedy came in 1928 when another hurricane hit Palm Beach and moved into Lake Okeechobee, flooding the surrounding community. Over 2,000 people were killed, mostly African-Americans, who were seasonal workers in the area.[9] The final blow to the economy came in 1929 when a fruit fly epidemic struck Florida’s citrus

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6. Tracy E. Danese, *Claude Pepper and Ed Ball: Politics, Purpose, and Power* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000), 14-15; 23.

7. Colburn, *Government in the Sunshine State*, 28.

8. Danese, *Claude Pepper and Ed Ball*, 24. Ad valorem taxes are taxes based on the assessed value of real estate or personal property.

9. Charlton, *History of Florida*, 388.

crop, killing 72 percent of the trees.[10] When the stock market crashed in the fall of 1929, Florida was already in economic shambles.[11]

Finding a solution to Florida's financial problems was not easy for state leaders. Real estate values quickly dropped and banks across the state started to fail. More than forty banks closed in 1926 alone.[12] Governor Doyle Carlton wanted the legislature to raise taxes to reduce the state deficit of $2.5 million and help counties pay off bonds. He also wanted to use the gasoline tax to help pay for roads and schools. Carlton was opposed by powerful northern representatives whose counties had few debts and resented having to pay for the excesses of their southern counterparts. Many southern counties had taken out large loans during the boom years in an effort to build public work projects to entice builders; they were now drowning in debt.[13] Conflict among state leaders arose in 1931 when the legislature voted to raise money by legalizing pari-mutuel wagering at horse and dog tracks with a tax on the proceeds, but Carlton vetoed it because he had moral concerns. The racing bill passed over the governor's veto and became a new source of income for the state. At first, Florida's traditional fiscal conservatism made government officials reluctant to accept that its citizens might need help from the federal government. The Florida Committee on Unemployment Relief asked the government to tell Hoover that Florida would care for its own. The local governments, however overtaxed, were forced to carry the burden of the unemployed.[14]

By 1932, Florida, like most of the country, blamed Herbert Hoover for the Great Depression and clamored for new leadership. The state welcomed two new leaders in 1934, United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Florida Governor David Sholtz. Sholtz, a Brooklyn-born, Yale-educated lawyer from Daytona Beach represented a shift from the usual northern elite that governed Florida's interests. Although Sholtz, who had been active in the

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[10] Colburn, *Government in the Sunshine State*, 29.

[11] For additional information on Florida in the 1920s, see John F. Eades, "City Planning in West Palm Beach, Florida, During the 1920s," Master's thesis, Florida Atlantic University, 1991; Nancy A. Hewitt, *Southern Discomfort: Women's Activism in Tampa, Florida, 1880s-1920s* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001); Philip Warren Miller, "Greater Jacksonville's Response to Florida Land Boom of the 1920s," Master's thesis, University of Florida, 1989; and, Gregg Turner, *Florida Railroads in the 1920s*, Charleston: Arcadia, 2005.

[12] Tebeau, *History of Florida*, 394.

[13] Colburn, *History of Florida*, 29.

[14] Tebeau, *History of Florida*, 398.

Florida Chamber of Commerce, called for balanced budgets and good business practices to prevail while dealing with the Depression, he was also open to more creative solutions and was concerned for the public welfare. He proposed taxes, such as five dollars for automobile tags to raise state revenue and encouraged aid to public schools. In addition, he understood that Florida alone would not be able to handle the strain of the unemployed; under Sholtz's administration Florida became a huge recipient of federal relief aid under Roosevelt's New Deal. Federal expenditures in Florida increased from $12,772,000 in 1930 to $62,718,00 in 1934, and averaged $54 million over the next three years.[15]

When the relief programs emerged in Florida, various groups across the state, including cultural and historical institutions, sought ways to take advantage of the opportunity to obtain funds. The first New Deal agency in Florida was the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1933. The CCC worked on a reforestation project in Olustee National Forest, and it was just the beginning of relief work in the state.[16] While many unemployed were grateful to work, federal regulations created conflicts with employers who resented interference with local wage rates and working conditions. When citrus growers and turpentine growers complained that relief workers were being paid too much, federal officials agreed to refuse relief certification to people that rejected private employment.[17] As the Depression dragged on, tension always remained between the demands of local business owners and the needs of those seeking federal relief.

The state library was one of the institutions in Florida seeking relief funds, and had only existed for a few years when the Depression hit. Despite pleas from various officials, Florida lacked a functioning state library until the 1920s. The foundation had been laid in 1845, when the Florida General Assembly passed a law creating a legislative library with the Secretary of State as custodian. Then, in 1855, the Secretary of State became the ex-officio State Librarian and was in charge of cataloguing books. Unfortunately, due to his numerous other official functions as Secretary of State, nothing really came of this provision. Over the next several decades, various politicians lamented the absence of a state library, but no action was taken. Supporters of the creation of a state library included Secretary of State H. Clay Crawford, Governor N. B. Broward, and Governor Park Trammell. In addition, Florida historical societies and library associations also pushed for the creation of a library.[18] Finally, the Florida legislature passed the Library Act of 1925 and appropriated money for a State Library Board and a State Library to be located in the basement of the state Capitol once a new state office building was completed.

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[15] Charlton W. Tebeau, *A History of Florida*, 401-406; Colburn, *Government in the Sunshine State*, 29-30. For information on David Sholtz, see Merlin Cox, "David Sholtz: New Deal Governor of Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 43, no. 2 (Fall 1964).

[16] On Civilian Conservation Corps, see David J. Nelson, "Relief and Recreation: The Civilian Conservation Corps and the Florida Park Service, 1935-1942," Master's thesis, Florida State University, 2002; A. L. Reisch Owens, *Conservation Under FDR* (New York: Praeger, 1983); Jerrell H. Shofner, "Roosevelt's 'Tree Army': The Civilian Conservation Corps in Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 65, no. 4 (Spring 1987).

[17] Tebeau, *History of Florida*, 402-403.

The movement for a state library began before public libraries were established in Florida, but it was the public library system that managed to first flourish in the state. Before the twentieth century the state had no public libraries, but there were private libraries, often called "subscription libraries," organized by women's clubs, library associations, and other civic organizations. These libraries allowed paying members to borrow books, although membership was usually restricted to meet certain qualifications.[19] The limitations and elitism of these private libraries contributed to the push for public libraries by those influenced by Progressive thought regarding the importance of education and culture. At this time, the Florida legislature theoretically supported the creation and maintenance of a state library. The 1845 Constitution, for example, allowed for a state library insofar as it provided a place to store books and maps in the state's possession.[20] Little money, if any, was actually appropriated to take care of the records and books of the state, however, and the so-called state library was more of a fiction than a reality. Only through the dedicated efforts of historians, librarians, professors, congressman, and other interested individuals in Florida did the state library become a reality in the 1920s.

Efforts to organize and create a state library and archives in Florida had their roots in the nineteenth century. In the antebellum period, the catalysts for organization were residents of St. Augustine, a town already noted for its important history. In 1855, a group of men living in St. Augustine met above George Burt's store to discuss the importance of statewide historic preservation. The local townspeople included Major Benjamin A. Putnam, who became the first president of the Florida Historical Society; George R. Fairbanks; K. B. Gibbs; William A.

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[18] Florida State Library Board, *Report of the State Library Board of the State of Florida: February 1, 1935 to January 31, 1937* (Tallahassee, 1937), 5-7.

[19] Florida State Library Board, *Report of the State Library Board, February 1, 1935,* 7-8.

[20] Pamela Russell Mason, "A History of Public Library Development in Florida" (Master's thesis, University of Chicago, 1968), 6.

Forward; George Burt; Rev. E. Aubril; and several others. These interested citizens met several times and finally decided to hold an official organization meeting in early 1856. The society drafted a constitution and by-laws and elected officers to run the historical society. Unfortunately, the original notes of this first meeting were destroyed in a fire in 1919, but we do know that one of the primary activities of the Society was to give historical lectures. By April 1857, the Society boasted 134 members. In 1858 it petitioned the Florida House of Representations for $500 to publish a book on early Florida history, but members received no further response regarding their petition from the legislature. When the Civil War disrupted the nation, it also disrupted the activities of the Historical Society of Florida. It is unclear exactly what happened to the early collections and records of the early Society as they have since disappeared.[21] It was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that the Florida Historical Society was reborn.

It is clear that from the start this first incarnation of the Florida Historical Society had ambitious plans. These men were not merely satisfied to preserve the local history of St. Augustine but sought to reach out to show others the importance of all of Florida's past. In addition, they quickly looked to the state government for aid in achieving their goals. As would be a common pattern in Florida history in the early twentieth century, however, the state government was unresponsive to the need for historic preservation or recordkeeping. Perhaps it is not really surprising that there was such a lack of interest because the interests of the Society appealed to a minority of the population. The Society organizers in St. Augustine were all highly educated, financially secure men. The occupations of the founders included one mayor, one former mayor, one attorney, a former planter, a general merchant and bookseller, and a priest. Florida was at this time, and for a long time to come a very rural state. Funding projects that would only benefit people if they came into the city would not appeal to the Florida legislature. The Florida Historical Society would face many of the same battles over and over again as it struggled to support library and historic preservation legislation in Florida.

Despite several attempts to revive it, the Historical Society of Florida lay dormant until 1902. In November of this year, George West Wilson, the editor-in-chief of the *Florida Times-Union* and *Citizen* sent out an announcement which resulted in interested parties meeting in his office. This meeting ended up with the organization of the revitalized and newly named Florida Historical Society.[22] Major George Rainsford Fairbanks was elected as the first president; he had been Vice President of the Historical Society of Florida in St. Augustine in 1856.[23] The Florida Historical Society was chartered as an organization on May 15, 1905, and its members set forth its purpose in the charter:

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[21] Walt Marchman, "The Florida Historical Society 1856-61, 1879, 1902-1940," *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* Vol. 19, no. 1 (July 1940), 6-9; 12-14.

> The collection, arrangement and preservation of all material pertaining to the history of, or in any manner illustrative of Florida, including books, pamphlets, documents, archives, manuscripts, newspapers, diaries, notes, letters, speeches, maps, plats, surveys, portraits, photographs, or other likenesses or men and women prominent in Florida history, pictorial illustrations or Florida scenery, relics and products. Also relics of every kind, whether of prehistorical fossils, geological specimens and everything in any manner illustrative of Florida. To prepare, edit and publish articles, sketches, biographies, pamphlets, books, and documents, and descriptive or illustrative of Florida."[24]

As with its previous incarnation, the 1902 historical society also had large scale plans for the preservation of Florida's history. Its officers were eager to collect any and all memorabilia relating to Florida's past and were interested in archaeology as well as written, recorded history. By 1905, the Society had managed to find a location for its artifacts, books, and other collections when the Trustees of the Jacksonville Public Library graciously allowed the Society the use of a fireproof room in the city's library.[25] Delighted with their new home, officers urged members to add to the Society's collections. President Francis P. Fleming encouraged members and their friends at the annual meeting of the Florida Historical Society in 1907, "Remember that nothing pertaining to Florida is too insignificant to be gratefully received."[26] In 1908, the Society began publishing the *Florida Historical Society Quarterly*, both as a way to keep its members informed of its activities and as a forum for historical research.[27]

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[22] F. P. Fleming, "George West Wilson," *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* Vol. 1, No. 2 (July 1908), 40-41.

[23] F. P. Fleming, "Major George Rainsford Fairbanks," *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* Vol. 1, No. 1 (April 1908), 5.

[24] Charles S. Adams and F. P. Fleming, "Prospectus" *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* Vol. 1, No. 1 (April 1908), 3.

[25] Adams and Flemming, "Prospectus," 3.

Another link to the 1856 Historical Society of Florida was an early effort to reach out to the state legislature for aid. Throughout the early decades of the Florida Historical Society, financials problems constantly plagued the officers in charge of the organization. In 1907, Fleming reported that the organization had paid off the previous year's debt and that the reading room could be kept open three days week now. He quickly warned, however, that it was always important to increase membership.[28] Only two years later the Society was forced to close its room in the library to the public due to lack of funds.[29] It was only through the volunteer efforts of friends of the late governor and Florida Historical Society president Francis P. Fleming that six "prominent" young women in Jacksonville decided to help out the Society by watching the room.[30] In the meantime, the Society had prepared a bill asking for some state aid; the bill passed the Senate but lost in the House.[31] The Society persisted in seeking government aid for historical preservation efforts despite this early failure.

From its founding, the Florida Historical Society remained concerned about the condition about the state's public records and historical material. At the 1908 annual meeting, the Society resolved that the chairman should appoint a three member committee to "consider and act in the matter of preserving the public archives and State documents and to solicit legislative aid therefor [*sic*]."[32] In the April 1909 edition of the *Florida Historical Society Quarterly*, the Society wrote a scathing article on "Florida's 'State Library,'" which derided the legislature's weak efforts to comply with existing library legislation. The article called the existing situation, in which books and documents were thrown haphazardly in the damp basement of the Capitol, "a shame and a disgrace to the intelligence and public spirit of a civilized and long-suffering people."[33] Although this early effort to shame the Florida Legislature into providing a proper state library failed, other efforts continued.

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[26] "Report of President F.P. Fleming to the Annual Meeting of the Florida Historical Society, Held November 19th, 1907," *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* Vol. 1, No. 1 (April 1908), 9.

[27] Adams and Fleming, "Prospectus," 3.

[28] "Report of President F.P. Fleming to the Annual Meeting of 1907," 7.

[29] "Postponed Annual Meeting," *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* Vol. 1, No. 4 (January 1909), 25.

[30] "Editorial Notes," *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* Vol. 2, No. 1 (April 1909), 52.

[31] "Report of President F.P. Fleming to the Annual Meeting 1907," 7-8.

[32] "Postponed Annual Meeting," 28.

When a state Library Board was finally appointed in 1927, the Florida Historical Society supported its efforts. At its 1929 annual meeting, Harold W. Colee spoke of "The Cooperation of State Governments with Historical Societies," emphasizing that old buildings are the foundations of civilization and that the state should recognize their value and assume financial responsibility for them. "History, like charity, should begin at home," he remarked.[34] Colee pointed out that with the land boom in Florida in the 1920s, many new people in Florida needed to be made aware of Florida's history. State aid was needed to awaken historical and preservation sentiment among local communities. Colee admonished his fellow Society members, "We are so intent on building for the future that we do overlook those things which are behind us."[35] In addition, the Florida Historical Society supported the State Library's effort to build a separate building to house its collections. In 1939, the Society approved a resolution at its annual meeting supporting the appropriations bill for the State Library Building and approved publicizing the resolution in local newspapers. Members also voted to write to their Congressmen for a PWA grant to fund the building.[36] A year earlier, an article in the *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* expressed the importance of placing private collections in a fire-proof public repository, and also expressed concern at the number of private Florida collections that had been taken out of state.[37] The Society saw state aid as the only solution to the long-term problem of preserving Florida's heritage.

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[33] "Florida's 'State Library'," *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* Vol. 2, No. 1 (April 1909), 44-46.

[34] Francis M. Williams, "The Annual Meeting of the Florida Historical Society," Minutes, *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* Vol. 7, no. 4 (April 1929), 361.

[35] Colee, "Cooperation of State Governments with Historical Societies, "*Florida Historical Society Quarterly* Vol, 8, no. 1 (July 1929), 65.

[36] "The Florida Historical Society," *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* Vol. 17, no. 4 (April 1939), 328.

[37] "The Historical Records Survey and State Archives Survey of Florida," *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* Vol. 17, no.1 (July 1938), 63-64.

During the 1930s, the Florida Historical Society was mostly consumed with securing its own permanent building. The Society began making plans for a building in early 1928. During the annual meeting of that year, President Arthur T. Williams announced that it was an opportune time to begin such a venture. People had informed him that they would be more willing to donate if their collections would be housed in a secure permanent location. This feeling prompted the urge to build. Williams believed that if the Society could raise enough money for a building, one of Florida's cities would be generous enough to donate the land.[38] It was soon clear that the financial situation in Florida and the rest of the nation was not able to sustain extra expenses. By January 1929, the Society threatened to cut down the size of the *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* unless more people become contributing members ($10) instead of regular members ($2).[39] This was not the most auspicious time to be asking people for money to build a new historical society building. Indeed, at the 1930 annual meeting, the Building Committee reported that it was an unfavorable year for securing funds.[40] The Society soon found itself in even more dire condition when its president died in 1932. Arthur T. Williams had allowed the Society to use a room in his offices for its headquarters and its collections for many years without cost. Upon his death, however, the corporation owning his building forced the Society to move out immediately. Fortunately, librarian Joseph F. Marron of the Jacksonville Public Library offered the Society some space at its Willow Branch library, to which it agreed.[41] For the rest of the decade, the Society tried to stay afloat financially, continuing to publish its journal and promoting historical preservation across the state. In 1940, the Society finally decided to move its library to St. Augustine, the city that originally started the society.[42]

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38. "Report of Arthur T. Williams, President, to the Twenty-Fifth Annual Meeting of the Florida Historical Society, Southern College, Lakeland, Florida, February 7, 1928, " *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* Vol. 6, no. 4 (April 1928).

39. "Notes and Comments," *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* Vol. 7, no. 3 (January 1929), 258.

40. "Annual Report of Arthur T. Williams President,' *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* Vol. 8, no. 4 (April 1930), 214.

41. "Annual Report of P. K. Yonge, 1st Vice President and Acting President," *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* Vol. 11, no. 3 (January 1933), 145-146).

42. "The Annual Meeting," *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* Vol. 19, no. 1 (July 1940), 68.

The Florida Library Association (FLA) was the other major proponent of public libraries in Florida and one of the key supporters of the State Library. The FLA was first organized in 1901 with a few teachers and librarians. At this point, however, the FLA was not a strong organization and only held business meetings at the same time as the annual State Teachers Association. The first annual meeting of the Florida Library Association was in Miami on December 27 to 29, 1905. Carolyn Palmer, who worked at Stetson University, was reportedly the only full-time librarian in Florida at that time. She was elected as the first president of the FLA. Due to the weakness of the FLA, it eventually became inactive at an unknown date.[43]

The current Florida Library Association originated from a meeting held in Orlando on April 26 and 27, 1920. Helen Virginia Stelle of the Tampa Public Library sent out the call for the meeting, which was sponsored by the Sorosis women's club of Orlando. At this organizational meeting Stelle was elected temporary chairman and officers were elected. Joseph F. Marron of the Jacksonville Public Library was elected President; Louise Richardson of the Florida State College for Women was elected First Vice President; S. S. Green of Bartow Public Library was elected Second Vice President; May Lewis of Tampa Public Library was elected Corresponding Secretary; and, Cora Miltimore of University of Florida Library was elected Recording Secretary. The revitalized FLA had twenty-one charter members and five institutional members.[44]

Between the establishment of the 1901 and the 1920 Florida Library Association, a transformation had taken place within the world of library development in the state of Florida. This change was the gradual emergence of public libraries throughout the state. Florida's first public library was in Jacksonville in 1905 with the aid of a Carnegie grant.[45] In 1917, Ocala and Tampa also established Carnegie libraries, increasing the number of Florida communities with

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[43] George B. Utley to Florida Library Association in *Florida Library Bulletin* Vol. 1, no. 2 (May 1927), 1-2; and, Cora Miltimore, "Later Days of the Florida Library Association," *Florida Library Bulletin* Vol. 1, no 2 (May 1927), 3.

[44] Miltimore, "Later Days," 3.

[45] Mason, "History of Public Library Development," 7. Previously, Pensacola had twice voted down Carnegie money to build a public library. A grant of $15,000 had already been approved in 1900, but the electorate never voted to accept it, George S. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries: Their Histories and Impact on American Public Library Development* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1969).

Carnegie libraries to ten.[46] Other communities in Florida began to establish public libraries without Carnegie money, but the library movement did not gain as much support as many hoped. In 1923, the state had 27 communities of a population of 1000 or more with non-Carnegie public libraries.[47]

As a way to encourage the development of additional public libraries, both the Florida Historical Society and Florida Library Association pushed for library legislation in Florida and lobbied the state legislature for both a state library and aid for public libraries. The *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* expressed concern about the state of public records in Florida as early as 1909. In the January edition, minutes of the annual society meeting revealed that the chairman appointed a committee to consider and act upon "the matter of preserving the public archives and State documents and to solicit legislative aid therefore."[48] In the next journal, a critical article about the condition of the so-called "state library" berated the state legislature for its miserliness in preserving state records. An Act of December 17, 1861 allowed the Secretary of State to appoint an assistant to help with the State Library, but it forbade him to pay the assistant from the State treasury – he must pay the assistant from his own salary. As a result of this lack of attention, the article revealed, many of the state records and books were damaged due to mold and the destruction of insects and rodents.[49] The Society also made an unsuccessful petition to the state legislature in 1909 for permission to examine the archives and papers of the State of Florida at the Capitol, to make copies and take custody of papers not connected to official files, and to have $1,200 appropriated annually to support the Society. Members argued that in absence of an active state library or archive, the Florida Historical Society was serving the function of a cultural repository in Florida and should received state support. The bill passed the state Senate, but was left on the calendar of the House session.[50] The Society continued to support efforts to create a state library in the 1910s and 1920s, but was mainly preoccupied with procuring its own permanent building.

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46. Mason, "History of Public Library Development, 7; and, Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries*, 194.

47. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries*, 194.

48. "Postponed Annual Meeting," *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* 1, no. 4 (January 1909), 28.

49. "Florida's 'State Library'," *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* 2, no. 1 (April 1909), 44-45.

50. "An Appeal for Legislative Aid," *Florida Historical Society Quarterly* 2, no. 1 (April 1909), 49-50.

The Florida Library Association, on the other hand, strongly pushed for library legislation to create the State Library Board. In 1908, during two meetings of the first incarnation of the Florida Library Association speakers gave talks on the importance of creating a state library commission. The first was delivered by George B. Utley in St. Petersburg, Florida on January 2, 1908 and the second by W. D. Carn in Gainesville, Florida during a December 30 to 31 conference.[51] When the FLA revitalized in 1920, creation of a state library was still a top priority. One of the most important discussions during the second meeting of the FLA in 1921, for example, was the bill before the state legislature regarding the creation of the State Library Commission. Joseph F. Marron, librarian of Jacksonville Public Library and President of the FLA, had spent time in Tallahassee lobbying in support of the bill, but it had failed to pass. In 1923, the FLA voted to send Marron to Tallahassee again to lobby for the Library Commission Bill, H.R. 289, which had been received by the House and reported by the Judiciary Committee. The bill failed to pass at this session; the vote tied thirty-thirty.[52] The library commission bill remained a topic of discussion at the next two annual meetings. At the 1925 meeting, Minerva Leatherwood Blanton, who had been the Secretary for the North Carolina Library Commission, was present. Blanton had helped North Carolina pass library legislation and advised FLA members on how to deal with the legislators. The hopes of the FLA and the Florida Historical Society were finally realized in 1925 when the Florida legislature passed the Library Act of 1925. The State Library Board, appointed by law in 1927, was responsible for choosing a secretary, who would also serve as the State Librarian.

On March 26, 1927, the State Library Board organized, electing Olin W. Kennedy as chairman and William T. Cash as secretary.[53] Although Cash had previous experience working in Florida politics, he had little training as a librarian. Born in Jefferson County in 1878, Cash left home at age thirteen and mostly educated himself through avid reading. Cash once noted that he averaged about three months per year schooling from six years old on, and he only received nine and a half months schooling between the ages of thirteen and nineteen.[54] Nevertheless, Cash passed the state teachers' examination in September 1897 and taught for twenty-five years, also holding the positions of school principal and school librarian. He eventually became the superintendent of Taylor County public schools.[55] During these years, Cash also participated at various times in the Florida legislature; he served in the House in the 1909, 1915, and 1917 sessions and served in the Senate in 1919. When Cash was chosen as State Librarian in 1927, he was editor of the *Perry Herald*.[56] In order to prepare himself for the job of State Librarian, Cash read various library publications, including the *Florida Library Bulletin*, and contacted other state libraries to see what they were doing.[57] At the time, the Florida Library Association expressed disappointment that a professional librarian was not appointed to the post of State Librarian. The FLA kept an optimistic tone about the new board, but seemed to suspect that the delay in organizing the State Library Board and appointing members only reflected the legislature's lack of true interest in the state's cultural activities.[58] Despite his lack of qualifications as a librarian, Cash had ambitious plans for the State Library and eventually received great respect from other librarians in Florida.[59]

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[51] George B. Utley to Florida Library Association, *Florida Library Bulletin* 1, no. 2 (May 1927), 2.

[52] Cora Miltimore, "Later Days of the Florida Library Association," *Florida Library Bulletin* 1, no. 2 (May 1927), 4-5.

[53] Florida State Library Board, *Report of the State Library Board of the State of Florida: From the Time of its Organization, March 26, 1927 to February 1, 1929* (Tallahassee, 1929), 3.

Although the Florida Historical Society and FLA had been at the forefront of state library activity for many years, the purpose of the State Library Board was to assume a leading role in Florida library development. Cash took decisive steps towards this end and set out specific goals for the State Library in 1927, although he acknowledged that many of these plans would not be feasible for many years. His goals included preserving the governmental materials under the former custody of the Secretary of State; collecting Floridiana, including books, newspapers, letters, photographs, and maps; creating a legislative bureau to serve the state legislature; securing a list of books from other libraries in Florida to assist researchers; gathering official records in Florida, and assisting the creation of circulating libraries throughout the state.[60] These plans were ambitious, indeed, considering that when the State Library opened in 1928 it contained only 2,000 books, which were mostly federal and state documents.[61] The Library also received approximately 1500 books from the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs and the W. J. Bryan Library, but these books were earmarked for the library extension programs and circulated throughout the state.[62] For Cash, the most important goals were collecting materials relating to Florida and creating the library extension program. In the late 1920s, he lamented the lack of rural libraries, explaining that "the State Library Board expects to stimulate library pride, to encourage the formation of libraries, to give out whatever library information it can, . . . to encourage education through wider reading and to be a general means of the wider circulation of books."[63] When the Great Depression hit in 1929, many of Cash's goals soon became possible through the use of federal relief money.

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[54] "Will Cash Creates Florida Library to Educate Public," *Pensacola News* (October 13, 1946), N2004-5,"Newspaper Clippings," Box 1, William T. Cash Papers, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida (hereafter cited as Cash Papers); and Cash to A.C. Davis, July 14, 1936, "W. T. Cash Correspondence – D," Box 2, Cash Papers.

[55] Cash to A.C. Davis, July 14, 1936, Cash Papers; "The Florida State Library Board," [c. 1927], "State Library Board, n.d.," Box 7, Cash Administrative Files.

[56] Untitled MS, n.d., "Miscellaneous," Box 1, Cash Papers.

[57] Florida State Library Board, *Report 1927 to 1929*, 7.

[58] "The Florida State Board," *Florida Library Bulletin* Vol 1, No. 2 (May 1927), 12-13.

[59] Olive Brumbaugh to Harold W. Colee, March 12, 1937, "W.T. Cash Correspondence – B," Box 2, Cash Papers.

It is important to remember that Florida entered a depression earlier than most of the nation, soon after its real estate bust in 1925. It was hardly an auspicious time to begin spending money on a new state library and expanding public libraries, especially in such a fiscally conservative state. Unfortunately after all those years of lobbying for library legislation it was, in fact, in the spring of 1925 that money was finally appropriated for the State Library Board and State Library. Perhaps the flush of prosperity made the state legislators more generous during the height of the boom; nevertheless, economic chaos reigned in the state within the year. Despite the dismal state finances, Cash persisted in pursuing funds for the library. During the 1927 legislative session, he wrote letters to each member of the House and Senator describing the work of the State Library Board in order to persuade them to support the Board's budget recommendations. During the first few years of the depression in Florida, the State Library continued to function and collect additional volumes of books. Before June 1928, Cash had spent almost all of his appropriation of $1,750 on books and publications, twenty percent of which was rare Florida material.[64] In the Library Board's biennial reports, Cash repeatedly addressed the need for more money to buy books and to have better facilities.[65] In 1929, Cash wanted to make photostatic copies of county records but lacked the funds to do so. He knew that the State Library needed a large appropriation of money to be able to keep libraries open and copy "old and valuable records."[66] Once the Depression hit the nation and Florida's financial difficulties continued, he and other concerned parties in Florida began searching for alternative means of aid.

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[60] Florida State Library Board, *Report 1927 to 1929*, 7-8.

[61] William T. Cash, "Seven Years of Progress," 1942, "Florida Library Association, 1939-1950," Box 4, Cash Administrative Files.

[62] Florida State Library Board, *Report 1927 to 1929*, 8.

[63] "What the State Library Means to Florida," [c. 1928], "State Library Board, n.d.," Box 7, Cash Administrative Files.

The Florida Historical Society and Florida Library Association proved to be close allies to Cash and the State Library Board in their early search for ways to fund library projects. In 1934, Cora Miltimore of the FLA sent a proposal to Marcus Fagg, the state Civil Works Administrator, asking for a federal CWA project employing fifty-eight workers for a state survey of local archives. Miltimore mentioned other states that had already completed surveying projects, such as California and Illinois, urging Fagg to approve the project. Florida had a rich heritage, but she feared the state was in danger of losing its early documents. "This survey," she wrote, "will preserve for the state that material which still remains and will prevent further carrying to northern libraries our own governmental records."[67] There is no record that this project was ever approved. In 1935, the Florida Historical Society endorsed the survey of state archives recommended by the National Park Service and directed its secretary to inform state relief officials that it approved the survey as a relief project.[68]

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64. W. T. Cash, "Florida State Library Board," *Florida Library Bulletin* 2, No. 1 (January 1929), 4.

65. Florida State Library Board, *Report of the State Library Board of the State of Florida: February 1, 1929 to January 31, 1931*, 8*;* and Florida State Library Board, *Report of the State Library Board of the State of Florida: February 1, 1933 to January 31, 1935*, 4-5.

66. William T. Cash to Alfred J. Hanna, January 3, 1929, "Hanna, Alfred Jackson, 1929-1949," Box 5, Cash Administrative Files.

67. Miltimore to Fagg, February 24, 1934, "Joint Committee on Materials for Research of the American Council of Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council, 1934," Box 5, Cash Administrative Files.

68. "Annual Meeting of the Florida Historical Society," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 13, no. 3 (January 1935), 175.

The 1935 Library Board report gave the first indication that federal relief money assisted the library. During the previous year, several Federal Emergency Relief Agency (FERA) workers temporarily worked on a library project of indexing legislative journals. The report noted, “We could, if we had the means, locate much valuable historic and archival material and if we could get the state FERA to give us workers for this, capable of deciding what we ought to know about it, it would be of immense benefit to us.”[69] From this point on, Cash and the Library Board started campaigning vigorously for federal money to fund library projects. The Library Board eventually sponsored three major projects: the State Archives Survey, the Statewide Library Project, and the Rare Books Project.

The State Archives Survey (SAS) was the first WPA project that the Library Board sponsored. Cash’s particular interest in building up the Library’s Floridiana collection sparked the creation of this project.[70] Of course, the idea of a surveying project had been generated years earlier without any success, but Cash now managed to get Florida officials actually interested in the project. No doubt the State Librarian’s familiarity with state politics and his time with the Florida legislature helped convince his colleagues to show an interest and approve the project. During the fall of 1935, Cash wrote an editorial for the *Tallahassee Daily Democrat* in which he urged the creation of a project that would survey archives in Florida, suggesting that this would be a perfect WPA project. After the editorial was published, M. L. Montgomery, the Secretary of the State Planning Board, invited Cash to his office where the latter showed Montgomery plans he had created for a surveying project. After the Washington office approved the plans, Cash became the State Supervisor for the State Archives Survey. The state-wide project officially started in December 1935.[71] Among its proposed goals were inventorying newspaper files, manuscripts, diaries, plantation journals, state, county, municipal, and organizational records, and listing all rare and out-of-print books and pamphlets relating to Florida.[72] Cash’s official duties as State Librarian, however, precluded him from the necessary travel required of the State Supervisor. He, therefore, resigned this position in February 1936, and Carlton Smith, one of the project's district supervisors, then became director of the project.[73]

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[69] Florida State Library Board, *Report 1933 to 1935*, 9-12.

[70] “Report of the State Library Board, 1943-1945; 1945-1947; 1947-1949,” Box 1, Cash Papers.

[71] “Monthly Report from the State Office Compiled from the District Supervisors’ Reports, Period beginning July 1 – ending July 31, 1938,” M82-58, “Historical Records Survey/State Archives Survey (WPA) Weekly Reports

[72] William T. Cash to Senator Claude Pepper, November 25, 1936, “W. T. Cash Correspondence – P&Q,” Box 3, Cash Papers.

From the beginning of the SAS, Cash worked actively to create support for the project among politicians and other influential people in Florida. He wrote several times to Florida's representatives and senators in the U.S. Congress, imploring their assistance in preventing cuts to their funding. In November 1936, Cash wrote to Senator Claude Pepper, asking him to use his influence to contact Ellen S. Woodward and Harry L. Hopkins on behalf of the Florida project in order to prevent workers from being eliminated.[74] He later wrote to Senator Charles O. Andrews, trying to convince him that continuing the SAS was an urgent matter because if the project is stopped "it will mean dropping from employment of around one hundred persons who have been trained to do useful work."[75] Cash also used his influence, often successfully, to try to get friends and colleagues jobs in Florida and in Washington, D.C.[76] In addition, Cash was not above using blandishments to convince others to help him. In 1941, when budget restraints had diminished much of the Work Projects Administration staff, Cash was anxious to maintain funding to the State Library. He wrote to Alfred Hanna, a professor at Rollins College, who was also an author and former president of the Florida Historical Society, in order to get his support for a library appropriations bill. After noting that Hanna's fame "will doubtless give you influence with the members from your county," Cash declared that the first task to be undertaken if the Library receives funding would be the creation of the Floridiana catalogue cards that Hanna wanted. He implied that the job might not get done without the passage of the Senate bill because the WPA help had been almost completely eliminated.[77] Cash used similar flattery and promise of favors with others he hoped he could use to his advantage. His previous work in the

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[73] Florida State Library Board, *Report 1935 to 1937*, 8-9.; and William T. Cash to Allen F. Jones, March 23, 1937, "W.T. Cash Correspondence – S," Box 3, Cash Papers.

[74] William T. Cash to Senator Claude Pepper, November 25, 1936, "W. T. Cash Correspondence – P&Q," Box 3, Cash Papers.

[75] William T. Cash to Senator Charles O. Andrews, February 10, 1938, "Andrews, Charles O. – United States Senator, 1938-1940," Box 1, Cash Administrative Files.

[76] William T. Cash to Senator Charles O. Andrews, November 25, 1938, "Andrews, Charles O. – United States Senator, 1938-1940," Box 1, Cash Administrative Files.

[77] William T. Cash to Alfred Hanna, May 22, 1941, "Hanna, Alfred Jackson, 1929-1949," Box 5, Cash Administrative Files.

Florida legislature gave Cash an advantage in knowing politicians in Florida and understanding how to influence the political system.

William Cash's passion for Floridiana was one of the major influences on the direction of the SAS project. After only one year, Cash succeeded in accessioning many valuable materials to the State Library, including two old digests of Florida laws, 50 rare manuscripts, a number of rare books by Florida authors, and over 200 manuscripts. According to the 1937 Library Board report, the State Library obtained over $1000 worth of material without cost.[78] By the end of the SAS, the State Library had received thousands of valuable books and documents.

This interest in Florida history not only created the impetus for creating the SAS, but it also affected appointments to the project. For example, one of the reasons that he suggested Carlton Smith to the project in 1936 was that Smith promised that he would be able to gather many historical letters, newspapers, and other material for the State Library. Although Smith received and donated 200 items relating to Achille Murat, Cash criticized him at one point for not fulfilling his pledge.[79] In an angry letter written in October 1936, Cash complained that he went to Governor David Sholtz and Senator Pepper on Smith's behalf but Smith had not responded with proper gratitude. He asked Smith if he did not understand that everything he collected went to the State Library and whether "is it not a fact that you were given an advantage in salary (at my suggestion) over the other district supervisors because of what I KNEW you could do for the State Library, if you would?"[80] Cash appeared to place more importance on the collection aspect of the SAS than the other parts of the project and gave his support to workers accordingly.

In 1936, an unusual situation occurred in which there were two surveying projects being conducted at the same time. The Historical Records Survey began operating in Florida under the direction of Carita Doggett Corse, the State Supervisor of the Federal Writers' Project, but it soon became obvious that the project objectives overlapped with the SAS. On July 1, 1936, the State Archives Survey and the Historical Records Survey combined under one state director, Sue

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[78] Florida State Library Board, *Report 1935 to 1937*, 9.

[79] Florida State Library Board, *Report 1935 to 1937*, 9. Achille Murat, the crown Prince of Naples, was the nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte. Murat arrived in Florida in 1824; while living in the United States he published several books and eventually retired to his estate in Tallahassee.

[80] William T. Cash to Carlton Smith, October 26, 1936, "W. T. Cash Correspondence – S," Box 3, Cash Papers.

A. Mahorner.[81] The projects maintained separate workers and activities under a single administrative body, and the State Library Board sponsored the joint program.

By 1938, tensions emerged between the two projects as congressional budget cuts threatened their survival. One of the problems was that HRS always had fewer workers than the SAS, averaging 30 and 120 workers, respectively.[82] In the spring of 1938, Cash received word from the Washington Historical Records Survey office that the State Archives Survey would be stopped. In response, Cash wrote a furious letter to Senator Andrews, denouncing the decision to cancel the project. He wrote that the SAS already dismissed approximately sixty-five workers the previous year and that the end of the surveying project would mean the loss of an additional one hundred jobs. In addition, Cash denied claims by the Washington office that the project should be closed because the State Library Board cannot get the inventories published: "the ridiculousness of the idea that the State Archives Survey could not get mimeographed and issued inventories of the records of the different counties is enough to make me assert that the National Office is only offering an excuse, rather than a reason for the discontinuation of the State Archives Survey."[83] Since Florida had two surveying projects, cutting the project with the most personnel seemed to be a logical solution for Washington. Despite Cash's hopes that Harry Hopkins would intervene and save the project, the State Survey closed on August 1, 1938.

The Historical Records Survey continued in Florida as a federal project under the supervision of Sue Mahorner. In August 1939, the Works Progress Administration ceased sponsoring projects and all Historical Records Survey projects had to find state sponsors to support them. In Florida, the State Library Board had always helped sponsor the survey and continued to do so until the project ended in 1943. After August 1939, the project became known as the Florida Historical Records Survey under the administration of the Florida Works

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[81] Florida State Library Board, *Report of the State Library Board of the State of Florida: February 1, 1939 to January 31, 1941*, 16; and Florida State Library Board, *Report of the State Library Board of the State of Florida: February 1, 1937 to January 31, 1939*, 11.

[82] "Weekly Report from the State Office Compiled from the District Supervisors Weekly Reports: beginning June 7 – ending June 11, 1937, Mary Lewis Files; "Semi-Monthly Report from the State Office Compiled from the District Supervisors Reports, Period beginning April 1 – ending April 15, 1938," Mary Lewis Files; and "Semi-Monthly Report from the District Supervisors Report, Period beginning April 16 – ending April 30, 1938," Mary Lewis Files.

[83] William T. Cash to Senator Charles O. Andrews, April 27, 1938, "Andrews, Charles O. – United States Senator, 1938-1940," Box 1, Cash Administrative Files.

Projects Administration's Division of Professional and Service Projects.[84] Although Cash had protested the transfer of the state surveying projects to federal supervision in 1938, only a year later the Historical Records Survey returned to state control, albeit with fewer workers.

The second Works Progress Administration project the Florida State Library Board sponsored was the Statewide Library Project. This project, organized in 1937 to give assistance to libraries in Florida and gather information about libraries in the state, also functioned to further the library extension goals Cash had formulated a decade earlier. In a 1927 article in *Florida Library Bulletin*, Cash wrote a statement of "some of the things not mentioned in the law, but which I am planning that we shall do," which included maintaining circulating libraries to rural districts in Florida.[85] These goals were expanded in 1935 with support from the Florida Library Association's approval of "A Plan for State-Wide Library Service in Florida," a blue print for more concrete action. General objectives included expansion of the State Library's service to existing libraries, starting book service to regions not already served, and the organization of county and regional libraries. In addition, the plan called for a coordinated public library system in Florida of municipal libraries; state, legislative, and historical libraries; libraries in all state schools; and libraries in state institutions of correction, handicapped, and the blind.[86] It was not until the Statewide Library Project, however, that libraries had a chance or the funding enacted these goals. Mrs. Marjorie B. Emmons supervised the project as State Consultant. In a 1939 Library Board report, a little over a year after the project started, Cash listed various achievements the projects had already accomplished: indexing newspaper files and legislative journals, typing out-of-print books, preparing a subject bibliography of Florida material, and assisting under-staffed libraries throughout the state.[87] Some of these tasks overlapped slightly with the Historical Records Survey, especially as the HRS took on additional projects in later years, but the additional indexing projects only benefited the State Library.

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84. "Monthly Report from the State Office Compiled from the District Supervisors' Reports, Period beginning July 1 – ending July 31, 1938," Mary Lewis Files; and Florida Historical Records Survey, *Public Archives Field Manual* (Jacksonville, 1940), 4.

85. Cash, "The Florida State Library Board," *Florida Library Bulletin* 1, No. 3 (August 1927), 3.

86. "A Plan for State-Wide Library Service in Florida," *Florida Library Bulletin* 3, no. 5 (1935), 22.

87. William T. Cash to Walter B. Hill, January 10, 1940, "Hill, Walter B., 1940," Box 5, Cash Administrative Files; and Florida State Library Board, *Report 1937 to 1939*, 11-12.

An important component of the Statewide Library Project was the library extension work supervised by Frances Reed. Library extension projects workers labored to not only provide a wider circulation of books throughout the state, but also to help start libraries in rural communities. As previously mentioned, the lack of libraries in Florida had concerned Cash and the State Library Board since the beginning of its creation. In 1929, Florida only had approximately 100 libraries, public and private, excluding schools. Cash lamented that "the library situation in northern and western Florida is not at all encouraging, and it is exceedingly 'spotty' in the rest of the state."[88] By 1935, when the State Library Board began sponsoring WPA projects, the situation was not much better. At that time, only 49 free libraries existed in the state and 41 of 67 counties lacked any free public library. This meant that approximately 59.8 percent of the population, or 960,000 people, lived without access to a public library.[89] Thus, the Statewide Library Project functioned to correct these deficiencies.

The key element to the Statewide Library Project's extension work rested on the "tool of demonstration" theory. The project did not intend to merely loan books out to rural communities through the State Library, but tried to create local community support for libraries by demonstrating how popular and essential they were for citizens in the community. The plan sent out books to communities in order to stimulate interest in libraries; then the books were slowly withdrawn, as local sources of money emerged to create a community library. Workers then moved the books to another town for a similar process. The *Handbook of Statewide Library Projects* emphasized that "the statewide service project is a means to an end and not the end itself. There is no desire on the part of the State Work Projects Administration to set up independent or rival systems of service, but rather it is intended to supply a tool for librarians in their efforts to consummate a professionally conceived statewide library service system."[90] The *Handbook* also instructed supervisors how to work through the WPA red tape to receive funds for their projects. Through adequate sponsor contributions and having a large number of certified workers, the project qualified for federal funds to be used "for other than labor." The Statewide Library Project then used these federal funds to buy books and bookmobiles for its extension work.[91]

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[88] Florida State Library Board, *Report 1927 to 1929*, 11.

[89] Helen Virginia Stelle, *Florida Library Survey 1935: A Report Prepared for the Florida Library Association* (Tampa, 1937).

[90] *Handbook of Statewide Library Project,* [c. 1940], S 1664, Statewide Library Project WPA Administrative Papers, 1940-1941, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida (hereafter cited as Statewide Library Project Papers).

In Florida, this extension work was successful, as the number of communities and number of books loaned increased each year. On April 24, 1940, the Library Board hired Eulah Mae Snider, previously a librarian at the P. K. Yonge Laboratory School, as Assistant State Librarian and Field Agent. From July 1, 1940 to September 1, 1942, Snider worked as the Director of the Extension Service. Through this work, she traveled throughout the state to encourage local communities to start their own libraries. In the first two years, the project loaned 3,293 books; between 1939 and 1941 the number increased to 4,281 books in 105 loans; by 1943, the biennial number rose to 4,992 books in 111 community loans.[92] The Statewide Library Project also sent out books to other New Deal programs, including Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camps and National Youth Administration girls in several counties.[93] Unfortunately, World War II forced the State Library Board to curtail its extension services in June 1942 and the Statewide Library Project became the War Information and Reading Service.[94]

Despite the importance of the Library Extension Service, the majority of the Statewide Library Project workers concentrated on mundane office tasks and indexing projects. Many WPA workers toiled at the circulation desk, cleaned shelves, and accessioned and boxed books. They also indexed legislative journals, alphabetized lists of deeds and state land conveyances, and copied rare books.[95] Often staff spent much of their time answering correspondence and responding to research requests. In 1939, workers at the State Library wrote over 300 letters in one month.[96] Unit supervisors worried that this work would be seen as "boondoggling" and anxiously tried to prove the worthiness of the projects in their monthly reports. One report conveyed the gratitude of Clyde L. Derby, Area Supervisor of the Historical Records Survey, for the help he received from a Statewide Library Project worker while he searched for information to include in a paper. Another report related that the president of the Madison County Historical Society said he used election returns that a project worker compiled.[97] Supervisors wasted no opportunity to show that the Statewide Library Project deserved continuance.

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[91] *Handbook of Statewide Library Project*, S 1664, Statewide Library Project Papers.

[92] Florida State Library Board, *Report 1939 to 1941*, 10; and Florida State Library Board, *Report 1941 to 1943*, 8.

[93] "Argument, For Senator Tillman," 1937, "Florida State Library, Reports & Articles, 1929-1949," Box 4, Cash Administrative Papers.

[94] Florida State Library Board, *Report 1941 to 1943*, 9.

[95] "Narrative Report of Work on Project No. 2699 – State Library Project: For Month ending August 20, 1938," "Florida Works Progress Administration – Statewide Library Project, 1938-1939," Box 5, Cash Administrative Files; and "Narrative Report, Statewide Library Project, whose number is 3817, October 4-20, 1938," "Florida Works Progress Administration – Statewide Library Project, 1938-1939," Box 5, Cash Administrative Files.

The State Library itself benefited from the work of the Statewide Library Project. From January 1, 1936 to early 1941, the State Library had an average of six WPA workers.[98] In a July 1939 report, the supervisor emphasized the ways the project had helped the State Library, adding, "the State Librarian and his assistant were so swamped with work when this project began to operate that they simply could not meet all demands upon them. They still have more than enough to do, but the unit of the statewide project operating here has certainly promoted the efficiency of their services."[99] In fact, the State Library did not hire an archivist, secretary to the library, or cataloger until 1941, when they expected the Statewide Library Project to end.[100] The project helped out the State Library tremendously, which no doubt contributed to the close relationship between the State Library Board and project, more so than the other WPA projects, and encouraged the State Library Board to continue sponsoring it.

The last major WPA project that the State Library Board sponsored was the Statewide Rare Books Project. The Rare Books Project aimed at typing manuscripts of rare or out-of-print books that could not be loaned out of libraries; thus, copies of the manuscripts could be sent to other libraries for use throughout the state.[101] This was the Board's shortest project, as it began

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96. "Narrative Report, State Library Unit Statewide Library Project, No. 3817 SW, January 21 to February 20, 1939," "Florida Works Progress Administration – Statewide Library Project, 1938-1939," Box 5, Cash Administrative Files.

97. "Narrative Report, State Library Unit, January 21 to February 20, 1939"; "Narrative Report, State Library Unit, Statewide Library Project, No. 3817, November 21 to December 20, 1938," "Florida Works Progress Administration – Statewide Library Project, 1938-1939," Box 5, Cash Administrative Files.

98. Florida State Library Board, *Report 1941 to 1943*, 7.

99. "Narrative Report, Tallahassee Library Unit, Statewide Library Project, No. 3817 SW, Month beginning June 21, ending July 20, 1939," "Florida Works Progress Administration – Statewide Library Project, 1938-1939," Box 5, Cash Administrative Files.

100. Florida State Library Board, *Report 1941 to 1943*, 7.

101. Florida State Library Board, *Report 1939 to 1941*, 18.

in July 1939 and only continued through 1940. In the early months of the project, several problems limited its effectiveness. First, someone at the state office tacked an indexing project in Duval County onto the Rare Books Project without the knowledge of the State Library Board. As a result, the indexing project used up about 56 percent of monthly appropriations. In addition, there was some trouble in getting the project started in many Florida counties. Only two of eighteen counties in which Rare Books Projects were to operate had opened by the end of August.[102] In other counties, field supervisors had difficulty establishing the project at all. Carlton Smith wrote to Rolla A. Southworth, Director of the Professional and Service Division, about his troubles opening the project in Orlando, exclaiming, "Miss Brambough was the hardest person I ever tackled in my life – She is cooperating now – Hope others on the project will not offend her to run the workers out."[103] In Fernandina Beach, on the other hand, the relative prosperity of the community meant that there were no available relief workers for the project. Field Supervisor William McDonald wryly remarked, "Perhaps some well meaning soul will lose a quarter of a million and drop back to the 'Hoover status' again."[104] By the end of 1939, field supervisors reported that a lack of guidelines led to the copying of books that were still in-print instead of only rare books. Writing to the Professional and Service Division's State director, Cash acknowledged, "as you say 'the weaknesses in the past of this project have been obvious.' I know of them and was doing what I could to cure them."[105] He related that he took time out of his duties as State Librarian to make up a list of books, manuscripts, and pamphlets that should be copied. As a result of these early problems, in February 1940, Carita Doggett Corse assumed responsibility as technical supervisor of the Rare Books Project in addition to her duties as State Supervisor of the Writers' Project; Carlton Smith and Walter McDonald remained Field Supervisors. Despite the brevity of the program and its various problems, the Rare Books

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[102] William T. Cash to Carlton Smith, August 23, 1939, "Smith, Carlton, 1937-1941," Box 6, Cash Administrative Files.

[103] Carlton Smith to Rolla A. Southworth, October 10, 1939, "Smith, Carlton, 1937-1941," Box 6, Cash Administrative Files; and Carlton Smith to Rolla A. Southworth, n.d., "Smith, Carlton, 1937-1941," Box 6, Cash Administrative Files.

[104] William McDonald to William T. Cash, January 3, 1940, "Works Progress Administration, 1939-1943," Box 7, Cash Administrative Files.

[105] William T. Cash to Rolla A. Southworth, February 3, 1940, "Correspondence, 1940-1941," Box 1, Cash Papers.

Project accomplished important copying work, such as the "Autobiography of Judge Thomas Douglas," "Scenes of a Surveyor's Life," and "Patriot War Papers (1812-1813)."[106] Other copying projects continued through both the Historical Records Survey and the Statewide Library Project.

Nationally, the Historical Records Survey and related library projects received relatively little criticism and had less controversy than other cultural projects, such as the Federal Writers' Project. Florida was no exception to this general trend. There is no indication from existing records of communist accusations or similar problems affecting the projects that the State Library Board sponsored. That is not to say that the WPA projects were without troubles. Most of the problems in Florida, however, came from worries over funding and tensions among the state WPA administration and the State Library Board. These two problems often intertwined.

A major problem emerged as hostility grew between Sue A. Mahorner, the State Supervisor of the Historical Records Survey, and members of the State Library Board, particularly William Cash. Mahorner had directed the combined SAS and HRS since July 1, 1936. When the Historical Records Survey reverted to state control in 1939, Mahorner continued on as director of the Florida Historical Records Survey. From the beginning of her tenure, Cash had received complaints about her from Carlton Smith, whom she had replaced as State Supervisor. At that time, Cash dismissed Smith's concerns and reprimanded him about publicly criticizing those in a position of authority.[107] He even defended her to Senator Claude Pepper, stating, "Mrs. Mahorner has during her period of service as State Director (July 1, 1936 till now) been of invaluable assistance to the Florida State Library."[108] While Mahorner and Cash may not have had the most cordial relationship, he did not have any problems with her WPA work.

By 1939, however, Mahorner began to clash with other project administrators and the Library Board. Marian Copping, who had been the Indexing Supervisor, was removed from the project as a new statewide indexing project was being written up. She wrote to Cash, "Sue wants indexing, but only on the condition that it is under her absolute control as part of her program.

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[106] Carlton Smith to Rolla A. Southworth, September 30, 1939, "Smith, Carlton, 1937-1941," Box 6, Cash Administrative Files.

[107] William T. Cash to Carlton Smith, October 26, 1936, "W.T. Cash Correspondence – S," Box 3, Cash Papers.

[108] William T. Cash to Senator Claude Pepper, July 16, 1937, "Correspondence, 1918-1939," Box 1, Cash Papers.

That would not allow me any travel, and not over $125.00 per month salary. No doubt but she could carry it on successfully."[109] A year later, a field supervisor complained that Mahorner had "helped unsell the University on the microfilming of those Library of Congress manuscripts because she wanted to do this work on the Historical Records Survey."[110] It appeared to other administrators that Mahorner was trying to gain sole control over projects funded by the State Library Board. The situation came to a head when Mahorner was appointed to the State Library Board in 1940. She now maintained a position on the Board that funded her own projects. This situation infuriated Cash and he made a long list of mistakes that Mahorner had caused since her appointment. Among his complaints were that she convinced the Board to "unwittingly" vote for $1000 of its funds, got the Board to "fall for" the naming of Eulah Mae Snider as Assistant State Librarian, and cost the Board extra money over a construction bid for a new State Library building. In addition, Cash felt she attempted to humiliate him and undermined his authority.[111] Cash apparently wrote up this list of faults in preparation for some kind of confrontation with Mahorner. It is unclear exactly how the problem was resolved, but Mahorner left the State Library Board by 1941, although she remained State Supervisor. Such tension among the administrators of the WPA projects left other workers feeling frustrated about the amount of work being done and worried about funding for their own projects.

The other major problem faced by the State Library Board involved the tensions between the goals of State Library and the purpose of the WPA. Although work relief projects needed to be useful, employment was their main purpose. The State Library Board, however, had specific goals it wanted to accomplish through the State Archives Survey, Statewide Library Project, and Rare Books Project. Frustration often emerged among the Library Board and WPA supervisors over the poor training of WPA workers and the lack of work accomplished. Carlton Smith criticized Leila L. Bland, a worker in Lakeland, for her slow pace on the Rare Books Project. She had worked 170 hours on Hetherington's *History of Polk County* but only typed 75 pages. Smith griped to his supervisor that it was "a great waste of time," and worried that such a pace would bring criticism from the State Library Board.[112] L. E. Bigelow, a worker on the Statewide Library Project, also complained about WPA work because most of the people he worked with never finished anything. "I must confess," he wrote, "I am like the damn fool who goes on a fishing trip or party and spoils things by wanting to fish."[113] Cash himself often complained about the quality of his WPA assistants and believed that too much relief work made people lazy.[114] On the other hand, he acknowledged, "many who were down and out have had useful employment and, in spite of the waste in connection with it, many [*sic*] beneficial to the cause of history has been discovered."[115] While Cash defended the projects sponsored by the State Library Board, he certainly did not indiscriminately support relief work. He understood, however, that the WPA projects, despite their flaws, overall benefited the State Library and furthered Cash's plans for the Library's future.

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[109] Marian Copping to William T. Cash, May 15, 1939, "W. T. Cash Correspondence – C," Box 2, Cash Papers.

[110] William McDonald to William T. Cash, May 3, 1940, "Works Progress Administration, 1939-1943," Box 7, Cash Administrative Files.

[111] Handwritten notes by William T. Cash, n.d., "Mahorner, Sue A.," Box 6, Cash Administrative Files.

By the end of the WPA, the State Library had successfully expanded and new libraries had sprung up around the state. In 1943, the State Library boasted 20,000 books; 7,500 manuscripts; 150 maps and Photostats; 500 photographs and pictures; 5,000 scrapbook clippings; and 750 WPA publications.[116] This was no small feat for a library that started with only 2,000 books and documents. State Supervisors and Field Supervisors collected much of the valuable historic material and WPA relief workers catalogued, indexed, and prepared inventories for thousands of items. If it were not for the WPA, much of the Floridiana collection that rests in the State Library today would not be available. In addition, William Cash's tireless efforts to secure material for the Library and expand library circulation throughout the state would have been impossible if the State Library Board had not sponsored several WPA projects. While much of the work that was done by the Historical Records Survey, Statewide Library Project, and Rare

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112. Carlton Smith to Rolla A. Southworth, November 28, 1939, "Smith, Carlton, 1937-1941," Box 6, Cash Administrative Files.

113. L. E. Bigelow to William T. Cash, August 31, 1938, "Bigelow, Lee Eugene," Box 1, Cash Administrative Files.

114. William T. Cash to Walter B. Hill, February 20, 1940, "Hill, Walter B., 1940," Box 5, Cash Administrative Files; William T. Cash to Walter B. Hill, June 3, 1940, "Hill, Walter B., 1940," Box 5, Cash Administrative Files; William T. Cash to Vernon Lamme, March 14, 1940, "W. T. Cash Correspondence – L," Box 3, Cash Papers.

115. William T. Cash to L. E. Bigelow, September 19, 1938, "Bigelow, Lee Eugene," Box 1, Cash Administrative Files.

116. Florida State Library Board, *Report 1941 to 1943*, 6.

Books Project was tedious, dull, and exhausting because of its technical nature, it provided important tools for researchers and state workers. The Historical Records Survey, in particular, provided valuable service during the Depression by conducting research on behalf of Federal Writers' Project workers and providing relief boards with information. In addition, the scholars used the historical material gathered under the projects to write new books about Florida history. William Cash, for example, published *The Story of Florida* in 1938 and *Florida Becomes a State* in 1945. The success of both the Historical Records Survey and the library projects reinforced the validity of national and local advocates' support for historical preservation projects and records inventories. The accomplishments of these projects also showed that adequate funding and dedicated workers can achieve incredible progress in improving access to historical records.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION: WORLD WAR II AND BEYOND

As the United States prepared for war, supporters of library projects and the Historical Records Survey had to search for ways to stay relevant to the war effort. In Washington, many of the New Deal agencies and projects took on new functions to help with the war and administrators saw these plans as prototypes for state and local endeavors. In March 1941, for example, Roosevelt created the Committee on Conservation of Cultural Resources for the "preparation of plans for the protection of materials of cultural, scientific, and historical importance in the possession of Agencies of the Federal Government."[1] After the attack on Pearl Harbor and the direct American intervention in war, federal officials believed states and individual cities needed similar plans to protect resources. In order to further these plans, the purpose of the HRS was officially amended to include inventorying housing and storage areas for emergency deposits of records and valuable historical material.[2] The Committee on Conservation of Cultural Resources issued a pamphlet in December 1941 entitled "The Protection of America's Cultural Heritage" that emphasized the importance of planning in advance for emergencies. An acknowledgement of the significance American history and culture had taken during the Depression years, the pamphlet cautioned, "since cultural institutions play an important role in the maintenance of national morale, the least deviation from the normal arrangement of materials and functioning of an institution consistent with safety is desirable."[3] While these new duties allowed the programs the exist for a little while longer, the original function of the HRS and library projects eventually yielded to the demands of World War II.

In Florida, officials and workers struggled to adjust to the changes wrought by the war. State officials desperately tried to keep their WPA projects going, but had trouble acquiring the necessary sponsorship. Marjorie B. Emmons, the State Supervisor of the Statewide Library

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1. Collas G. Harris to John J. Taggert, December 18, 1941, "Caldwell, Stafford, 1938," S-1505, Box 2, William T. Cash Administrative Files, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida (hereafter cited as Cash Administrative Files).

2. Memo, December 15, 1941, "Caldwell, Stafford, 1938," Box 2, Cash Administrative Files.

3. "The Protection of America's Cultural Heritage," Committee on Conservation of Cultural Resources, National Resources Planning Board, Washington, DC 1941, "Caldwell, Stafford, 1938," Box 2, Cash Administrative Files.

Project, wrote that "the life of the project wholly depends upon the amount of defense work we can throw ourselves into *at once*."[4] She worried that the defense work was needed in order to accomplish any type of public library work. Emmons justified the Statewide Library Project's involvement in the war effort by arguing that it averted subversive activities by spreading knowledge through reading throughout Florida.[5] In addition, orders came from Washington that Library Project personnel assist on other projects, such as the Victory Book Drive, a program that collected reading material for military members.[6] As Washington cut funding and library projects closed, citizens around the state protested. Imogene Middleton wrote to Emmons in 1942, pleading with her to keep the library open in her rural area, especially since there was no other entertainment in the area and there were forty-eight boys from the community in the war. "Don't their families need something to do," she asked, "to forget just a little while?"[7] Eventually, Washington discontinued funding for inventorying projects of the HRS in favor of work the directly related to the war. A few projects slipped through the cracks if they could be justified as defense work. One inventory project called "Church Records as Supplementary Vital Statistics" was allowed by a Florida regional office as acceptable defense work since it might help identify soldiers.[8] Despite the hardships of the Depression, the poor economic conditions had actually been beneficial in many respects for cultural institutions in Florida. With the continuance of World War II, much of this financial assistance given to libraries and historical societies was redirected to shipyards and construction activities.

By 1942, the Historical Records Survey and Library Projects had been officially subsumed into the war effort and ceased to exist as such. In the bustle of all the activity in Washington, the Roosevelt administration failed to inform some of the top WPA officials that the projects were being shut down. Sargent B. Child, the director of the HRS, was shocked to learn that the project would merge into a new a Cultural Program and a Clerical Assistance

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[4] Emmons to Cash, March 19, 1941, "Emmons, Marjorie B, 1940-1942," Box 3, Cash Administrative Files.

[5] Emmons to Cash, March 19, 1941, Box 3, Cash Administrative Files.

[6] Frances A. Ewell to William Speed, January 2, 1942, "Victory Book Campaign, 1941-1944," Box 7, Cash Administrative Files.

[7] Middleton to Emmons, March 12, 1942, "Emmons, Marjorie B, 1940-1942," Box 3, Cash Administrative Files.

[8] Franklin E. Albert to Cash, May 26, 1942, "Works Projects Administration, 1939-1943," Box 7, Cash Administrative Files.

Program. He wrote to Florence Kerr, the Assistant WPA Commissioner, that he had not even been consulted about such a decision and believed it was a huge mistake. Childs complained that such planning was unrealistic and reflected "ill considered administrative plans."[9] While Child was understandably upset about the decision to end the HRS, the project had actually fared better than some of the other Federal One projects, such as the controversial Federal Theater Project that that been shut down in 1939. The broken up HRS and Library Project workers continued on as part of the war effort until the WPA was officially ended in 1943.

Although the WPA projects ended in Florida, their legacy continued to have beneficial effects in the Sunshine State. The increased federal funding had allowed the State Library to add to its Floridiana Collection and increase its circulation during the Depression years. After the Depression, Florida finally added an archivist position to the library staff. In 1941, the Florida legislature passed a bill that would appropriate $5500 annually to extend the historical program by cooperating with the Florida Historical Society and establishing "a real archives department." Dorothy Dodd was appointed as the first state archivist, although the state archives remained a part of the state library until 1969. By 1942, the state library boasted over 19,000 books, including bound newspaper volumes and magazines, and 5,000 manuscripts in the State Library. In 1935, the library had started with only 2,000 books, mostly Federal and State documents; in only 7 years the library had increased by 17,000 books.[10] In addition, the WPA money spent towards library extension projects helped communities open new libraries across the state. In fact, the New Deal projects fulfilled many of the goals the State Library Board set out before the Depression. The WPA projects in Florida were a tremendous boon to library development in the state, and helped advance projects that would not have had the chance to be completed otherwise. Communities across the state also gained a new appreciation for the importance of proper recordkeeping and historic preservation.

In addition to the external material gathered by the HRS and library projects in Florida, these projects also produced valuable documents and books on their own. The surveying and indexing projects of the HRS created an unprecedented look into the material of local and state archives. The finding aids created by these projects allowed both researchers and ordinary citizens a more organized and detailed understanding of the activities and history of local and national government. These guides were reproduced and placed in repositories throughout Florida. As the most thorough exploration of Florida's archival material, contemporary and future researchers found the guides to be invaluable and time saving tools for their work. Among the books on Florida history that have benefited from work accomplished by HRS workers are *Florida Becomes a State*, edited by Dorothy Dodd; *Slavery in Florida: Territorial Days to Emanipation* by Larry Eugene Rivers; *The Life of Henry Laurens Mitchell* by George B. Church, Jr., and *History of Jefferson County* by Jerrell H. Shofner.[11] To the present day, the Florida State Archives maintains copies of many of the finding aids produced during the New Deal.

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[9] Child to Kerr, February 27, 1942, "Folder A-Z, February 15, 1942," Central Files General 1935-1944, RG 69, National Archives at College Park, College Park, Maryland; hereafter cited as NARA).

[10] W. T. Cash, manuscript of "Seven Years of Progress," September 1942, "Florida Library Association, 1939-1950," Box 4, Cash Administrative Files.

While one cannot underestimate the influence of the WPA projects to future Florida library development, it is also important to understand the importance of these projects as they occurred during the New Deal. On the one hand, the archival surveying and library projects functioned as necessary relief work. Both types of projects tended to have low material and labor costs, and workers did not require much training. In addition, women also benefited from these projects since librarianship already was a feminized profession, with women making up the majority of librarians in the country. Even women untrained as librarians often had experience with other pink-collar professions, such as secretarial work, that provided useful skills for library or surveying work. Due to their professional knowledge, the projects gave many women the opportunity to achieve supervisory positions within the WPA. In this sense, the projects were a means to an end to provide aid and further economic recovery as well as occupational opportunities for women.

On the other hand, these projects served a much greater function than simply expeditious relief work. For decades, librarians had viewed their work as a vital link between citizens and the larger community around them. Public libraries sponsored lectures, clubs, classes and other activities aimed at educating people in the community. Before the Depression, librarians, historians, and women's organizations searched for ways to increase the exposure of Americans to knowledge of their culture and history, but were often stymied by lack of resources. When the economic hardships of the Depression hit the United States, public libraries became indispensable places in many communities. In a time when money was scarce, public libraries provided one of the only sources of free entertainment and education through their stacks of books, magazines, and newspapers. In addition, the surveying and indexing projects facilitated the acquisition of new knowledge about communities through detailed finding aids. As Americans worked on these projects, they gained a deeper understanding of their own community and those around them.

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[11] Dodd, *Florida Become a State* (Tallahassee: Florida Centennial Commission, 1945); Rivers, *Slavery in Florida: Territorial Days to Emancipation* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000); Church, *The Life of Henry Laurens Mitchell: Florida's 16th Governor* (New York: Vantage Press, 1978); and, Shofner, *History of Jefferson County* (Tallahassee: Sentry Press, 1976).

The creation of the cultural and historical relief projects rested on the shoulders of the pioneering work of women during the Progressive Era, tireless efforts of professionals, and changes in thought about the role of art, history, and community among the middle-class. The administrative structure and planning of the New Deal programs owed a great deal to the legacy of early Progressive thinkers and activists. New Deal planners' willingness to experiment with economic recovery, the dependence on the scientific method as a form of evaluation, and the belief that Americans could improve their condition through individuals working in a community all emerged from this early intellectual tradition. The growing conviction that art and history should play an important part in citizens' lives emerged from a backlash against the scientific mindset of many Progressives in the 1920s. Artists and intellectuals feeling alienated from American culture isolated themselves from their surroundings although they sought a more organic cultural experience. When the Depression hit, however, many of these same critics found an opportunity to finally become part of that larger community through the shared experiences of art and history. They encouraged the emergence of federal programs to sponsor work relief programs focusing on American culture and history, both national and local. These intellectual trends merged with the longstanding goals of professional librarians and historians and the work of settlement houses to increase the number and effectiveness of cultural institutions throughout the country.

Although the experiences of individual Americans during the Great Depression stand out as a bleak period in American history, the collapse of the country's economic structure provided opportunities for new and innovative cultural programs. The creation of work relief programs, especially under the WPA, pumped millions of federal dollars and personnel into all types of projects. Cultural and historical programs, in particular, greatly benefited from this new fount of resources because of the lack of support for such projects before the Depression prevented their development. An unprecedented crisis in the United States created an unprecedented chance to explore the meaning of American culture. In addition, for the first time, state and local governments could systematically survey the holdings of their archives and libraries, leading to a deeper understanding of America’s past. Projects on such a large scale would have doubtfully gained political support without the distinctive conditions of the Great Depression. Despite all the tragedies of those years, Americans gained a priceless knowledge and insight into their own diverse culture and past.

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