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978-0-521-82259-6 - The Federal Theatre Project: A Case Study

Barry B. Witham

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The Federal Theatre Project

A Case Study

Drawing upon archival resources, official correspondence and personal interviews, this book provides a detailed examination of the operations of the US Federal Theatre Project in the decade of the 1930s. From the colorful bus tours through the Civilian Conservation Corps camps to the turbulent productions of the Living Newspapers, the book recreates the often chaotic but frequently exhilarating story of Uncle Sam as producer. Special attention is given to the controversial Seattle Negro unit, the prize-winning production of *See How They Run* and the mass spectacles which attempted to incorporate Hallie Flanagan's vision of a truly national project rooted in local culture. *The Federal Theatre Project: A Case Study* illuminates both the ambitions of the program and the day-to-day details of making art from a new model – a subsidized national theatre.

BARRY B. WITHAM is Professor at the School of Drama, University of Washington. He is the author of thirty articles in scholarly journals and editor of *Theatre in the United States: A Documentary History, Vol 1: Theatre in the Colonies and the United States* (Cambridge, 1996).

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For Peggy, Michael and Drake

and

Robert Bates Witham

1942–2001

“Quemadmodum omnium rerum, sic litterarum quoque intemperantia laboramus; non vitae sed scholae discimus.” . . . Seneca, Epistle 106

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