

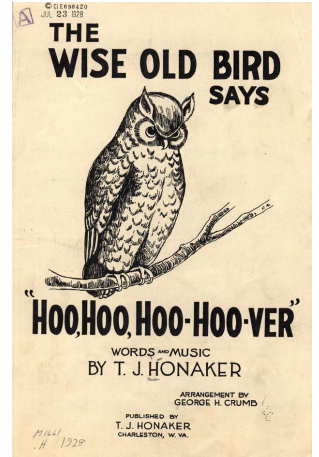
# The Great Depression

## Herbert Hoover's Optimism

When Herbert Hoover was elected in 1928, the Roaring 1920s had reached its peak. During the election of 1928, Hoover credited the laissez faire policies of Republican presidents for the successful economy and Wall Street's Bull Market. Laissez faire policies meant that the government would not interfere with the economy.

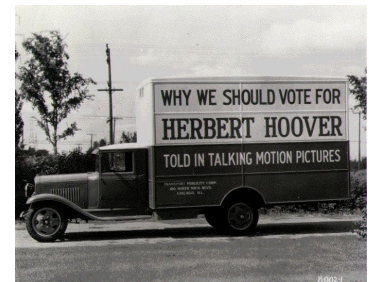
"By adherence to the principles of decentralized self-government, ordered liberty, equal opportunity, and freedom to the individual, our American experiment in human welfare has yielded a degree of well-being unparalleled in all the world. It has come nearer to the abolition of poverty, to the abolition of fear of want, than humanity has ever reached before."

--Herbert Hoover's Campaign Speech, October 22, 1928



1. What were laissez faire policies?

2. What did Hoover promise in his campaign speech on October 22, 1928?



## The Interactions of Business Overproduction and Consumer Underconsumption

Though the US economy appeared to be prosperous during the 1920s, the conditions that led to the Great Depression were created during that decade. During the 1920s, the wealthy grew wealthier due in large measure to government fiscal policies that both reduced business regulations and allowed the wealthy to keep more of their money. These reduced regulations and low corporate taxes increased the profits of corporations and made their stocks more valuable. At the same time, the poor and working classes lost the ability to buy products because their wages stayed the same while prices rose. This reduction in consumer consumption resulted in business overproduction and eventually caused business profits to decline. These factors were an important cause of the Great Depression.

New methods of buying products, including the installment plan and buying on credit, became popular during the 1920s. These methods encouraged consumers to buy more than they could afford and to go into debt. Worst of all, banks loaned people money to buy stock with very little money paid at the time of purchase. The stocks themselves became the collateral for the loan. This was called buying on margin. Rising stock prices and the ability of ordinary people to buy stock on credit increased investment in the stock market and inflated the price of stocks above their actual value. Then, by October 1929, the US economy was beginning to show signs of slowing down. Stockholders feared the economy was ending a period of prosperity and entering a period of recession. This caused some investors to panic and sell their stocks. As more people sold their stock, other people panicked and sold their stock as well, driving down their prices and causing a stock market crash. A loss of confidence in financial institutions moved people to pull their investments from banks, resulting in a bank rush. Banks closed as they ran out of money, and only those who arrived early enough to withdraw their deposits in time were able to recover their investments from the failed banks.

In turn, the stock market crash triggered other economic weaknesses and plunged the United States into the Great Depression—a severe economic recession in the 1930s that affected all the world's industrialized nations and the countries that exported raw materials to them. Industry, trade, construction, mining, logging, and farming decreased sharply. Business profits, tax revenues, and personal incomes did, as well.

3. How did the the government’s fiscal policies help the wealthy to grow wealthier?

4. Why were poor unable to buy some consumer products of the 1920s?

5. What was the result of “business overproduction”?

6. Which practice by banks led to people buying more than they could afford?

7. What led to the stock market crash?

8. Explain how bank rushes happened.

9. If people saved money wisely, refrained from buying on credit or buying on margin, refrained from stock speculation, *but they did not withdraw their sums before a bank failed*, could they recover their life savings?

10. What was the Great Depression?



## Dust Bowl

New machinery and improved farming techniques made American farmers very productive. By producing more food each year, farmers thought they could earn more money. Instead, this overproduction helped drive down the prices of their products and made it harder for them to make a profit. In response, farmers tried producing even more food by taking out more loans to buy more land and farm equipment. As a result, most farmers were very vulnerable to economic and environmental disasters when banks started foreclosing on farms owned by farmers unable to repay their loans. To make matters worse, the Great Plains states were experiencing a severe drought. When a series of severe dust storms hit the prairies, they picked up the dirt loosened by the drought and the over-farming practices that had eroded the soil. This ecological disaster was called the Dust Bowl. Dry conditions and high winds made farming impossible. Tenant farmers and sharecroppers were among the hardest hit as their landlords evicted them and sold the land. Over 500,000 Americans were left homeless. Many farmers from Oklahoma, Texas, and the surrounding Dust Bowl states migrated to California in search of work.



*John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath tells the story of the Joad family's journey from the Dust Bowl to California*

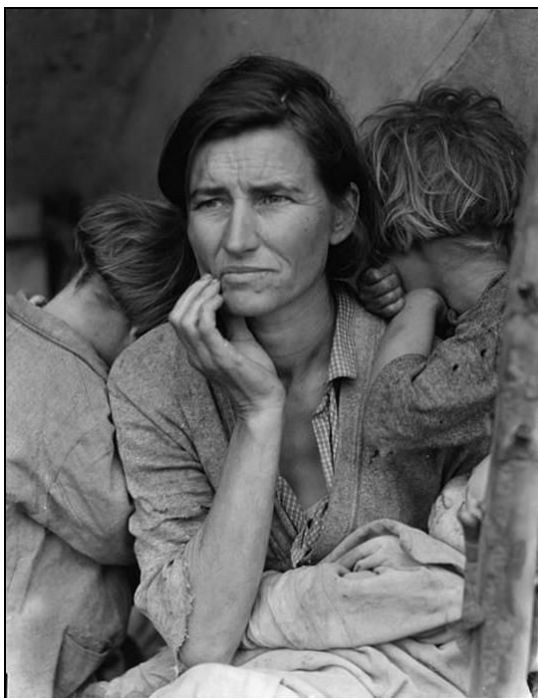
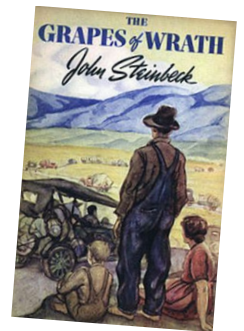
"The cars of migrant people crawled out of the side roads onto the great cross-country highway, and they took the migrant way to the West. In the daylight they scuttled like bugs to the westward; and as the dark caught them, they clustered like bugs near to shelter and to water. And because they were lonely and perplexed, because they had all come from a place of sadness and worry and defeat, and because they were all going to a new mysterious place, they huddled together; they talked together; they shared their lives, their food, and the things they hoped for in the new country. Thus it might be that one family camped near a spring, and another camped for the spring and for company, and a third because two families had pioneered the place and found it good. And when the sun went down, perhaps twenty families and twenty cars were there."

--Excerpt from Chapter 17 of *The Grapes of Wrath*

11. What were the 3 causes of the Dust Bowl?

12. Where did many migrants go when they left the Dust Bowl to seek better economic opportunities and environmental conditions?

13. What was the main idea of *The Grapes of Wrath* excerpt?



"Migrant Mother." Dorothea Lange, February 1936.

The Resettlement Administration was one of President FDR's agencies that helped people from the Dust Bowl. This agency hired photographer Dorothea Lange to take pictures that would build support for its programs. This photograph was one of several that Dorothea Lange took of migrant farm worker Florence Thompson, a widowed pea-picker, and three of her seven children. The family is a real migrant family from a migrant camp headed to California from the Dust Bowl during the Great Depression.

14. How might this photograph be useful as evidence of the living conditions of migrant farm workers during the Great Depression?

15. What about this source might make it less useful as evidence of the living conditions of migrant farm workers during the Great Depression?

## Widespread Unemployment

As profits fell and it became clear consumers would need to reduce spending, workers began to lose their jobs. By 1932, the unemployment rate in the United States had reached 25%. Unemployed workers who had no savings could not pay their debts, and many lost their homes. Homeless and unemployed people settled in camps of shacks and tents in rundown areas. These homeless shanty towns became known as Hoovervilles, named after Herbert Hoover, the US president when the Depression started (due to his laissez faire approach and refusal to provide direct aid during the Depression). Hooverville residents slept in packing crates if they were lucky; if not, they slept on the ground. They begged for food from people who still had jobs and housing. They often relied on breadlines from charities and would wait in line for long periods of time for food and other necessities.

16. What was a direct result of widespread unemployment?

17. Who lived in Hoovervilles? What were they?

18. What were breadlines?



## Hoover's Response to the Great Depression

Hoover believed that direct aid for the needy could not be provided by the federal government because the Constitution did not include a provision to do so. He believed the depression could be helped by volunteers, or individuals aiding by philanthropy and charity, and localism, or help provided by local governments and organizations (who understand the needs of their own communities). Hoover celebrated the spirit of Americans to exhibit rugged individualism in times of hardship: "...individual initiative and enterprise through which our people have grown to unparalleled greatness." (*How does Hoover's statements that suggest Americans need to work their way out of the Great Depression relate to Turner's Frontier Thesis?*)

Hoover signed the Hawley-Smoot Tariff into law to encourage Americans to buy American made goods. It was a protective tariff that increased the cost of imported goods. Foreign nations responded to the tariff by passing tariffs of their own. This created an imbalance of trade and further impeded economic recovery in the US and abroad.

Hoover's approach for much of his presidency proved to be ineffectual. By the last year of his presidency, Hoover changed course for some of his laissez faire policies. The Reconstruction Finance Corporation was established in 1932. This government corporation provided financial support to state and local government and lent money to banks, railroads, and other businesses. He also approved of federal funding for the building of the Hoover Dam (originally called the Boulder Dam) to generate jobs and hydroelectricity for the Southwest. Hoover believed investing in business would benefit those hit hardest by the depression by "trickle-down" economics.

19. Why did Hoover believe the federal government could not provide direct aid?

20. How did Hoover believe the depression could be helped?

21. Define volunteerism:

22. Define localism:

23. What is rugged individualism?

24. What was the Hawley-Smoot Tariff?



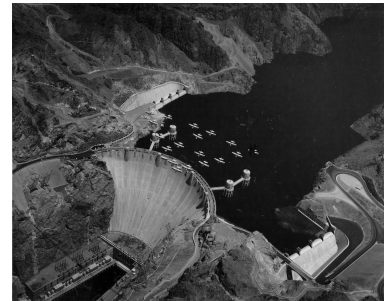
25. How did the American depression impact other parts of the world?

26. List three other tariffs you have learned about in US History that disrupted trade with other nations.

27. What was the purpose of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation?

28. What did engineers hope to harness from the Colorado River?

29. Why did workers flood into the region in search of work?



30. How did Hoover believe support for governmental, financial, and business institutions would benefit those most in need?

## **The Bonus Army**

The Adjusted Compensation Act passed in 1924, promised bonus payment to veterans of WWI to be paid in 1945. In 1931, many wanted this bonus early as relief for hard times. The "Bonus Army" was a group of veterans that assembled in Washington to protest for the early payment of their bonus. The Hooverville created by the Bonus Army in Washington drew press attention to the poor living conditions of veterans of the Great War. This was bad press for President Hoover, and he authorized General MacArthur to remove the Bonus Army. General MacArthur used harsh tactics to remove the Bonus Army, which further tarnished Hoover's reputation in the year before the next presidential election.

*Do you think he'll win the election of 1932?*

31. Who were the Bonus Army, and what did they want?

32. Which group marched on Washington in the 1890s to bring attention to poverty of that time? Which other marches on Washington have been significant in American History?



## The "New Deal"

In the first presidential election during the Great Depression, American voters rejected Herbert Hoover and voted in **Franklin Delano Roosevelt**, perhaps best known as FDR, in 1932. When he took the oath of office March 4, 1933, he famously declared, "First of all, the only thing we have to fear is fear itself --nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror." However, more banks continued to close across the nation as the economy hinged upon collapse. Roosevelt offered initiatives he termed the "New Deal," his series of programs to end the Depression. He promised these programs would help different segments of the economy recover by addressing specific needs and weaknesses.



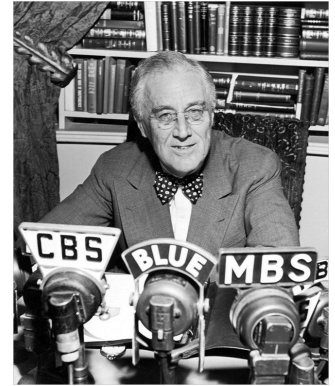
## The Hundred Days

One of the first issues FDR sought to address was the instability of the banking system. His economic advisors prepared the Emergency Banking Relief Act, which passed both houses of Congress within his first week in office. This law provided loans to banks to help them reopen and established some federal oversight of the banking industry. Months later the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) was created to insure bank deposits up to \$2500. This emphasized the commitment of the federal government to protecting deposits and preventing another panic. FDR's address of the Banking Crisis, among his attempts to address the depression with other initiatives, between March 9th and June 16th of 1933 were historically noted as (the first) Hundred Days. During the Hundred Days, Congress approved fifteen pieces of major social and economic legislation designed by a group of presidential advisors, known as "the brain trust." The first Hundred Days of the presidency has since become a precedent by which newly elected presidents are judged on their efforts to fulfill their campaign promises.



## Fireside Chats

Eight days after he was elected, FDR delivered his first fireside chat. Fireside chats were a series of radio addresses to calm the American public and to simplify and explain the initiatives and goals of the New Deal to the masses. As families might gather around the radio by the living room fireside to listen to these addresses, FDR explained his attempts at relief (to help those in need), recovery (to improve the economy of the US), and reform (change laws to prevent another economic crisis). FDR charmed Americans with his charisma, and he reached them directly without giving frequent public appearances in Washington. Fireside chats allowed for FDR to further conceal his disability. The public did not know that a disease had resulted in the loss of FDR's legs more than 11 years before FDR took office. He frequently sought rehabilitation and remedies to gain the use of his legs again, but he was confined to a wheelchair for the rest of his life. FDR concealed his disability from the American public by using leg braces, podiums, railing, and even other people to help hold him in an upright position on his legs for speeches occasionally.



1. What was the purpose of the New Deal?
2. What were the purpose of fireside chats?

## First Lady, Eleanor Roosevelt

Eleanor Roosevelt was a very dynamic and influential first lady. She redefined the roles and activism expected of a first lady. She was interested in humanitarian causes and social progress, and she was very vocal about them during her husband's time in the White House. As a supporter of women's activism, she was also instrumental in convincing Roosevelt to appoint more women to government positions. She traveled all over the United States to observe social conditions so she could keep the president informed about the state of the nation. She served as FDR's eyes and ears during his time in office, because of his limited mobility that was maintained as a secret. FDR spent much of his time engaging in hydrotherapy treatments at the "Little White House," his resort in Warm Springs, Georgia where he spent much of his time during the last two decades of his life treating his polio symptoms. *Interestingly, since his death researchers have concluded that it was more likely that FDR contracted Guillain-Barre Syndrome, rather than polio, from which he lost his ability to walk.*



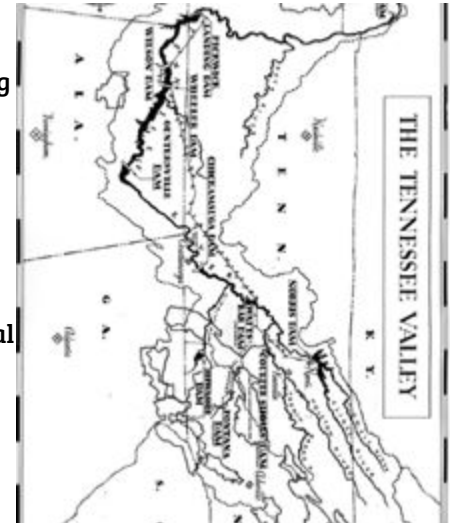
3. How did Eleanor Roosevelt come to symbolize social progress and women's activism?
4. Do you think she changed the role of the first lady? How?

## New Deal Relief Efforts

Unlike Hoover, FDR promised to provide direct federal relief to curb the effects of high unemployment. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) created a jobs program for young men aged 18 to 25. The men lived in camps and worked on a variety of conservation projects in US parks and recreation areas. During the nine years that it existed, over 2.5 million workers earned \$30 a month cutting trails, building reservoirs, and building a shelter-belt of 200 million trees stretching from Texas to Canada to protect against erosion, such as the conditions that contributed to the Dust Bowl. The Public Works Administration (PWA) also financed more than 34,000 construction projects, such as hospitals and schools, at a cost of more than \$6 billion. Although the New Deal did not end unemployment, it provided opportunity, hope, and national purpose which had been missing since the nation had spiraled into the depression.

## New Deal Recovery Efforts Cont.

FDR asked Congress to take unprecedented action to meet the farm crisis. The Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) proposed to increase farm income by paying farmers to leave acres unplanted. This was a controversial approach at a time when people were hungry. Due to decreased production of crops, the price of farm products rose after more than a decade of low crop prices. The Tennessee Valley Authority contributed to the New Deal's recovery program by helping to revitalize and modernize the south. It funded the construction of a system of dams and hydroelectric plants to provide inexpensive electricity and flood control for impoverished residents of the Tennessee Valley. This ambitious program of regional planning helped to stimulate growth in an area that had been amongst America's most underdeveloped regions.



5. What was the effect of the TVA on the rural South?

6. Which states were affected by the TVA recovery efforts besides Tennessee?

## Opposition to the New Deal

Father Charles Coughlin was a Catholic priest from Detroit. Known as the "Radio Priest," Coughlin delivered radio sermons to a nationwide audience estimated at over 30 million Americans. Like the late 19th century Populists, Coughlin supported nationalizing the banks and coining more silver dollars. Another critic of FDR was Francis E. Townsend, a retired physician who argued that the New Deal did not do enough for older Americans. He endorsed a program to provide relief checks to the elderly. Perhaps the most famous opponent of FDR was Huey Long, a colorful and controversial governor and US senator from Louisiana. He famously stated, "I'm a small fish here in Washington. But I'm the Kingfish to the folks down in Louisiana." Known as the "Kingfish," this radical populist claimed to be the enemy of Wall Street and big business. He developed the "Share Our Wealth" program, promising to tax the rich and guarantee each American a \$5000 home and an annual income of \$2500. Confident that he would win the election of 1936, he wrote a book about his goals for his time in the White House. However, he was assassinated on the steps of the Louisiana capitol in Baton Rouge in September of 1936.



7. Why did Huey Long oppose the New Deal?

## Court-Packing Scheme

In the summer of 1935, the Supreme Court began to deliver a series of decisions overturning key New Deal programs. FDR was alarmed that some New Deal programs were invalidated by these decisions and others could be overturned by the Supreme Court. Determined to protect the New Deal, FDR asked Congress for the authority to appoint a new Supreme Court justice for every member over the age of 70. This would allow him to change the number of justices from 9 to 15. Both the public and members of Congress opposed "court-packing" as a violation of judicial independence and the separation of powers. Rejection of FDR's Court Reform Bill was his first major legislative defeat as president. Ultimately, the Supreme Court upheld the Wagner Act and Social Security Act. Furthermore, several justices retired and FDR appointed nine new members to the Supreme Court while he was president.

8. Why were critics concerned that court packing could disrupt the system of checks and balances?



9. What is the main point of the political cartoons below?



## The Second New Deal

The Second New Deal was made possible by Democratic victories in both the House and Senate during the mid-term elections of 1934. FDR promised increased Democratic support in the legislature would allow him to further the goals of the New Deal.

## Works Progress Administration

Congress enacted the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in April of 1935. Initially funded with \$5 billion, the WPA launched an ambitious program that included constructing 600,000 miles of highways, repairing 100,000 bridges, and erecting thousands of public parks and recreational facilities. The WPA did more than hire construction workers. It also funded innovative projects designed to utilize the skills of artists, actors, and writers. For example, the Federal Art Project employed artists to paint murals for post offices, libraries, and other public buildings across America.

\*Refer to the end of the guided readings to examine slave narratives collected by WPA writers.



## The Social Security Act

Signed by FDR in August in 1935, the Social Security Act answered the Townsend Plan by enacting the New Deal's most far-reaching legislative initiative. The act established a pension for retired people over the age of sixty-five. A small payroll tax paid by both workers and employers financed the fund. In addition, the Social Security Act committed the national government to a broad range of social welfare activities including federal grants-in-aid for old age assistance and aid for dependent children. The Social Security Act also had some important limitations. It initially excluded farm laborers, domestic servants, and the self-employed. It also took money out of workers' paychecks when low consumer demand remained one of the main causes of the depression.



## The Wagner Act

The Second New Deal gave the labor movement a significant victory with the passage of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). Often called the Wagner Act for its sponsor, New York Senator Robert Wagner, the NLRA protected the right of workers to join unions and bargain collectively with management. The NLRA also created a National Labor Relations Board to supervise union elections and investigate unfair labor practices by employers. The Wagner Act resulted in increased union membership, with a jump from an estimated 3 million workers at the beginning of the depression to an estimated 9 million workers by the end of the 1930s.

10. After the passage of the Wagner Act, would it be legal to blacklist a worker belonging to a labor union?



## World War II and FDR's Opposition to Neutrality

The New Deal did not bring about the full economic recovery FDR promised. The US finally emerged from the Great Depression when the federal government sharply increased military spending as the nation prepared for World War II. America fought World War I as an idealistic crusade to "make the world safe for democracy." However, as totalitarian regimes became increasingly aggressive in Europe, American isolationists argued that the US should follow George Washington's advice to avoid becoming politically involved in European affairs and advocated for American neutrality.

To prevent FDR from involving America in what some saw as a European war, Congress passed a series of Neutrality Acts to make it illegal to sell arms or make loans to nations at war. FDR recognized that the US could not isolate itself from the spreading fascist aggression. In his 1936 Quarantine Speech, FDR warned "[t]he peace-loving nations must make a concerted effort in opposition to those violations of treaties . . . which today are creating a state of international anarchy and instability from which there is no escape through mere isolation or neutrality." The fourth of the Neutrality Acts, passed in 1939 in recognition of the Nazi threat to Western Europe's democracies, permitted the sale of arms to nations at war on a "cash and carry" basis. This meant that buyers would have to pay cash and send their own ships to American ports to pick up the supplies, thereby keeping American ships from being sunk by the Germans. While America tried to remain at peace, Hitler plunged Europe into war.

On September 1, 1939, Germany launched a massive blitzkrieg, or "lightning war," against Poland. France and Britain immediately declared war on Germany. Britain called on the US to support their fight against Nazi Germany. In a fireside chat, FDR explained that America must become an "arsenal of democracy" by providing war materials to Britain. He then asked Congress to approve a Lend-Lease Act allowing him to send war materials to any country whose defense he considered vital to the US. Congress approved the Lend-Lease Act in March of 1941. Depression ridden industries were reinvigorated by war mobilization to produce weapons.

11. What were the purpose of the Neutrality Acts?
12. Why did FDR oppose them?
13. Explain the difference between "cash and carry" and "lend-lease."
14. What is the message of the political cartoon to the right? (The ship is named "Aid That Will Win")
15. Do you recognize the illustrator (hint: he later became a children's author)?



16. How did the entrance of the US into World War II improve the economy of the US?

Create a blog post to share on social media to disseminate your message as either a member of the Brain Trust or Huey Long (or other opponent of FDR). *No, the internet still didn't exist for basically another 60 years.*

1. If you choose to be a member of the Brain Trust, write an endorsement of at least three New Deal programs. You must explain the purpose of each program and evaluate its effectiveness. **Persuade Americans to support the New Deal!**
2. If you choose to represent Huey Long or another FDR opponent, critique at least three of the New Deal Programs. You must explain the purpose of each program and evaluate its effectiveness. **Persuade Americans to protest the New Deal!**

You may complete either option in whatever illustrative medium you prefer. Upload it to Edmodo to submit.



*Do you know why this portrait of FDR at The Little White House was left unfinished?*

## WPA Slave Narratives

In the 1930s, the Works Progress Administration sponsored a Federal Writers' Project dedicated to chronicling the experience of slavery as remembered by former slaves. Approximately 70 years had passed since slavery ended in 1965, and the last surviving former slaves had grown old. African-American men and women born into slavery were interviewed. Their stories were recorded and transcribed and are now available to the public through the Library of Congress. The imbalance of power between African American interviewees and the white WPA writers (who were not always forthcoming about their purpose and intentions but represented themselves as government employees) left some interviewees suspicious of the writers or trying to appeal to them in the hopes of government aid during the depression.

1. Why were these narratives valuable, aside from creating work to employ out of work writers?
2. Why might we view these sources to be historically accurate?
3. What factors might make these narratives historically inaccurate?

## Interview #1

On July 6th, I interviewed Susan Hamlin, ex-slave, at 17 Henrietta street, Charleston, S.C. She was sitting just inside of the front door, on a step leading up to the porch, and upon hearing me inquire for her she assumed that I was from the Welfare office, from which she had received aid prior to its closing. I did not correct this impression. and at no time did she suspect that the object of my visit was to get the story of her experience as a slave. During our conversation she mentioned her age. "Why that's very interesting, Susan," I told her, "If you are that old you probably remember the Civil War and slavery days." "Yes, Ma'am, I been a slave myself," she said, and told me the following story:

"I kin remember some things like it was yesterday, but I is 104 years old now, and age is starting to get me, I can't remember everything like I use to. I getting old, old. You know I is old when I been a grown woman when the Civil War broke out. I was hired out then, to a Mr. McDonald, who lived on Atlantic Street, and I remembers when de first shot was fired, and the shells went right over the city. I got seven dollars a month for looking after children, not taking them out, you understand, just minding them. I did not got the money, Mause got it." "Don't you think that was fair?" I asked. "If you were fed and clothed by him, shouldn't he be paid for your work?" "Course it been fair," she answered, "I belong to him and he got to be get something to take care of me."

"My name before I was married was Susan Calder, but I married a man name Hamlin. I belonged to Mr. Edward Fuller, he was president of the First National Bank. He was a good man to his people till de Lord took him. Mr. Fuller got his slaves by marriage. He married Miss Mikell, a lady what lived on Edisto Island, who was a slave owner, and we lived on Edisto on a plantation. I don't remember de name cause when Mr. Fuller got to be president of de bank we come to Charleston to live. He sell out the plantation and say them (the slaves) that want to come to Charleston with him could come and them what wants to stay can stay on the island with his wife's people. We had our choice. Some is come and some is stay, but my ma and us children come with Mr. Fuller.

We lived on St. Philip street. The house still there, good as ever. I go 'round there to see it all de time the cistern still there too, where we used to sit 'round and drink the cold water, and eat, and talk and laugh. Mr. Fuller have lots of servants and the ones he didn't need hisself he hired out. The slaves had rooms in the back, the ones with children had two rooms and them that didn't have any children had one room, not to cook in but to sleep in. They all cooked and ate downstairs in the hall that they had for the colored people. I don't know about slavery but I know all the slavery I know about, and the people was good to me. Mr. Fuller was a good man and his wife's people been grand people, all good to their slaves. Seem like Mr. Fuller just git his slaves so he could be good to dem. He made all the little colored chillen love him. If you don't believe they loved him what they all cry, and scream, and holler for when dey hear he dead? 'Oh, Mause dead my Mause dead, what I going to do, my Mause dead.' Dey tell dem t'aint no use to cry, dat can't bring him back, but de chillen keep on crying. We used to call him Mause Eddie but he named Mr. Edward Fuller, and he sure was a good man.

"A man come here about a month ago, say he from de Government, and dey send him to find out 'bout slavery. I give him most a book, and what he give me? A dime. He ask me all kind of questions. He ask me dis and he ask me dat, didn't de white people do dis and did dey do dat but Mr. Fuller was a good man, he was sure good to me and all his people, dey all like him, God bless him, he in de ground now but I ain't going to let nobody lie on him. You know he good when even the little chillen cry and holler when he dead. I tell you dey couldn't just fix us up any kind of way when we going to Sunday School. We had to be dressed nice, if you pass him and you ain't dress to suit him he send you right back and say tell your ma to see dat you dress right. Dey couldn't send you out in de cold barefoot neither. I 'member one day my ma want to send me wid some milk for her sister-in-law what live 'round de corner. I fuss cause it cold and say 'how you going to send me out wid no shoe, and it cold?' Mause hear how I talkin and turn he back and laugh, den he call to my ma to gone in de house and find shoe to put on my feet and don't let him see me barefoot again in cold weather."

When de war start going good and de shell fly over Charleston he take all us up to Aiken for protection. Talk 'bout marching through Georgia, dey sure march through Aiken, soldiers was everywhere.

"My ma had six children, three boys and three girls, but I de only one left, all my white people and all de colored people gone, not a soul left but me. I ain't been sick in 25 years. I is near my church and I don't miss service any Sunday, night or morning. I kin walk wherever I please, I kin walk to de battery if I want to. The Welfare use to help me but dey

shut down now, I can't find out if dey going to open again or not. Miss (Mrs.) Buist and Miss Pringle, dey help me when I can go there but all my own dead."

"Were most of the masters kind?" I asked. "Well you know," she answered, "times den was just like dey is now, some was kind and some was mean; heaps of wickedness went on just de same as now. All my people was good people. I see some wickedness and I hear 'bout all kinds of t'ings but you don't know whether it was lie or not. Mr. Fuller been a Christian man.

"do you think it would have been better if the negroes had never left africa?" Was the next question I asked. "No Ma'am," (emphatically) dem heathen didn't have no religion. I tell you how I t'ink it is. The Lord made t'ree nations, the white, the red and the black, and put dem in different places on de earth where dey was to stay. Dose black ignoramuses in Africa forgot God, and didn't have no religion and God blessed and prospered the white people dat did remember Him and sent dem to teach de black people even if dey have to grab dem and bring dem into bondage till dey learned some sense. The Indians forgot God and dey had to be taught better so dey land was taken away from dem. God sure bless and prosper de white people and He put de red and de black people under dem so dey could teach dem and bring dem into sense wid God. Dey had to get dere brains right, and honor God, and learn uprightness wid God cause ain't He make you, and ain't His Son redeem you and save you wid His precious blood. You kin plan all de wickedness you want and pull hard as you choose but when the Lord mek up His mind you is to change, He can change you dat quick (snapping her fingers) and easy. You got to believe on Him if it tek bondage to bring you to your knees."

You know I is got converted. I been in Big Bethel (church) on my knees praying under one of de preachers. I see a great, big, dark pack on my back, and it had me all bent over and my shoulders drawn down, all hunch up. I look up and I see de glory, I see a big beautiful light, a great light, and in de middle is de Sabior, hanging so (extending her arms) just like He died. Den I gone to praying good, and I can feel de sheckles (shackles) loose up and moving and de pack fall off. I don't know where it went to, I see de angels in de Heaven, and hear dem say 'Your sins are forgiven.' I scream and fell off so. (Swoon.) When I come to dey has laid me out straight an I know I is converted cause you can't see no such sight and go on like you is before. I know I is still a sinner but I believe in de power of God an I trust his Holy name. Den dey put me wid de seekers but I know I is already saved."

"Did they take good care of the slaves when their babies were born?" she was asked. "If you want chickens for fat (to fatten) you got to feed dem," she said with a smile, "and if you want people to work dey got to be strong, you got to feed dem and take care of dem too. If dey can't work it come out of your pocket. Lots of wickedness gone on in dem days, just as it do now, some good, some mean, black and white, it just dere nature, if dey good dey going to be kind to everybody, if dey mean dey going to be mean to everybody. Sometimes chillen was sold away from dey parents. De Mause would come and say "Where Jennie," tell um to put clothes on dat baby, I want um. He sell de baby and de ma scream and holler, you know how dey carry on. Geneally (generally) dey sold it when de ma wasn't dere. Mr. Fuller didn't sell none of us, we stay wid our ma's till we grown. I stay wid my ma till she dead.

"You know I is mix blood, my grandfather bin a white man and my grandmother a mulatto. She been marry to a black so dat how I get fix like I is. I got both blood, so how I going to quarrel wid either side?"

SOURCE: Interview with Susan Hamlin, 17 Henrietta Street

NOTE \* Susan lives with a mulatto family of the better type. The name is Hamlin not Hamilton, and her name prior to her marriage was Calder not Collins. I paid particular attention to this and had them spell the names for me. I would judge Susan to be in the late nineties but she is wonderfully well preserved. She now claims to be 104 years old.

## Interview #2

Ex-Slave 101 Years of Age

Has Never Shaken Hands Since 1863

Was on Knees Scrubbing when Freedom Gun Fired

I'm a hund'ed an' one years old now, son. De only one livin' in my crowd frum de days I wuz a slave. Mr. Fuller, my master, who was president of the Firs' National Bank, owned the fambly of us except my father. There were eight men an' women with five girls an' six boys workin' for him. Most o' them wus hired out. De house in which we stayed is still dere with de sisterns an' slave quarters. I always go to see de old home which is on St. Phillip Street.

My ma had t'ree boys an' t'ree girls who did well at their work. Hope Mikell, my eldest brodder, an' James wus de shoemaker. William Fuller, son of our Master, wus de bricklayer. Margurite an' Catharine wus de maids an' look as de children.

My pa b'long to a man on Edisto Island. Frum what he said, his master was very mean. Pa real name wus Adam Collins but he took his master' name; he wus de coachman. Pa did supin one day en his master whipped him. De next day which wus Monday, pa carry him 'bout four miles frum home in de woods an' give him de same 'mount of lickin' he wus given on Sunday. He tied him to a tree an' unhitched de horse so it couldn't git tie-up an' kill e self. Pa den gone to de landin' an' cetch a boat dat wus comin' to Charleston wood fa'm products. He (was) permitted by his master to go to town on errands, which helped him to go on de boat without bein' question'. W'en he got here he gone on de water-front an' ax for a job on a ship so he could git to de North. He got de job an' sail' wood de ship. Dey search de island up an' down for him wood houndogs en w'en it wus t'ought he wus drowned, 'cause dey track him to de river, did dey give up. One of his master' friend gone to New York en went in a store w'ere pa wus employed as a clerk. He recognize' pa is easy is pa recognize' him. He gone back home an' tell pa master who know den dat pa wusn't comin' back an' before he died he sign' papers dat pa wus free. Pa' ma wus dead an' he come down to bury her by de permission of his master' son who had promised no ha'm would come to him, but dey wus' fixin' plans to keep him, so he went to de Work House an' ax to be sold 'cause any slave could see e self if e could git to de Work House. But it wus on record down dere so dey couldn't sell 'im an' told him his master' people couldn't hold him a slave.

People den use to do de same t'ings dey do now. Some marry an' some live together jus' like now. One t'ing, no minister nebber say in readin' de matrimony "let no man put asounder" 'cause a couple would be married tonight an' tomorrow one would be taken away en be sold. All slaves wus married in dere master house, in de livin' room where slaves an' dere missus an' mossa wus to witness de ceremony. Brides use to wear some of de finest dress an' if dey could afford it, have de best kind of furniture. Y our master nor your missus objected to good t'ings.

I'll always 'member Clory, de washer. She wus very high-tempered. She was a mulatto with beautiful hair she could sit on; Clory didn't take foolishness frum anybody. One day our missus gone in de laundry an' find fault with de clothes. Clory didn't do a t'ing but pick her up bodily an' throw 'er out de door. Dey had to sen' fur a doctor 'cause she pregnant an' less than two hours de baby wus bo'n. Afta dat she begged to be sold ur she didn't [want] to kill missus, but our master ain't nebber want to sell his slaves. But dat didn't keep Clory frum gittin' a brutal whippin'. Dey whip' 'er until dere wusn't a white spot on her body. Dat wus de worst I ebber see a human bein' got sucha beatin'. I t'ought she wus goin' to die, but she got well an' didn't get any better but meaner until our master decide it wus bes' to rent her out. She willingly agree' since she wusn't 'round missus. She hated an' detest' both of them an' all de fambly.

W'en any slave wus whipped all de other slaves wus made to watch. I see women hung frum de ceilin' of buildin's an' whipped with only supin tied 'round her lower part of de body, until w'en dey wus taken down, dere wusn't breath in de body. I had some terribly bad experiences.

Yankees use to come t'rough de streets, especially de Big Market, huntin' those who want to go to de "free country" as dey call' it. M en an' women wus always missin' an' nobody could give 'count of dere disappearance. De men wus train' up North fur sojus.

De white race is so brazen. Dey come here an' run de Indians frum dere own lan', but dey couldn't make dem slaves 'cause dey wouldn't stan' for it. Indians use to git up in trees an' shoot dem with poison arrow. W'en dey couldn't make dem slaves den dey gone to Africa an' bring dere black brother and sister. Dey say 'mong themselves, "we gwine mix dem up en make ourselves king. Dats de only way we'd git even with de Indians."

All time, night an' day, you could hear men an' women screamin' to de tip of dere voices as either ma, pa, sister, or brother wus take without any warnin' an' sell. Some time mother who had only one chile wus separated fur life. People wus always dyin' frum a broken heart.

One night a couple married an' de next mornin' de boss sell de wife. De gal ma got in in de street an' cursed de white woman fur all she could find. She said: "dat damn white, pale-face bastard sell my daughter who jus' married las' night," an' other ti'ings. The white man tresten' her to call de police if she didn't stop, but de collud woman said: "hit me or call de police. I redder die dan to stan' dis any longer." De police took her to de Work House by de white woman orders an' what became of 'er, I never hear.

W'en de war began we wus taken to Aiken, South Ca'lina w'ere we stay' until de Yankees come t'rough. We could see balls sailin' t'rough de air w'en Sherman wus comin'. Bumbs h it trees in our yard. W'en de freedom gun wus fired, I wus on my 'nees scrubbin'. Dey tell me I wus free but I didn't b'lieve it.

In de days of slavery woman wus jus' given time 'nough to deliver dere babies. Dey deliver de baby 'bout eight in de mornin' an' twelve had to be back to work.

I wus a member of Emmanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church for 67 years. Big Zion, across de street wus my church before den an' before Old Bethel w'en I lived on de other end of town.

Sence Lincoln shook hands with his assasin who at de same time shoot him, frum dat day I stop shakin' hands, even in de church, an' you know how long dat wus. I don't b'lieve in kissin' neider fur all carry dere meannesses. De Master wus betrayed by one of his bosom frien' with a kiss.

\*Augustus Ladson conducted this interview with Susan "Hamilton," clearly the same person as Susan Hamlin. Ladson's racial identity is unknown, but this account of the interview strongly suggests that he was black. Even in Depression-era South Carolina, Hamilton/Hamlin could only have spoken about the brutalities of slavery so frankly and without fear of recrimination to a fellow African American.

4. These two accounts were given by the same interviewee. List some major differences between the two accounts.

5. Why do you think Hamlin/ Hamilton gave different accounts to different interviewers?

# World War II

World War II was the culminating event in the United States' rise to the level of a superpower. Though initially reluctant to become involved in the fighting, once attacked, the United States responded with military and economic contributions that led to an Allied victory. Responding to the country's need to fight the war, the federal government grew larger.

## Protesting Discrimination

In 1941, **A. Philip Randolph**, the founder of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, proposed a march on Washington, D.C., to protest discrimination in the military and in industry. He called on African Americans from all over the United States to come to Washington and join him. President Roosevelt, afraid the march might cause unrest among whites, summoned Randolph to the White House and asked him to call off the march. When Randolph refused, Roosevelt issued an executive order that called on employers and labor unions to cease discrimination in hiring practices in industries related to defense. As a result of Roosevelt's actions, the march was canceled.

## Pearl Harbor and Its Aftermath

On the morning of December 7, 1941, the navy of the Empire of Japan launched a surprise attack on the US Navy base at **Pearl Harbor**, Hawaii. Over 2,400 Americans were killed and 1,178 more were wounded, 19 ships were damaged, and over 300 aircraft were destroyed. The Japanese attack took the United States officially into World War II. One effect of America's entry into the war was alarm about the loyalty of Japanese Americans: 120,000 Japanese Americans lived in the United States, most of them on the West Coast. Fears of spies and sabotage led to prejudice and sometimes violence against Japanese Americans. In the name of national security, Roosevelt ordered all people of Japanese ancestry be moved from California and parts of Washington, Oregon, and Arizona to rural prison camps. Although most of the people imprisoned in these **internment** camps were Japanese Americans, there were also small numbers of German Americans and Italian Americans imprisoned under the same law, as well as hundreds of Native Americans from Alaska.

1. Who was A. Philip Randolph?
2. What did he do?
3. What did Roosevelt do in response to him refusing to the call off the march?
4. What happened on December 7, 1941?
5. What were the casualties?
6. What did the attack on Pearl Harbor move some Americans to do?
7. What was the purpose of Roosevelt's Executive Order?
8. Who was sent to internment camps and why?



## The “European Theater” and “Pacific Theater”

The United States entered World War II after the attack at Pearl Harbor. There were two theaters of war. American forces fought in both the Pacific and in Europe. Fighting in the Pacific Theater presented some extra strategic difficulties and ultimately led to the use of atomic weapons to end the war. The distance across the Pacific was three times the distance from New York to Great Britain. It could take up to five months for supplies to get from California to Australia. The decision to prioritize the war in Europe sent the best and greatest amount of equipment to Europe. This allocation of resources meant that forces in the Pacific faced outdated equipment and shortages until the United States' industrial capacity could catch up with demand. Additionally, there was little or no infrastructure to transport and store supplies in the Pacific once they arrived in the theater. Finally, the climate of the Pacific region was difficult to manage and caused food supplies to spoil. These conditions led to the Allied policy of **Island Hopping** across islands that served as landing strips. These locations allowed air bombardments of Japanese fortifications. The Pacific Theater presented unique challenges for the United States in delivering food, weapons, and medical supplies to troops in the region during World War II. Headway was made in the Pacific six months after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The United States won a sea battle against the Japanese Navy that was a turning point in World War II. The Japanese tried to trap and sink America's aircraft carriers near Midway Island, which was an American refueling station for ships and airplanes. The United States had gained intelligence information that the attack was coming and lured the Japanese into the waiting American forces. In the **Battle at Midway**, the United States destroyed four Japanese aircraft carriers while losing only one American carrier. The American victory at Midway is regarded as the most important naval engagement of the Pacific campaign. The success was also a huge morale boost for the United States. The Japanese never recovered from this defeat, which enabled the United States to gain control of other strategic Pacific Islands.

Eventually, the Island Hopping campaign in the Pacific led President Truman to a critical juncture. President Roosevelt had died in early 1945 and Harry Truman was the new President responsible for making the decisions regarding the conduct of the war. Should the United States use a new atomic weapon or would a military invasion of Japan's mainland be necessary to achieve victory in the Pacific? The development of the atomic weapon had been a tightly held secret and would certainly cause significant damage if used in battle.

The **Manhattan Project** was a code name for a secret research and development program whose goal was to build an atomic weapon during World War II. European scientists who fled Germany in the early 1930s, including Albert Einstein, feared that German physicists were developing an atomic weapon for Hitler. The scientists urged Roosevelt and Churchill to create a similar program. United States General Leslie Groves led the development of numerous research labs, where three atomic weapons were ultimately created. One of the research labs was the Los Alamos facility in New Mexico.

9. What were some of the challenges of fighting a war in two “theaters” of the world?

*In the European Theater?*

*In the Pacific Theater?*

10. What was the Manhattan Project?

