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Review of *Mister, You Got Yourself a Horse* Edited by Roger L. Welsch

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Mister, You Got Yourself a Horse. Edited by Roger L. Welsch. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1981. Illustrations, glossary, bibliography. 202 pp. Cloth. \$14.95.

This fine new book indicates a welcome direction regional scholars are taking in attending to cultural traditions in particular states. The Great Depression of the 1930s altered America and left behind some troublesome problems; but those hard times led to the serious collection of regional folklife by members of the Federal Writers' Project (an arm of the Works Progress Administration under FDR), and we are still discovering and wondering over the materials passed to us by those WPA writers and collectors. Roger Welsch's collection is the result of a modern scholar's discovery of a body of WPA materials in Nebraska. The collecting was done in the thirties across the nation, and many of the collectors concentrated on the realm of everyday life and work. Deposits of this kind are being studied with new eyes in our search for meaningful ways to account for the shadows in the streams of local and state history. In the case of Welsch's Nebraska compilation, the volume turns particularly toward transcribed stories that inform us of and reflect upon the theme of "work" (in its tight relationship with "play"). Many of the narratives are about the wondrous, complex, and mythical subject of horseflesh and the farmers and tradesmen whose lives and livelihoods were linked to the world of horses.

These narratives were selected from the WPA vaults with great care and represent the editor's selection of the best renditions. Welsch adds an introduction that provides background information on the stories. The book's sections are titled "The Traders," "Horses," "Some Trades," and "Racers." There is a helpful glossary for the reader not conversant with such terms as "pelters," "cribbers," and "switchers." There is also a bibliography, but no index.

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