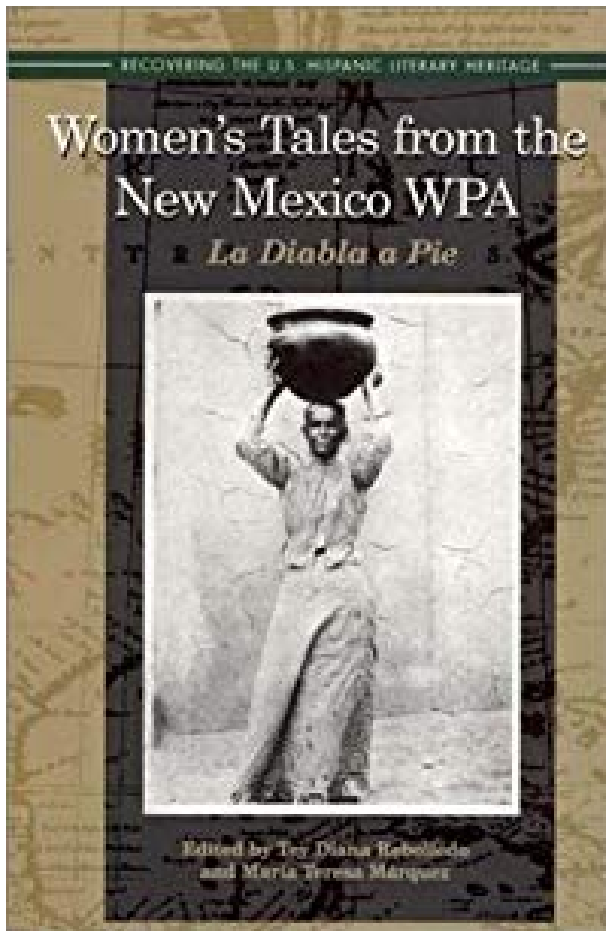


Women's Tales from the New Mexico Wpa: La Diabla a Pie



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Cultural Writing. At the height of the 1930's Great Depression, President Franklin Roosevelt instituted a Federal Writers Project as part of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), one of many government programs aimed at getting the populace back to work. Many writers participated through activities such as compiling a series of state guides, gathering folksongs, and recording the oral narratives of still-living ex-slaves. New Mexico was among the states participating in this effort, and the project workers there included two women interviewers, Lou Sage Batchen and Annette Hesch Thorp. Their work placed particular emphasis upon gathering Hispanic women's tales, or cuentos. The two interviewed many native old-timers, gathering folktales as well as gleaning vivid details of a way of life now gone.