

The first collection of essays on the life and work of Sanora Babb

Unknown No More

Recovering Sanora Babb

Edited by Joanne Dearcopp and Christine Hill Smith

Thanks in part to the Ken Burns documentary *The Dust Bowl*, Sanora Babb is perhaps best known today for her novel *Whose Names Are Unknown* (2004), which might have been published in 1939 had her publisher not thought the market too small for two Dust Bowl novels, hers and Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*. Into the twenty-first century, Babb wrote and published lyrical prose and poetry that revealed her prescient ideas about gender, race, and the environment. The essays collected in *Unknown No More* recover and analyze her previously unrecognized contributions to American letters.

Editors Joanne Dearcopp and Christine Hill Smith have assembled a group of distinguished scholars who, for the first time in book-length form, explore the life and work of Sanora Babb. This collection of pathbreaking essays addresses Babb's position within the literature of the Great Plains and American West, her leftist political odyssey as a card-carrying Communist who ultimately broke with the Party, and her ecofeminist leanings as reflected in the environmental themes she explored in her fiction and nonfiction.

With literary sensibilities reminiscent of Willa Cather, Ralph Ellison, and Meridel LeSueur, Babb's work revealed gender-based, environmental, and working-class injustices from the Depression era to the late twentieth century. No longer unknown, Sanora Babb's life and work form a prism through which the peril and promise of twentieth-century America may be seen.

Joanne Dearcopp, Sanora Babb's literary executor and agent, is an author, writing coach, and publisher. She has worked at Simon & Schuster, McCall Books, and Grolier Publishing. **Christine Hill Smith** is Professor of Humanities/Communication at Colorado Mountain College and the author of *Social Class in the Writings of Mary Hallock Foote* and coeditor of *Sites of Insight: Colorado Sacred Places*. **David M. Wrobel** is Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Oklahoma and the author of numerous articles and books, including *America's West: A History, 1890–1950*.

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