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Biographies

1051. Harris, Trudier, and Thadious M.
Davis, eds. Afro-American Writers, 1940-1955,
(Dictionary of Literary Biography, Vol. 76).

This “sixth and final volume in [the DLB]
series devoted exclusively to Afro-American
writers” (p. xi) covers twenty-six novelists,
poets, playwrights, biographers, screenwriters,
and essayists who published significant works
between 1940 and 1955. Other volumes in the
subseries cover fiction writers after 1955 (see
ARBA 85, entry 1056), dramatists and prose
writers after 1955 (see ARBA 86, entry 1155),
poets after 1955 (see ARBA 86, entry 1155),
writers before the Harlem Renaissance (see
ARBA 87, entry 1069), and writers from the
Harlem Renaissance to 1940 (see ARBA 88,
entry 1158). The essays in this volume begin with a
list of works by each writer followed by discus-
sions (punctuated with photographs) of each
writer’s life and works, and conclude with
selected references to critical works (not
linked to the text) and locations of papers. Essay
length varies for each author based on his or her
renown (e.g., three pages for William Blackwes
Branch, twenty-three for Richard Wright).
References are often insufficient (e.g., two ref-
ences for J. Saunders Redding, three for
Melvin Tolson, four for Margaret Walker),
although the entry for Ralph Ellison has eighty-
one references. The essays are well written,
some critical, some simply descriptive, by little-
known scholars (although Robert Farnsworth
composed the Tolson entry), and all significant
authors of the period are covered (e.g., Gwend-
dolyne Brooks, Robert Hayden, Chester Himes,
Ann Petry). Three additional essays describe the
Hatch-Billops Collection, the Moorland-
Spingarn Research Center, and the Schomburg
Center. A superfluous reprint of the readily
available December 1950 issue of Phylon ex-
pands the text by sixty-two pages, space that
could have been better used for an analytical
index. The work concludes with a forty-six-item
general bibliography and the usual DLB cumu-
lathe index.

Handbooks

1053. Colonization, 1640-1865
illus. index. (Con-
 temporary Literary Biography (Contemporary)
0-8103-1819-9.

This work is a
volume Concise Literary Biography (Con-
siderable volumes in Ameri-
can authors. Romantic periods
that do not need
ceptions)

The entries
not from the parent