



Documentary Photography of the New Deal

A Legacy of Social Conscience

Saturday, March 12, 2005

Presented by the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum

Documentary Photography of the New Deal

A Legacy of Social Conscience

When

Saturday, March 12, 2005

8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Where

Henry A. Wallace Visitor and Education Center at the
Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and the
Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site
4079 Albany Post Road, Hyde Park, New York

Registration fee

\$15 pre-registration, \$5 students

\$25 at the door, \$10 students

Presented by

The Franklin D. Roosevelt
Presidential Library and Museum

Sponsored by

The Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute
with additional funding provided by
The Dyson Foundation and the
Wallace Genetic Foundation

Cover

Dorothea Lange. *Mother and baby of family on the road,
Tulelake, Siskiyou County, California. September 1939.*

About the Conference

Documentary Photography of the New Deal: A Legacy of Social Conscience, a conference organized by the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library, will be held Saturday, March 12, 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM. The conference explores themes suggested by the Library's current special exhibition, *"This Great Nation Will Endure": Photographs of the Great Depression*. The exhibit showcases 175 images produced by Dorothea Lange, Walker Evans, Ben Shahn, Gordon Parks, Carl Mydans, Marion Post Wolcott, Jack Delano, and Russell Lee, the legendary documentary photographers of the New Deal's Farm Security Administration.

Lawrence W. Levine, a MacArthur Award-winning historian who teaches at George Mason University and the University of California at Berkeley, is the co-author with Cornelia R. Levine of *The People and the President: America's Conversations with FDR* (Beacon Press, 2002). He will deliver the keynote address and lead a morning panel discussion on the photo unit of Farm Security Administration. The afternoon session will explore the legacy of FSA photography and its impact on modern documentary photographers in the Hudson Valley. *The Plow That Broke the Plains* and *The River*, the groundbreaking documentary films produced by Pare Lorentz for the Farm Security Administration will be screened during lunch.

The conference will take place in the Henry A. Wallace Visitor and Education Center located at the FDR Presidential Library and Museum and Home of FDR National Historic Site. Space is limited. Pre-registration is strongly suggested: \$15, which includes continental breakfast, lunch and closing reception. Students with valid ID, \$5. Onsite registration on the day of conference on a space available basis: \$25 adults and \$10 students with valid ID.

For additional information please call 845.486.7745 or visit www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu. The conference is sponsored by the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute with additional funding provided by The Dyson Foundation and the Wallace Genetic Foundation.

Agenda

- 8:30 a.m. Continental Breakfast
- 9:00 - 9:15 a.m. Welcoming Remarks
- 9:15 - 10:15 a.m. Keynote Address
The History and Legacy of FSA Photography
Lawrence W. Levine
Professor of History and Cultural Studies,
George Mason University
- 10:15 - 10:30 a.m. Break
- 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Panel Presentation
Unique Aspects of the FSA Photography Project
Moderator
Lawrence W. Levine
Panelists
Beverly W. Brannan
Curator of Photography, Library of Congress
Dr. Cara A. Finnegan
Assistant Professor of Rhetorical Studies,
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. Lunch and Film Excerpts
The Plow That Broke the Plains and *The River*
by FSA documentary film maker, Pare Lorentz
- 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. Presentation
Dustbowl Descent - Re-photographing the Subjects of the Farm Security Administration Photographs
Bill Ganzel
Author & Photographer, Executive Producer, Interactive Media Group
- 2:30 - 2:45 p.m. Break
- 2:45 - 4:00 p.m. Panel Presentation
Contemporary Documentary Photography
Moderator
Benjamin Krevolin
President, Dutchess County Arts Council
Panelists
Joan Barker
Communications and Media, SUNY New Paltz
Spencer Ainsley
Director of Photography & Videography,
Poughkeepsie Journal
- 4:00 - 5:00 p.m. Wrap-up Discussion
All speakers moderated by Lawrence W. Levine
- 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. Reception and Tour of FSA photography exhibit
William J. vanden Heuvel Gallery
FDR Presidential Library and Museum

“This Great Nation Will Endure”: Photographs of the Great Depression

September 12, 2004 - July 17, 2005

“This Great Nation Will Endure” is a photographic exhibition of 175 images of America taken between 1935 and 1942 by the legendary photographic unit of the Farm Security Administration. During the 1930s and early 1940s, the FSA employed a remarkable group of photographers—including Dorothea Lange, Gordon Parks, Ben Shahn, John Vachon, Walker Evans, John Collier, Arthur Rothstein, Walker Evans, Carl Mydans, Russell Lee, Marion Post Wolcott and Jack Delano—to document the lives and struggles of Americans enduring the Great Depression. Their work includes some of the most familiar—and powerful—images of the nation to emerge from those difficult years. Many have reached iconic status in American culture.

The exhibition includes FSA photographs from every region of the nation. It is one of the largest and richest exhibitions of FSA photography ever mounted, and includes reproductions of many photographs in dramatically large formats. A soundtrack consisting of FSA audio recordings of folk music sung by migrant workers fills part of the exhibit space. Also included is a specially-commissioned short documentary film that explores the work of several of the most prominent FSA photographers.

A New Deal agency created by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the FSA sought to help American farmers and farm laborers who were confronting economic depression and natural disaster, including the ecological disaster known as the Dust Bowl. For much of its history, the agency was connected to the Department of Agriculture, led by Henry A. Wallace.

Most of the photographs in the massive FSA photo collection depict rural life and hardships. But the collection also includes images of town and city life. In tens of thousands of photographs, the FSA created a remarkably diverse record of life in America during the 1930s and early 1940s—including images of hardship, endurance, hope, recovery, migration, recreation, and community life.

These photographs provide visual affirmation of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s bold assertion in his first inaugural address, which he delivered at the lowest point of the Great Depression: “This great nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper....the only thing we have to fear is fear itself....”



Images (clockwise from upper left)

Dorothea Lange. *Unemployment Benefits Aid Begins*. Line of men inside a division office of the State Employment Service office at San Francisco, California, waiting to register for benefits on one of the first days the office was open. January 1938.

Gordon Parks. *Government Charwoman*. August 1942.

Arthur Rothstein. *Father and Sons Walking in the Face of a Dust Storm*. April 1936.

Dorothea Lange. *Migrant Mother*. February 1936.

Registration Form

Name

Address

.....

City

State

Zip

Telephone

Email

The registration fee is \$15 (\$5 students) prior to the date of the conference and \$25 (\$10 students) at the door. Checks should be made out to *FERI*.

Please charge \$.....to my Mastercard Visa

Card #.....Expiration Date.....

Name (as printed on card).....

Signature

Mail payment with this form to:

FSA Conference
c/o Cliff Laube
FDR Presidential Library
4079 Albany Post Road
Hyde Park, NY 12538

I do / do not (circle one) plan to attend the reception and tour of the FSA photography exhibit at 5:00 p.m.