PICTURES BY DOROTHEA LANGE



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This image of Dorothea Lange, cropped from a larger picture, depicts the Resettlement Administration's photographer as she appeared, on the job in California, during February of 1936. Online via the Library of Congress.

In the early months of 1936, <u>Florence Owens Thompson</u> (a 32-year-old Oklahoman who had moved to California some years before) was in desperate straits. A widow, she was (at the time) the mother of six.

Jim Hill (her companion and acting father to her children) was, among other things, a "peapicker" but was unable to provide for his family since the pea crop had failed. The Thompsons had just sold their tent to buy food.

Years later, in 1960, Dorothea Lange <u>described</u> an encounter between the two women which led to Lange's most famous Farm Administration photographs:

I saw and approached the hungry and desperate mother, as if drawn by a magnet. I do not remember how I explained my presence or my camera to her, but I do remember she asked me no auestions.

I made five exposures, working closer and closer from the same direction. I did not ask her name or her history. She told me her age, that she was thirty-two. She said that they had been living on frozen vegetables from the surrounding fields, and birds that the children killed. She had just sold the tires from her car to buy food.

There she sat in that <u>lean-to tent</u> with her children huddled around her, and seemed to know that my pictures might help her (they clearly did), and so she helped me. There was a sort of equality about it. (From: Popular Photography, Feb. 1960.)

From abandoned homes and tenant shelters in the plains, to hopelessness in the cities, Dorothea Lange documented "fear itself." The <u>record</u> (be patient with this link) she created is remarkable:

- An <u>abandoned farm</u>, surrounded <u>by sand</u>, in the Coldwater District north of Dalhart, Texas.
- In nearly-deserted Tamarack (Adams County, Idaho), a former <u>sawmill</u> stands empty.
- When the drought came, tenant farmers in many states left, as shown by abandoned <u>shelters</u> in the <u>Mississippi Delta</u>, Texas (<u>near Roscoe</u> and <u>Childress County</u>) and elsewhere.
- In a Kern County (California) Farm Administration camp, an Oklahoma grandmother (of 22) tries to make do.
- An antebellum plantation home (in Greene County, Georgia) had lost its former beauty.
- A family from Arkansas tried their best to make a new life in California.

One of America's bright spots, during the depression years, was the <u>Empire State Building</u>. Started in 1930, just months after the stock-market crash, it remained the world's <u>tallest skyscraper</u> until the first tower of the World Trade Center was finished in 1973.

Ultimately an "an icon for all things New York" - especially after the $\underline{1933 \text{ movie King Kong}}$ - it remains the subject of movies and stories today.

Let's take a virtual visit.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/PICTURES-BY-DOROTHEA-LANGE-King-Kong

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/PICTURES-BY-DOROTHEA-LANGE-King-Kong

Media Stream



Dorothea Lange

Photo of Dorothea Lange while she was working as a Resettlement Administration photographer. February of 1936. Image online via the Library of Congress.

View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Dorothea-Lange



Florence Owens Thompson

Photo by Dorothea Lange, from the American Memory Collection at the Library of Congress. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Florence-Owens-Thompson



Pea Pickers

Photo by Dorothea Lange, from the American Memory Collection at the Library of Congress. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Pea-Pickers



Abandoned Farm - Depression-Era America

Photo by Dorothea Lange, from the American Memory Collection at the Library of Congress.

View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Abandoned-Farm-Depression-Era-America



Abandoned Farm Surrounded by Sand - Depression-Era America

Photo by Dorothea Lange, from the American Memory Collection at the Library of Congress. View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Abandoned-Farm-Surrounded-by-Sand-Depression-Era-America



Former Saw Mill - Depression-Era America

Photo by Dorothea Lange, from the American Memory Collection at the Library of Congress. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Former-Saw-Mill-Depression-Era-America



Abandoned Shelter During America's Great Depression

Photo by Dorothea Lange, from the America Memory Collection at the Library of Congress. View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Abandoned-Shelter-During-America-s-Great-Depression



Mississippi Delta - Abandoned Shelter

Photo by Dorothea Lange, from the American Memory Collection at the Library of Congress.

View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Mississippi-Delta-Abandoned-Shelter



Roscoe Texas - Abandoned Farm

Photo by Dorothea Lange, from the American Memory Collection at the Library of Congress. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Roscoe-Texas-Abandoned-Farm



An Antebellum Plantation Home is Abandoned

Photo by Dorothea Lange, from the American Memory Collection at the Library of Congress. View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/An-Antebellum-Plantation-Home-is-Abandoned



Childress County, Texas - Abandoned Farm

Photo by Dorothea Lange, from the American Memory Collection at the Library of Congress.

View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Childress-County-Texas-Abandoned-Farm



Homeless Family from Arkansas

Photo by Dorothea Lange, from the American Memory Collection at the Library of Congress. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Homeless-Family-from-Arkansas



Life in Desperate Times

Photo by Dorothea Lange, from the American Memory Collection at the Library of Congress. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Life-in-Desperate-Times



Living in a Farm Administration Camp

Photo by Dorothea Lange, from the American Memory Collection at the Library of Congress.

View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Living-in-a-Farm-Administration-Camp



Rear of the Plantation Home

Photo by Dorothea Lange, from the American Memory Collection at the Library of Congress. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Rear-of-the-Plantation-Home



The Empire State Building

Image online, courtesy the U.S. Library of Congress.

View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/The-Empire-State-Building



Trying to Make Do with Very Little

Photo by Dorothea Lange, from the American Memory Collection at the Library of Congress. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Trying-to-Make-Do-with-Very-Little



View of the Empire State Builing

Image online, courtesy the U.S. Library of Congress.

View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/View-of-the-Empire-State-Builing



 $\frac{\text{King Kong - 1933 Trailer}}{\text{The film was made, and released, by RKO Pictures.}} \ \text{Copyright, RKO/Turner Entertainment/Warner Brothers,}$ all rights reserved. Trailer online, courtesy studios and via YouTube.

View this asset at: $\underline{\text{http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/King-Kong-1933-Trailer}}$