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As a photographer for the Federal Works Agency, in 1930, Lewis Wickes Hine took this photo of a worker fastening bolts on a beam of the Empire State Building during its construction. The photo is [online via the U.S. National Archives](#). Click on it for a full-page view.

The [original](#) Waldorf-Astoria Hotel [once stood](#) where the Empire State Building was constructed (at 350 Fifth Avenue) in 1930. It took just over a year to finish what was then the tallest building in the world.

Who actually did the work? How did they build it so fast? What did the famous landmark look like during its birth year?

Lewis M. Hine took stunning [photographs of the workers](#). Many of those pictures are available for online viewing, at the New York Public Library's website.

Historical footage, of the work in process, also shows men - seemingly on the edge of safety - as they worked in teams to [create a modern marvel](#).

Theodor Horydczak's [photographs](#) of the Empire State Building, taken in the 1930s, have also been digitized by the Library of Congress. Let's examine a representative sampling:

- A [view](#) from 41st Street and 5th Avenue, on July 3, 1933 - four months after the March 2, 1933 release of the original [King Kong](#) film.
- On the [4th of July](#), 1933, the building - at 102 stories - was the [tallest](#) in the world.
- At the time, it dominated the [Manhattan skyline](#).

Samuel Gottscho's photographs, also digitized by the Library of Congress, add to our understanding of New York City as it appeared in the 1930s:

- A [view from the ESB](#), on January 19, 1932, including Central Park.
- [Looking north](#) - and northeast ([toward](#) the East River) - on September 11, 1933.
- Night scenes - the [Queensboro Bridge](#) (on January 19, 1932), [Times Square](#) (January 7, 1932), and the [north part](#) of town (January 19, 1932) - were impressive from the top of the city. They still are - as a [virtual tour](#) (from the ESB's official site) demonstrates.

Against this historical backdrop - when people in a previously vibrant city were "down on their luck" because of the depression - RKO Studio released [King Kong](#), a movie which featured the city and its tallest building.

Like their predecessors, Peter Jackson's 2005 remake and Jordan Vogt-Roberts' 2017 reboot require us to take another trip back in time - *much* further back - to the days of the dinosaurs. Could such creatures have existed on a place like the fictional (and primordial) "Skull Island?"

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

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/THE-EMPIRE-STATE-BUILDING-King-Kong>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/THE-EMPIRE-STATE-BUILDING-King-Kong>

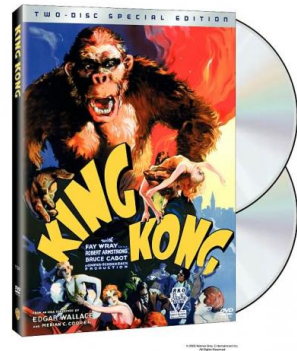
Media Stream



View of the Empire State Building

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

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



King Kong - Video Case

Image online, courtesy the [barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com) website.

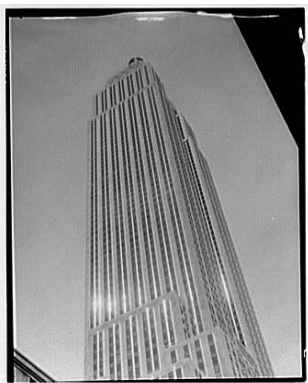
View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/King-Kong-Video-Case>



Looking Up at the Empire State Building

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

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Looking-Up-at-the-Empire-State-Building>

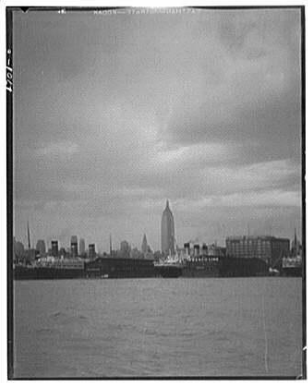


Empire State Building: When It was Tallest in the World

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

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Empire-State-Building-When-It-was-Tallest-in-the-World>



Manhattan Skyline

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

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Manhattan-Skyline>



Looking Out From the Empire State Building

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

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Looking-Out-From-the-Empire-State-Building>



Looking North from Empire State Building - September 11, 1933

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

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Looking-North-from-Empire-State-Building-September-11-1933>



Looking North - From the Empire State Building

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

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Looking-North-From-the-Empire-State-Building>



Looking Toward the East River - From the Empire State Building

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

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Looking-Toward-the-East-River-From-the-Empire-State-Building>



Night View of Times Square - From the ESB

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

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Night-View-of-Times-Square-From-the-ESB>

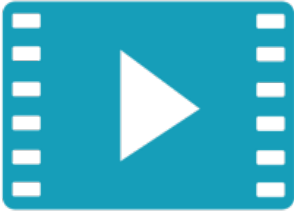


Night View of the Queensboro Bridge - From the ESB

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

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Night-View-of-the-Queensboro-Bridge-From-the-ESB>



Building the Empire State Building - Historic Footage

Historic footage of the Empire State Building, from *New York: A Documentary Film*. Online, courtesy YouTube.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Building-the-Empire-State-Building-Historic-Footage>