

1-1-2012

The United States Farm Security Administration-Office Of War Information Archive: A Latent Nexus Of Truth About The New Deal Era

Monika E. Berenyi
Ryerson University

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.ryerson.ca/dissertations>



Part of the [Photography Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Berenyi, Monika E., "The United States Farm Security Administration-Office Of War Information Archive: A Latent Nexus Of Truth About The New Deal Era" (2012). *Theses and dissertations*. Paper 1270.

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ Ryerson. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Ryerson. For more information, please contact bcameron@ryerson.ca.

THE UNITED STATES FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION-OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION
ARCHIVE: A LATENT NEXUS OF TRUTH ABOUT THE NEW DEAL ERA

A Thesis in support of the database documentary:

American Document

www.americandocument.org

by Monika Erzsebet Berenyi

A Thesis presented to Ryerson University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts in the Program of Documentary Media

Exhibition

American Document
1935 - 1944

I.M.A Gallery
80 Spadina Avenue, Suite #305
May 30th - June 16th
Opening Reception: June 7th, 6-10pm
Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2012

© Monika Erzsebet Berenyi 2012

Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this Thesis. This is a true copy of the Thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I authorize Ryerson University to lend this Thesis to other institutions or individuals for the purpose of scholarly research.

I further authorize Ryerson University to reproduce this Thesis by photocopying or by other means, in total or in part, at the request of other institutions or individuals for the purpose of scholarly research.

I understand that my Thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Monika Erzsebet Berenyi

Abstract

The United States Farm Security Administration-Office of War Information Archive: A Latent Nexus of Truth About the New Deal Era

Master of Fine Arts (2012)

Monika Erzsebet Berenyi

MFA Documentary Media, Ryerson University

Since the conclusion of World War II, the ethos of the Roosevelt administration (1933-1945) and the achievements of the New Deal era have been celebrated by official rhetoric. *American Document* is a dynamic storytelling platform which deconstructs the validity of this long-sustained authority in the United States. Between 1935 and 1944, the United States Resettlement Administration (1935-1937), Farm Security Administration (1937-1942), and Office of War Information (1942-1944) contributed to the capture of a panoramic portrait of America in the form of a photographic survey. Collectively, these photographs constitute the Farm Security Administration-Office of War Information archive, and impart an unparalleled documentary account of the New Deal era. This Thesis engages archival evidence to question and illuminate how state socialism was imposed on an unsuspecting people at the expense of individual liberty, free enterprise, and the ebb and flow of the American dream.

Dedication

In memory of Paul Vanderbilt (1905-1992)

Paul Vanderbilt was an artist, curator, and archivist who devoted his professional career to illuminating the metaphorical dimensions of photographs. His life's work reveals the practice of an innovator, conscientiously engaged with the pedagogical value of visual languages and the discipline of history. His expression of experimental curatorial and archiving techniques quietly revolutionized the ways in which we see and tell stories, and his contributions to the study of American history and photography are not yet fully known. Among his many achievements, Vanderbilt classified the FSA-OWI photographic survey of America into a dynamically functioning historical resource. It is my hope that the content expressed in this thesis paper and in *American Document* contributes to the greater perception of the distinctive context within which Vanderbilt cultivated his practice.

Acknowledgements

The realization of *American Document* is a reflection of Ryerson University's dedication to the cultivation of dynamic forms of intellectual expression, technological advancement, and enlightenment. I would like to formally acknowledge Ryerson University for generously supporting my artistic and academic development throughout the duration of my MFA studies. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Professor Blake Fitzpatrick, whose voice of encouragement has served as a constant source of inspiration and strength since the inception of my interest to study at Ryerson. I would also like to herewith convey my immeasurable appreciation for the professors who composed my thesis advisory committee: Don Snyder, David Bouchard, and David Tucker. Thank you to all of you for your caring mentorship, patience, and unfailing belief in my art, in the spirit of *crescat scientia, vita excolatur*. I would also like to acknowledge the Ryerson University Documentary Media faculty at large, whose selfless dedication to the field of education and instruction on a broad range of subjects contributed to the final expression of *American Document*. I also wish to express my indebtedness to the librarians of the Prints and Photographs Division at the US Library of Congress. Their genuine contributions and scholarly guidance offered crucial assistance in many matters. I would like to especially acknowledge Barbara Natanson for her ardent enthusiasm and meticulous extension of specialized knowledge on the subject of the FSA-OWI archive. Finally, I wish to extend my heartfelt appreciation to my parents and to my dearest friend, Christine Cserti-Gazdewich for their steadfast support and undying confidence in my artistic journey.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>There Were the Years 1935 - 1944</i> by M. Berenyi	1
INTRODUCTION	3
<i>AMERICAN DOCUMENT: CONTENT</i>	5
I. The Regime of Power: The Roosevelt Administration and the New Deal Era	
II. The FSA-OWI Archive: A Product of the Regime of Power	
<i>AMERICAN DOCUMENT: FORM</i>	12
I. Multilinear Narrative Structure	
II. Composite Database Design	
<i>AMERICAN DOCUMENT: METHODOLOGY</i>	20
I. Historicizing Syntax in the FSA-OWI Archive	
The New Deal Cultural Aesthetic	
Roy Emerson Stryker's Vision of America	
Paul Vanderbilt's Classification System	
II. Writing the Narrative	
<i>AMERICAN DOCUMENT IN THE DOCUMENTARY TRADITION</i>	34
I. Documentary Treatments of New Deal Era History	
CONCLUSION	40
APPENDICES	44
A. <i>AMERICAN DOCUMENT: MULTILINEAR NARRATIVE STRUCTURE</i>	45
B. VANDERBILT CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM: THE WORKING PICTURE FILE	50
C. HISTORICAL SECTION PHOTOGRAPHIC UNIT SAMPLE SHOOTING SCRIPT: ROY STRYKER TO RUSSELL LEE AND ARTHUR ROTHSTEIN, FEBRUARY 19TH, 1942	54
ENDNOTES	55
BIBLIOGRAPHY	60

There Were the Years 1935 to 1944

1935

Ours is the spirit of a careworn vessel.
Misery is resilient.
We're spelling ourselves
In a land of dust
With wrecks for chariots.

1936

We gather in church and pray for rain.
Clouds spring, then vanish quickly;
Wind answers, erasing the sun with lightening speed.
In the harvest of our sorrows
Darkness cradles at midday.

1937

Freedom is bait and there's no place like home.
The radio
 puts us all to sleep,
 oh my beautiful A MER ICA.
I'd rather smoke cigarettes in Chicago than be forgotten.

1938

Somewhere deep in the Mississippi Delta
Black gales howl and juke joints stir.
If you blow into the Ozarks
You'll meet the mountain children there-
A lot which has remained the same.

1939

On days dead dry
We drove the Mother Road,
Leaving cattle country far behind.
Mays Avenue Camp, Oklahoma-
One sad place in history.

1940

The cotton mills of Georgia
Are sweating prayers to gods;
Some folks play cards
In the center of town,
Wearing crisp white gloves.

1941

Stop for service, boys!
 Pearl Harbor
 Liberty ships
 Christmas 1941 - we'll do our part.
Victory also rests on ladies and gardens.

1942

Southerners waltz in twilight hours;
Only some are saved.
Plantations rest on Sundays and Iowa is a proverb.
And the Japanese?
Nobody really knows.

1943

Coal, butter, sugar, paper, tin, brass, honey, copper, hosiery...rationed.
 People live in abandoned churches.
 Beauty parlor signs are scarce.
 Crossing lines on the Million Dollar Highway,
 Colorado beams my frontier dream.

1944

In Tombstone Arizona,
If you die, you're dead, that's all.
The freight train stops at a sliding to cool its drawn wheels.
There's a first-class God leading us all
....down this Road.

By M. Berenyi

INTRODUCTION

Since the conclusion of World War II, the ethos of the Roosevelt administration and the legacy of the New Deal have been crystallized in the American consciousness in social, historical, and national terms. *American Document* is a work that provokes the audience to consider and assess the complex history of the New Deal era from a revisionist perspective, within the context of a dynamic database documentary on web platform. Through an inventive manipulation of archival photographs drawn from the historic FSA-OWI archive, and an adaptation of the third-person plural narration technique, *American Document* challenges the celebrated paternalistic myth and legacy of the Roosevelt administration through the delivery of an irrefutable dynamic visual language. The work's master narrative, designed to confront the legacy of the New Deal with archival evidence, is delivered in the form of a choral voice composed of the artist's editorial reading of the FSA-OWI archive and a database of 2,500 archival photographs. Through the mechanics of a randomly modulated algorithm and database aesthetics, *American Document* expresses the extraordinary value of documentary photography to the practice of history while unfolding the existence of latent truth in the FSA-OWI archive.

Conceptualizing *American Document* as a database documentary which functions as a platform for interpreting and revising the historical record, demands a discussion on the controversies associated with the New Deal era and the ethos of the Roosevelt administration. The construct of the choral voice, expressed to the audience through the third-person plural narration technique, is utilized to represent another form of masses. This representation of others articulates the voice and existence of an

independent society, subject to the will of extreme governmental authority. The choral voice is supported and delivered by the synthesis of the artist's editorial reading of the archive, thematic expository text, and database of archival photographs with original captions and embedded text, on web platform. *American Document* entrusts the audience with agency while calling for their participatory action to bring the voice of others into being, in the context of a randomly modulated database. Functioning within a framework subject to actualization at the discretion of participatory experience and perception, the work is maverick by virtue of its subtle and subversive approach to challenging the traditional historical view of the New Deal era. As new narratives unfold, seemingly uncommon photographs find communion, encouraging solidarity between the audience and representation of others.

American Document calls for the consideration of these revisionist interpretations of New Deal era history in the presence of a choral voice, which functions to unfolding archival evidence through a dynamic visual language. At the intersection of the practices of history and documentary, *American Document* suggests a new platform for interpreting and deconstructing historical truth, utilizing the materiality of the FSA-OWI archive as viable evidence to explore unfixed historical, national, and social meanings. Through a dynamic arrangement of historical evidence and latent truth, the forces of paternalistic government, utopian idealism, and a nation defined by its mythic past are challenged in the context of a new narrative form. In the present day, *American Document* is also a metaphor for the types of circumstances that arise when so much power is artificially concentrated in government institutions. For the aforementioned reasons, the new media paradigm presents an unparalleled opportunity for expanding

the historiography of the New Deal era whilst advancing the broad divisions within the humanities. As a dynamic exercise in the practice of writing history, *American Document* disrupts the continuities of fixed meanings while broadening our understanding of collective memory through a materially and ideologically other voice.

AMERICAN DOCUMENT: CONTENT

I. The Regime of Power: The Roosevelt Administration and the New Deal Era

Throughout the 1920s, under both the Coolidge and Hoover administrations, a state of social and economic uncertainty had been felt across the United States. Rural and urban poverty had escalated since the conclusion of World War I, and the American national consciousness had suffered in tandem. In 1929, circumstances were exacerbated by the Wall Street crash, which effectively catapulted the United States into the Great Depression. The disintegrating effects of the social and economic catastrophes which characterized the decade of events which followed, and the United States entered its most turbulent period in history.

Between 1932 and 1933, the severity of societal decline resulted in a state of crisis, which was remedied by a new national paradigm in the form of a new political regime: the Roosevelt administration and the New Deal state (1933-1945). In 1933, in the context of precarious circumstances, Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his loyal coterie of supporters in the Democratic Party, introduced the New Deal and the New Deal cultural aesthetic to America. Although the extent of the New Deal era is defined by the years 1933-1941, beginning with the inauguration of President Roosevelt and ending with the United States' entry into World War II, it is commonly understood to be

the period in American history which corresponds to the Roosevelt administration's term in office (1933-1945). The term "New Deal" connotes the sequence of experimental economic policies, which were implemented under the Roosevelt administration in an attempt to revitalize and reconstruct American society during the Great Depression. Two New Deals, each characterized by categorically different *modus operandi*, influenced the years 1933-1935 and 1935-1937, respectively, and were corroborated by the dissemination of a nationwide propaganda campaign, in the form of the New Deal cultural aesthetic. By 1937-1938, the Roosevelt administration fell under criticism over indications of deeper economic decline, and Congress at large questioned the actual viability of the New Deals. Thereafter, economic depression continued with oscillating effect until the consequences of America's foray into World War II replaced immediate concerns across the nation. Many of the experimental economic policies, which had propelled the New Deals, were subsequently replaced by strategies to support a war economy on the homefront and abroad. In sum, an opportune moment had been seized by the Roosevelt administration to institutionalize state socialism within vulnerable national circumstances.

The subsequent celebratory ethos of the New Deal era, which has come to inform perceptions of history in the United States, reflects the powerful mechanism of selective memory. The New Deal era was undeniably a critical period in American history affected by the strain of economic collapse, a panorama of human suffering, and a state of war. The revisionist interpretation of New Deal era history posits that the Roosevelt administration manipulated the aforementioned conditions in an effort to impose a social welfare state on an unsuspecting public, at the cost of the ebb and flow

of the American dream, civil liberty, and freedom. *American Document* corroborates this revisionist discourse in the discussion of New Deal era history and provides a dynamic intervention into the processes of selective memory.

The Roosevelt administration's ascent to power had been underscored by charismatic expressions of strategies for hope in a new American national consciousness, economic recovery, as well as the introduction of social programs previously unknown. To garner public support for the existence of the New Deal state, a sophisticated form of propaganda was disseminated through various cultural media forms, most especially: radio, photography, and the moving picture.¹ Throughout the 1930s, the Roosevelt administration also encouraged nationwide societal participation in the visualization and production of a new American national consciousness, in the form of the New Deal cultural aesthetic. By the late 1930s, the New Deal state had reached its limits both politically and economically, and ubiquitous forms of cultural production fragmented long before the dramatic changes brought by wartime mobilization rendered them obsolete. By 1941, the United States was entrenched in a full-fledged war economy. Production and visualization of the new American national consciousness was effectively celebrated through the stratum of war propaganda. Art historian John Tagg has argued that Roosevelt administration's moment of social documentary had effectively ceased by 1944.² The FSA-OWI archive materialized analogously within these aforementioned historical conditions.

As the narrative which supports *American Document* (see APPENDIX A) presents a revisionist reading of New Deal era history, it is pertinent to note that the economic policies and recovery programs administered by the New Deal agencies,

inclusive of the Resettlement Administration and the Farm Security Administration, never comprised of the practical measures required to redistribute wealth in the form of social security, or address the persistent problem of poverty. It has also been argued that the Roosevelt administration's experimental reform strategies, coupled with the forces of a state controlled propaganda campaign, prolonged societal instability by promoting beliefs in the benefits of social welfare, centralized planning, and state interventionism.³ It is necessary here to emphasize the magnitude by which visualization and production of the New Deal cultural aesthetic was propagated through economic policies and reform programs. As they played an instrumental role in supporting nationwide cultural production efforts, including the materialization of the FSA-OWI archive, they operated under a successful facade. To the public eye, the incompetency which characterized the New Deal recovery programs was overshadowed by the transparency of an effective propaganda campaign, designed to sustain beliefs in the efficacy of the New Deal state. Even if the economic reform programs were not the force of any significant redistribution of wealth, the Roosevelt administration understood that the propulsion of cultural production, in the context of the New Deal aesthetic, was a means to stabilizing confidence in socialist ideology.⁴ As a product of the New Deal cultural aesthetic, the materialization of the FSA-OWI archive must be understood within this broader ideological scope.

II. The FSA-OWI Archive: A Product of the Regime of Power

Reference to what has come to be known as the FSA-OWI archive conflates the history of a number of photographic collections, New Deal agencies, and individuals.⁵ The FSA-OWI archive also bears its own master story, one which materialized under a

regime of power. Jacques Derrida, in his seminal work on the archive, *Archive Fever*, addressed the relationship between politics and the archive, and stated that:

There is no political power without control of the archive, if not of memory. Effective democratization can always be measured by this essential criterion: the participation in and the access to the archive, its constitutions, and its interpretation.⁶

As the Roosevelt administration's propulsion of the New Deal cultural aesthetic enforced a new national consciousness, in the context of the New Deal state, the materialization of the FSA-OWI archive provided a pictorial record of America and an opportunity for Americans to visualize solidarity among themselves. A discussion on how the FSA-OWI archive manifested, and details of its physical dimension further explicate its role as primary source material in *American Document*.

The FSA-OWI archive is a historic artifact of the New Deal era that offers critical information to the study of New Deal era history. The archive constitutes a monumental photographic survey of the United States, which broadly characterizes the years 1935 to 1944. The contents of the archive reveal an extraordinary documentary record of the livelihood of a nation, caught in the midst of tumultuous upheaval, change, and uncertainty. Documentation of the Great Depression, Dust Bowl Migrations, plight of the Southern sharecroppers, and domestic war effort are among the many critical episodes in American history contained within the archive. As with all archives, the practice of identifying new meanings and new relationships contributes to broadening our understanding of the historical record.

The provenance of the archive is traced to the Roosevelt administration's New Deal cultural production campaign, deployed to cultivate a new national consciousness and authenticate the myriad of experimental policies, which defined the New Deal state.

The campaign was articulated with a distinct cultural aesthetic, considerably influenced by the documentary tradition of representing others. As such, the FSA-OWI archive reflects an impeccable synthesis of the New Deal cultural aesthetic and the documentary tradition.

The story of how the archive was orchestrated begins in 1935 with Roy Stryker, who at the request of Rexford Tugwell (Undersecretary of the Department of Agriculture) was invited to initiate a photographic record unit to document the relief efforts of the Resettlement Administration (1935-1937). The RA had been created in April of 1935 to consolidate a number of New Deal economic recovery programs formerly run by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, and the Department of the Interior. Stryker was appointed director of the Historical Section of the RA's Division of Information, from where he established the Historical Section Photographic Unit. Although Stryker was an ardent advocate of the New Deal cultural aesthetic, his nostalgia for agrarian America and admiration for the Turner Thesis (*The Significance of the Frontier in American History* by Frederick Jackson Turner, 1893) were to have a decisive influence on the editorial of the FSA-OWI archive.

On January 1st, 1937, the RA was incorporated into the Department of Agriculture. By September, the RA's activities were diminished by provisions made in the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenancy Act, and its responsibilities subsumed by a new agency, the Farm Security Administration. Shortly thereafter, by order of the Secretary of Agriculture, Henry A. Wallace, Stryker and the Historical Section Photographic Unit were effectively transferred to the FSA, from where the archive would acquire its reputation as a monumental photographic survey of America. The effects of World War II were also

to have a critical influence on the editorial and security of the archive. In October of 1942, Stryker and the archive were transferred to the Office of War Information, which functioned as an agency within the Office for Emergency Management. Stryker was designated as chief of the OWI's News Bureau Division of Photography, and the Historical Section Photographic Unit was re-established as a division of photography within the Bureau of Publications and Graphics, Domestic Operations Branch (later transferred to the Washington Section, Overseas Picture Division). The structure of the Historical Section Photographic Unit, which functioned under both the RA and FSA, officially dissolved under the OWI. It was also during this time that Stryker appointed archivist Paul Vanderbilt to devise a formal system of classification for the archive. On September 14th, 1943, Stryker resigned from his position at the OWI, and on January 18th, 1944, Librarian of Congress, Archibald MacLeish, accepted legal transfer of the custody of the archive from Elmer Davis (Director of the OWI.) The archive remained accessible to the OWI until the end of World War II, and was physically transferred to the Library of Congress in 1946. Since then, the archive has been catalogued in the Prints and Photographs Division as the FSA/OWI Collection, and defined by Vanderbilt's classification system, in the form of numbered microfilmed lots and the Working Picture File (see APPENDIX B).

The archive, as it presently exists in the Library of Congress, comprises of some 110,000 black-and-white prints (of which 88,000 form the Working Picture File), 210,000 negatives (of which 180,000 are originals, and the remainder- a mixture of duplicate negatives, copy negatives, and transparencies), 1,610 color transparencies, 2,200 lots (groups of photographs on microfilm), and written records (caption sheets, caption

notes, office files, scrapbooks, and supplementary reference files). The archive contains photographic materials from 6 specific collections, the majority of which were produced and gathered by the diverse group of photographers who worked for Stryker's Historical Section Photographic Unit, as it existed in a succession of government agencies: the RA (1935-1937), the FSA (1937-1942), and the OWI (1942-1944). Materials from other governmental and non-governmental sources were also placed in the archive because they were deemed to be significantly associated with the RA, FSA, and OWI content. The 6 collections contained within the archive are defined as follows, and dates are noted where relevant: Resettlement Administration-Farm Security Administration Collection (1935-1942); Office of War Information Collection (1942-1943, Overseas Operations Branch, Washington Office photograph files); Office for Emergency Management-Office of War Information Collection (1940-1946, News Bureau photographs); America at War Collection; Portrait of America Collection; and Office of War Information Collection (Overseas Operations Branch, news photograph files).

AMERICAN DOCUMENT: FORM

I. Multilinear Narrative Structure

American Document is a database documentary situated in a master narrative that invites the audience to consider and assess New Deal era history in the context of a dynamic storytelling platform. The work is supported by a multilinear narrative structure, which expresses the artist's editorial reading of the FSA-OWI archive and creative process. The multilinear narrative structure comprises of an indexed database of 2,500 archival photographs characterized by embedded text and captions, and a

paradigm of thematic expository text. Each archival photographic is accentuated by a theme, photographer, year, and state, and juxtaposed with its original caption. In certain circumstances, the variable unknown appears as an indicator of where categorical data could not be fully ascertained. *American Document* is actualized by random algorithmic modulation and may be navigated from any of the four junction points (theme, photographer, year, state). The junctions reveal the counterpoint of the multilinear narrative structure, and express essential metadata, which informs the content of the work. With each activation, an archival photograph is selected at random from the database, and a new narrative path enabled. Through the subtleties of thematic pattering and algorithmic modulation, narratives form and seemingly disparate photographs find communion. While the audience is provoked to form, navigate, and pursue their own experience, the artist's voice is sustained by the presence of the thematic expository text.

The thematic expository text sustains the presence of the artist's voice throughout the modulation of the database, and provides spaces for contemplation that conjure allusions to iconic characteristics, beliefs, and morals in American culture. The themes may also be understood as leitmotifs, suggestive of conditions and dimensions in the psyche of the American experience, prevalent during the historical period in question. The themes include: The American Dream, Liberty, Commerce, Christianity, The Road, The Everyday, Government, World War II, and Race. The themes reflect a particular depth of the artist's editorial reading of the FSA-OWI archive and understanding of New Deal era history.

The multilinear narrative structure may also be conceptualized as a composition of voices, which express a collective choral voice. The collective choral voice is deployed using the third-person plural “we” narration technique to illuminate contrasting ways of understanding New Deal era history. Use of this formal literary strategy draws comparisons to the traditional documentary book genre, where the “we” narration technique has been historically deployed to represent others and the social conditions in which they inhabit. The expression of the choral voice is supported by the sum of the parts, which compose the multilinear narrative structure: the selection of 2,500 archival photographs characterized by embedded text and original captions, the thematic expository text, and the junction points. As the audience engages the database, the choral voice is revealed at various tones, and at various lengths. Over time, seemingly disparate archival photographs coalesce, and salient historic values and new meanings are sung through repetitive designation. As recognizable evidence is exposed in an unexpected fashion, defamiliarization enhances perception of the realities, stories, and truth expressed. A discussion on the use of the “we” narration in *American Document* offers broader insight into the historical and conceptual dimensions of the work.

Reference to the artist’s documentary book production, *What We Are About to Receive: Historical Voices From the United States Farm Security Administration Archival File* (2011) provides a segue into the discussion on the idiosyncratic nature of the choral voice present in *American Document*. In *What We Are About to Receive*, the “we” narration technique is deployed to represent a form of collective solidarity which argues for a revisionist reading of New Deal era history. Through the sequencing of literary and archival text, oral histories, and archival photographs drawn from the FSA-OWI archive,

a choral voice is articulated on behalf of another form of masses. *What We Are About to Receive* functioned as the catalyst to *American Document*, and is the first work of its kind to situate archival photographs from the FSA-OWI archive within the context of a revisionist reading of New Deal era history.

What We Are About to Receive and *American Document* must also be understood as contiguous interventions in the wealth of historiographic and cultural material, which has contributed to crystallizing selective memory. In both works, the “we” narration technique is used to represent another form of collective solidarity, critical of the Roosevelt administration and the detrimental effects of the New Deal state. Through the articulation of the choral voice, *What We Are About to Receive* and *American Document* endeavour to deconstruct official history by challenging the belief that all Americans espoused the ideological strategies of the Roosevelt administration. In *What We Are About to Receive*, the choral voice is deployed in the context of the documentary book genre to represent the unnamed individuals whose faces appear in the photographs of the government sponsored FSA-OWI archive, and challenge the construct of selective memory through a revisionist reading of New Deal era history. In *American Document*, the choral voice is deployed in similar fashion, and expressed by a multilinear narrative structure in the form of a database on web platform. Unique to the choral voice in *American Document* is a distinct economy of historical information about the New Deal era, expressed in the form of embedded text. As the currency of the choral voice exposes content, *American Document* illustrates the viable and latent value of archival material to the study of New Deal era history. *American Document* is the first

work of its kind to evaluate and deconstruct the collective value of embedded text in FSA-OWI archive.

The presence of the choral voice in *American Document* is also paradoxical, as use of the “we” narration technique was formally stylized during the New Deal era as a mechanism of classic documentary practice. Use of the “we” narration technique also characterized the manner by which Stryker instructed the Historical Section Photographic Unit to create captions and commentary for the FSA-OWI archive. Of the vast body of documentary material created during the 1930s and 1940s, it is also relevant to note that the “we” narration technique was commonly used in productions supported by or in support of the Roosevelt administration. In *American Document*, the “we” narration technique is discerningly and subversively used to render a classic documentary aesthetic within a contemporary context.

II. Composite Database Design

American Document is a database documentary comprised of a multilinear narrative structure, revealed on web platform. The specific technical design of *American Document* is fundamental to its capacity and visibility as a dynamic storytelling platform. The composite database design was devised using interdisciplinary research methods, and informed by an understanding of how digital technology has increasingly impacted the value of the database as a cultural narrative. The practice of history, documentary, and database aesthetics were incorporated into the artist’s approach to researching and producing *American Document*, with an objective to disseminate the work with an experiential, networked approach. As the database is emblematic of the computerized

age we inhabit, the form of *American Document* is timely and opportune to advancing the practice of history.

From inception to completion, the formal production of *American Document* evolved in the context of chronological iterative stages, which included: research, design, programming, and critical discussions with the thesis advisory committee. Research and development of the multilinear narrative structure were critical to the process of conceptualizing the composite database design. The composite database design supports the exploration of new narratives and latent truth through a dynamic storytelling platform, actualized and sustained by random algorithmic modulation. Random algorithmic modulation facilitates a critical environment for questioning official history and selective memory, while providing unparalleled access to archival evidence of value to the study of New Deal era history.

American Document was initially envisioned while conducting research within the analog FSA-OWI archive, located in the Prints and Photographs Division of the US Library of Congress. The first iteration of the work was expressed in the form of a blueprint diagram. An analog database was then created in paper format, and the archival photographs sub-classified into the respective themes, which characterize the multilinear narrative structure. Once the research was completed, a strategy for integrating and applying appropriate technology was determined. An integral process of prototyping shaped the next stage of creative development, while an effective system of technology was identified to support the work. The continuous process of prototyping resulted in mapping, translating, and refining the work to its next iterative stage.

The production process of *American Document* was critically informed by Lev Manovich's principles of new media: *numerical representation*, *modularity*, *automation*, *variability*, and *transcoding*.⁷ The composite database design demanded that a raw database be composed, in the form of a spreadsheet, to indicate the structured, hierarchical network of subject-oriented objects, evidenced in the multilinear narrative structure. Thereafter, the spreadsheet was activated using syntax and programming language to enable a dynamically functioning database on web platform. A brief discussion on how Manovich's principles informed the production process provides greater insight into the breadth and depth of *American Document*.

The principle of *numerical representation* is expressed by the work's algorithm, where the conversion of data into numerical representation occurs through digitization. The algorithm functions as the final sequence of simple operations used to present a given task. The *index.html* (Hyper Text Markup Language) provides the structure to the algorithm, and is enhanced by *PHP* (PHP- Hypertext Preprocessor), which functions as an *html* embedded programming language used for dynamic web development. The *modularity* of the work is expressed by its fractal structure, which forms a non-hierarchical organization of independent parts. The *automation* of the work is rendered by a low-level algorithm, supported by numerical coding and the modular structure. The work is also characterized by the principle of *variability*, and subject to infinite mutable variations, which occurs as a result of numerical coding and the modular structure. The principle of *transcoding* is expressed by the work's interface. The interface is the enumeration and translation of the composite *index.html*, read by the

browser and supported by a public server on the *World Wide Web*. The interface is stylized by *CSS* (Cascading Style Sheets).

American Document exists as a composite database supported by a *RDBMS* (Relational Database Management System), in the form of *MySQL* (My Structured Query Language). During the stages of production, the work was stabilized on a *MAMP* server (web application software hosted on a MAC OS-X operating system, supported by an *Apache* web server, which applies both *MySQL* and *PHP*). The work was then transferred to a public server, and is currently read by browsers on the *World Wide Web*. The final rendering of the work on the public server is also an expression of its final *index.html*.

As the database provides a means by which to structure and support an experience, *American Document* offers a stylized opportunity to explore the history of the New Deal era and transcend the traditional realm of the archive. The work is also a prototypical example of how an existing historic archive may be interpreted in a customized fashion, lending visibility to the seemingly unknown and unseen. *American Document* also reveals the opportunity for transformation, reconfiguration, and revision of the historical record through database aesthetics, truly illuminating how technology is at the epicentre of our evolving literacy. A discussion on the particular methodology which informed the artist's decisions concerning content and form, provides further insight into the work's distinguishing characteristics.

AMERICAN DOCUMENT: METHODOLOGY

I. Historicizing Syntax in the FSA-OWI Archive

The process of historicizing syntax in official archives is one which encompassed the research and development of *American Document*. Historicizing syntax is the expression of the artist's creative adaptation of a historiographic methodology used in the practice of history. The process of historicizing syntax may also be conceptualized as *reading the archive from below*.⁸ Historic archives are latent bodies of evidence which facilitate a multitude of opportunities for unearthing new narratives and revising the historical record. By virtue of the complexity of forces, which contribute to their formation, historic archives are also subject to their own vulnerabilities. As monumental fixities of information, associated with specific historical locations, the meanings and truth they contain are also susceptible to constant transformation by the individuals who interpret and act upon them. In the practice of history, the objective to discover and articulate new narratives broadens the discourse on a given subject matter. Sourcing new meanings from historic archives such as the FSA-OWI provides an opportune means by which to address the forces of selective memory, which have come to influence perceptions of the New Deal era.

Consciousness of the economy of syntax in historic archives enhances the process of engaging content and revising history. As interfaces to the discovery of new narratives, historic archives demand consideration of the embedded layers which support them.⁹ Thus, the methodology of historicizing the syntax which has come to inform a given historic archive, is constructive to advancing the practice of history. In the realm of historic archives, the FSA-OWI archive is a significant repository of information,

influenced by decisive layers of syntax. Encompassing the years 1935 through 1944, and representing the entire geographic domain of the United States, the archive is an unusually rich panoramic portrait of its time. The archive evinces the New Deal era not just by the archival photographs it contains, but also by the currency of the ideology it reflects. As a cultural product of the New Deal state, the archive also embodies the ideological mechanisms that the Roosevelt administration deployed to address the effects of social and economic crisis.

The system of beliefs which propelled the progressive ideology of the New Deal state simultaneously informed the process of cultural production in the form of the New Deal cultural aesthetic. In brief, American progressivism was a broadly based reform movement that reached its height during the early 20th century, characterized by a demand for efficiency and equality in all areas of society. Under the Roosevelt administration, progressive ideology was adapted in the form of a New Deal socialism, which wagered that society could be strengthened if it were constrained in the form of a utopian collective state, where rights to social security, education, and human development would be guaranteed for all. In an effort to guarantee those broad reaching civil liberties and a social system designed for a pluralistic society, the New Deal imposed a system of centralized planning which also secured a wider role for the state.

In the documentary tradition, the system of beliefs which supported the New Deal may be comprehended as a referent to *the Real*; and the FSA-OWI archive interpreted as a product of the referent to *the Real*.¹⁰ In the context of a database on web platform, *American Document* enables latent archival evidence to question selective memory and the experimental social, economic, and centralizing policies, which were imposed by the

New Deal state in an unsuspecting public. As an indeterminate body of evidence informed by an ideological belief system, the FSA-OWI archive offers a vital opportunity to the study and advancement of New Deal era history. Historicizing the syntax which has informed the FSA-OWI archive may be achieved by interpreting its most integral parts: the New Deal cultural aesthetic; Roy Stryker's vision of America; and Paul Vanderbilt's classification system.

As a cultural artifact of the New Deal era, the FSA-OWI archive is intrinsically linked to the heritage of the progressive ideology which informed the New Deal state.¹¹ The New Deal cultural aesthetic was a decisive expression of progressive ideology, rendered in the form of government regulated visual culture. As the influential arm of government propaganda, the New Deal cultural aesthetic was celebrated and disseminated by various New Deal agencies, in the form of controlled cultural production efforts. A chronological evaluation of the rise and fall of the New Deal cultural aesthetic provides insight into how progressive ideology informed the production of the FSA-OWI archive.

In 1933, the Roosevelt administration introduced the New Deal and the New Deal cultural aesthetic to America. The Roosevelt administration's successful ascent to power was influenced by charismatic expressions for hope in a new American national consciousness and experimental strategies for economic recovery, previously unknown. Sophisticated production of propaganda, in the form of visual culture, stimulated national support for the existence of the New Deal state. By the late 1930s, the efficacy and popularity of the New Deal reached its limits, and by 1941, the United States was at war. Ubiquitous forms of cultural production, popularized by the New Deal cultural

production campaign, would soon transform to reflect and support a burgeoning war economy. Initially intended to stimulate public support for progressive reform, the New Deal cultural aesthetic was also manipulated to support a state of war. It was within these aforementioned historical circumstances that the FSA-OWI archive evolved. Tagg has written extensively on the subject of the FSA-OWI archive, and remarks that the visual culture of the New Deal era must be understood in the context of cultural, political, and economic strategy.¹² The Roosevelt administration suspended the disintegrative effects of societal crisis by shifting the American polity to a form of state socialism, by reaping the effects of the New Deal cultural production campaign. As the New Deal cultural aesthetic encouraged Americans to participate in a sense of national unit through a common language of experience, the Roosevelt administration cemented a new social paradigm.

As a myriad of agencies and recovery programs propelled a nationwide cultural production campaign in an effort to stabilize the New Deal state, a stylistically distinct New Deal cultural aesthetic emerged. The New Deal cultural aesthetic was characterized by the belief system which supported the New Deal state, and imbued by the documentary tradition of representing others. William Stott, in his pioneering study *Documentary Expression and Thirties America*, argues that the New Deal era brought about the need to visualize social conditions because they were nearly “invisible to the eye.”¹³ Even if the New Deal state was incapable of addressing the structural causes of disintegration, the materialization of the FSA-OWI archive, and the subsequent cultural productions it inspired, unified the nation with a common visual vernacular for American culture in the context of new polity.¹⁴ The materiality of the FSA-OWI archive is a superb

expression of the visualization and production technique associated with the New Deal cultural aesthetic. Furthermore, the archive is a repository of an unprecedented range of social and geographic contexts, rendering its value to the study of New Deal era history is indispensable.¹⁵ As prime editor, Roy Stryker's adaptation of the New Deal cultural aesthetic in the form of a distinct vision of America also had a critical impact on materialization of the FSA-OWI. A discussion on the enormity of Stryker's vision provides further insight into the artist's methodology of historicizing syntax.

Prior to the New Deal era, Stryker had publicly advocated progressive ideology while working as a lecturer of economics at Columbia University. During the early 1930s, Stryker expressed his support for the New Deal state in the form of documentary photography and illustrations, which supported strategies for social and economic reform. Of critical importance to the discussion on historicizing syntax in the FSA-OWI archive is Stryker's belief system, which was informed by the New Deal era and distinct referent to *the Real*. Stryker would have a critical impact on the expression of the documentary visualization technique and the New Deal cultural aesthetic, which materialized with such enormity in the FSA-OWI archive.

Stryker's influence on the expression of the New Deal cultural aesthetic began in 1935, when he was appointed director of the RA's Historical Section by Rexford Tugwell. The impetus to establish a Historical Section was to benefit both Tugwell and Stryker. Tugwell was a fervent advocate of progressive ideology and the New Deal state, who had an astute understanding of the communicative power of visual culture. While Stryker shared an ideological kinship with Tugwell, he was also empowered by a yearning to preserve a distinct pictorial record of America.¹⁶

Stryker's idiosyncratic vision of America was a consequence of his nostalgic admiration for life on the great American frontier. Stryker's formative years had been spent in the primitive surroundings of Southwestern Colorado, where he had celebrated and admired the values expressed in Turner's seminal work on the American frontier. In reference to his vision and the FSA-OWI archive, Stryker once stated:

We know now that we helped open up a brand-new territory of American life and manners as a legitimate subject for visual commentary...and I guess I may as well admit it now...during the whole eight years, I held onto a personal dream that inevitably got translated into black-and-white pictures: I wanted to do a pictorial encyclopedia of American agriculture. My footnotes to the photographers' instructions undoubtedly accounted for the great number of photographs that got into the collection which had nothing to do with official business. In truth, I think the work we did can be appreciated only when the collection is considered as a whole...There's an unusual continuity to it all.¹⁷

As Stryker's visualization and production of a pictorial record of America simultaneously supported the New Deal cultural aesthetic, the celebration of a national consciousness was preserved. The expression of Stryker's vision necessary was among the greatest contributions to the documentary moment that informed 1930s America.

Stryker's influence on the materialization of the FSA-OWI archive was articulated within the 1930s documentary tradition of representing others, and thus, contributed to the documentary moment. Stryker indoctrinated his photographers in the art of a particular form of image capture, which assumed the tenets of classic documentary techniques. The methodology integrated the documentary aesthetic with fieldwork, supported by rigorous study in the disciplines of sociology, economics, and American history. Prior to documenting a given geographic locale, Stryker's photographers acquired a comprehensive understanding of local and cultural influences. Thereafter,

the photographers produced photographs which were contextualized by mandatory writing, in the form of image captions, caption notes, and reports. The critical role of Stryker and his vision of America is further corroborated by the fact that he commissioned nearly all of the archival photographs contained within the FSA-OWI archive, by means of instructing his photographers with prescriptive shooting scripts (see Appendix C).¹⁸ Although Stryker's prescriptive shooting scripts were carried out by the individual photographers who worked for the Historical Section, Stryker maintained rigid controls over the selection, administration, and dismissal of his staff. It is also necessary to acknowledge that the unique personalities of the individual photographers and the captions they created contributed to the syntax of the FSA-OWI archive. In the context of this particular discussion, the contributions of the individual photographers will be understood as an extension of Stryker's vision.¹⁹

A discussion on the specifics of Stryker's editorial process, as it pertains to the development of the Working Picture File, further illuminates the impact of his vision on the materialization of the FSA-OWI archive. Throughout Stryker's tenure as director of the Historical Section, he promoted the New Deal cultural aesthetic while maintaining an editorial process subject to his own discretion. Negatives produced on shooting assignments were developed in the Washington D.C., laboratory and at times, by the photographers in their darkrooms or in the field. Stryker also expected the photographers who developed their own negatives to filter out any redundant images before they were sent back to Washington D.C., where the proof prints were made. Once developed, the negatives were assigned numbers, typically by the laboratory staff, and Stryker's editorial process began. Stryker's image selection process was autocratic,

and often provoked adverse reactions from some of his photographers. He also punched holes in the 35 mm negatives, which were then designated as “killed negatives”, and thereafter, either discarded or given to the photographers. In later years, most of the killed negatives were left in the negative files. By the early 1940s, Stryker defined an editorial procedure which gave his photographers greater autonomy in the image selection process, even though he still maintained the final word.

Comprehension of how the FSA-OWI captions were formulated and produced provides further insight into the methodology of historicizing Stryker’s vision of America. For the photographers who worked in Stryker’s Historical Section, writing captions was an integral part of the particular production process which shaped the materialization of the archive.²⁰ First prints made from the original negatives were used by the photographers as a reference when drafting final captions for the images selected for the Working Picture File. A print for each image was then mounted on an 11x14 inch board, upon which an edited version of the photographer’s caption was written by a clerk. The print was then filed. Many of these original caption drafts may be found in the caption files, contained in the FSA-OWI archive’s written records.

By 1942, the FSA-OWI archive had materialized on such an enormous scale that it necessitated an official classification system. Between 1935 and 1942, Stryker had organized the archive with minimal effort; negatives were placed in storage while prints were filed chronologically by assignment, in series, in the Working Picture File. Complaints about the inefficient nature of the aforementioned arrangement prompted Stryker to hire archivist Paul Vanderbilt, to restructure and systematize a classification system for the archive.²¹ The final embedded value which informed the artist’s

methodology of historicizing syntax in the FSA-OWI archive, is explicated by a discussion on Paul Vanderbilt's classification system.

As the formal intellectual paradigm which provides access to the FSA-OWI archive, Vanderbilt's classification system is critical to the process of historicizing syntax. Vanderbilt was a fervent supporter of the New Deal state who believed in value of documentary photography to the practice and understanding of American history. Thus, his classification system is also an extension of the various forms of cultural production which were supported by the New Deal cultural aesthetic. Vanderbilt was also a skilled archivist who understood the monumental depth of Stryker's vision as an expression of a pictorial referent for America.

When Vanderbilt was appointed to classify the FSA-OWI archive, he soon realized that the undertaking would entail the organization of "the residuals of a hectic New Deal propaganda agency into a permanent historical resource."²² Simultaneously, the moral, political, and historical depth of the FSA-OWI archive compelled his awakening to the connotative value of images. The process by which Vanderbilt devised a system of classification for the FSA-OWI archive was accomplished in stages. First, he arranged the contents of Stryker's augmented Working Picture File into a system of 2,200 lots.²³ Each lot was defined to correspond with Stryker's original shooting assignments, pre-existing groups of prints, or was gathered by reassembling groups of prints that had been dispersed throughout the Working Picture File. Vanderbilt then preserved these primary groupings on microfilm. Thereafter, he reconfigured the prints that had been microfilmed as lots in the form of a permanent "classified file," based on his own subject classification system. The prints were rearranged by subject classes

within larger geographical divisions rather than by groups representing shooting assignments.²⁴ The archive was legally and physically transferred to the Library of Congress in 1944 and 1946, respectively. Since then, Vanderbilt's "classified file" (also referred to as the Working Picture File or Reading Room File), the microfilmed lots, stored lots, and written matter which comprises the FSA-OWI archive, have been located in the Prints and Photographs Division. As gatekeepers to the contents contained within the archive, Vanderbilt's classification system and the "classified file", are of strategic importance to the process of historicizing syntax.

Vanderbilt's classification system is arbitrary in orientation, and thus, ideologically aligned with the New Deal state's propulsion of a new national consciousness. The system also reflects the consciousness of individual who recognized the value of photography to the broader practice of history. Vanderbilt understood photography to be a visual language subject to connotative values, and desired that the classification system support a platform for exploring and revising American history. Vanderbilt's classification system was advanced for its time, as it enabled a structure for practicing history through the medium of photography, disengaged from the confines of fixed values. The dual system allowed for uninhibited access from the subject-based "classified file" to the site-specific lots, while supporting singular photographs, to serve different users, under different circumstances.²⁵

Vanderbilt perceived the contents of the FSA-OWI archive "not as facts so much as conceptions",²⁶ and as previously mentioned, understood the corresponding relationship between photography and the practice of history. In his discourse on photography, he exercised terminology drawn from the discipline of linguistics, and

argued that images, like words, could be recombined to “connote” and “denote” new meanings. Vanderbilt also asserted that the value of ambiguity and the free-floating photograph in the archive is:

that which provides for recombination and reuse...Certainly the provision for location of pictures on call is not to be neglected, but more important is the scattering of pictures in the pathways of search, where they may be found unexpected as fresh inspiration.²⁷

As Vanderbilt’s classification system was devised to liberate the FSA-OWI photographs from their actual contingency of use, it also enabled an abstraction from the complexity and richness of their use. Vanderbilt stabilized a latent nexus for the discovery of new narratives, subject to the discretion of the user. Analyzing the ideological and conceptual qualities of the classification system was integral to the artist’s methodology of historicizing syntax in the FSA-OWI archive.

Historic archives are institutions of unusually rich resources which afford dynamic opportunities to the practice of history. Historic archives are also regimes of power, steeped in the authority of their authorship, which demand a critical framework for exploration. The artist’s methodology of historicizing syntax in the FSA-OWI archive contributed to the discovery and refinement of the narrative which supports *American Document*. Furthermore, as historicizing the syntax embedded in the archive provided critical insight into an ideology and its participants, Stryker’s vision of America, and a pragmatically devised classification system, the central theme of the archive was illuminated. As a latent nexus of truth contained within a master story, historicizing the syntax of the FSA-OWI archive provides the keys to the countless versions of American history that it holds.

II. Writing the Narrative

American Document is a treatment of New Deal era history that evolved from a synthesis of interdisciplinary research and productions methods, which included protocols from the practice of history, documentary, and database aesthetics. *American Document* was created to enable a multilinear storytelling platform that could address the forces of selective memory and official history, which have come to crystallize the ethos of the New Deal era. Using archival evidence drawn from the historic FSA-OWI archive, supplemented by thematic expository text, a narrative that would provoke and encourage a revisionist reading of New Deal era history was devised. The process by which the narrative was written reveals the depth of the artist's practice and editorial reading of the FSA-OWI archive. The artist's practice is animated by forms of storytelling which explore archival material and the practice of history in the context of dynamic visual languages. In the context of a database on web platform, the artist devised *American Document*, engaging the practice of history and the documentary tradition of representing others to enable new meanings about the New Deal era.

The artist's objective to address the complex history of the New Deal era through the medium of a dynamic database on web platform was inspired by the forces of official history and selective memory. Applying strategies from the practice of history, documentary, and database aesthetics, the artist devised a narrative which would offer a dynamic platform for assessing New Deal era history in the presence of archival evidence. Most importantly, the artist's methodology of historicizing syntax, which entailed the conceptualization of the New Deal cultural aesthetic, Stryker's vision of

America, and Vanderbilt's classification system, illuminated the latent value of truth embedded in the FSA-OWI archive.

The FSA-OWI archive functioned as primary source to the development of the narrative in *American Document*. Tactile research was conducted at the Library of Congress, in the Prints and Photographs Division, where both the Working Picture File and system of 2,200 lots were explored with a critical methodology. The methodology of historicizing embedded syntax in the FSA-OWI archive formed the most comprehensive component to the artist's research process, revealing her prime interests in the practice of history and the archive. The artist's research process also entailed critical evaluation of the historiography which has informed public perception of the New Deal era, and study of the Roy Emerson Stryker and Paul Vanderbilt papers, held at the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Paul Vanderbilt's discourse on photography, which illuminates the metaphorical dimensions of archival photographs, was of particular importance to the artist's production process, as were the works of practitioners who have addressed and represented the history of the New Deal era using archival photographs and text, within the documentary tradition. Formal consideration of the documentary book genre and use of the "we" narration literary technique, which proliferated throughout the New Deal era, were of critical significance to the artist's process.

In the most noble sense, *American Document* expresses a dynamic exercise in the practice of writing history. The artist's motivation to conduct and present historical research in the context of a database is a function of her artistic practice. Refinement of the techniques used in the development of *American Document* is attributed to the

artist's absorption of Vanderbilt's discourse on photography and experimental archiving strategies. As *American Document* was devised to facilitate a narrative which would allow the audience to dialogue with archival photographs in a process of experiencing New Deal era history, the work also confirms the utility of Vanderbilt's arbitrary classification system- devised for the user to source and experience infinite realities in American history. Thus, *American Document* pointedly illustrates continuity with Vanderbilt's philosophy on the value of archival photographs to the practice of history. In 1992, just prior to his death, Vanderbilt expressed that although an abundance of literature had been written on the FSA-OWI photographic survey, "the inside story of this great humanistic ideal, struggling through political realities, had never been published."²⁸ Perhaps then, it may be concluded that the greatest continuity between *American Document* and Vanderbilt's philosophy is expressed by the arrangement of the narrative.

In *American Document*, the expression of latent truth and a distinctive American experience is evidenced by the selection of FSA-OWI archival photographs enabled, and sustained by the effect of the third-person plural "we" narration technique. The presence and use of the choral voice in *American Document* falls in continuum with the American documentary and literary traditions of articulating the American experience, on behalf of others. In *American Document*, the "we" narration technique functions as a formal component to the delivery of the narrative structure, which represents a distinct collective voice in the American experience. The body of information which supports the choral voice challenges the forces of official history, announcing evidence of a tangible *lived* experience with a capacity to question the New Deal state. As use of the choral

voice was refined and popularized during New Deal era, its deployment as a mechanism for expressing and remembering the human experience in *American Document* is germane. In the artist's documentary book *What We Are About the Receive*, the "we" narration technique is deployed to enable the voice of others who witnessed and lived a collective American experience which challenges of the ethos of the New Deal era. *American Document* is an extension of the aforementioned work, where the "we" narration technique is deployed in the context of database, facilitating the voice of another form of masses.

American Document is a dynamic platform which provides a revolutionary context within which to explore New Deal era history. The methodology used by the artist to research and create the narrative reflect a synthesis of interdisciplinary approaches, underscored by a critical interest in the connotative value of archival photography, the pedagogical function of visual languages, and the utility of database aesthetics. As a treatment of history that engages archival evidence and the choral voice to either challenge to the ethos of the New Deal era, it is befitting to examine other works, which have endeavored to do the same. To a credible extent, works of principal value to the discussion of *American Document* in the documentary tradition were produced during the 1930s and 1940s, and fall within the documentary book genre.

AMERICAN DOCUMENT IN THE DOCUMENTARY TRADITION

I. Documentary Treatments of New Deal Era History

American Document is a treatment of New Deal era history that reflects the coalescence of scholarly research, documentary techniques, and database aesthetics.

Although *American Document* suggests a revolutionary form for interpreting New Deal era history, it befits the discussion on the work in the documentary tradition to address content. In the spirit of the documentary tradition of representing others, *American Document* enables the voice of another form of masses, supported by archival evidence, to question the rhetoric which has come to crystallize the ethos of the Roosevelt administration. Simultaneously, *American Document* functions as an intervention imbued by a documentary aesthetic, which challenges the text-centric processes of history writing and selective memory.

Amongst the extent of works which have addressed New Deal era history with a documentary aesthetic, *American Document* shares greatest kinship with the documentary book genre. The genre is characterized by sequenced photographs, accompanied by verbal commentary arranged in narratives, which demonstrate a thesis. By the early 1920s, the genre was already an established form, used to represent others and express constructs of mass solidarity. During the 1930s and 1940s, use of the “we” narration technique was stylized in a variety of documentary forms, and most emphatically expressed in documentary books deployed to represent the social, economic, and political voices of the time. It was also during the New Deal era that the documentary book genre became a persuasive agent of representation and propaganda to the Roosevelt administration. As the choral voice in *American Document* expresses a form of mass solidarity, the work not only provokes the reassessment of how official history has come to inform New Deal era history, but also prompts consideration of how the documentary tradition has contributed to its formation.

Of particular importance to the discussion of *American Document* in the documentary tradition is an examination of how the “we” narration technique was used in the documentary book genre to represent ideologically distinct forms of solidarity. Although the documentary book genre was formally distinct, the “we” narration technique was used to divergent political effect. Ranging from radicalized proponents of the Popular Front to observers of the new American national consciousness, the choral voice either challenged or espoused the belief system which propelled the New Deal state.²⁹ The distance between the authorial voice, the choral voice of the masses represented, and the audience was also subject to difference. It is also apropos to note that the “we” narration technique is clearly evidenced throughout the FSA-OWI archive, rendered by the captions and commentary style that accompany the archival photographs.

In *American Document*, the “we” narration technique is used to represent the collective experience of a form of masses which exists outside the realm of official history. As much of the documentary material produced during the 1930s and 1940s contributed to cementing the New Deal state, it is critical to acknowledge how the choral voice functions in *American Document*, in its ability to facilitate an unfettered space for broadening our understanding of New Deal era history. The work is revolutionary by virtue of its ability to provide the audience with immediate access to the artist’s editorial reading of the FSA-OWI archive, while provoking the serendipitous discovery of new meanings through the unexpected juxtaposition of archival evidence and historical truth. Furthermore, the audience is given agency to consider and determine whether the

official rhetoric which supports the ethos of the Roosevelt administration, demands revision.

In the context of this discussion, the documentary books which best reveal the genre's capacity to represent divergent forms of collective masses will be examined, so to illuminate how *American Document* differs and conforms. This discussion will contemplate the following works: *You Have Seen Their Faces* (1937) by Erskine Caldwell and Margaret Bourke-White, *Land of the Free* (1938) by Archibald MacLeish, and *12 Million Black Voices: A Folk History of the Negro in the United States* (1941) by Richard Wright and Edwin Rosskam.

Caldwell and Bourke-White's celebrated documentary book, *You Have Seen Their Faces* is a bold example of how the "we" narration was used to represent a form of solidarity, from a well-distanced position. The work was documented and produced between the years 1936 and 1937, independently of the RA and the FSA, and has been regarded by critics as "the decade's most influential protest against farm tenancy."³⁰ The means by which Caldwell and Bourke-White represented the plight of the rural Southern sharecropper employed similar documentary techniques used by Stryker and his Historical Section Photographic Unit. The work also set the aesthetic and literary tone for future documentary book productions, many of which functioned as forms of critique to their predecessor. In *You Have Seen Their Faces*, the juxtaposition of humanistic prose, semi-fictionalized captions, and heartfelt photographs of the tenant farmer clearly reveal that Caldwell and Bourke-White are on the side of progressive reform in the rural South. The work also expresses the vast distance between Caldwell and Bourke-White, and the dispossessed they represent. While the choral voice calls for hope, empathy,

and even a degree of admiration for the plight of Southern sharecropper, it argues that progressive reform may only be achieved through the solidarity of those who are suffering, with the aid of governmental intervention. The manner by which the “we” narration technique was deployed also indicates that Caldwell and Bourke-White were content with simply acquiring a non-participatory audience, in the form of inactive witnesses who could bear witness to their visionary sermon. Literary historian Joel Woller has commented at length on how “avoiding the aloof voyeurism epitomized by Caldwell and Bourke-White became one of the preoccupations of Depression-era film and photographic documentary in the US.”³¹ In many ways, it is this *aloof voyeurism* which is so effectively critiqued in James Agee and Walker Evans’ *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941), and in *American Document*. Although *You Have Seen Their Faces* stands as a documentary landmark, the coupling of its visionary tone and use of the choral voice to conjure witnesses does little justice to the human suffering it endeavored to address. The work is pure New Deal nostalgia, and critical to the broader discussion on how the forces of official history and selective memory contributed to crystallizing the ethos of the New Deal era.

In Archibald MacLeish’s *Land of the Free*, the “we” narration technique is also used to represent the social condition of the Depression and the supposed government which will restore it to health. MacLeish supported his emotionally saturated narrative strategy by selecting stoic and gritty photographs from the FSA-OWI archive, many of which are now considered to be classics. At the time of its release, the work’s content and belligerent tone appealed to the working-class struggle, arguing that social injustice would only be overcome by men who acted in solidarity. The work begins with the lines

“We don’t know / We aren’t certain,” and ends, “We wonder / We don’t know / We’re asking.” MacLeish’s text was greatly praised, for it caught the sentiment of the time and offered much support to the Roosevelt administration and the propulsion of the New Deal cultural aesthetic. Stott has argued that *Land of the Free* popularized solidarity amongst members of the New Deal Coalition, and encouraged greater defiance by Roosevelt of the capitalist system and its rulers.³² The collective masses in *Land of the Free* are clearly conceptualized in working-class, national, administrative, and above all nostalgic New Deal terms. The audience is invited to rally and participate in contemplating the reforms of the New Deal state and the legitimacy of the Roosevelt administration. Although ideologically dissimilar, a linearity may be drawn between *Land of the Free* and *American Document*, in the call for participatory action- to question and consider the paternalistic government which represents the collective.

In contrast to both *You Have Seen Their Faces* and *Land of the Free*, the “we” narration technique deployed in Wright and Roskam’s *12 Million Black Voices* challenges the form of socialism imposed by the New Deal state. The work challenges the audience to participate in establishing a new collective society- one which exists beyond the realm represented in MacLeish’s *Land of the Free*. Wright’s authorial voice is inescapably defined by his African-American working class heritage, and his call for a new form of socialism that clearly resonates the more extreme ideologies espoused by the Popular Front. Although Wright’s authorial position is conditioned by his race and class, the choral voice in *12 Million Black Voices* calls for a universal participatory audience, willing to engage in the transformation of society with all who are represented. The work’s universal appeal is in fact contradictory, as it is classed by

celebratory references to the Great Migration, solidarity with a racially composed communist working-class, and delivered from a cross-generation male African-American position. Thus, the choral voice represented in *12 Million Black Voices* is actually a tendentious proposal to participate in an extreme form of self-transformation, within a collective American society. The work is marginalized by its sensational and aggressive invitation to an intended audience- one that is willing to embrace the historic particularities of the African-American experience. The work's adaptation of Stryker's captioning techniques, use of photographs from the FSA-OWI archive, and contributions to both African-American and Popular Front literature are self-evident. In the context of *American Document*, continuity with *12 Million Black Voices* may be drawn between the manner by which agency is offered to the audience- to participate in a form of an American experience, and by the provocation to revise existing historical and social paradigms.

The works here contemplated provide relevant contextual and aesthetic value to the discussion of *American Document* in the documentary tradition. As the documentary book genre, so famously stylized during the 1930s and 1940s and so aptly relevant to the discussion on New Deal era history, provided the greatest source of inspiration and influence on the artist's conceptualization of the documentary aesthetic, it is in the opinion of the artist that the works here contemplated best support the discussion of *American Document* in the documentary tradition.

CONCLUSION

Since the conclusion of World War II, the historiography of the New Deal era and the conventional practice of history have reciprocally sustained the ethos of the

Roosevelt administration and the New Deal state. *American Document* is a maverick intervention to the forces which have governed, informed, and buttressed public perception of New Deal era history. As a database documentary on web platform, composed of interdisciplinary research and production methods, *American Document* presents a revolutionary space to question the historiography of the New Deal era while broadening the practice of history. Applying a synthesis of documentary techniques, database aesthetics, and latent evidence from the FSA-OWI archive, *American Document* deploys a distinct choral voice, provoking the audience to question and consider the forces of official history, and the solidarity of another American experience. Historically, the documentary tradition has contributed to illuminating the American experience in collective terms. *American Document* represents a materially and ideologically distinct American experience, designated to narrate and expose the stories of enduring people whose lives were subject to the unorthodox reform strategies of a paternalistic state.

As a monumental artifact of the New Deal era, characterized by embedded historic values and latent truth, the FSA-OWI archive functioned as the primary source to the work's multilinear narrative structure. Through a methodology drawn from the practice of history, the artist historicized the syntax which informs the FSA-OWI in an effort to isolate latent truth, applicable to the study of New Deal era history. Critical evaluation of the historiography of the New Deal era, the New Deal cultural aesthetic, Stryker's vision of America, and the Vanderbilt classification system informed the artist's process of assessing the FSA-OWI archive. The methodology of historicizing syntax

resulted in an editorial reading of the FSA-OWI archive, which concentrates on the value of embedded text in archival photographs.

The dynamic coalescence of content, form, and methodology in *American Document* was also informed by Vanderbilt's discourse on documentary photography and the practice of history, and Manovich's principles of new media. As an electronic database, the immediacy of digital technology and random algorithmic modulation provoke the consciousness of the audience to consider the rhetorical strategies, ideological belief system, and reforms imposed by the New Deal state, in the presence of archival photographic evidence. The work is of revolutionary value to the process of broadening the historiography of the New Deal era and the practice of history, illuminating the necessity for interdisciplinary research and production in the context of networked approaches. As the database, in the most explicit sense, has become emblematic of our time, *American Document* is also a paradigm for research and production, to the various disciplines which fall under the rubric of the humanities. As a relational database, *American Document* contributes to the new narrative forms which have evolved from the systematized and experimental approaches supported by new media. In sum, *American Document* expresses a new organizational model for perceiving, interpreting, and presenting archival information, where latent truth is made accessible beyond the constraints of the traditional archive.

Most importantly, *American Document* enlightens our understanding of the past while functioning as a metaphor to the history of the present. As the experiences of the present continue to build upon perceptions of the past, it is arguable that the state of social and economic crisis, which currently characterizes the United States, is the

inheritance of the experimental strategies, reforms, and policies which constituted the New Deal. If by serendipitous occasion, should *American Document* spark the sensibility of an inquisitive consciousness - so integral to comprehending the nature and beauty of American liberty - then the work will have made its mark on history.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

AMERICAN DOCUMENT: MULTILINEAR NARRATIVE STRUCTURE

The Themes

The American Dream
Liberty
Commerce
Christianity
The Road
The Everyday
Government
World War II
Race

The American Dream

The American Dream is the tone of utopia. America is a mythic land of sorts, a studio of infinity steeped in legendary triumphs and catastrophic endings, where man's overriding courage faces the perils of destiny and self-fulfilling prophecy in the spirit of a vigorous individualism. Change comes at painful costs, where the balance of what is fair remains unknown. The American Dream is a national ethos of the United States, where the idea of freedom includes a promise of the possibility of prosperity and success. The American Dream and the Declaration of Independence are inextricable, chiming the same tune that all men are created equal, and are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, including Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness. The American Dream is a place of historic values and storybook ideals, which power the hopes and aspirations of Americans as they strive for a better life through hard work and fair ambition. The American Dream is a place of dreams transpiring in an era of catastrophic uncertainty, where economic crisis and war are known by all, where lives are burnt with yearning, where inflated expectations and sorrows go hand in hand, and where heroes and sinners live together in a land, clearly dislocated.

Liberty

Liberty is the tone of freedom. Liberty is a moral principle that identifies the condition in which human beings are able to govern themselves, to behave according to their own free will, and take responsibility for their actions. Liberty is also one of the most treasured values in American culture. Throughout history, Americans have defined their idea of Liberty in the context of authority, property, social justice, equality, the right to privacy, and the pursuit of personal freedoms. Liberty is a place where ideas of freedom are expressed in words, revealing a voice which lived between 1935 and 1944. Liberty is also a place of looming evidence, where the pulses of individualism and resistance question the freedom of the common man, and the belief that America is being saved from itself.

Commerce

Commerce is the tone of independence. The principles of American Liberty have long been evidenced by the achievements of the independent free market economy. The free market is imbued by the spirit of vigorous individualism, and buttressed by the unfettered transmission of knowledge. The people who propel the free market value themselves, their communities, and the principles of Liberty. During the New Deal era, the Roosevelt administration centralized many of the valued free market functions by imposing an experimental planned market economy, on an unsuspecting people. Commerce is a place of declaration, that between 1935 and 1944, the American people continued to realize their independence through private ownership of the means of production, the creation of goods and services for profit and income, the accumulation of capital, competitive markets, voluntary exchange, and wage labor.

Christianity

Christianity is the tone of communion. The Founders of the United States drafted the Declaration of Independence with a Biblical God in mind, although they advocated religious tolerance. Since the founding of the nation, the people have remained permissive of those who seek to practice their beliefs as they see fit. Nevertheless, some still say that it was the Christian religious foundation that made America exceptional. From the Evangelical to the Episcopal, to the Quaker, Christianity beams as a guiding principle, across the regions, and throughout the individual states. Christianity is a place where the Great God Saves on Sundays, where beliefs and morals are heard and shared by a spectrum of believers. The dominion of divine providence, nature's god, and other such heavenly forces tread along close by.

The Road

The Road is the tone of transformation. The Road is paradoxical America, in all her turbulent glory, known by those who know her liberation. The Road is a metaphor for man's existence, composed of inward journeys of physical rebirth and decay, transcendence, and metamorphosis. The Road is a poetic indicator of crossroads and intervention, where each turn imposes its own mores, and where the brave decide their speed. The Road is a location, furnished with all types, running with the cadences of life, where the rural and urban never harm the other, though they recognize their differences. The Road is an allusion to America's proclivity for migration, obsession with cars, deeply rooted yearning for all that might be, and distrust of power wherever it occurs. The Road is a fortuitous place of consciousness, where darkness, violence, and light are entwined with myth and irony. To the beholder, the Road is a place where messages are communicated and perceived along the way; sometimes there is a detour, and sometimes it dies.

The Everyday

The Everyday is the tone of pathos. The Everyday is the quotidian world of our existence, steeped in all that is beautiful and mundane, where the quietude of harmony also knows foreboding. From the Oklahoma Panhandle to the Appalachian Mountains, The Everyday is a place where you see the faces, and read the words of lives lived between the years 1935 and 1944. The people welcome you to their stage. Here you see a panoramic portrait of things, and perhaps most lucid is the plurality of a humanity, transpiring in a land of great American frontiers. From the disparate coasts of Maine to California, man is a cog in the machinery of life, constantly on the threshold of something new, raw, and possibly territorial. The Everyday provides transparency to earthly morals, dreams, dust bowls, whims, and certain things, which are simply better left unsaid, so to absolve them from some customary label.

Government

Government is the tone of constraint. The Government of the United States, for all its majesty, was envisioned as a Government of limited powers. It was during the New Deal era, that a watershed in the growth of Government power occurred. A state of economic crisis and the Great Depression were used to justify the expansion of this power, where an exorbitant number of experimental policies and alphabet agencies were deployed to mediate inflation, unemployment, and the exigency of human suffering. It was also during this time that the Democratic Party stylized the use of propaganda, in a nationwide effort to champion the common man and restore hope to the nation, while imposing a planned market economy on an unsuspecting people. Roosevelt's revolution began in 1933, with his inaugural address, which left no doubt about his intention to seize the moment, and harness its worth to his purposes. Best remembered for its patently false line that "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself," it also called for extraordinary measures in the form of emergency governmental powers. Government is a place where socialist planning, political realignment, and big city machines encounter conscience, Liberty, and The Everyday. We give thanks to the Resettlement Administration and the Farm Security Administration for documenting this unforeseen change in the American political landscape.

World War II

World War II is the tone of tension imbued with freedom. Fundamental to Americans' sense of themselves as individuals, and as a nation, is the idea of freedom. This central term in American vocabulary is deeply embedded in the documentary record of the nation's history, language, and everyday life. In 1941, Roosevelt famously defined the elusive word in his Four Freedoms speech, where he proposed that people "everywhere in the world" ought to enjoy freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. It was also during the very same year that the Japanese made a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, an event which officially catapulted the United States into World War II. To the American people, December 7th,

1941 is a date, which lives in infamy, for better and for worse. The idea of freedom supported Americans, both overseas and on the homefront, throughout the duration of the war. In their righteous might, the people triumphed over all adversity, and saw their efforts through to absolute victory, conquering their wartime foes for the cause of freedom. World War II is a place of tension and uncertainty, where the dissolution of preordained notions of everyday life serve as salient reminders of war's unexplained nature. In a world ravaged by oppression, World War II is a place which embodies the Four Freedoms, where The Everyday is colored by a booming war economy, price controls, war bond drives, victory gardens, rationing, the rise of women in the labor force, and unswerving acts of courage under pressure. We give thanks to the Government's nationwide propaganda campaign, and especially the Farm Security Administration and Office of War Information, for popularizing and documenting the war effort, on the homefront.

Race

Race is the tone of struggle desirous of harmony. In the United States Declaration of Independence, the self-evident premise that "All men are created equal," was immortally declared. Immortally declaring the equality of man did not prevent the widespread intolerance of diversity, nor did it inhibit the diffusion of racially structured institutions. The story of race relations in America is one of dire complexity, steeped in darkness, irony, and anguish. The forbearance of those who have been affected remains astonishing. One might say that America is a racist land, but hardly anyone would utter such an abomination. Between 1935 and 1944, Race is an unfair place, where bigotry and shame speak of a chilling indifference in society, and where crimes are committed in words, and in the dead of silence. In the shadow of endurance, man is tagged and segregated as a visible and undesirable convention. If this place causes you discomfort, then you have felt the suffering.

The Photographers

Clem Albers, Philip Brown, Esther Bubley, Paul Carter, John Collier, Marjory Collins, George Danor, Jack Delano, Sheldon Dick, Royden Dixon, Pauline Ehrlich, Walker Evans, Andreas Feininger, John Ferrell, Albert Freeman, Edward Gruber, Fritz Henle, Howard R. Hollem, Joseph A. Horne, Fenno Jacobs, Theodor Jung, Dorothea Lange, Russell Lee, Howard Liberman, Edwin Locke, Martha McMillan Roberts, Carl Mydans, David Myers, Alfred T. Palmer, Gordon Parks, Walter Payton, William Perlitch, Marion Post Wolcott, Ann Rosener, Edwin Rosskam, Louise Rosskam, Arthur Rothstein, V.B. Scheffer, Ben Shahn, Arthur S. Siegel, Roger Smith, George C. Stoney, Roy Stryker, John Vachon, and Paul Vanderbilt.

The Years

1935
1936
1937
1938
1939
1940
1941
1942
1943
1944

The States and Territories

Alabama, Alaska Territory, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii Territory, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Virgin Islands, Washington, Washington D.C., West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

The archival photographs reproduced in American Document are drawn from the Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection.

APPENDIX B

VANDERBILT CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM: THE WORKING PICTURE FILE

The Working Picture File is classified by geography (primary) and subject (secondary).

Geographic Divisions

A

-subjects without geographical consideration

B

Alaska Territory (Alaska 1959)

Canada

C

-subjects within the United States without further regional division

D Northeastern States

Connecticut

Delaware

Maine

Maryland

Massachusetts

New Hampshire

New Jersey

New York

Pennsylvania

Rhode Island

Vermont

Washington D.C.

West Virginia

E Southeastern States

Alabama

Arkansas

Florida

Georgia

Kentucky

Louisiana

Mississippi

North Carolina

South Carolina

Tennessee

Virginia

F Midwestern States

Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Michigan
Minnesota
Missouri
Ohio
Wisconsin

G Northwestern States

Colorado
Idaho
Kansas
Montana
Nebraska
North Dakota
South Dakota
Utah
Wyoming

H Southwestern States

Arizona
New Mexico
Oklahoma
Texas

J Farwestern States

California
Nevada
Washington
Oregon

K

Puerto Rico
Virgin Islands

*Hawaii Territory (Hawaii 1959)

Hawaii Territory is not represented in the Working Picture File, although it is represented in the archive as a whole. Photographic prints from Hawaii Territory were collected, and may be found in groups, in storage containers. These images were not microfilmed, and do not form part of the lots.

**The absence of letter "I" is a convention used by archivists.

Subject Divisions

14-18	<u>The Land - the background of civilization</u>
143-153	Mountains, deserts, foothills, plains
154-167	Farms, land conditions
168-175	Forests, parks, plant life
177-1835	Weather, floods, rivers, dams, canals, lakes
184-187	Highways, railroads, industrial areas
19	Seashore, islands, open sea
2-278	<u>Cities and Towns - as background</u>
211-227	City streets, buildings, stores, traffic, housing, slums, industry, waterfronts
23	City parks, residential areas, suburbs, gardens
25-27	Towns and small cities, oil towns, mining towns, housing, pueblos, ghost towns, cemeteries, etc.
3	<u>People - as such - without emphasis on their activity, except in the case of children</u>
3-35	Crowds, groups, individuals, details, clothes, families
36-38	Children, groups, home activities, schools, organizations, play
4	<u>Homes and Living Conditions</u>
41-43	Houses, rooms, furniture, people at home, visiting, hobbies
44-447	Life in tents, shacks, rooming houses, hobo jungles
448-46	Personal care and habits, housework, cooking, eating, sewing, sleeping
47-48	Porches, yards, gardens, servants
5-526	<u>Transportation</u> : walking, animals, cycles, automobiles, taxis, trailers, trucks, road conditions, electric cars, railroads, freight, shipping, airplanes
527	Tourists, traveling, hotels, and other accommodations
53-65	<u>Work - the economic basis of survival</u>
53-57	Raw materials
53-54	Agriculture: crops, livestock, ranches
531-538	Vegetables & fruits, grain, sugar, coffee, cotton, tobacco, etc/
54-5481	Dairy and poultry farming, cattle, sheep & other livestock
5482-5488	Farm land, equipment and management
55-558	Forest products: lumber, syrup, turpentine, decorative greens, trapping
56	Fishing, shrimps, oysters, etc.
57	Mining, oil (petroleum) wells, quarrying
58	Technical research, administration & finance, office work, stock rooms
59	Engineering and Building
591-593	Civil engineering, surveying, clearing land, roads, tunnels, bridges, irrigation, water supply, sewage disposal
594-595	Architecture, drafting, construction, alterations
596-598	Small house building, building trades, prefabrication, landscaping, demolition
6	Processing and Manufacturing
601-608	Food products, meat packing, dairy products, canning, beverages, feed, etc.
609-611	Fur, leather, textiles, clothing, accessories, carpets, canvas, cordage
612-614	Wood, building materials, paper, packaging, printing, commercial photography, reproduction
615-619	Chemical industries, munitions, oil refining plastics, runner, cement, clay, glass
620-623	Iron and steel, other metals, machinery, engines, tools, appliances, household equipment, scientific and musical instruments
624	War materials other than munitions & transportation equipment-- Ordinance
625-628	Transportation equipment: automobiles, tanks railroad rolling stocks, ships, aircraft-- Miscellaneous manufacturing
63-64	Selling and Distribution
630	Warehousing, wholesaling

631-645	Advertising, displays, selling, stores, miscellaneous shops, newsstands, home delivery, auctions, markets, street vendors
646-648	Services: mechanical (e.g. plumbing), hotel and restaurant help, tailors, barbers, beauty parlors, etc.
65-655	Utilities, power, electricity, heat, gas, water, ice, postal service, telephone, telegraph, radio communications
656-658	Fire prevention, street cleaning, undertaking, misc. services
66-69	<u>Organized Society - for security, justice, regulation, and assistance</u>
66	Labor organization, strikes, unemployment, relief, employment
67-675	Government, legislature, elections, politics, law, courts, police, prisons, economic, administration, treasury
677	Foreign relations, diplomatic corps
678-679	Non-governmental and semi-governmental organizations -- Promotion
68-6842	Government and other organized aid and security planning: agents, meetings, planned communities, agricultural aid, relocation, migratory labor, rehabilitation, tenant purchase loans, etc.
6844-686	Other aid organizations, welfare work (except medical), handicapped people, education, aid in disasters
687	Animal protection
7-72	<u>War</u> - Fortifications, armed services, special groups, registration, recruiting
73-7324	Induction, general training, camps, maneuvers
7325-739	Special training, functions -- preparation for war -- Infantry, artillery, armored forces, Marines, MP's, Navy, life aboard ship, Coast Guard, military & naval aviation, engineers artificers, intelligences, operations under special conditions
74-741	Famous people in armed services; servicemen on leave
742-745	Transportation: marching, motor, shops, air
746-7583	Theaters of war: combat action, offense, defense, supply, sea engagements, aircraft actions, bombing raids, atrocities, dead, prisoners
7585-7488	Heroes, awards, parades -- Retirement -- War graves
76-7639	Civilian defense and other civilian activities
764-775	Evacuation, refugees, internment, propaganda, subversion, sabotage, the enemy
8-83	<u>Medicine</u> - health, first aid, war casualties, hospitals, dentistry, public health, sanitation, safety
84-85	<u>Religion</u> - prayer, churches, clergy, revival meetings, ceremonies, education, missionaries
86-88	<u>Intellectual and Creative Activity</u> - science (as distinct from technology), colleges and universities, museums, records, surveys, documentary work, journalism, editorial work, writing, representative and decorative arts
89-909	<u>Social and Personal Activity</u> - ceremonies, organized gatherings, meetings, informal gatherings, parties, dancing
906-908	Hotels, restaurants, clubs, resorts, vacations, beaches, amusement parks
91	Fairs, parades, rodeos, circuses, theaters, show business, motion pictures, music, radio
92-93	Recreation, relaxation, outdoor life, sports, athletic contests, indoor games, gambling
94	Dissipation and crime
96	<u>Alphabetical Section</u> - subjects not adequately covered above, but better arranged in alphabetical order under subject headings

APPENDIX C

HISTORICAL SECTION PHOTOGRAPHIC UNIT SAMPLE SHOOTING SCRIPT: ROY STRYKER TO RUSSELL LEE AND ARTHUR ROTHSTEIN, FEBRUARY 19TH, 1942

<p>From R. E. Stryker To Russell Lee, Arthur Rothstein, in particular</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">FSA February 19, 1942</p>
<p>I. Production of foods-fruits, vegetables, meat, poultry, eggs, milk and milk products, miscellaneous products.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Packaging and processing of above b. Picking, hauling, sorting, preparing, drying, canning packaging, loading for shipping c. Field operations --planting; cultivation, sowing d. Dramatic pictures of fields, show "pattern" of the country; get feeling of the productive earth, boundless acres. e. Warehouses filled with food, raw and processed, cans boxes, bags, etc. <p>II. Poultry--large-scale operations</p> <p>Hatching, shipping chicks</p> <p>Get a few pictures "cute" of little chicks</p> <p>Real close-ups</p> <p>Eggs--get "pictorial" shots of eggs in baskets, in piles, in crates (get pattern pictures for posters)</p> <p>Dressed poultry</p> <p>Chickens in pens and yards</p> <p>Feeding operations</p> <p>III. General farming -- get pictures of representative small farms (California -- Texas) General farming, buildings, farmer & family, farmer at work.</p> <p>IV. Small town under war conditions</p> <p>Select a small town some distance from large cities and make a camera study of how this town looks under war conditions.</p> <p>Civilian Defense Activities</p> <p>Meetings of all kinds--Red Cross</p> <p>Farm groups, etc.</p> <p>Look for a town near an Army Camp</p> <p>Signs--stores, filling stations, etc.</p> <p>Selective Service</p> <p>Registration of new age groups</p> <p>Home gardens, Civilian Defense Activities</p> <p>Schools, More neighborliness (Any evidence of this?)</p> <p>V. Auto and auto tire rationing. A civilian population gets off rubber tires. (Many things should be photographed now before disappearance of marked decline. Old tires piles</p> <p>Used care lots. Especially when enormous number of cars are stored.</p>	<p>Signs--any sign which suggests rubber (or other commodity) shortage, rationing, etc. Horse-drawn vehicles. Blacksmith shops, harness shops, buggies, delivery wagons, horse drays (for trucks), bicycles. (What will happen to roadside hamburger stand?) Watch for closed filling stations or eat joints.</p> <p>VI. The highway</p> <p>Watch for any signs which indicate a country at war. "Man at Work" pictures. We are still short of these pictures. These should include:</p> <p>highway building - big stuff, e.g., in the Rocky Mts. of major highways.</p> <p>Repair and maintenance.</p> <p>Emphasize the men.</p> <p>VII. (for R. Lee) Mining, California, Arizona, New Mexico</p> <p>Get pictures showing increased activities among prospective and small operating outfits.</p> <p>Mercury--near San Jose, California. Cement, Kaiser's cement plant near San Jose, California.</p> <p>(See Jack Tolan. Also Sat. Eve. Post article on Kaiser.)</p> <p>Minders--faces & miners at work</p> <p>VIII. The land</p> <p>The long shots for a "feel" of the country</p> <p>Details</p> <p>IX. People - we must have at once:</p> <p>Pictures of men, women and children who appear as if they really believed in the U.S. Get people with a little spirit. Too many in our file now paint the U.S. as an old person's home and that just about everyone is too old to work and too malnourished to care much what happens. (Don't misunderstand the above. FSA is still interested in the lower income groups and we want to continue to photograph this group.)</p> <p>We particularly need young men and women who work in our factories, the young men who build our bridges, roads, dams and large factories.</p> <p>Housewives in their kitchen or in the yard picking flowers.</p> <p>More contented-looking old couples--woman sewing, man reading; sitting on porch; working in garden; sitting in park; coming from church; at picnics, at meetings.</p>

ENDNOTES

¹For a comprehensive evaluation of the impact that the Roosevelt administration and the New Deal had on the evolution of visual culture in America during the 1930s, see William Stott, *Documentary Expression and Thirties America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973); and John Raeborn, *A Staggering Revolution: A Cultural History of Thirties Photography* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2006).

²Between 1933-1945, the New Deal cultural aesthetic was characterized by the documentary technique of representing others. Interestingly, the year 1944 coincides with both the legal transfer of the FSA-OWI archive to the Library of Congress and the end of Roy Stryker's role as its editorial director. Tagg has addressed the rise and decline of the New Deal aesthetic and locates the precise "breakup of the documentary moment" to the year 1943. See John Tagg, *The Disciplinary Frame* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 179-207. For further reading on the conditions of societal change in the context of the New Deal cultural aesthetic, see Stott, *Documentary Expression and Thirties America*, 92-118.

³The bibliography here is obviously vast, but for criticisms of the New Deal's social, economic, and centralizing policies, see, for example, Paul A. Baran and Paul M. Sweezy, *Monopoly Capital: An Essay on the American Economic and Social Order* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1966); Ronald Radosh, "The Myth of the New Deal," in *A New History of Leviathan: Essays on the Rise of the American Corporate State*, ed. Ronald Radosh and Murray Rothbard (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1972), 146-87; Lloyd C. Gardner, "The New Deal, New Frontiers, and the Cold War: A Re-examination of American Expansion, 1933-1945," in *Corporations and the Cold War*, ed. David Horowitz (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1969), 105-41; Robert Higgs, *Crisis and Leviathan: Critical Episodes in the Growth of American Government* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); and Burton W. Folsom Jr., *New Deal or Raw Deal?: How FDR's Economic Legacy Has Damaged America* (New York: Threshold Editions, 2008). For general accounts, see, for example, William E. Leuchtenburg, *Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1932-1940* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963); and Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., *The Age of Roosevelt*, 3 vols. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957-60).

⁴On the sophisticated deployment of documentary techniques and technologies across the formidable range of New Deal economic agencies, see P. Daniel, M.A. Foresta, M. Stange, and S. Stein, *Official Images: New Deal Photography* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1987). Of the agencies cited, it was the RA under Rexford Tugwell that was most vehemently attacked as "one of the most far-flung experiments in paternalistic government ever attempted in the U.S." See Felix Bruner, "Utopia Unlimited: Executive Order Gives Tugwell Power to Administer Projects Calling for \$364,790,00," *Washington Post*, February 10, 1936, quoted in Nicholas Natanson, *The Black Image in the New Deal: The Politics of FSA Photography* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992), 51.

⁵For general detail on the FSA-OWI archive, see "Appendix: The FSA-OWI Collection," in Carl Fleischhauer and Beverly W. Brannan, eds., *Documenting America, 1935-1943* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 330-42. For specific detail on the FSA-OWI archive in the context of the RA, FSA, and OWI, see F. Jack Hurley, *Portrait of a Decade: Roy Stryker and the Development of Documentary Photography in the Thirties* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1972); and Allan Winkler, *The Politics of Propaganda: The Office of War Information, 1942-1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978).

⁶Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 4.

⁷Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media*. (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2001), 27-48.

⁸*Reading the archive from below* is a term in documentary theory which refers to the revisionist process of approaching the archive with a critical awareness of the bureaucratic system of intelligence which has institutionalized it. The term evolved from Allan Sekula's seminal essay on the archive, *The Body and the Archive*. See Allan Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," in *The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography*, ed. Richard Bolton (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989), 343-388.

⁹A given archive may be imagined as a cultural interface, which contains a specific visual language encoded within its domain. The archive is also governed by its syntax, and its contents may be accessed with greater dexterity when the user interfaces with it by applying their knowledge of syntax. The theory of the archive as a cultural interface, supported by syntax, is an extrapolation on Lev Manovich's discussion on the language of cultural interfaces, expressed in his seminal work on the language of new media. See Manovich, *The Language of New Media*, 69-73.

¹⁰Discussion on the referent to *the Real* is pervasive in discourse on documentary and the archive. The referent to *the Real* is most often aligned with Lacan's theory of *the Real*, where individual perception of reality refers to all that is known to be authentic, in reference to the self and to the external dimension of the human experience. The referent to *the Real* also refers to the infinite and absolute, as opposed to a reality based on sense perception and material order. Interpretation of Lacan's referent to *the Real* may be applied to the process of historicizing syntax in the FSA-OWI archive. The idea of the New Deal state was supported by a connotative referent to *the Real*, articulated through the visualization and production of a perceived authentic American national identity. During the New Deal era, documentary practice and rhetoric coalesced in the context of the Roosevelt administration's response to the systematic economic, political, and cultural crises that the Hoover administration had sought to elide as symptoms of the Great Depression. The Roosevelt administration claimed responsibility for the state of national crisis, and imposed a strategy for reform, in the context of a New Deal state. Under the rubric of various economic agencies, the referent to *the Real* manifested in a vast array of cultural products. The visualization and production of these cultural products were deployed to restore the strength in societal cohesiveness while legitimizing the Roosevelt administration as its paternal representative. The visualization and production of the FSA-OWI archive, the vision of Stryker, and Vanderbilt's classification system may be understood within the context of this belief system. For a comprehensive study on Lacan's construct of *the Real* see Jacques Lacan, *Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis*, trans. Anthony Wilden (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1968). For a secondary interpretation on Lacan's referent to *the Real*, as it applies to the formation and materiality of the FSA-OWI archive, see Tagg, *The Disciplinary Frame*.

¹¹For a reading of the archive as "one of the prime cultural artifacts of the New Deal," see Alan Trachtenberg, "From Image to Story: Reading the File," in Fleischhauer and Brannan, *Documenting America, 1935-1943*, 43-73. Of relevance to the broader discussion on the New Deal cultural aesthetic is the existence of other New Deal cultural production initiatives which proliferated between 1933-1945. These include: Federal One (a Works Progress Administration - later renamed the Works Projects Administration - initiative, which included the Federal Writers' Project, Historical Records Survey, Federal Theatre Project, Federal Music Project, and Federal Art Project); and the Public Works of Art Project (a Civic Works Administration initiative). It is also relevant to note that nearly 70% of all New Deal agencies employed photographers within their programs and maintained public relations offices to disseminate their photographic materials. Raeborn has argued that the success and visibility of the FSA-OWI archive was due largely to a unique configuration of circumstances, namely: the profound vision and leadership of Stryker, the accumulative talent of the photographers employed by the Historical Section Photographic Unit, and the role played by various media agencies that consistently published images from the archive. In contrast to these unique circumstances, photographs produced under the auspices of other New Deal agencies were staffed by journeymen who were simply content to be employed. See Raeborn, *A Staggering Revolution: A Cultural History of Thirties Photography*, 147.

¹²Tagg, *The Disciplinary Frame*, 85-86.

¹³Stott, *Documentary Expression and Thirties America*, 67.

¹⁴The practice of visualizing and producing other communicative forms, sourced from the contents of the FSA-OWI archive, is evidenced by the wealth of exhibition panels, pamphlets, posters, and documentary photography books which circulated throughout American society between the years 1935 and 1945. Of these forms, the documentary book genre achieved popular status. Titles worthy of note include: H.C. Nixon's *Forty Acres and Steel Mules* (1939); Walker Evans and James Agee's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941); Richard Wright and Edwin Rosskam's *12 Million Black Voices: A Folk History of the Negro in the United States* (1941); Dorothea Lange and Paul Taylor's *An American Exodus: A Record of Human Erosion in the 1930s* (1939); Archibald MacLeish's *Land of the Free* (1939); Edwin Rosskam's *Washington, Nerve Center* (1939); and Sherwood Anderson's *Home Town* (1940).

¹⁵Under the RA, the New Deal cultural aesthetic manifested in the form of photographic images which reflected the dispensation of RA cash loans made to individual farmers, as well as documentation of the Dust Bowl Migrations, the plight of the Southern sharecroppers, life on subsistence farms and homesteads, and the construction of planned suburban communities. Thereafter, when the RA was subsumed by the FSA, the New Deal cultural aesthetic manifested in the form of photographic images which documented the broader impact of the Dust Bowl Migrations, migratory agricultural labor, and environmental concerns. Thereafter, documentation efforts focused on broader coverage of rural and urban conditions, with particular reference to sub-standard living, educational facilities, American folkways, industry, and typical communities. When the FSA was subsumed by the OWI, documentation efforts concentrated on the national war effort in the context of domestic life, gender roles, industry, manufacturing, education, and specific wartime programs. All the while, the materialization of the FSA-OWI archive was influenced by a belief system that celebrated the spirit of a new national consciousness.

¹⁶Stryker had studied economics and sociology at Columbia University, and was a former graduate student of Tugwell's. During the mid-1920s, Stryker compiled illustrations for Tugwell's *American Economic Life and the Means of Its Improvement* (1925), which was a prototype documentary project that incorporated the documentary aesthetic with the study sociology, economics, history, cultural studies, and geography. In 1934, Stryker presented a concept for a pictorial source book on American agriculture to Tugwell. In 1935, under the aegis of the RA, the concept for the pictorial source book manifested in the context of the Historical Section Photographic Unit, whose objective was to document agrarian America. Further biographical information, analyses of Stryker's approach to documentary photography, and his vision of America are discussed in Hurley, *Portrait of a Decade: Roy Stryker and the Development of Documentary Photography in the Thirties*, 95-120; and in Nancy Wood, "Portrait of Stryker," in Roy E. Stryker and Nancy Wood, *In This Proud Land: America 1935-1943 as Seen in the FSA Photographs* (Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1973), 10-19.

¹⁷Stryker and Wood, *In This Proud Land: America 1935-1943, As Seen in the FSA Photographs*, 7.

¹⁸Archivist Nicholas Natanson has estimated that approximately 75,000 prints and 145,000 negatives (including both black-and-white negatives and color transparencies) contained within the FSA-OWI archive can be attributed to Stryker's period as director. See Natanson, *The Black Image in the New Deal: The Politics of FSA Photography*, 269-70.

¹⁹Fleischhauer and Brannan have argued that although Stryker imparted his vision of America on his photographers, he encouraged them "to shoot as many aspects of their subjects as they wished." See Fleischhauer and Brannan, *Documenting America, 1935-1943*, 4. At present, although a concise history on the social dynamics of the Historical Section Photographic Unit which operated under the RA, FSA, and OWI has yet to be written, deeper insight into the effects Stryker's character and vision had on his staff, which in turn influenced the formation of the archive, may be drawn from the various biographical histories which have been written about the photographers associated with the archive.

²⁰A detailed description of Stryker's instructional methods for editing negatives, prints, and drafting captions was printed in a procedural manual for the Historical Section. The manual which dates from 1940 or later reads as follows: "After the negatives are numbered, two 8x10 inch prints are made from each negative. These are called 'first prints.' In the case of the 35 mm film, two 5x7 prints are run off on the Emby Automatic Printer. A few 8x10 inch test enlargements are also made from the 35mm film. Mr. Stryker edits these first prints by tearing the corners, or by sometimes making notes in the margins, of those he thinks ought not to be in the file. We call this 'killing.' One set of the 'first prints' are mailed to you in the field. Two franked post cards will be enclosed. One is for you to fill in the date and sign and return to the office, acknowledging receipt of the pictures. The other is for you to fill out and send in after you have captioned the prints and are returning them to the office. If you disagree with Mr. Stryker's notes, or you do not agree that certain prints should be killed, it is your privilege to leave the print in for the files, and so indicate. It is also your privilege to kill any prints you do not wish in the files, by tearing the corners." See Fleischhauer and Brannan, *Documenting America, 1935-1943*, 339.

²¹As the FSA-OWI archive grew throughout the 1930s, its contents also functioned as a vital source of information to media networks (government agencies, public newspapers, magazines). Thus, the impetus to establish a classification system was prompted not only by the archive's size, but also by the number of users who sought its contents. Sources indicate that by 1939, guidance was given to users in the form of "suggestions for picture stories," such as "stories of groups of people," "crop stories," and "stories of places." In 1941, Historical Section photo editor, Edwin Roskam, implored Stryker to introduce a clear "subject file" so that users could locate what they needed with some dispatch. For further information on the organization of the archive, as it existed under the RA and FSA, see Alan Trachtenberg, "From Image to Story: Reading the File," in Fleischhauer and Brannan, *Documenting America, 1935-1943*, 52-53. It is also relevant to note that by 1942, Stryker was already mobilizing an effort to secure the archive's permanence within the public domain. Between 1942-1943, as budget cuts in the OWI and dissent in Congress over the use of government funding loomed as threats, Stryker began negotiations with the Roosevelt administration and Librarian of Congress, Archibald MacLeish, for the Library of Congress to take custody of the archive. Although the legal and physical transfers of the archive did not occur until 1944 and 1946, respectively, in autumn of 1943, Stryker was satisfied that its contents would be secured and he resigned from the OWI.

²²Paul Vanderbilt, *Between the Landscape and Its Other* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1993), 19.

²³Vanderbilt defined a lot as "a set of prints which it is desired to keep together in some order not provided for by the subject classifications, usually because it is a story conceived and photographed as an interpretive unit." The lots which Vanderbilt established ranged in size from about thirty to more than two hundred prints. Of the 2,200 lots which were identified, 1,800 were microfilmed and 400 were placed in storage. See Fleischhauer and Brannan, eds., *Documenting America, 1935-1943*, 332.

²⁴Vanderbilt defined six broad geographical regions, which include: the Northeastern states (Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington D.C., and West Virginia); the Southern states (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia); the Midwestern states (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin); the Northwestern states (Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming); the Southwestern States (Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas); and the Farwestern states (California, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington). Note: Alaska Territory and Canada were also grouped as a region, as were the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. Hawaii Territory is not represented in the Working Picture File, although it is represented in the archive as a whole. Subjects without geographical consideration, and subjects within the United States without further regional division were also classified respectively. The major subject classes in the "classified file" are as follows: 14 (The Land- the background of civilization); 2 (Cities and Towns- as background); 3 (People as Such- without emphasis on their activity); 4 (Homes and Living Conditions); 5-52 (Transportation); 53-65 (Work-agriculture, commerce, manufacturing); 66-69 (Organized Society- for security, justice, regulation, and assistance); 7 (War); 8-83 (Medicine and Health); 84-85 (Religion); 86-88 (Intellectual and Creative Activity); 89-94 (Social and Personal Activity); 96 (Alphabetical Section). The naming and numbering of the subject classes and subclasses reflect Vanderbilt's captivation with devising a type of arbitrary classification system. As such, the classes do not reflect a recognizable outline, and the naming and numbering of the subject subclasses vary in each of the six geographical divisions. See Paul Vanderbilt, *Guide to the Special Collections of the Prints and Photographs in the Library of Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1955).

²⁵The prints contained within the "classified file" have their lot numbers stamped on the back, enabling the user to move freely from Vanderbilt's arbitrary arrangement of subjects to Stryker's content and site-specific shooting assignments.

²⁶Paul Vanderbilt, "Computations for a Viewfinder," *Afterimage*, no. 4.3 (1976): 12.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 13.

²⁸ Vanderbilt, *Between the Landscape and Its Other*, 21.

²⁹The Popular Front was a populist movement which comprised of a broad coalition of left-leaning political groupings that influenced labor movements in the United States during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. The Popular Front was multiracial in composition, and characterized by an anti-fascist, pro-radicalized New Deal agenda. As the Popular Front fell into demise during the late 1940s, its communist-leaning members were purged by the state while its socialist-leaning members were absorbed by the Democratic Party. This shift in politics resulted in the stabilization of the New Deal Coalition. The aesthetic subculture of the Popular Front is one of the most understudied in American history, and reflects the legacies of two distinct divisions: Communist and Social Democrat.

³⁰Stott, *Documentary Expression and Thirties America*, 216.

³¹Joel Woller, "First-person Plural: The Voice of the Masses in Farm Security Administration Documentary," *Journal of Narrative Theory* 29, no.3 (1999): 345.

³²Stott, *Documentary Expression and Thirties America*, 225.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Agee, James and Walker Evans. *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1941.
- Baran, Paul A., and Paul M. Sweezy. *Monopoly Capital: An Essay on the American Economic and Social Order*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1966.
- Berenyi, Monika. *What We Are About To Receive: Historical Voices From the United States Farm Security Archival File*. Washington, D.C.: Isolde Solange Evangeline Pressworks, 2011.
- Caldwell, Erskine and Margaret Bourke-White. *You Have Seen Their Faces*. New York: Viking Press, 1937.
- Daniel, P., M. A. Foresta, M. Stange, and S. Stein. *Official Images: New Deal Photography*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1987.
- Derrida, Jacques. *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*. Translated by Eric Prenowitz. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.
- Farm Security Administration / Office of War Information Collection. Library of Congress. Washington, D.C.
- Fleischhauer, Carl and Beverly W. Brannan, eds. *Documenting America, 1935-1943*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.
- Folsom, Burton W. Jr. *New Deal or Raw Deal?: How FDR's Economic Legacy Has Damaged America*. New York: Threshold Editions, 2008.
- Gardner, Lloyd C. "The New Deal, New Frontiers, and the Cold War: A Re-examination of American Expansion, 1933-1945." In *Corporations and the Cold War*, edited by David Horowitz, 105-41. New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1969.
- Higgs, Robert. *Crisis and Leviathan: Critical Episodes in the Growth of American Government*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.
- Historical Section Photographic Unit Sample Shooting Script: Roy Stryker to Russell Lee and Arthur Rothstein, February 19, 1942. FSA/OWI Collection. Library of Congress. Washington, D.C.
- Hurley, F. Jack. *Portrait of a Decade: Roy Stryker and the Development of Documentary Photography in the Thirties*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1972.

- Lacan, Jacques. *Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis*. Translated by Anthony Wilden. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1968.
- Leuchtenburg, William E. *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1932-1940*. New York: Harper and Row, 1963.
- MacLeish, Archibald. *Land of the Free*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1938.
- Manovich, Lev. *The Language of New Media*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001.
- Natanson, Nicholas. *The Black Image in the New Deal: The Politics of FSA Photography*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992.
- Paul Vanderbilt Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. Washington, D.C.
- Radosh, Ronald. "The Myth of the New Deal." In *A New History of Leviathan: Essays on the Rise of the American Corporate State*, edited by Ronald Radosh and Murray Rothbard, 146-87. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1972.
- Raeburn, John. *A Staggering Revolution: A Cultural History of Thirties Photography*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2006.
- Roy Emerson Stryker Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. Washington, D.C.
- Schlesinger, Arthur M., Jr. *The Age of Roosevelt*. 3 vols. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957-60.
- Sekula, Allan. "The Body and the Archive." In *The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography*, edited by Richard Bolton, 343-388. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989.
- Stott, William. *Documentary Expression and Thirties America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.
- Stryker, Roy E. and Nancy Wood. *In This Proud Land; America, 1935-1943, As Seen in the FSA Photographs*. Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1973.
- Tagg, John. *The Disciplinary Frame, Photographic Truths and the Capture of Meaning*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009.
- Trachtenberg, Alan. "From Image to Story: Reading the File." In *Documenting America, 1935-1943*, edited by Carl Fleischhauer and Beverly W. Brannan, 43-73. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.

- Turner, Frederick Jackson. *The Early Writing of Frederick Jackson Turner*. Compiled by Everett E. Edwards. Freeport, NY: Books for Library Press, 1969.
- Vanderbilt Classification System: The Working Picture File. FSA/OWI Collection, Library of Congress. Washington, D.C.
- Vanderbilt, Paul. *Between the Landscape and Its Other*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1993.
- Vanderbilt, Paul. "Computations for a Viewfinder." *Afterimage*, no. 4.3 (1976): 8-13.
- Vanderbilt, Paul. *Guide to the Special Collections of the Prints and Photographs in the Library of Congress*. Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1955.
- Winkler, Allan M. *The Politics of Propaganda: The Office of War Information, 1942-1945*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978.
- Woller, Joel. "First-person Plural: The Voice of the Masses in Farm Security Administration Documentary." *Journal of Narrative Theory* 29, no.3 (1999): 340-366.
- Wright, Richard and Edwin Rosskam. *12 Million Black Voices: A Folk History of the Negro in the United States*. New York: Viking Press, 1941.