

# Yale University ~ Photogrammar - The Great Depression



Photo: Arthur Rothstein From: Open Culture

## *Origins*

After a series of setbacks in the courts that repealed many of the First New Deal's program, President Roosevelt pursued a new set of initiatives including the Resettlement Administration in 1935. It was charged with aiding the poorest third of farmers displaced by the depression and particularly focused on resettlement on viable lands and providing low-interest loans. Directed by Rexford Tugwell, a Columbia University economist, the RA came under immediate scrutiny. Realizing the battle for public opinion had begun, Tugwell hired his former student Roy Stryker to lead the Historic Section within the Information Division of the RA, which in 1937 was moved to the FSA.

## *Mission*

In order to build support for and justify government programs, the Historical Section set out to document America, often at her most vulnerable, and the successful administration of relief service. The Farm Security Administration—Office of War Information (FSA-OWI) produced some of the most iconic images of the Great Depression and World War II and included photographers such as Dorothea Lange, Walker Evans, and Arthur Rothstein who shaped the visual culture of the era both in its moment and in American memory. Unit photographers were sent across the country. The negatives were sent to

Washington, DC. The growing collection came to be known as “The File.” With the United State’s entry into WWII, the unit moved into the Office of War Information and the collection became known as the FSA-OWI File.

*170.000 Photographs documenting the Great Depression*

Go to: <http://photogrammar.yale.edu/>