



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## Oral history interview with Edwin and Louise Roskam

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Oral history interview with Edwin and Louise Rosskam
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.rosska65
<b>Date:</b>	1965 August 3
<b>Creator:</b>	Rosskam, Edwin, 1903-1985 (Interviewee) Doud, Richard Keith (Interviewer) Rosskam, Louise, 1910-2003 (Interviewee) New Deal and the Arts Oral History Project
<b>Extent:</b>	70 Pages (Transcript)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Digital Content: Oral history interview with Edwin and Louise Rosskam, 1965 August 3, Transcript</a> <a href="#">Audio: Oral history interview with Edwin and Louise Rosskam, 1965 August 3, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)</a>

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

This interview conducted as part of the Archives of American Art's New Deal and the Arts project, which includes over 400 interviews of artists, administrators, historians, and others involved with the federal government's art programs and the activities of the Farm Security Administration in the 1930s and early 1940s.

### Available Formats

Transcript available on line.

### Restrictions

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

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## Biographical / Historical

Edwin (1903-1985) and Louis Rosskam (1910-2003) were photographers from Roosevelt, N.J.

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## Scope and Contents

An interview of Edwin and Louise Rosskam conducted 1965 August 3, by Richard Doud, for the Archives of American Art, at their home, in Roosevelt, N.J.

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## Scope and Contents

Edwin Rosskam speaks of his background and youth in Germany; coming to the United States; his education in painting at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts; the early development of his interest in photography; getting his photojournalism career started; joining the Farm Security Administration and working under Roy Stryker; the view of America presented by the work produced by the FSA; photography exhibits he has done; the effect upon him of the people he met and photographed during his FSA career; the political impact of the FSA; applications and uses of the photographs produced by the FSA; the project's strengths and weaknesses; books and other projects he has contributed to. He recalls Roy Stryker, Dorothea Lange, Marion Post Wolcott, John Vachon, and the novelist Richard Wright. Louise Rosskam discusses the impact upon her of the people who were photographed, propagandistic aspects of the work, and the impact of the FSA project on photojournalism.

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## General

Originally recorded on 2 sound tape reels. Reformatted in 2010 as 3 digital wav files. Duration is 2 hr., 49 min.

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

### Subjects:

Documentary photography  
Photographers -- New Jersey -- Roosevelt -- Interviews

### Types of Materials:

Interviews  
Sound recordings

### Names:

Lange, Dorothea  
New Deal and the Arts Oral History Project  
Stryker, Roy Emerson, 1893-1975  
United States. Farm Security Administration. Historical Section  
Vachon, John, 1914-1975  
Wolcott, Marion Post, 1910-1990  
Wright, Richard, 1908-1960