



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## Oral history interview with Roy Emerson Stryker

Funding for the digital preservation of this interview was provided by a grant from the Save America's Treasures Program of the National Park Service.

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Oral history interview with Roy Emerson Stryker
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.stryke63
<b>Date:</b>	1963-1965
<b>Creator:</b>	Stryker, Roy Emerson, 1893-1975 (Interviewee) Doud, Richard Keith (Interviewer)
<b>Extent:</b>	159 Pages (Transcript)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Digital Content: Oral history interview with Roy Emerson Stryker, 1963-1965, Transcript</a> <a href="#">Audio: Oral history interview with Roy Emerson Stryker, 1963-1965, 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.

### Restrictions

Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

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## Biographical / Historical

Roy Emerson Stryker (1893-1975) was the director of the Farm Security Administration Historical Section of Washington, D.C. Under Stryker the Photographic project of the FSA documented the drought, poverty and despair of rural and urban America during the Depression.

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## Scope and Contents

An interview of Roy Emerson Stryker conducted 1963-1965, by Richard Doud, for the Archives of American Art, at the artist's home, in Montrose, Colorado.

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## Scope and Contents

Stryker speaks of his youth; early career in ranching and social work; the origin of the photography project in the Farm Security Administration; bureaucratic problems; photography and journalism; photographers on the project; subjects' reaction to being photographed; public perception of the FSA project; Paul Vanderbilt's work with the project's photographs; ethics of the photographers and staff; interaction between the photographers and subjects; the influence of earlier documentary photographers, such as Matthew Brady and Lewis Hine; political and media problems with the project; use of the photographs as a force in social change; and other issues surrounding the FSA photography project. He recalls Jack Delano, John Vachon, Edwin Roskam, Arthur Rothstein, Rexford Tugwell, John Collier, Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange, Russell Lee, Carl Mydans, Ben Shahn, and Marion Post Wolcott.

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## General

Originally recorded on 5 sound tape reels. Reformatted in 2010 as 9 digital wav files. Duration is 8 hr.

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

Names:

Collier, John, Jr., 1913-1992  
Delano, Jack  
Evans, Walker, 1903-1975  
Lange, Dorothea  
Lee, Russell, 1903-1986  
Mydans, Carl  
Roskam, Edwin, 1903-1985  
Rothstein, Arthur, 1915-1985