

The camera view of Fort Peck, in the hands of Margaret Bourke White:

This possibly could be not a camera's-eye view, or at least not entirely; instead the camera itself is a kind of character, doing its business (photographic process cd be briefly poetically described), going places (as held or tripoded by B-White)-- but ultimately, the NY editors of LIFE see what they've already made up their minds to see, Fort Peck as New Deal wild west.

--cd include how legends accrete (that is, comment on this along w/ the descriptive actuality of B-White and the camera in action: story of B-White being mistaken for well-dressed prostitute, for ex.

--ultimate example of the camera doings its job but the LIFE editors pervebting it is the cover shot, mistakenly calling the spillway the dam.

The camera came to town in (fall of '36), before winter, or it really would have been horrified.

Fred Michels--2nd folder MHS oral history summaries

Margaret Bourke White story from summary:

Wh. being escorted around by the captain (my note: evidently head of Ft Peck photo dept) and other staff of photo dept. Wh. wanted to see everything, so they took her to the "Riding Academy...house of ill fame." Captain's wife, who came along, didn't want to go inside so waited in car. A drunk came along and propositioned her. Recounts the conversation that followed, as told by the captain's wife herself.

--could be worth listening to for this incident and Michels' other mentions of delivering furniture to brothels.

James Montfort, 2nd folder MHS oral history summaries

Bourke White Article was accurate but no one liked it.

Clarence Crane--2nd folder MHS oral history summaries

Bourke White's "bias": LIFE focused on Wheeler, after Wh. had the run of the entire dam to take pics of.

--possibly ask Jan Mason where Wh's proofs or pics would be?

"Looks like where God lost his overshoes."

--possible use: The pilot who takes Bourke-White up for aerial shots could make the remark, maybe without quote marks to fit the rest of that section. Then a justifying sentence something like:

...vast porch corner (i.e., projects, machinery etc. scattered everywhere)

During '93 bookstore tour, somebody passed along to me the memory of Margaret Bourke White during her Fort Peck photo assignment, sitting every night in a cafe reading Gone With the Wind with her meal. Check this out against GTTW pub date.

possible dialogue abt Wheeler, from Myron Baker (2nd folder MHS oral history summaries)
usage of "they had plenty of whatever's":

Bourke-White is told by one of her escorts that the boomtowns have "plenty of whatever's."

"Let's see one of those whatever's, Mr. 00," she says. (They go to the Riding Academy.)
^{your}