
Researched, Written, Edited by, and Original Copyright of, David Joseph Marcou in April-May 2014 in La Crosse, WI, and Published in May 2014 by DigiCOPY of La Crosse.

All Photos in This Book Were Taken by Lewis Wickes Hine, Unless Otherwise Indicated.

Paperback edition published by DigiCOPY of La Crosse, May 2014.

David Joseph Marcou is an author, documentary photographer, playwright, poet, journalist, and editor living in western Wisconsin, who has published more than 70 of his own books, including the award-winning 10-volume group photobook series he’s directed, “Spirit of America”, and the 18-volume personal photobook series he’s photographed and authored “Human Character”. Two writings by him have so far been nominated for Pulitzer Prizes, and his writings and photos are housed in many leading archives and galleries, including the British National Portrait Gallery, the National Assembly Library of South Korea, the Wisconsin and Missouri Historical Societies, the La Crosse Public Library Archives, and various Smithsonian Archives. Two of his Presidential Campaign 2008 photos were on-display in 2011-2012 at the National Museum of American History Archives Center in the group-show “Gift of the Artist”. He learned about the documentary photography of Lewis Wickes Hine more than 30 years ago, but had only written brief pieces about Mr. Hine before this book’s publication. David has lived and worked as a journalist in London, Seoul, Missouri, and Wisconsin. He is the father of a married son, who is a military veteran studying engineering on the US East Coast.

Researched, Written, Edited by, and Original Copyright of, David Joseph Marcou in April-May 2014 in La Crosse, WI, and Published in May 2014 by DigiCOPY of La Crosse.

All Photos in This Book Were Taken by Lewis Wickes Hine, Unless Otherwise Indicated.
“If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.... Love bears all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends... So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”

– Full Passage Can Be Found in St. Paul’s 1st Letter to Corinthians, Chapters 13 and 14.
Preface:

Two memories have most inspired me to research and write this book-length biographical essay about Lewis Hine, the great American documentary photographer.

First, while I was a member of the Missouri Reporting Program based in London during the autumn semester of 1981, if memory serves one day I found myself in a warehouse type gallery in that capital city. Though it was open, no one else was in there when I was. Many small photographs in frames were on tables, perhaps a few on walls too. The one photographer I’ve long associated with those photos is Lewis Hine. There must have been some ID or distinctive photo/s there, because from the initial onset of this memory many years ago, it seemed like all the key photos in that gallery were by Mr. Hine.

Second, at the reception after my wedding to Ann E. Majeska in June 1973, Ann’s paternal grandfather, Ben Majeska Sr., said something to me about love that sticks with me still, from the same passage by St. Paul quoted at this book’s outset: “If I speak with the tongues of men and angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy
gong or a clanging cymbal… So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”

Though I loved Ann then, I’m not sure I loved her fully or that she loved me a great deal. If she did, she knew enough eventually to let me go, to do the work I believe in, as part of the family I most need. In a way, I still love Ann, though we divorced in 1979, and I still feel love too for my second wife, Suk-Hee, to whom I was married from 1986-1992.

Though I’ve loved those two women, I have never been able to discern how to love them as much as they’ve needed, and for them to love me as much as I need, as the flawed, but hard working, man I most tend to be. Ann and I never had children together; Suk-Hee and I did, Matthew, who is married and hopefully will have children with his wife, reasonably soon.

But as for Ben Majeska Sr., he resembled Lewis Hine – both men as far as I know were Wisconsin natives of nearly the same pre-1900 generation (and both were raised in the Fox River Valley), handsome, slim, with common-sense glasses and decent heads of hair, wiry strong, sensitive, and fond of poetry and pictures. Ben Sr. lived into his 90s I believe, still doing his pushups, pull-
ups, and sit-ups at an advanced age, and memorizing poetry, a lifelong habit for the former railroad steam-engine mechanic, who loved his wife Ella all his adult life, as did Lewis his Sarah.

I’ve long admired couples who love their life-partner “til the end of time”, including my parents, who married on Valentine’s Day, 1950, and who are still in love and married to each other more than 64 years after their very romantic wedding day. Thank you, Mom and Dad, for your shining example, and for the love I still share with as many people as care positively about me, my son and his wife, and our extended family.

But two Lewis Hine portraits stand out here, regarding how children can be treated. Both show young girls – one is Lewis’s portrait of a little black orphan sitting on a tiny chair in front of a house where a “Jim Crow” sign says, “Temporary Home for Colored Children”. That little girl has a very innocent quality, and trusts Lewis Hine. The other photo-portrait shows a textile-girl, not looking into camera, but rather, with hopeful gaze, looking out a window during work. Its caption is “Glimpse on the Outer World”.
Forward, then, to the life-story and works of Lewis Wickes Hine, hopefully with his and our courage to love and reform via documentary photography…

**Part 1: Spirit of America, Wisconsin, and Oshkosh.**

The Douglas and Sarah Hine family that gave birth to Lewis Hine, the great documentary photographer from Wisconsin, according to ancestry.com dates on the Hine side back to England. (The surname Hine is of Anglo-Saxon origin, deriving in all likelihood from the word “hinde”, for deer, or for keeper of the deer.) An apparent direct ancestor on the Hine side for Douglas and Lewis, named Thomas Hine, was born in Essex, England ca. 1580 and arrived in Milford, Connecticut as a mature adult, where his family remained at least a couple of generations, before moving to Cairo, NY, in the general vicinity of the Catskill Mountains. Thus descendant Lewis’s later “Catskill dream”, as he referred to that beautiful mountain district’s inspiration for him, and for many artists before and since.

(A son of that early direct ancestor, Thomas Hine Jr., apparently not a direct ancestor of Lewis’s, was born in England in 1621, arriving in Connecticut some 25 years
later. Thomas Jr. was a hero of the wars against the Pequots, after having released and fed a friendly Indian who’d been tied up by the Pequots and left for the mosquitoes to devour.)

If it’s accurate, one citation on the ancestry.com website indicates one of Lewis Hine’s mother’s blood-relatives, Olive, who married a Hayes, was her-self born a Hine, which in genealogical terms means a “pedigree-collapse” in the family tree, which is explainable due to the limited number of marital mates available in that part of New England soon after the initial immigration. It does not invalidate the family tree, because in theory all family trees undergo pedigree-collapses at some points, because the human race, in some theories, descended from only two initial ancestors.

As time passed in the area that would become the state of Wisconsin, it was discovered by non-natives when Frenchman Jean Nicolet landed at Green Bay in 1634. By 1818 fur traders and others began settling the area that would become the city of Oshkosh, located at the western edge of Lake Winnebago, along the Fox River. However, it wasn’t the fur trade that would prove to be Oshkosh’s
biggest early bread and butter; that honor would go to lumbering.

Oshkosh was named for the Menominee Chief Oshkosh, whose Indian name meant “the claw”. Though he fought with the British during the War of 1812, he was an ally of the Americans during the Black Hawk War of 1832. Via treaties Chief Oshkosh signed and with a bit of federal subterfuge, Wisconsin was ceded to America, and became a US state in 1848. Already having been named the county seat for Winnebago County, Oshkosh was incorporated as a city in 1853. The railroad arrived there in 1859, and with the area’s navigable waterways naturally added into the mix, lumbering became a strong contributor to the city.

At one time, Oshkosh was known as the "Sawdust Capital of the World," due to the number of lumber mills there. By 1874, it had 47 sawmills and 15 shingle mills. By 1870, Oshkosh had become the third-largest city in the state, with a population of more than 12,000. The Oshkosh Daily Northwestern newspaper was founded around this time, as was the Oshkosh State Normal School (now the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh).

On April 28, 1875, Oshkosh had a "Great Fire" that consumed homes and businesses along Main Street north of the Fox River. The fire had engulfed 70 stores, 40 factories, and 500 homes costing nearly $2.5 million (or
$51.2 million in 2010 money) in damage. In about 1900, Oshkosh was home of the Oshkosh Brewing Company, which coined the slogan "By Gosh It's Good." Its Chief Oshkosh label became a nationally distributed beer.

After Lewis Hine left Oshkosh (1901), Oshkosh became the well-to-do home of “Oshkosh B’gosh”, a famous clothing line. And after the invention of airplane flight, the Oshkosh Experimental Fly-In became very famous. Both are still very famous today.

Meanwhile, in the paternal line of focus here, Douglas Hull Hine (born ca. 1830) and his wife, Sarah Hayes Hine (born ca. 1830), married in 1857 in Cairo, NY, and soon after, apparently made a mainstream 19th century American migration from New York State via the Erie Canal, to Wisconsin. They took up residence in Richland County, at Lone Rock, in the Township of Buena Vista, where their first child was born in 1858. It seems Lewis’s father worked as a painter then, but soon after enlisted on the Union side in the Civil War. Douglas H. Hine served with the 20th Wisconsin Infantry Regiment as principal musician.

One account states that Douglas, and perhaps his family too, lived in Costa Rica for five years. That Central American sojourn either occurred before he married Sarah
Hayes in 1857, or after his Civil War service. Douglas and Sarah would have four children -- Lizzie, Hattie, Lola, and Lewis (the youngest). Lizzie (also known as Mary) was born in 1858; Hattie in 1860. Lola was born in 1869 in Ohio, became a teacher, apparently never married, and moved to New York State like Lewis.

As for intellectual, cultural, economic, and political ferment, the populist tradition, which had been alive in the world even before the Ancient Greeks fashioned the world’s first republican democracy, was very much alive in the State of Wisconsin in the second half of the 19th century, where hard work and individual responsibility were the order of the day. The nation’s Republican Party had been formed in Ripon, Wisconsin, in 1854, and in 1860, its presidential candidate, Abraham Lincoln, was elected president. Before war’s end, Lincoln supported full emancipation of America’s slaves.

Also in the 1860s, the Grange Movement was formed in Washington, D.C., to combat excessive freight rail rates. Dairy farmers in Wisconsin joined that movement. The University of Wisconsin in Madison was already graduating young men and young women who came from various walks and levels of life, but who ascended
professional ladders via hard work and good results. UW was a state land grant university and one of its departments was Agriculture. Soon, the Normal School movement to train teachers would grow up in the Badger State too; as would the Progressive Party a few years later, led by “Fighting Bob” LaFollette.

Lewis Hine’s mother, Sarah Hayes Hine, was an educator, but had to become a bit of a business-woman when the family opened a restaurant/coffeeshop along Oshkosh’s Main Street. Many types of hard-working, everyday citizens were boosting the Wisconsin economy then – e.g. lead miners, lumbermen, food and dry goods dealers, factory-owners, blacksmiths, various industrial workers, clergy, teachers, and to be sure, dairy farmers too.

The “Oshkosh Daily Northwestern” states that, after Douglas Hine served in the Union Army during the war, he and his wife moved to Oshkosh, ca. 1871. Lewis’s parents opened their own restaurant/coffeeshop on Main Street between Algoma Boulevard and Church Street. They lived above their business early on, and in later years, at 80 Division Street.

Little is known about Lewis’s earliest years after his birth in Oshkosh on Sept. 26, 1874, but when he presented his
lecture-slide shows as an adult, he delivered them in various churches, suggesting a tolerant religious upbringing. Those presentations were often titled simply, “Child Labor”.

It’s possible in addition to his early schooling that Lewis as a child was also helping with the family business, and thus becoming more curious about the world. The family’s restaurant/coffeeshop was famous for its oysters and men who smoked cigars there. The family apparently gave up that business two years before Douglas’s death, ca. July 1890, when he began receiving Civil War pension payments.

At the time of Lewis’s dad’s death in 1892 (a few say it may have been a suicide, most others say an accident; the Oshkosh paper stated that Douglas had been suffering from bronchial problems the last six years of his life, though the incident occurred when he was cleaning an old revolver of his at a shop downtown, “talking pleasantly” -- when the gun fired -- with a Mr. Cornelius, who likely was his son-in-law, because Franklin B. Cornelius had married Lizzie M. Hine Cornelius, a daughter of Douglas’s and sister of Lewis’s), and about the time of Lewis’s finishing high school, Douglas’s son began
working around town. After Douglas’s death, his widow, Sarah, received a federal widow’s pension.

Some of the jobs Lewis took then were splitting kindling, delivering packages for a department store, selling water filters door-to-door, and working as a mechanic.

But due to the national economic Panic of 1893, the aspiring young man may have been unemployed too for a short time. However, Lewis was listed in the Oshkosh City Directory in 1895 as being a furniture upholsterer – working 13 hours a day, 6 days a week, for $4 per week. Then, sometime between 1895 and the 1898 City Directory, he worked as a janitor for the National Union Bank, and studied stenography too, being promoted to clerk at that bank by 1898.

Also in 1898, there was a huge strike in the timber/woodworking industry. Oshkosh had more than a dozen large saw mills, and after the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, much of the lumber that rebuilt the Windy City came from Oshkosh sawmills. When wages decreased in the years immediately after the national Panic of 1893, woodworkers in Oshkosh organized for a very large strike. The governor called in the National Guard in summer 1898, and notable attorney Clarence Darrow
represented the strikers’ leadership, who were acquitted. The company that had brought charges, Paine Lumber, continued in business many decades. The Spanish-American War started about the time of the strike-leaders’ trial, and wood-products continued to be needed by the military and others.

One outgrowth of the strike-leader’s trial was testimony that Oshkosh woodworking factory owners had been replacing strikers and other adult workers with child laborers. As children took the places of adults during that period, because they worked for a lot less money, a local newspaper protested: “Even in these dull times, with the mills running about half time and with half a force, there are children working at many machines. The city is so full of idle men that when the street car company reduced the already slender pay of their drivers and brought on a [apparently minor] strike, there were two or three applicants for each vacant space. And yet with an army of idle men in our midst, children who ought to be in school are doing factory work.”/“This state of affairs is a disgrace to Oshkosh. The little work there is to be had should be done at decent wages and the little ones sent to school. Put men to work and let babies go home!”
Thus, Lewis Hine saw the exploitation of young workers already then. As for his own jobs from that period, he admitted, “I was neither physically nor temperamentally fitted for any of these jobs”.

His life-path was unique though -- he didn’t desert child labor situations totally, but instead would spend a lot of time documenting child labor, not only to offer loving witness to the dignity of those young people and their work ethics, but also to bring about positive reforms in the lives of children, so they could spend a lot more time attending schools, and a lot less time working for dirt-poor-wages.

Hine would become so engaged with young workers’ conditions and lives, he once said it was fun to photograph all laborers, but all other workers were a bit less fun to be around than miners, who included many child-laborers. It’s significant that his home state, the Badger State, got its nickname from lead miners, called “badgers,” for the way they burrowed into the ground like the feisty, beloved creatures by that name. Perhaps it’s true Hine sometimes had to keep himself from smiling at the children, but he said once that smiling kept him from
what he rather would have been doing, weeping over their plights.

**Part 2: New York City.**

Lewis Hine attended extension courses (including an art class or two apparently) at Oshkosh Normal School, where he met Frank Manny, the principal there and Lewis’s new mentor. With Manny’s encouragement, Lewis next studied sociology at the University of Chicago for one year, under two famous liberal educators: John Dewey and Ella Flagg Young. The famed sociologist and critic of “conspicuous consumption”, Thorstein Veblen, also taught there.

In 1901, Manny became superintendent of the Ethical Culture School in New York, a school whose students included many new German-Jewish immigrants. Manny immediately named Hine nature study and geography teacher there. He also asked Hine to become the school’s photographer, to document the social and academic aspects of the school. Taking his first photos ever (Hine was almost 30 years old then), he soon realized the power photography had to reveal truth and reality, making a
strong impact on him. He envisioned photography’s great teaching potential, and started the school’s camera course.

One project Manny and Hine decided on was to design a project for the students based on the new American phenomenon of mass immigration. That school’s particular interest was on immigrants from Eastern Europe, the new wave. The two men believed this photographic project would help students show the same regard for contemporary immigrants as they did for the Pilgrims who landed on Plymouth Rock.

By 1904, Hine made the first of many photographic visits to that nearby, famous immigrant-gateway, Ellis Island, where he made some of the most dramatic documentary photos ever of new immigrants to the United States. Developing a new love and respect for photography was only part of his main goal then; in 1904, he also traveled back to his hometown to marry his former classmate, and life-long partner, Sarah Ann Rich, also from the Oshkosh area. At about that time, Lewis studied for and earned a Master’s degree in the pedagogy of social work from New York’s Columbia University.

In 1905, Lewis Hine made a compelling work-portrait of a white-haired, bearded craftsman-printer in nice light,
running an old-style foot press, an example of “Joy in Work”, titled “The Old Printer”. Hine’s work-portrait of that printer shows the total concentration of two men at useful work, the printer and Hine. The caption adds about the human subject: “After long service in various branches of this profession, he was engaged in teaching the art of printing to children in a progressive school. He was also a student and social philosopher and a very good violinist. With all these lines of activity, he spent a very busy and happy life.”

By the end of 1906, Hine had published several articles for “The Elementary School Teacher”, “The Outlook”, and “The Photographic Times”, to promote photography as a teaching tool. During this period, Hine developed further connections at Columbia. With one, he met Arthur Kellogg, who worked for “Charities and Commons” magazine. This contact offered Hine many new professional connections.


In 1908, Lewis Hine proudly declared himself a photographer and filed his first advertisement in
“Charities and Commons” magazine, with 22 close lines of type. Within the coming year or two, he opened a studio, employed a staff, catalogued his work, developed film of a newly conscious public, and made slides of the photographs he took for the National Child Labor Committee to show when he addressed its members at conferences. Eventually, he made stereopticons too.

In 1913, Hine began featuring a different photo of his each week with his ads in “Survey” magazine (the new name for “Charities and Commons”). He’d been freelancing for that magazine and the NCLC a while, but had been hired full-time as the NCLC’s lead-photographer in 1908, when it began promoting and aiding enactment of child labor laws more fully.

These activities were a real struggle for the committee and its friends, because many people were opposed to, often violently, the introduction of those laws. Child labor was extremely profitable then, and many business owners were unwilling to accept and/or adhere to such laws.

During his earliest documentary labor-site visits, Lewis’s wife, Sarah, often accompanied him. (Some years, Lewis traveled as many as 50,000 miles, via auto and/or train.) In 1911, the couple traveled together through Mississippi
and Virginia, where they collaborated on a report about “thirteen cotton mills, ten knitting mills, five silk mills, three woolen mills, and glass and shoe factories.”

The Hines’ only surviving child, Corydon, was born the following year. An earlier son, Richard Lewis Hine, died in March 1911. His funeral services were in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Walter C. Rich, Mrs. Hine’s parents, who were farmers in the Town of Oshkosh. Rev. Smith conducted services, with Rev. Stair assisting.

(As for Corydon, whose given name derives from the Greek, meaning “ready to fight”, the surviving Hine youngster once stole from a deli when very young. His mom wrote the boy’s father, Lewis, working again on Ellis Island for an extended period, and asked him what to do about their son’s thievery. Lewis responded that she should make Corydon apologize to the deli owner, and ground him for a week. As Lewis stated, “We can’t have are/[our] son stealing like some sort of animal.”)

Lewis found kids at work to photograph in every part of the country and in some of the nation’s most significant industries. Textile mills were big offenders, especially in the South (the geographic section where black people had earlier been the country’s immigrant-slaves), which made
children the new slave class. One mill worker in every four was between the ages of ten and fifteen. No one knew how many workers were younger than ten, because they weren’t counted.

In North Carolina, Lewis Hine reported: “I found two little sisters spinning whose grandmother told me they were only six and seven years old. I found two boys under twelve whose hands had been mutilated in the mill. And I found any number of ten- and eleven-year-old children working an eleven-hour day (during the school term) at tasks involving eye strain and muscle strain. Is it any wonder, therefore, that I found a whole family, mother and five children, the oldest seventeen, of which not one could write his name?”

Throughout the segregated, “Jim Crow” South, mill work was reserved for whites. Blacks were seldom hired for that task. Most mill hands were impoverished white sharecroppers and tenant farmers who had abandoned worn-out farms for the promise of steady employment in the mills. Poor, white parents didn’t want their children “wasting time” by attending school. They felt that youngsters should work and help support the family, just
as the parents had when they were youngsters on the farm.

Children worked as spinners, doffers, and sweepers, with girls often being spinners. They walked up and down long aisles, brushing lint from machines and watching the whirling spools or bobbins for breaks in the cotton thread, which they quickly tied the ends together on. A spinner tended six or eight “sides”, as the long rows of spindles were called. She had to be on her feet nearly all the time, working 11 or 12 hours a day, six days a week.

Boys began working as doffers when they were seven or younger. They removed the whirling bobbins when they were filled with thread and replaced them with empty ones. Many youngsters worked barefoot, making it easier to climb onto huge machines to reach the bobbins or broken threads. If they weren’t careful though, they could fall into the moving machinery and be caught by it. The accident rate for children was double the rate for adults. An overseer told Hine, “We don’t have any accidents in this mill. Once in a while a finger is mashed or a foot, but it don’t amount to anything.”

The whole place was filled with constant machine noise; workers had to shout to be heard. And because heat and
moisture helped keep the threads from breaking, the mill windows were always kept closed. The hot, steamy air was filled with dust and lint that covered the workers’ clothes and made it hard to breath. Mill workers often developed tuberculosis, chronic bronchitis, and other respiratory illnesses. Many young mill workers never reached the age of 20.

But one mill owner indicated part of what Hine was up against, when he said, “Are you trying to do things for these people that they themselves do not want? Let them alone. They are happy.”

In the food canning industry, Hine found that child workers were even younger than those in the cotton mills. School-aged workers left their city homes for work before summer vacations began and returned long after the fall term had started. Most of these children were immigrants from Europe. They grew up wandering with their parents, moving from cannery to cannery, following the seasons from strawberries and peaches in the North to oysters and shrimp in the South.

Work in canning sheds began long before dawn. “Come out with me to one of these canneries at 3 o’clock in the morning,” Hine wrote from Mississippi. “Here is the
crude, shed-like building, with a long dock at which the oyster boats unload their cargo. Near the dock is the ever-present shell pile, a monument to the patient work of little fingers. It is cold, damp, dark. The whistle blew some time ago, and the young workers slipped into meager garments, snatched a bite to eat, and hurried to the shucking shed… Boys and girls, six, seven, and eight years old, take their places with the adults and work all day.”

Parents wanted their children working with them, so they could keep an eye on them. There were no daycare centers then, and even the newborns were taken to the cannery sheds daily. With those youngsters who could work, their parents desperately needed the money their children could earn. For a pail that held four pounds of shelled oysters, the worker received five cents. Children usually filled one or two pails a day, adults eight or nine.

The rough, sharp oyster shells were hard on little fingers, but raw shrimp were even worse. As the shrimp were peeled, they oozed an acid so strong that it ate holes in workers’ leather shoes and even in the tin pails they used. Children with swollen, bleeding fingers were prevalent.
At night, they soaked their fingers in an alum solution to harden their skin and help heal wounds.

Sharp knives and rough product also marked work in the fruit and vegetable canneries. Sometimes a knife slipped, cutting a finger to the bone. Cannery owners said the work had to be performed quickly, because the food products were perishable. Hine asked, “How about the children? Aren’t they perishable?”

Part 4: Breaker-Boys.

Some of Lewis Hine’s most haunting photos were taken in the dark tunnels and grimy breaker rooms of the nation’s coal mines (inspired by the pioneering flash methods of Jacob Riis, who photographed the dark tenement interiors and night-time streets of New York City, ca. 1890).

Those simple, black rocks that were formed millions of years ago, have provided people around the world with fuel for centuries. Coal can be found near the earth’s surface or a few thousand feet below it too. Before Europeans reached North America, Pueblo Indians found coal and burned it to cook food and make pottery.
In 1673, the Canadian explorers Louis Joliet (a published article by me shows that Louis Joliet was a direct ancestor of mine) and Father Marquette discovered coal along the Mississippi River. Several decades later, it was also discovered near the James River in Virginia. The latter region became the site of the first commercial coal operation in what would become the United States.

As the world industrialized more and more, the need for coal grew enormously. Coal created the heat that drove steam engines, which in turn powered machines of many kinds. Steam engines drove the first trains and steamships. And after the Civil War, a byproduct of coal, called coke, became a key to the making of steel. The demand for coal soon quadrupled, especially after it became a source for electric power too.

When European settlers came to the area that’s now Pittston, Pennsylvania, they found an area rich in a coal called anthracite. Anthracite is hard to light, but once lit it burns longer and more cleanly than other coal, and provides a strong heat. Mining it became a major industry in northeastern Pennsylvania, because that area contained almost three-fourths of the world’s anthracite. Most of it is found deep beneath the earth’s surface.
Large pieces of timber provided the mine-shafts with some support, though collapses still occurred, killing or maiming those trapped. Also, anthracite gave off a gas, methane, which could ignite when it came into contact with flames (as in miner’s lamps), causing explosions and fires, and it could also be deadly via inhaling it.

No government agencies then protected workers from the most dangerous of jobs, which coal-mining was among. And mining companies, which owned the towns the workers lived in, practiced what was called “mining the miners” – they tried to collect back as much of the miners’ work-pay for rent and provisions as they could. Sometimes miners weren’t even paid in cash, but rather in “scrip”, which could only be spent at the company store.

In Pennsylvania, the biggest coal-producing state, thousands of 14- and 15-year old boys were employed legally in mines. But thousands of younger boys, some of them only nine or ten, worked illegally there. The state’s child labor law was nearly useless, since it required no binding proof of a worker’s age.

Boys worked various jobs – as mule drivers, couplers, runners, spraggers (coal car drivers), and gate tenders. Most of the younger boys were employed in the coal
breakers outside the mines. Writer Stephen Crane wrote that the breakers “squatted upon the hillsides and in the valley like enormous preying monsters, eating of the sunshine, the grass, the green leaves.”

The boys’ faces who worked the breakers were black with soot, as they sat in rows on wooden boards placed over coal chutes. As coal came pouring through the chutes, the boys bent over, reached down, and picked out pieces of slate and stone that could not burn. It was tough work, demanding a good eye, since coal and slate look similar.

Coal was constantly flowing, so a boy who reached too far and slipped in could be mangled or killed. One day, Lewis Hine, who went to the coalfields to photograph in 1911, was there when two boys died that way.

Boys not working hard enough were hit on the heads and shoulders by a foreman with a broom handle. The coal dust was devastating to lungs of old and young alike. Hine often said, “If I could tell the story in words, I wouldn’t need to lug a camera.”

When the boys turned 12, they began to work in the mines themselves, where there was always the threat of cave-ins, fires, and explosions. The only proof of age needed in Pennsylvania was a statement signed by the boy’s parents.
One youngster, a lad named Patrick Kearny, lost his life in a mine accident in 1907. At an inquest into his death, there was evidence of a statement saying Patrick was 14, but he appeared only about 10. He was a “kind of small boy”, the foreman said, “but I thought he might be older than he looked.” When called on to testify, Patrick’s father said he had falsely signed the statement; his son was only 9-1/2 when he died.

With breaker-boys, Hine photographed a foreman standing over the young workers with a rod, to make sure they worked efficiently and fast. Sometimes, Hine photographed the boys from behind or off to the side as they worked; at other times, they turned and looked into his camera. Then, for several shots, the photographer had the boys stand in rows, with dim lighting above them.

One of those images sums up the hard life of breaker-boys. Their faces are young somehow, but disguised with age due to their adult clothes, caps, and the soot on their faces. They don’t smile. They simply stare at Hine’s lens.

The Progressives thought these child laborers deserved to be joyful and act like kids, but they didn’t show a lot of joy, at least not on-the-job. Instead, they suggested the hard lot they and their families had been saddled with,
because often the boys’ fathers and older boys too, worked farther down in the mines, as the miners themselves, if they hadn’t already succumbed to the dangerous conditions down there.

But one photo-portrait of the breaker-boys by Hine serves as the front-cover image for the 2012-published book “Breaker-Boys” by Michael Burgan. That image shows them standing together at attention, looking directly into the camera, near the dig. They appear to be serious choirboys, if it weren’t for the soot on themselves and their clothes. It’s a gripping image, because we see those worker-boys close-up. Every one of those boys had a mission in life, at least then, to earn money for their families and themselves, and not die in the process. Whatever became of most of them, few people know.

**Part 5: Other Child Laborers.**

Glass making was another youth-employing, tough and dangerous job. Most of those youngsters worked as blowers’ assistants in glassworks furnace rooms. The intense heat and glaring light of the open furnaces, where the glass was kept in a molten state, could cause eye
trouble, lung ailments, heat exhaustion, and a list of added medical problems.

The temperature of molten glass is 3,133 degrees Fahrenheit. The temperatures inside the factories ranged between 100 and 130 degrees. Fumes and dust were thick in the air. Broken glass covered the floors. Cuts and burns were common injuries. Paid by the piece, workers had to move fast for long hours without a break. Sixty-five cents a day was each boy’s wage.

Glassmaking was an around-the-clock industry. Some boys began work at 5 p.m. and worked until 3 a.m., when the streetcars weren’t running. After work, they either slept a couple hours on the factory floor until the streetcars started up, or they walked home, with the temperatures outdoors often being frigid, versus the extreme heat in the glass factories. One longtime adult glassworker intoned: “I would rather send my boys straight to hell than send them by way of the glass house.”

Viewers of Lewis Hine’s child labor photos were shocked to see children working in mines, factories, and mills. And yet children the same age, worked hard on city streets near the people who viewed the photos, without much attention. In those days, working children were seen
everywhere in America’s cities. They sold newspapers, shined shoes, ran errands, delivered packages, hauled firewood, coal, and ice, and labored in sweatshops too.

Adults passing them took for granted that a kid at work on the street was helping to support a widowed mom or an ailing parent. Some of those city kids were in business for themselves, peddling all sorts of merchandise on street corners. Newsboys and an occasional newsgirl shouted out from corners, “Extra! Extra! Read all about it!” Everyone knows their general story, but kids also peddled flowers, shoelaces, ribbons, and candy from boxes set up on street corners.

Many of these street vendors lived in poverty, never went to school, and had no real home. In New York City alone, thousands of homeless working children – orphans and runaways – lived in shelters funded by the Children’s Aid Society. For a few cents a day, a child could pay for a dormitory bunk, a breakfast of bread and coffee, and a supper of pork and beans. In urban centers, these young hawkers were viewed as enterprising youngsters.

Like the heroes of many popular dime novels then, especially the Horatio Alger tales, people believed kids could work their way from rags to riches. But not many
made it to the big time; often street-hawking led to dead-ends or close to it, because many of those kids had no formal education or advanced skills.

None of the child labor laws of the day applied to farm work (or work within the home much either), which was considered a wholesome job, even when the kids weren’t working their family’s farm, but were migrating with their parents cross-country, following the crop-harvest schedules.

Migrant families were crowded into makeshift shacks without screens to keep out swarming insects, and without electricity or running water. Many migrant laborers were blacks or other minority group members. Sometimes they were denied health and welfare services, and often they were barred from schools. Even kids who attended school part of each year, mainly served in the fields according to the crop-harvest schedules.

In the cotton fields of Texas, Hine saw “tiny bits of humanity picking cotton in every field”, even 5-year-olds. Some of the children were brought in from nearby orphanages, to pick cotton sunup to sundown, as fast as they could move.
Topping beets was just as bad, with kids working with adults as many as 14 hours a day. Topping requires cutting the tops of beets off with an unusual knife, against one’s knee, resulting sometimes in accidents.

During the approximately 10 years Lewis Hine photographed child labor across the country, he said more than once to his old friend Frank Manny, “I am right in my choice of work”. “My child labor photos have already set the authorities to work to see if such things can be possible.”

People all over America saw Hine’s photos in newspapers and magazines, and in a steady stream of publications sent out by the National Child Labor Committee. Hine’s photos proved that industrial America was exploiting its children. Laws were being blatantly violated by putting America’s kids into such dangerous and demanding jobs.

Hine personally designed pamphlets, booklets, and photo exhibits on child labor. He wrote descriptive captions for each photo, using children’s given names in some cases, and experimenting with the most effective ways to combine pictures and words. To describe this new format, he coined the term “photo-story”. Some of his photos were made into slides for his illustrated lectures.
In February 1910, he even gave a lecture-slideshow at the Algoma Street Methodist Church, which seems to have been his parents’ home-church in Oshkosh, led by Rev. Peter F. Stair. Naturally, he called that presentation “Child Labor”.

The NCLC loaned sets of slides to local groups and organizations, along with a typewritten talk. Whether Lewis presented the slides or a surrogate did, Hine’s photos of child workers with their faces filling up the bright and luminous screen in the darkness, held each audience spellbound with the descriptions of the hardships those children had to endure.

A newspaper reporter who saw an exhibit of Hine’s photos at a Birmingham, Alabama conference wrote: “There has been no more convincing proof of the absolute necessity of child labor laws… than these pictures showing the suffering, the degradation, the immoral influence, the utter lack of anything that is wholesome in the lives of these poor little wage earners. They speak far more eloquently than any [written] work – and depict a state of affairs which is terrible in its reality – terrible to encounter, terrible to admit that such things exist in civilized communities.”
Until 1917, Lewis Hine traveled from the Northeastern US Coast to the Deep South, photographing children working very hard under extreme conditions in mills, factories, mines, fields, and canneries. He’d develop his negatives and prints in bathrooms and coal bins in the places he lodged.

Often at labor-sites, Hine would have to use subterfuge to gain entry. He was a good mimic and actor who had often practiced guises with his photography students at the Ethical Culture School; when they went on nature walks for instance, he’d pretend to be a wayward tramp or an itinerant peddler.

His life would have been greatly threatened, if factory owners discovered his true identity, since they were so opposed to child labor laws. Hine’s guises during those visits took the form of a Bible salesman, a postcard salesman, or an industrial photographer interested in recording buildings and machinery.

After gaining entry, and under constant pressure of being discovered, he’d quickly note the child’s age, job description, and all pertinent information regarding their unique situation. He generally figured their approximate
age by how tall they were (he’d measure their height relative to the buttons on his shirt).

If he was unable to enter the workplace, he’d wait patiently outside until workers went off-duty and he had access to them to photograph. Hine would then use these photographs for publication in magazines, pamphlets, newspapers, books, slide lectures, and traveling exhibitions.

Eventually, Lewis Hine’s child labor photos helped convince government officials to create and strictly enforce laws against child labor. The impact of his photos on social reform was immediate and profound. They also helped inspire the concept of art photography, not only because of the context of his subject matter, but because the images showed a stark truth that dramatically differed from the mainstream’s emerging artistic character.

**Part 6: Lewis Hine’s Documentary Photography as Humane Human Art.**

Photography as an art form progressed considerably under the influence of the American photographer and editor Alfred Stieglitz, who organized the Photo-Secession
Group very early in the 20th century, which promoted a “painterly” style of photography. Those photos were characterized by “soft-focus”, romanticized views. Akin somewhat to modern photo-shop methods, the Photo-Secession Group distorted reality’s representation for artistic effects, with trickery of the actual image-making and print-production in Stieglitz’s group being key.

But Lewis Hine questioned the group’s methods to an important degree. He equated its artistic methods with academia’s “ivory tower”. How could they see down to the substrata of it all, from that tower?

For Hine, the art of photography lay in its ability to document and interpret the everyday world, that of work, of poverty, of factory, street, and household. He did not mean subjects always needed to be “humble”, and he did not demand traditional “beauty” exactly, or on the other hand “personal expression”. He meant it was important to honestly view and photograph how people really are and live. If Hine’s photography was “straight”, as one school of photo-artists opposed to the Photo-Secession called their work, Alan Trachtenberg points out that to Hine that meant more than only precise means; it meant also a responsibility to the truth of his moral vision.
Trachtenberg wrote more than once about Hine’s work, including in his Foreword to Kate Sampsell-Willmann’s book “Lewis Hine as Social Critic.” In that fairly accurate critique, Sampsell-Willmann states that the fact Hine gathered a large group of photographs as his vision’s body of work indicates he was a documentarian. She writes: “To document is to collect; to document with a symbolic, interpretive, or metaphoric medium – painting, dance, poetry, music – is to assert an honest perception of what had been collected in the artist’s mind. To document with a composed photograph is to do the same, but with an added element of authenticity that succeeds to convince through immediacy and exactitude, which in turn functions, paradoxically, to [partly] obscure the fact of its own purposeful composition.”

Hine set out to see the world through human eyes, in a way no photographer had fully done before. Whereas some of this essential human element had been involved in the documentary photos of the Brit John Thomson and the American Jacob Riis, and perhaps even a bit in the Civil War photographs of the Mathew Brady team, the foci were not as humanly involved and dignified as they were in Hine’s photos. He remade the photographic world in terms of essential human life, via the individual,
including his/her socio-political possibilities, among them the reform of child labor, but even more than socio-political possibilities, Lewis Hine did so in strongly cultural-democratic terms.

Comparing Hine’s work to Alfred Stieglitz’s, Sampsell-Willman states: “Whereas…Stieglitz set out to offer the world and the nation a uniquely American ‘high brow culture’, Lewis Hine can be credited with unintentionally collecting a body of work from which historians can reconstruct the intellectual struggles of an emerging culturally united nation, a cultural democracy. Hine’s lifetime output can be read as a highly personal record of his time and as an intellectual autobiography of a keen observer.

Moreover, by the last decade of Hine’s life, he recognized the archive potential in the body of his social and interpretive photography. Nonetheless, the fulcrum on which Hine’s cultural production balanced was concern for the dignity of work as a human value and the worker as primary mover in industrial society.”

In fact, Lewis Hine loved, in universal and specific senses, the people he photographed, and took care to photograph them in environments that meant something
profound to them, and to him, showing them foremost however, as intelligent and resourceful beings in the world, making their way forward along with him.

One caption Hine created while working for the Tennessee Valley Authority in the early 1930s, accompanied his straight-on facial portrait of an honest-looking, hard-working farmer in glasses with scruffy-fisherman’s hat. It says a lot about Hine’s best work: “Curtis Stiner, an example of the mountain farmer of East Tennessee. ‘I love my mountain and I want to stay right here the rest of my life if I can.’ The flooding of the reservoir will take his home,” 1933. National Archives.

The Norris Dam being built by the TVA then did take Stiner’s home, but he found work on a TVA construction crew soon after. His very human plight was suggested by various Hine photos, but Curtis Stiner’s very human face and heart are suggested strongly by the facial portrait Hine made of him. People were ambivalent about the TVA, because, while the dams took away some of their farms and homes, they also provided electricity, water reservoirs, and work for thousands of Americans.

Another photo-portrait Lewis Hine took during the Depression suggests the human face of hunger and thirst
among children. The caption reads: “Type of school girl in the Lonoke County, Arkansas, rural schools, where the Red Cross had a school lunch program as part of drought relief,” 1931. Library of Congress. The school girl looks into Lewis’s camera with steady-enough, dignified eyes. She calmly holds a simple metal cup that appears empty. But Hine’s caption suggests he was attempting a slightly adjusted approach, not as interested in individual names and/or (work) conditions as in his earlier photos of children, but in a kind of socio-economic ethic or class.

Compare Hine’s photo-portrait of that girl with his photo-portrait of an African-American boy holding a large piece of fruit during drought relief efforts in Mississippi around the same time. The youngster wears a huge smile, and there’s no doubt he’s grateful for both the fruit and the attention of the photographer. His pure joy is inescapable, and we, as viewers, feel the young man has a great deal of promise. This image suggests the universal, yet individuated hopes for the future of children and humanity.

Lewis Hine stated that art and beauty lay with the people, and with recording the truth of the people. Pushing the boundaries of the time’s thinking, early on Hine posed his
subjects to look straight into his camera lens. One who viewed the image would have no choice but to look the subject straight in the eye. This “confrontational style” was daring, but very compelling.

Though the majority of Hine’s earlier immigrant and child labor subjects are stationary in some respects, their personalities still come alive, via their look into the camera, their body posture, clothing, implements, etc. But, as John Szarkowski indicates in the Museum of Modern Art book “Looking at Photographs”, what set Hine’s photos most apart were their “graphic economy,” and the fact “he showed much love and respect for those who were casually called common people.”

Hine set brave new standards in photographic thinking and practice, and many other photographers began to see the power of his images, and began to be won over by his influence. He gained recognition and was commissioned for other work.

As time passed, Hine veered a bit from the eye-in-the-face methods that characterized many of his child labor photos. He eventually photographed more people looking into scenes rather than at his camera lens, often with machinery and/or furnishings, etc., nearby. Those latter-
day Hine images were presaged by images like his refugees on a moving train photo in post-war Europe (ca. 1919).

Lewis Hine’s documentary philosophy was changing by the middle of the 1930s; his art was arising more and more from the changing environments people moved about in and were being influenced by. People were still important, but less of their individual personalities were shown, more of their involvement in the mechanical or technological cosmos of the 20th century. As time passed, if he still sometimes posed people in his portraits and presented them as strong individuals, by the mid-1930s Hine was going more often with profile views or actively engaged postures rather than stationary subject-eye-to-viewer-face intensity.

Lewis Hine was putting people into the perspective of the mid-1930s by then. His most precious photos though, are still his child labor photos taken ca. 1907-1917. He loved those young people and their strong work ethics. Hine knew they were sacrificing much to help make a decent life and world for their families, friends, and themselves. He had documented their essential humanness humanely, and that humanness’s connection with a greater spirit in
the world – God and/or Nature, the greatest power in and around all of us.

**Part 7: After the Great War and Beyond.**

During the latter part of World War I, the American Red Cross hired Hine to photograph the relief mission to France and the Balkans, to aid refugees. He photographed a refugee mother and child in 1918 that is a compassionate, caring image, a predecessor of Dorothea Lange’s “Migrant Mother” image. He showed groups of refugees atop moving trains. And he took a photo in Paris of a little girl smiling at his camera that expresses the joy of human freedom. He also photographed in Paris a young curly-haired boy who speaks to the lives of street urchins.

Hine ranged about Europe more than a year. His portraits of everyday Europeans demonstrated his love and concern for people generally, and the ways they might be assisted with their lives, which was similar to what he had been suggesting with his Ellis Island and child labor portfolios.

Still, when he returned to the United States, he was ready to take on new challenges as a photographer. “I thought I had done my share of negative documentation. Now I
wanted to do something positive.” Though his child labor portraits were not generally negative about the children in them, they did suggest the horrible working conditions and hard lives of those kids.

Soon though, Hine’s major work project was an ambitious, celebratory series of “Work Portraits” – photographs of working people and craftsmen, the men and women who turned the massive wheels of industry. His aim was to highlight the importance of human labor in the new age of the machine. “Cities do not build themselves, machines cannot make machines, unless back of them all are the brains and toil of men.” Hine now viewed the American worker as a heroic figure, who could take great pride in his or her craft.

In 1930, when Hine was almost 56, he began the most daring assignment of his career. He was hired to photograph the step-by-step construction of what would then be the world’s tallest building – the Empire State Building in New York City.

Assisted by his son, Corydon, Lewis Hine climbed with the construction workers floor by floor, balancing his bulky camera equipment on girders, snapping pictures at dizzying heights as the structure rose into the sky.
Hine later recalled, “It was a new problem for me, this Empire State Building, full of surprises and thrills, of hard exhausting climbs up long vertical ladders with a heavy camera on my back, of perching way up on the tops of columns and even on the very tip of the mooring mast for special shots. And finally swinging out on a high derrick a quarter of a mile above the street. After it all, I came to realize more fully that even a skyscraper is what it is because behind all of it is the human spirit that made it.”

Lewis Hine’s most incredible photo from that six-month assignment was “Icarus Atop the Empire State Building” in 1931, showing a virile, hatless, sleeveless male worker in coveralls clinging to a thick, taut wire, connected to a thick wire-coil; beneath him far below is more of Manhattan and a waterway. It is a masterful photo, for two masterful workmen, the construction-worker and Lewis Hine.

Earlier, immediately after the war, Hine had returned to America and worked for the American Clothing Workers, the National Tuberculosis Commission, the Tenement House Commission, the Boy and Girl Scouts, the Milbank Foundation, the Harkness Foundation, and the Interchurch World Movement. He had published a series of photo-
stories and played a major role in “The Pittsburgh Survey”, demonstrating the unequal social and living conditions of that industrialized city.

From these diverse assignments came the portfolio that Hine called “Work Portraits”. In April 1924, he’d received the Art Directors Club of New York Medal for Photography. More published articles followed, including “He Who Interprets Big Labor in the Mentor”.

**Part 8: Lewis Hine, Work, and the End of the 1930s.**

In the 1930s, Hine worked for The New Deal Agency, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Rural Electrification Administration, the Work Projects Administration, the National Research Project, and others. Selected images from the culmination of these projects became “Men at Work” in 1932, a solid, pioneering picture book.

Hine also focused his camera on working conditions of women during the 1920s and 1930s, the same decades when studio and art portrait-photographer Edward Steichen (who had been growing up in Milwaukee as Hine had been growing up in Oshkosh) was creating
many of his masterful works for “Vogue” and “Vanity Fair” magazines.

Hine photographed women in the workplace for the cover of “Western Electric News”, a famous series called the Shelton Loom Series. Also, Hine photographed American housewives, for he believed the homemaker deserves recognition as one of America’s great workers.

But the Great Depression hit America in the early 1930s, and Hine desperately wanted to take part in the Farm Security Administration’s photo-projects, documenting people suffering, the projects led by the great picture-editor Roy Stryker.

Hine was repeatedly rejected for that job, partly perhaps because he still worked with relatively bulky cameras not the small-format models younger photographers used then, that could do spontaneous, candid photography much more easily than before.

Hine had turned 60, with his hunched-over posture. Another big reason Hine was rejected by Stryker was likely due to Hine’s demand to not give up ownership or rights to his negatives. The Library of Congress houses nearly all the FSA photos today, and retains copyright to
almost all of them. Ironically, some of Mr. Hine’s photos ended up in that Library’s Collection too.

Due to the nation’s Depression, the issue of negatives-ownership, and the marked decline in jobs for many people, Lewis Hine’s later years were spent almost as an “unknown”. By 1938, he could find no paying work, failed to win a grant for a new project to photograph immigrants at home and at work, and could no longer make mortgage payments on his and Sarah’s beloved home at Hastings-on-Hudson, just north of New York City. (He still believed in his “Catskill Dream”, but he lived slightly farther away from those mountains than his ancestors had in Cairo, NY.)

About this time, Lewis Hine met a fledgling photographer named Walter Rosenblum at the Photo-League in New York City. Hine mentored and taught the younger man. Rosenblum remembered later: “I always sought his company… and I was soon completely under his spell. We spent many hours in quiet conversation. I felt embraced by his presence. There were no formalities with Hine, no status games – just honesty and simple dignity. I had never met anyone like him.” It’s no mere coincidence that Kate Sampsell-Willmann writes in “Lewis Hine as
Social Critic” that none of Hine’s images were candid – they were all conversations.

In 1939, a major exhibition of Hine’s photos opened at the Riverside Museum in New York. That show lifted Hine’s spirits, but the recognition came a bit late. The bank soon foreclosed on Hine’s home. Soon after that, on Christmas morning, 1939, his beloved wife, Sarah, died after a lingering illness.

Lewis survived his wife by almost a year. He passed away as the result of an intestinal operation, on November 4, 1940, at Dobbs Ferry, NY, age 66, when he was still hoping to find sponsors for future projects.

Berenice Abbott, the discoverer of the great turn-of-the-century Parisian street and architecture photographer Eugene Atget, and Elizabeth McCausland, an up-and-coming art critic, had visited with Hine shortly before his death and had organized the retrospective exhibition of his work at the Riverside, re-exposing him as a photographic artist whose vision and images made a major impact on the evolution of American and World culture.

As Russell Freedman concludes in 1994 in his gripping study of the heart of Lewis Hine’s most important
portfolio, “Kids at Work”, “Lewis Hine died in poverty, neglected by all but a few. But his reputation continued to grow, and he is recognized today as a master American photographer. His photographs have become part of our national memory. They remind us what it was like to be a child and to labor like an adult, at a time when most labor was far harsher than it is now.

“Through his camera, a young spinner in a Carolina cotton mill gazes at us across a distance of eighty years. In her eyes we can still see the pain and cruelty of child labor, but Hine also captured her humanity, dignity, and strength.

“A friend once asked [Hine] why his kids seemed so beautiful, and he said, ‘I only photograph beautiful children.’

“Certainly, he had a way with children. With a smile and a few kind words, a touch of his hand, he let them know that he was their friend and ally. He saw the beauty that resides in every child, and kids responded by trusting themselves to his camera.

“Hine’s images of working children stirred America’s conscience and helped change the nation’s laws. With his box camera and his sympathetic eye, he made a dramatic
difference in people’s lives. In a real sense, the face of America never looked the same again.”

To be sure, during Lewis Hine’s photographing of the human situations he encountered and his work’s diverse but positive after-maths, the courage to love and reform shone through.

Part 9: Lewis Hine’s Lasting Legacy via the NCLC, Archives, and Beyond.

The National Child Labor Committee was organized on April 25, 1904, at a mass meeting at Carnegie Hall in New York City attended by men and women concerned with the plight of working children. They immediately formed an organization, to gain the support of prominent Americans and identify the extent and scope of the problem.

In 1907 the NCLC was chartered by an Act of Congress, and soon was obtaining support for action and advocacy. One of the first steps took place in early 1908 with the hiring of the Wisconsin-born and -raised documentary photographer Lewis Wickes Hine. His photographs would awaken the consciousness and conscience of the nation,
and change the reality of life for millions of impoverished, undereducated children.

In 1912, one of the first goals of the NCLC was achieved: the establishment of a Children’s Bureau in both the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. Department of Labor. From 1910-1920, while publishing and disseminating Hine’s photographs, the Committee worked for passage of state and federal legislation to ban most forms of child labor, and to promote compulsory education in all states.

When the Supreme Court ruled federal legislation banning child labor was unconstitutional, the NCLC turned its focus to passage of a constitutional amendment banning child labor and to continued strengthening of state laws from coast to coast in the 1920s.

The constitutional amendment fell a few states short of passage in the early 1930s, but NCLC steadfastly continued to pursue its goals. The result was the passage in 1938 of the Fair Labor Standards Act, which included strong NCLC-designed child labor provisions, which passed muster with the Supreme Court.

During World War II, the Committee kept vigil to make sure that employment shortages caused by the war didn’t
weaken the newly-passed and implemented laws, and that children were not drawn back into mines, mills, and streets. After the war, NCLC initiated the first national youth employment and training advocacy program to supplement its child labor work.

In 1954, the organization added a program designed to underscore the educational and health needs of the children of migrant farm workers in America. Legislation advocated and partly designed by NCLC at the federal level in the late 1950s and early 1960s culminated in 1964 with passage of the Manpower Development and Training Act, the Economic Opportunity Act, and the Vocational Education Act.

In 1975 the Committee published “Rite of Passage: Youth’s Transition from School to Work,” a compendium of ideas and recommendations by leading economists and educators on youth work issues. This was followed by “Promises to Keep,” evaluating the federal migrant education program, recommending substantive improvements in the education of migrant children and the outreach to migrant parents and families.

NCLC was a major player in the design and founding in 1979 of the National Youth Employment Coalition. The
Coalition, now based in Washington, D.C., was housed at NCLC for 15 years.

In 1985 the Committee initiated the Lewis Hine Awards for Service to Children and Youth, honoring previously unheralded Americans for their work with young people, and giving special awards to better-known leaders for their extraordinary efforts. The Awards have grown to become a regular and nationally recognized program of the Committee.

From 1991 to the present, NCLC created and expanded the KAPOW program, partnering elementary schools with businesses to teach young children about the world of work, and bringing private sector volunteers into the classroom. KAPOW is today a model program in states from Florida to California.

NCLC’s active role in youth employment and training, with KAPOW, through child labor prevention, with coalitions in both the youth work and farm worker arenas and with the Lewis Hine Awards, continues.

Many challenges lie ahead, some being as daunting as those of the early 20th century, but they need to continue to be met head on. The National Child Labor Committee’s purpose, to promote the rights, well-being, and dignity of
children and youth as it relates to work, working, and education is as important today as it was at Carnegie Hall in April of 1904.

None of the NCLC’s continuing work might have been successful, if it hadn’t been for the groundbreaking documentary photographs taken for that organization by Lewis Hine, early in the NCLC’s development.

After Lewis’s death, his son, Corydon, arranged for the Photo-League in New York to accept his works into its Collection. However, the communist-prone Photo-League was forced to disband in 1951, and Corydon arranged for other top archives to accept his dad’s works instead, many of which went to the George Eastman House in Rochester, NY.

With the Lewis Hine Award for Service to Children and Youth, five professional recipients and five volunteer recipients win the award each year, along with special category award-winners among well-known supporters. In 1993, five years after Corydon Hine’s death (and Corydon apparently had no children of his own), Hillary Clinton was one of the award’s Distinguished Service recipients.
Part 10: Selected Bibliography.

Many books and articles by/about/including Lewis Wickes Hine have been published. Among the more-detailed studies are:


“Former Oshkosh Man Has Won Renown in Photographic Field,” “The Oshkosh Northwestern”, February 15, 1939, Page 5.


“Lewis Hine as Social Critic,” by Kate Sampsell-Willmann, with a Foreword by Alan Trachtenberg. Published by the University Press of Mississippi, Oxford, MS, 2009.


by the University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, WI, 1989.
(General Background).

**Part 11: Acknowledgments.**

I wouldn’t have been able to research, write, and edit this book, my biographical essay about Lewis Wickes Hine, without the assistance of many good people (including the extended Marcou family and group of friends, especially my parents, my son and his wife and their family-to-be, my siblings and their families, and the Hines, Majeskas, Sims, Amarneks, Muskats, Brunners, Fitzgeralds, Joliets, Marquettes, Crockettts, O’Caseys, Hardys, Camerons, Bowns, Langes, Taylors, Steichens, Cartier-Bressons, Leibovitzes, Loengards, Morses, Parkses, Freibergs, Johnses, Smiths, Barclays, Bernstein, Grants, Doerings, Munroes, MacArthurs, Rangers, Kiedrowskis, Mulocks, Medingers, Kabats, Cooks, Wiesels, Katzes, Kleins, Friedmans, Kyes, Clotts, Hardies, Radas, Burkes, Callahans, Yis, Roses, and Collinses of this world), organizations, and resources. Especially helpful, as they so often are, have been the staffs of the La Crosse Public Library and Archives; the UW-La Crosse Murphy Library and Area Research Center; the Oshkosh Public Library
and its Reference Staff; the UW-Oshkosh Archives and Area Research Center; the Oshkosh Public Museum; the UW-Madison; the University of Iowa; and the University of Missouri School of Journalism; all the schools of La Crosse, WI, especially St. James, Aquinas, Logan, and Central Schools; the Wisconsin and Missouri Historical Societies and Archives; the Onalaska Public Library; Western Technical College; my former WTC-based students and the many sponsors and creative contributors for various projects I’ve led and/or authored; the National Child Labor Committee, and the Lewis Hine Award for Service to Children and Youth; Getty Images and Matthew Butson; the George Eastman House and Libraries; the Museum of Modern Art and Library; the Pulitzer Prizes; various good libraries and their staffs on the interlibrary loan circuit; the Library of Congress; the New York City Public Library; the National Archives; the Smithsonian Archives and Libraries; the British Library; the British National Portrait Gallery; the South Korean National Assembly Library; the National Libraries of Ireland and France; the Canadian National Library and Archives; the La Crosse Diocesan Archives; the Cathedral of St. Joseph the Workman; St. Rose Convent; the Vatican; Viterbo University/Library/Archives; the U.S.
Holocaust Memorial Museum; Becker Plaza (all its residents and staff) and the La Crosse City Housing Authority; various good governments in this state, nation, and world; Gundersen-Lutheran and Franciscan-Mayo health centers; the “La Crosse Tribune”; the “New York Times” and its Lens Blogs; the “Oshkosh Daily Northwestern”; “(Charities and Commons) Survey”; the “Catholic Times”; the “RPS Journal”; the “British Journal of Photography”; the “Guardian”; Yonhap News Agency; “Life”; “Missouri Life”; many other newspapers, magazines, and books covering Lewis Hine, his family, and his work, as well as those covering my works generally, over the years; the Pump House Regional Arts Center; the Weber Center for the Performing Arts; Irishfest-La Crosse; Downtown Mainstreet Inc.; the now-defunct Riverside Museum of New York and many other art, historical, and educational venues where the works of Lewis Hine have been on display and/or discussed, especially in America and England; all the authors of books and articles about and including Mr. Hine and his biographical and career details; weblinks dedicated to my own works (including my UK Digital Photographer online photo gallery, my La Crosse History Unbound weblink of diverse creative materials, my Wisconsin
Historical Society online photo gallery etc., and my flickr.com online photo galleries, along with my British National Portrait Gallery weblink, and my materials on the Smithsonian Website and in the SI collections); ancestry.com; Wikipedia.org; various other websites and sources studied by me during the research, writing, and editing of this book; plus the very professional and hard-working publishers of this book, DigiCOPY of La Crosse.

Finally, I thank the Good Lord, Maker of everything and everyone, and Mother Nature too, for allowing the people, weather, and traffic to cooperate sufficiently to complete this book’s publication and distribution decently, for as long as the Public, and the Assembly of Heaven, will read it…

Manuscript Completed by Author David Joseph Marcou in La Crosse, Wisconsin, on Wednesday, May 9, 2014. First Publication of Full Book (Comprising Covers, Text, and Illustrations with Captions) Occurred Soon After.
(Right) Little orphan girl by sign saying “Temporary Home for Colored Children”, Washington, DC, ca. 1905.

(Left) Family and wash on sunlit rooftop.

(Right) Child cotton mill workers, New Orleans, 1913.

(Left) Cute disabled boy, Chicago, ca. 1920.
(Right) Lewis Hine with his bulky, but very effective camera.

(Left) NCLC Exhibit at Panamerican Expo, ca. 1915.

(Right) 5-year-old boy picking cotton in Texas, 1912.

(Left) The Hine’s son, Corydon, with automatic floor-scrubber.
(Right) Young boy in Paris, ca. 1919.

(Left) Famous work portrait of mechanic, 1920.

(Right) Gravestone for Lewis and Sarah Hine, New York State.

(Left) “Icarus”, or worker near top of Empire State Building, NYC, 1931.
(Left) Breaker-boys, Pittston, PA, ca. 1911.

(Right) Boy with fruit in Mississippi drought relief program, ca. 1931.

(Left) Italian immigrant family, Ellis Island, ca. 1905.

(Right) 9-year-old Barbara Lieber hoeing sugar beets, St. John, WI, ca. 1915.