14 I used Hoppé, *Picturesque Great Britain* (Berlin: Ernst Wasmuth, 1926) and *Romantic America* (New York: B. Westermann, 1927); Karl Schumacher (ed.), *SudAmerika* (Berlin and Zurich: Atlantis, 1931). Hoppé, *Romantik der Kleinstadt* (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1929). Other data from Orbis Terrarum leaflets.

15 Fussell, *Abroad: British Literary Traveling Between the Wars* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980). Hoppé, *To Rome on a Sunbeam* (Wolverhampton: Sunbeam Motor Car Company, 1924); Richard Hoppé, Hoppé's grandson, kindly showed me a copy of this rare publication.

16 Hoppé, *Romantic America*, p. xxxvi; *Round the World with a Camera*, p. 229; and *Hundred Thousand Exposures*, p. 189. While the Bridge had been known by non-Indians for some time, and was first photographed in 1909, as Ian Walker rightly pointed out to me it *was* indeed rarely visited when Hoppé ventured to it.

17 Barthes, *Mythologies*, ed. and trans. Annette Lavers (London: Paladin, 1973), p. 82.

18 Masterman, 'Introduction' to E.O. Hoppé, *Picturesque Great Britain*, p. vi.

19 Nye, *American Technological Sublime* (Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1994); see also Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Idea in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964). For contrarieties of 'romantic', see Jacques Barzun's *Classic, Romantic and Modern* (Garden City, NY: Anchor, 1961), pp. 155–68.

20 A typical example is Fremont Rider, Frederic Taber Cooper, et al., *Rider's New York City: A Guide Book for Travelers* (New York: Henry Holt, 1923). I am grateful to Richard Haw for drawing such guides to my attention. Barthes, *Mythologies*, p. 82.

21 These Orbis Terrarum volumes, both entitled *Deutschland: Landschaft und Baukunst*, are Hürlimann, Introduction by Ricarda Huch (Berlin: Atlantis Verlag, 1931) and Hielscher (Berlin: Ernst Wasmuth, 1924). For Masterman on Ireland, see *Picturesque Great Britain*, pp. xxvi–xxvii; evidence on Hoppé's Irish travails taken from an autobiographical note in CA. Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). The British Embassy letter, dated 18 June 1926, was examined at CA.

22 Mann's words, kindly translated for me by David Stirrup, appeared on the dust jacket of *Romantik der Kleinstadt*.

23 Werner Gräff, *Es kommt der neue Fotograf!* (Berlin: Herman Reckendof, 1929). Evidence of Hoppé's relationships with Renger-Patzsch and Stieglitz is taken from unpublished letters to be reproduced in Mick Gidley, *Emil Otto Hoppé at Large: Photographing the Modern World* (forthcoming).

RECALCITRANT INTERVENTION: WALKER EVANS'S PAGES

David Campany

What more is there to say about Walker Evans? Along with the work of Eugène Atget and August Sander, Evans's photography is perhaps the most discussed and debated in the history of the medium. Built on formal restraint and the rhetorical ambivalence of the classical document, the work of all three has been subject to the vicissitudes of history and the shifting fortunes of readability. Each produced a body of work that *could* yield a great deal so long as the necessary skills or disposition were in place. Sander's inter-war portrait survey *could* be a training manual (as Walter Benjamin had suggested); Atget's agile documents *could* be redemptive history or proto-modernism; Evans's 'documentary style' *could* be a complex dialectical engagement with the behaviour of the document. Yet Sander's work could be reduced so easily to an authoritative imprint of the face of Weimar Germany, Atget's to a wistful record of a disappearing Paris and Evans's to an evocation of fading Americana for a metropolitan elite. Such images forever risk becoming the reality that they were in the first instance bold attempts to understand, articulate and comment upon. It is one of the deepest ironies of the medium that such approaches to photographic representation could lend themselves to the most astute, aesthetically rewarding and semantically rich of readings but also to the most reductive. (This was of course an ambiguity well exploited by the provocatively 'dumb' documents of Conceptualism and Pop later in the century, scrambling the distinction between the intelligence and the lumpenness of the photographic record.) It is this very gap between such extremes of interpretation, a gap that is inescapably political, which remains at the heart of the continuing claims made for such work.

Thirty-five years after his death, the understanding of Evans's work has become markedly split between seeing it as essentially belonging either to the gallery wall and the modern museum, or to the very different orbits of the page and the library. Evans the 'museum artist' is of course the legacy of a long-standing if fitful relationship with New York's Museum of Modern Art that began in the 1930s and culminated with a retrospective in 1971, the terms of which still define the mainstream approach to his work. His relationship to the page was arguably less fitful and also began in the 1930s with photographic contributions to various journals including *Architectural Record, Creative Art, Hound & Horn, Architectural Forum*, culminating with a 20-year tenure at *Fortune*. Plus there were a number of books. Some of these contained folios by Evans accompanying writing by others: Hart Crane's *The Bridge* (1930); Carleton Beals's *The Crime of Cuba* (1933); *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men: Three Tenant Families,* co-authored with James Agee (1941); and Carl Bickel's *The Mangrove Coast* (1942). Here Evans's photographs stood apart from the text, resisting the slick and usually unreflective integration of word and image that dominated magazine photo-essays and photobooks from the 1930s onward. In addition Evans published three monographic books: *American Photographs* (1938), *Many Are Called* and *Message from the Interior* (both 1966).

In his 40-year career Evans produced more than enough striking 'pictures' to warrant a place in any history of art or art photography, but he showed relatively little desire to present them that way. Instead his approach was shaped by a background in literature, by early ambitions to be a high modern writer and, soon after he found the camera, a realization that one of the central characteristics of photographic modernism was the intelligent assembly of images for the printed page. *American Photographs* and *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* have come to be seen as significant works of Modernist documentary (a form of highly reflexive record-making that Evans all but invented with the sequential arrangement of *American Photographs*, perhaps the first 'difficult' photobook to emerge in the US context). But recognition came with a significant delay. Having been remaindered when they were first published, *American Photographs* and *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* were reviewed widely and received positively when reissued at the beginning of the 1960s. These were books whose time had come precisely insofar as their moment had gone. Their latent critical success derived less from their being urgent contributions to the understanding of their own historical moments than from their coming to be seen as perplexing responses to an increasingly distant past. For Evans the timing was significant. Most of the images were at least a quarter of a century old, and from a period before the war, but still within living memory. As Martha Rosler put it subsequently:

> in the game of waiting out the moment of critique of some cultural work it is the capitalist system itself ... that is the victor, for in cultural matters the pickings of the historical garbage heap are worth far more than the critical moves of the present, and by being chosen and commodified ... even the most directly critical works in turn affirm the system they formerly indicted, which in its most liberal epochs parades them through the streets as proof of its open-mindedness. In this case of course [the publication of *Let Us now Praise Famous Men*], the work did not even see publication until its moment had ended.[1]

Rosler describes a kind of canonization that seals off the work from the historical and political complexity of its moment and turns modernist documentary reflexivity into a formal game. But a more profound ambiguity remained. Certainly, for some the historical remove made the photographs easier to read as art but for others their indexical force secured them status as historical records in the popular imaginary. Indeed they still looked 'documentary' enough to appeal to a constituency looking for models of campaigning realist practice from the past (it was in the 1960s that the myth was born of a 1930s possessed of a widespread cultural politics of dissent when the reality was a matter of important pockets of progressive activity in a predominantly conservative era). All this has allowed Evans's books to be aligned with his reputation as a modern photographic artist, distant from the cut and thrust of documentary and the compromises of the 'applied image'.

The work Evans produced for magazines is another matter entirely. The photobook form always has at least half an eye on posterity but the illustrated magazine has a very different temporality and cultural significance. It is not made to last but lives and dies, succeeds or fails in the space of its short shelf life. This presents profound problems for understanding the history of photography, particularly documentary and photojournalism. As the 'genres of record' these practices evolved and presented themselves in contexts that were essentially ephemeral. The representation of documentary and photojournalistic images in monographs and museums does little to capture the contingent complexity of their initial page presentation. And only in the last decade has the difficult work of assembling a history of the illustrated magazine begun to come into focus, if somewhat less clearly than the emerging history of the photobook.

In the revival of interest in Evans's work that gathered momentum through the 1960s he was heralded as several contradictory things at once: a detached observer of 1930s America; a committed documentarian; a pioneer of Modern art in photographic form; and a proto-Pop artist of the American vernacular. But he was not heralded as an editor, or a writer or a designer and certainly not a 'working photographer', all of which he had been in his engagement with the magazine page. Art's assessment of Evans, like its assessment of so many photographers working for magazines, preferred to overlook the actual conditions in which the imagery was made, to see it as simply the catalyst for the artistic production of photographs. The 1971 retrospective, curated by John Szarkowski, confirmed the growing resurgence of interest and secured Evans a significant reputation, introducing his photographs to a new generation of practitioners, writers and critics. But the terms were too narrow to reflect fully Evans's concerns and achievements. The show and the accompanying book (entitled simply *Walker Evans*) skirted his particular grasp of the page as a working site and the centrality of editing, sequencing and writing to his practice.[2] Szarkowski's approach, soon emulated by other museums, privileged the significant single, exhibitable photograph over the internally organized body of work. The only sequence Szarkowski adopted was a uniform chronology (although nearly half of the 200 images selected for the show dated from 1935 to 1936, the 'FSA' period). He had nothing particular to say about the specificity of any of Evans's books or magazine work. *American Photographs*, which had been published by MoMA, was for him a collection of exceptional images; an anthology, not an articulated statement and certainly not a 'work'. Its ambitious and demanding two-part structure, modelled on modern photography's two key modes of assembly – the associative sequence and the archival album – meant little to Szarkowski. He also dismissed Evans's 20 years at *Fortune* as a long autumn of comfortable compromise following a creative 'hot streak' in the 1930s born of youthful energy and artistic exploration. He assumed Evans was softened by regular employment into producing very few images of the 'fierce conviction that identifies his best work' since the 'continual vigilance' required of working for a magazine 'frustrates free expression'.[3] This missed the point. At *Fortune* Evans's work was not *only* about the making of photographs. It was about synthesizing the whole craft complex associated with the production and presentation of photographic work for a magazine while seeing what an independent mind could do with it. Images of 'fierce conviction' (singular, rhetorically charged, formally unified, museum friendly) are often resistant to such synthesis and it should be conceded that Evans produced comparatively few of these for *Fortune*. But the boundaries Evans was testing there were less to do with composition and picture-making than those of the mainstream magazine itself. Three examples from *Fortune* should illustrate the point well enough here.

Evans's disdain for the working practices of American magazines is well documented.[4] It is part of his posthumous artistic identity that although the American vernacular was his lifelong subject he saw its magazine culture as generally vulgar and regressive, too in thrall to advertising, commerce, kitsch and the management of popular opinion. *Fortune* was founded in 1930 by Henry R. Luce who had established *Time* magazine in 1923 and went on to launch *Life* in 1936. In the immediate aftermath of the Wall Street Crash and the onset of the Depression it was an unlikely venture: a luxurious and extravagant magazine specializing in the coverage of business, science and industry. Luce expected it to run at a loss, as a worthwhile indulgence subsidized by his other enterprises. The editorial statement in the first issue (February 1930) announced the aim of presenting 'clear and readable text, profusely illustrated with pictures, in a form ample and agreeable to the eye' and 'planned upon an economic scale which permits it to go toward that end beyond the technical limitations of most magazines'.[5] Many of *Fortune's* pages were printed in high-quality gravure rather than the halftone typical of most non-art publications. It also used colour reproduction in great quantity. At eleven by fourteen inches it was larger than most magazines and it had more pages, printed on heavy stock. It set out to commission the best photographers, writers, artists and illustrators, which meant looking beyond the scope of those working within journalism. Noting its blend of free marketeering and advanced artistic values, Douglas Eklund has described *Fortune* as 'an experiment in the aesthetics of capital'.[6] But as the effects of the Depression continued to take their toll well into the 1930s (there were five million unemployed in 1931), *Fortune* could not cleave easily to its brief of celebrating the bounties of capital. As Evans himself remarked, it 'didn't really know what role it should play during the depression. They didn't know what they were doing since they were founded to describe in a stimulating way American business and industry, and that was falling apart'.[7] And with the coming of the Second World War its position was if not contradictory then at least sensitive to the breadth and uncertainty of social and cultural attitudes of that fraught period.

As a freelance photographer, Evans contributed to *Fortune* as early as 1934 (seven photographs for a piece on the Communist Party in the September issue). In 1943, after around 13 years working without a permanent job, he joined Luce's Time Incorporated as a writer (primarily an art, film and book reviewer for *Time*). He continued to take photographic commissions, including some from *Fortune*. Two years later he was offered a post at *Fortune* as a photographer and writer; and in September 1948 he was named Special Photographic Editor, a title and position he had carved out for himself.[8] It was his artistic credentials, his avowed interest in American culture and his ability as a writer of copy that secured him a unique role. While *Fortune* was sheltered from the sharp demands of commercial viability, it in turn sheltered

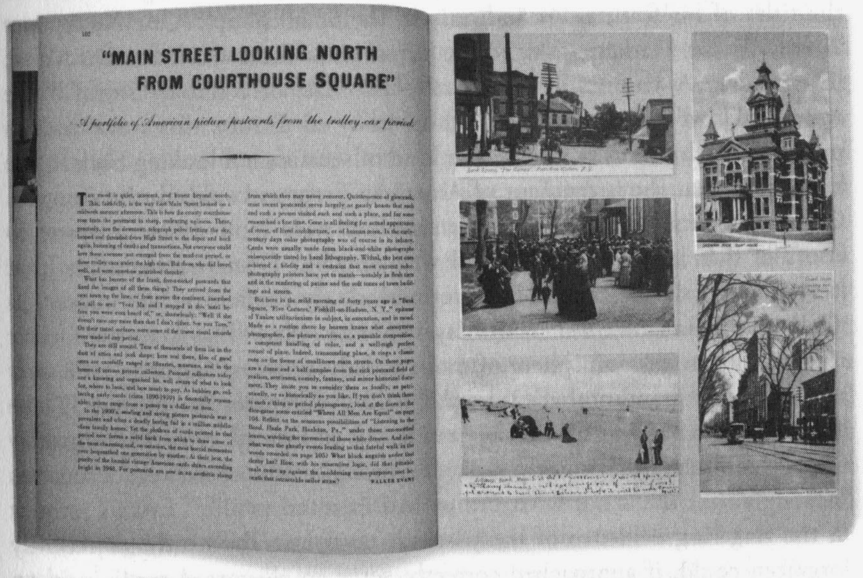
Evans, giving him more than usual freedom. Once established on the staff he cultivated a high degree of autonomy. He shot competent portraits of businessmen as a trade-off for picking and choosing his photographic assignments, as well as compiling features from archival images. He answered not to the art department but directly to the managing editor, securing near total control of the pages he bargained for. An editorial from May 1948 informed the readership about him:

> Walker Evans ... is a writer of delicacy and evocative power. He is more widely recognized, however, in many discerning circles as one of the most distinguished photographers in the U.S. Aesthetic officialdom has leaned strongly towards that judgment: Evans had the first one-man show of photography ever given by New York's Museum of Modern Art, had held a Guggenheim Fellowship, and has only recently exhibited at the Chicago Art Institute. The power of Evans's photography has always proceeded from an eye that is as lively, direct, responsive and acidly probing as the eye of the great Civil War photographer Matthew Brady. Evans is not in the least interested in photographic attitudinizing, in camera schmaltz or grandiosity; he wishes through the instrumentality of photography, to make you see, with maximum directness, the great accuracy of tone and detail, the sights that have arrested him in his straight staring around the amazing crust of the visible world. [9]

Despite the high regard, Evans's work received no special billing or auteurist presentation in the magazine. This entirely suited its nature, as we shall see. Evans never used *Fortune* simply to showcase his talents as an image-maker. It was not a forum for 'art'. Rather he worked with and against the received conventions of the magazine page, producing features that both did and did not fit within *Fortune*'s editorial remit. With increasing frequency he wrote the texts to accompany his features.[10] He also determined the look of his pages, including the cropping of images, layout, graphics and titles. He understood that photographic meaning did not begin and end with the individual photograph. It was, vitally, a matter of editing, designing and writing. While he had pursued all these skills before, *Fortune* gave him the opportunity to do so with a steadier schedule, sufficient freedom and a regular income. It was an enviable position that few photographers have ever achieved, particularly on American magazines.

'Main Street Looking North From Courthouse Square' (May 1948), his first feature as Special Photographic Editor, included none of his own photography but drew instead on his archive of vintage American postcards (Figure 1).[11] He saw that the regional postcards that were typical of the early twentieth century provided an unlikely but telling measure of that era. They were predominantly colour-tinted views of provincial streets, bridges, transportation and factories – not the glorifications of leisure and tourist spots that soon came to dominate the form. The imagery is clear, unpretentious, restrained and quite anti-promotional, similar in many ways to Evans's own photographic aesthetic. Even so, he knew very well they could be misread as nostalgia (an acute awareness of the possibilities of misreading is the common thread that unites all of his work for magazines). So Evans crafted a succinct page-long introduction that made deft connections between period and image, making the case that the passing of particular moments in modern history always involve the passing of their distinctive mode of self-representation:

> In the 1900's, sending and saving picture postcards was a prevalent and often a deadly boring fad in a million middle-class family homes. Yet the plethora of cards printed in that period now forms a solid bank from which to draw some of the most charming and, on occasion, the



"MAIN STREET LOOKING NORTH FROM COURTHOUSE SQUARE"

A portfolio of American picture postcards from the trolley-car period

1. Walker Evans, 'Main Street Looking North from Courthouse Square', *Fortune* (1948).

> most horrid mementos ever bequeathed one generation by another. At their best, the purity of the humble vintage American cards shines exceeding bright [*sic*] in 1948. For postcards are now at an aesthetic slump from which they may never recover. Quintessence of gimcrack, most recent postcards serve largely as gaudy boasts that such and such a person visited such and such a place, and for some reason had a fine time. Gone is all feeling for actual street, of lived architecture, or of human mien. In the early-century days color photography was of course in its infancy.

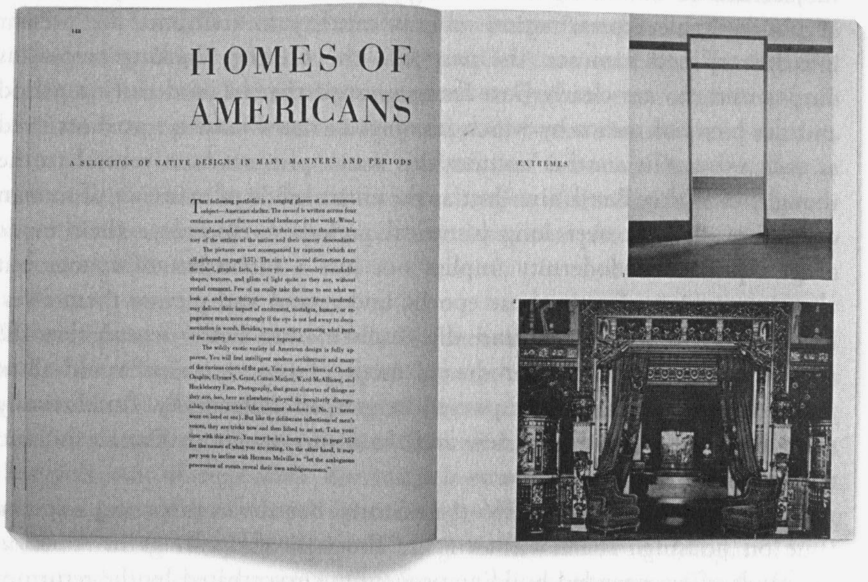
What might at first look like a mildly sentimental feature is in fact a concise and accessible reflection on photography, history, material culture and memory, presented in a magazine with an even shorter active life than a postcard.

The majority of Evans's *Fortune* features had a historical consciousness that was out of step with the magazine's commitment to the modern and the new. Many focused upon vestiges of the past and the imminent obsolescence of everyday things. 'Vintage Office Furniture' (August 1953) showcased nineteenth-century office fittings and equipment still to be found in businesses of long standing in the Boston area. 'Before they Disappear' (March 1957) was a suite of colour images of vanishing railroad company insignia, standardized but still hand-painted on the sides of freight cars. Even the titles of his features are indicative: 'The Small Shop', 'One Newspaper Town', 'Is the Market Right?', 'The Wreckers', 'These Dark Satanic Mills', 'Downtown: A Last Look Backward', 'The Last of Railroad Steam', 'The Auto-Junkyard'. However, it would be hasty to dismiss this work and its presence in *Fortune* as nostalgic, as a kind of sentimental looking back in the knowledge that the juggernaut of American progress could not be stopped. Certainly many business-oriented magazines were (and still are) prone to bouts of that kind of wistful hand wringing but Evans was adamant that it was not so simple and he became increasingly explicit on the matter. In 'Collectors Items' (*Mademoiselle*, May 1963) he railed: 'Pray keep me forever separated from an atmosphere of moist elderly eyes just about to spill over at the sight of grandmother's tea set'.[12] And in interview he insisted: 'To be interested in what you see that is passing out of history, even if it's a trolley car you've found, that's not an act of nostalgia. You could read Proust as "nostalgia" but that's not what Proust had in mind at all'.[13] Evans's interest in the lingering evidence of the past was complex. The nearly, or recently forgotten could, if approached correctly, serve an allegorical meditation on the present and the nature of modernity. More to the point, in *Fortune* Evans's tempered and reflective take on modernity extended beyond the

subject matter to the nature of images themselves, to the very structure of photographic representation and its capacity to transport the present into history and summon the past into the present. Looking across his output one can see clearly how Evans grasped that in modernity a period and the pictorial means by which it comes to know itself are as short-lived as each other. (In another context this was a phenomenon central to the thought of Walter Benjamin: 'Just as the entire mode of existence of human collectives changes over long historical periods so too does their mode of perception'.[14]) Modernity implies not just a succession of epochs but also a succession of ways those epochs understand and picture themselves. Looking at the overlooked and the throw(n)away Evans sensed that the act of representation *could* produce a mode of attention that would allow photography's relation to the past to be grasped dialectically. Paradoxically then, *Fortune*'s focus on the new and the future was both Evans's foil and the best context for his concerns.

In the early months of 1946 the editorial board was preparing a special issue on housing. There was an acute shortage of dwellings in America, the result of a suspended building programme exacerbated by the return of military personnel from overseas. There was great popular interest both in the innovative construction methods that had been developed in wartime and in new ways of living. Solving the housing problem was vital to America, prerequisite to any other kind of 'advance'. *Architectural Forum*, the sister publication of *Fortune*, was also planning a housing issue and both appeared in April 1946. Most of the articles were descriptive and informational, covering topics such as the economics of building, innovations in construction, new modes of interior design and home appliances. The cover design featured Buckminster Fuller's hi-tech Wichita House, a development of his modular Dymaxion House of 1944, which was receiving much publicity.

Evans's contribution 'Homes of Americans' took a starkly different approach.[15] It covered five double spreads, comprising an introductory text, 33 photographs and captions reserved for the concluding page. The presentation was almost austere amid the magazine's colour reproductions and graphic flamboyance. The typesetting was pared-down, the layout neutral and grid-like and the images black and white. None were shot especially for the feature and only seven were by Evans himself, taken much earlier in the 1930s. The picture credits were tucked away on the issue's general credits page and they were from three federal sources. But this was not an archival research exercise since most of the prints were actually from Evans's own collection, as the brief editorial on page 2 points out.[16] Where the rest of the magazine put photographic illustrations to use in enthusiastic and



148

HOMES OF AMERICANS

A SELECTION OF NATIVE DESIGNS IN MANY MANNERS AND PERIODS

EXTREMES

The following portfolio is a ranging glance at an enormous subject—American shelter. The record is written across four centuries and over the most varied landscape in the world. Wood, stone, glass, and metal bespeak in their own way the entire history of the settlers of the nation and their uneasy descendants.

The pictures are not accompanied by captions (which are all gathered on page 157). The aim is to avoid distraction from the naked, graphic facts, to have you see the sundry remarkable shapes, textures, and glints of light quite as they are, without verbal comment. Few of us really take the time to see what we look at, and these thirty-three pictures, drawn from hundreds, may deliver their impact of excitement, nostalgia, humor, or repugnance much more strongly if the eye is not led away to documentation in words. Besides, you may enjoy guessing what parts of the country the various scenes represent.

The wildly exotic variety of American design is fully apparent. You will find intelligent modern architecture and many of the curious crusts of the past. You may detect hints of Charlie Chaplin, Ulysses S. Grant, Cotton Mather, Ward McAllister, and Huckleberry Finn. Photography, that great distorter of things as they are, has, here as elsewhere, played its peculiarly disreputable, charming tricks (the casement shadows in No. 11 never were on land or sea). But like the deliberate inflections of men's voices, they are tricks now and then lifted to an art. Take your time with this array. You may be in a hurry to turn to page 157 for the names of what you are seeing. On the other hand, it may pay you to incline with Herman Melville to "let the ambiguous procession of events reveal their own ambiguousness."

2. Walker Evans, 'Homes of Americans', *Fortune* (1946).

explanatory articles, 'Homes of Americans' was much more ambiguous, even deliberately awkward (Figures 2, 3 and 4).

Evans was well aware of the open meaning of these documents, and here he strategically turned the risks of misreading into the very subject of the piece. This is the introductory text:

> The following portfolio is a ranging glance at an enormous subject – American shelter. The record is written across four centuries and over the most varied landscape in the world. Wood, stone, glass and metal bespeak in their own way the entire history of the settlers of the nation and their uneasy descendants.
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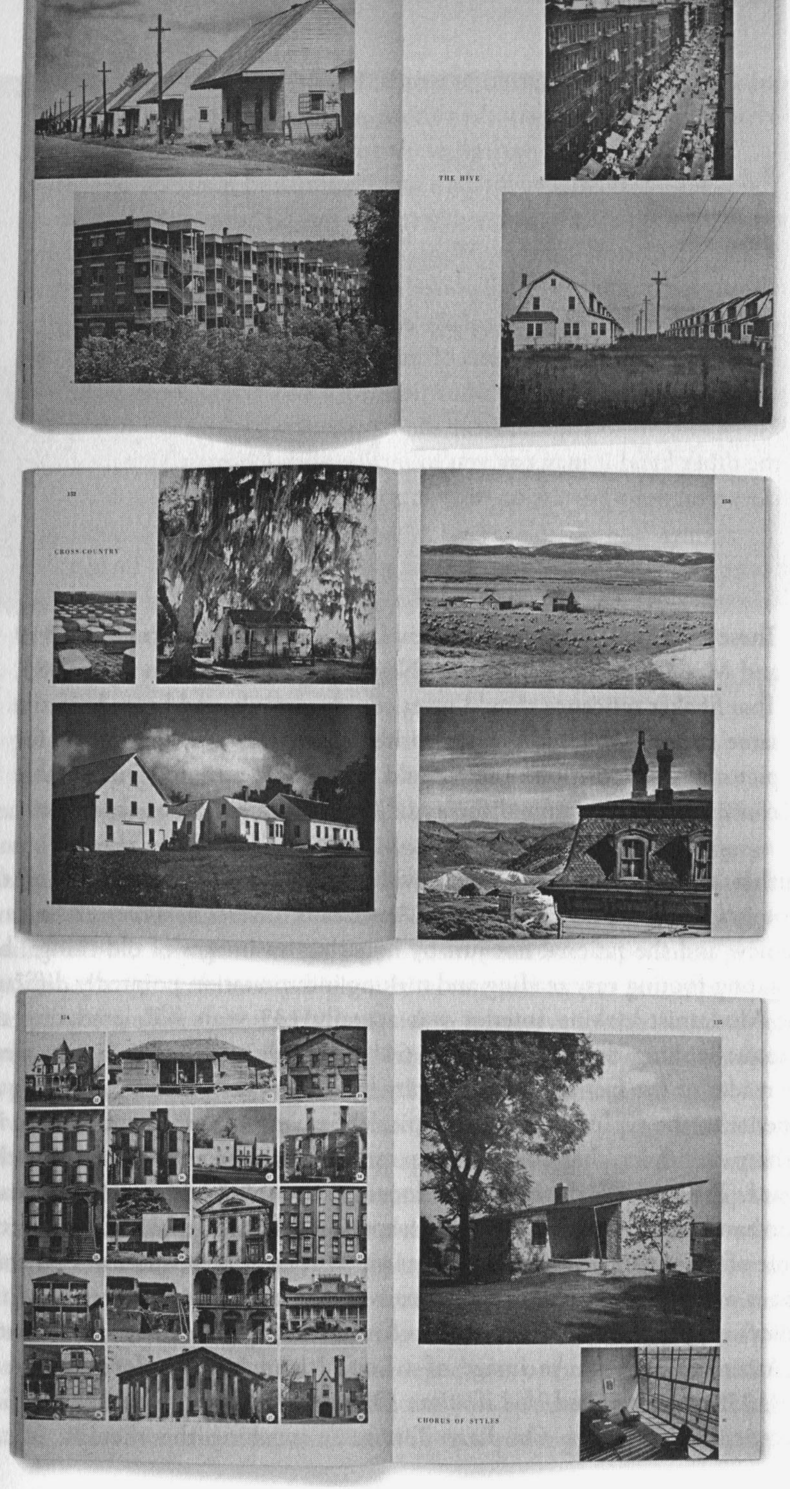

3. Walker Evans, 'Homes of Americans', *Fortune* (1946).

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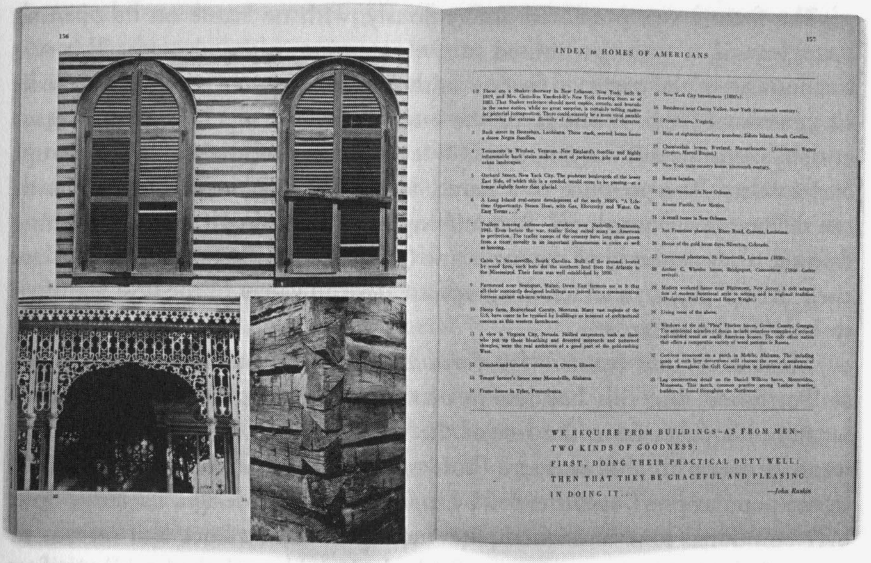
The tone continues at the rear in the caption for the first two images:

> These are a Shaker doorway in New Lebanon, New York, built in 1819 and Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt's New York drawing room as of 1883. That Shaker reticence should meet cupids, ormulu and brocade in the same nation, while no great surprise, is certainly a telling matter for pictorial juxtaposition. There could scarcely be a more vivid parable concerning the extreme diversity of American manners or character.

Neither could there be a more vivid parable of the vicissitudes of the photographic document. 'Homes of Americans' inverts *Fortune*'s embrace of the new and the rational not just by lingering on images of old things, but by wrong-footing easy reading and making interpretation pointedly difficult. The Modernist-looking interior was actually 133 years old, predating the Baroque-looking drawing room by 64 years. This opening pair also alerts the reader to the fact that photography has always been attracted with equal appetite to the typical and the untypical, the banal and the exotic, but with a sharp reminder that photographs cannot guarantee their status in this regard. The reader is deprived of a documentary standard by which to make shorthand sense, but is unable to suspend the documentary claim in the name of art or something else. Further on we see a field of Airstream caravans that is a temporary home for defence workers, but the caption talks of the trailer's emancipatory mobility and its long-standing popularity as a mainstay of American culture. An image of a Long Island housing development of the 1930s is captioned 'A Life-time Opportunity. Steam Heat, with Gas, Electricity and Water. On Easy Terms...', mocking the rhetoric of the real estate sales pitch to be found elsewhere in the magazine. The sleek functionalism of the latest High Modern home by Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer is squashed into a grid with vernacular flatroofed, wood-frame houses from the nineteenth century. Captions suggest repeatedly that the beauty of built form is rooted in pragmatism, tradition, experience, prudence and anonymous craft, not in high architecture and its star pioneers. Many of the images are left deliberately undated to suggest – in this future-oriented issue of *Fortune* – that if these dwellings still exist and are occupied, they are as contemporary as anything new and have a valid future.



INDEX to HOMES OF AMERICANS

WE REQUIRE FROM BUILDINGS—AS FROM MEN—
TWO KINDS OF GOODNESS:
FIRST, DOING THEIR PRACTICAL DUTY WELL:
THEN THAT THEY BE GRACEFUL AND PLEASING
IN DOING IT...
—John Ruskin

4. Walker Evans, 'Homes of Americans', *Fortune* (1946).

Conventionally, captions serve to 'anchor' the polysemy of the image while helping to imply that photographic meaning is straightforward and natural.[17] 'Homes of Americans' foregrounds the function of the caption by actively withholding or delaying its delivery, and setting it at odds with the photograph. Word and image are deployed against convention to slow down audiences rather than hasten them into the tempo necessary to consume a photo-essay as information or entertainment. As in so much of Evans's work for the printed page 'Homes of Americans' sets out to establish a reflective pace at which it is possible to think not just about the purported subject matter, but about the conditions and limits of photography and writing.

The feature was presented anonymously, with no name on its opening page, leaving it to be attributed to the magazine in the abstract. This was uncommon in the pages of *Fortune* (although Evans often reduced his credit to a minimal 'W.E.'). But given the interventionism involved here it seems entirely plausible this was done to allow it the fullest potential quietly to disrupt and subvert. The presence of a name, any name, may well have contained the deliberate awkwardness, personifying and bracketing it off as something distinct from the body of the magazine (much the way art magazines declare their 'artists' pages' in which the graphic rules and values of the host are lifted to indulge the art/artist).

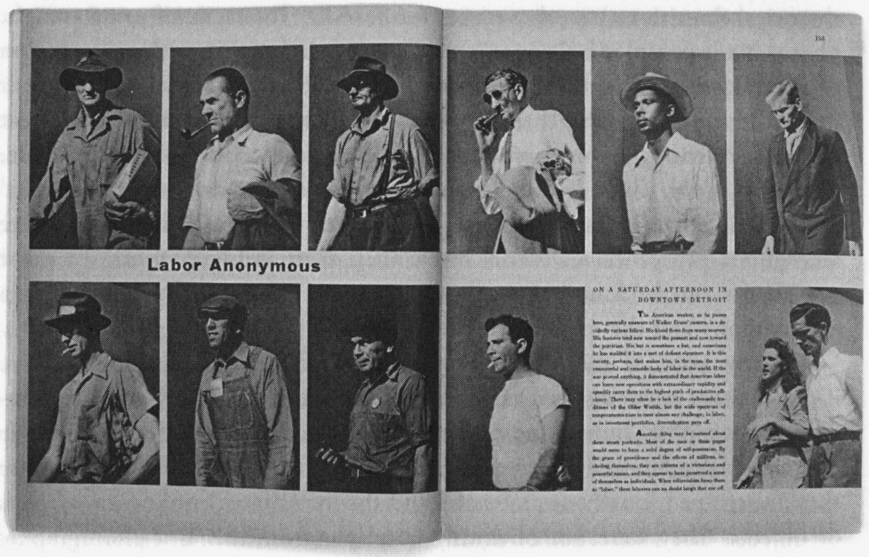
Most of Evans's features for *Fortune* were billed on the contents pages as 'Portfolios', but this had less to do with artistic aspiration or a need to separate his pages from the rest of the magazine than a desire to put clear water between his concerns and those of photo-essay formulae being honed in the popular press, spearheaded by *Life* with its pacy design, narrative flow, over-emotional tone and often trite 'messages'. Henry Luce had set out to ensure *Life* was 'the best magazine for look-through purposes', while its first editor Daniel Longwell had proclaimed excitedly 'the quick nervousness of pictures is a new language'.[18] Evans's portfolios have no beginnings, middles or ends and they resist speed at every turn. Each is a deliberating and monotone meditation on a small cluster of related themes. It is suggestive, inconclusive, open and at odds with its setting. This recalcitrance was a resistance to what John Tagg has described as 'those dreams of transparency, efficiency, and accelerated exchange that marked the instrumentalization of photographic meaning, in social administration as in commercialized communications, in the documentary archive as in the photojournalistic picture file'.[19] In another context such refusals of clear meaning might have looked indulgent or prankish but for Evans part of making effective work for *Fortune* entailed knowing the context well enough to be able to operate a kind of micro-intervention, confounding assumptions and diverting expectations.

With his name confined to the credits page and only seven of the images being his, it is not surprising 'Homes of Americans' slips below the radar of those looking for Evans's more obviously formal or pictorial hallmarks. Moreover, while the selection of the photographs was his, the text was the outcome of conversations with his good friend and member of *Fortune*'s editorial board, Wilder Hobson, who had been first assigned a piece on American housing. So we must proceed with care before we declare Evans the absent auteur here. Nevertheless, the whole disposition of the feature chimes with Evans's outlook, while the writing is very close in attitude and rhetorical flourish to his other pieces for *Fortune*. The tactic of using straight photos made complex by sequence and text was in keeping with his suspicion of anything easy while the stronger remarks bear his characteristic distrust of magazine manipulation. There is the warning that 'Photography, that great distorter of things as they are, has … played its particularly disreputable, charming trick'. There is the injunction to 'Take your time with this array' and the hint that 'it may pay you to incline with Herman Melville to "let the ambiguous procession of events reveal their own ambiguousness"'. Similar sentiments can be found throughout Evans's pronouncements on his own photography and the medium in general.[20]

Clearly none of the meaning of 'Homes of Americans' would survive if the images were disaggregated and re-presented. It is an entirely 'site-specific' assembly. Indeed most of the images had been used before in one context or another and Evans could pluck and reuse them precisely because they functioned loosely as archival stand-ins for (almost) unknown subjects or objects. They were not obviously 'arty' pictures. This is a photographic tradition in which Evans is an exemplary figure, not just in his adherence to the 'straight' photo and his preference for vernacular subjects, but in his understanding that the more neutral the document appears the more dependent its meaning upon the way it is deployed. And insofar as its meaning is made through placement, sequence and language, it is archival to its core. There could be no *definitive* place for such images. Photographs would be what you did with them (and even the museum would have to concede that it could never provide the definitive meaning or last word).

An even starker example of this kind of contingency is 'Labor Anonymous', published seven months after 'Homes of Americans' (November 1946). It is a double-spread of 11 images and text which at first glance looks like a serial typology of anonymous workers, perhaps taken surreptitiously as they leave their place of work. That is how these portraits by Evans are regularly recycled and presented in exhibitions and monographs. But in the spread itself there are many details that complicate and even contradict such a reading. The short but crucial text makes no reference to the end of a working shift, while only three of the subjects are wearing clothes associated exclusively with labour (Figure 5).

The feature is in fact subtitled 'On a Saturday Afternoon in Downtown Detroit', suggesting this may not be a day of work at all, even if this is one of America's foremost industrial cities. These may well be workers but they are not working here. The text occupies a space the size of one of the portraits, as if word and image were of a piece and interchangeable, but once read it is clear the purpose is to uproot that assumption. Evans reminds the reader



Labor Anonymous

ON A SATURDAY AFTERNOON IN
DOWNTOWN DETROIT

5. Walker Evans, 'Labor Anonymous', *Fortune* (1946).

that there is no classifiable physiognomy on show here. Labourers cannot be stereotyped, neither in appearance, nor disposition, nor dress: 'His features tend now toward the peasant and now the patrician. His hat is sometimes a hat, and sometimes he has molded it into a sort of defiant signature.' In other words these photographs offer no sure measure and the reader will still have all their interpretive work ahead of them. He concludes: 'When editorialists lump them as "labor" these laborers can no doubt laugh that one off.' It is an obvious point but easily forgotten: a person cannot be anonymous in and of themselves but only to, or for, another. 'Labor Anonymous' is revealed to be an ironic title, critical of the assumptions of mainstream editorialists and readers, including those of *Fortune* itself (the feature appeared in an issue dedicated to 'Labor in U.S. Industry'). Looking again at the photos we see they are not entirely serial, even though this was about as serial as Evans's work ever became (more so than his New York subway portraits). In the first frame a man in overalls seems to look directly at the photographer. The brim of his hat overshadows his eyes, giving the impression he notes the presence of the camera while keeping something of himself hidden. It stalls the ethnographic fantasy of invisibility, of observing and classifying unsuspecting specimens. Placed top left in the grid, the image helps to suggest the subsequent shots should not be taken too readily 'at face value'. The final photo shows a man and a woman together as a couple in the same frame, complicating any simple distinction between labour relations and sexual relations. All this is in the space of a single spread. It is a rare example of a photographer adopting the conventions of the visual typology, only to undermine the instrumental authority they usually invoke. Suffice it to say, when removed from their layout and presented simply as a suite of formally innovative street portraits, their meaning is doomed not just to 'revert to type', but to turn the original intention on its head.

It would be another two decades at least before this kind of attention to the discursive limits and ideological underpinnings of documentary and photojournalism was to come into focus in the USA, and only then in the context of conceptualism and its art-educational spin-offs. In 1946 'Labor Anonymous' parried the growing trend for voyeuristic portraits, while 'Homes of Americans' offered housing to its readership 'in two inadequate descriptive systems', to paraphrase the title of the much-celebrated conceptual documentary work by Martha Rosler from 1974 to 1975.[21] And when Dan Graham produced the still endlessly celebrated photo-text 'Homes for America' in 1966 (in ignorance of Evans's precedent), its appearance as a piece of subversive print journalism was scuppered first by the artist's failure to get it published in the mainstream press and then by *Arts* magazine's replacement of his intended images with one by … Evans.[22] But Graham's magazine work survives where Evans's has not precisely because Graham saw himself as an artist making 'Works' for magazines, which permitted him to recycle and recuperate them in the post-conceptual art museum, whereas Evans was working for a magazine with no eye on the future but a very sure eye on intelligent intervention in the moment and context of publication. Unaware of his magazine work, the conceptual art generation of the 1960s and 1970s inherited and largely rejected Evans as a modernist/formalist museum artist, when in fact he had been a significant precursor.

Evans's use of the page gives us a far better understanding of what he may have meant by his notoriously elusive description of his work as 'documentary style'.[23] The museum tends to take this to mean an Evans image looks like a documentary photograph but is 'really' art, either because it is formally more ambitious than documentary demands, or more riskily because once exhibited the museum suspends the documentary claim. But if we take documentary to mean not a type of image but a type of image *use* (also involving modes of editing, writing and design), then Evans's work for the magazine page was indeed 'documentary style' rather than 'documentary'.

When John Szarkowski presented Evans as a modern museum artist, he had the photographer's opportunistic blessing and in some senses this was inevitable. In working at *Fortune* Evans addressed himself to a specificity and timeliness of the page that the art history of photography cannot adequately accommodate. It would have been not just inappropriate but pretty much impossible for posterity to rest upon such work. Exhibiting or reprinting those features would have had 'merely' anecdotal interest. The recent interest in the photographic book, of which the present volume is an instance, marks a tentative step towards the barely charted and possibly unchartable chaos that is the history of the photographic page. Indeed the photobook represents something of a bridging point between the auteurism and permanence demanded by the culture of the museum and the near-anonymous ephemerality of the magazine which was photography's most significant site for the four decades in which Evans was active (1930–70). So what does it mean to return to the specificity of magazine work and to reproduce it here? For Denis Hollier,

> The significance of the reprint is not the same for a book as it is for a periodical. A novel is republished because it has had some success or because the time has come to rediscover it. *Habent sua fata libelli.* With a journal, the transposition from the aorist to the imperfect alters the textual status of the object, its punctuality. Like an event condemned to linger on.[24]

I cannot tell if Evans himself thought this way but given the manner in which he worked at *Fortune* it should not surprise us if he did. His eyes were not on the future but on *that* audience, for *that* feature in *that* magazine, *that* month. Plus of course posterity cannot deploy the same criteria of judgement as the present. Evans barely spoke about his magazine work, but when he did it was clear he thought highly of it. It was for him among his most significant achievements. When asked about his favourite *Fortune* features, he even opted for ones that did not involve his own photography but allowed him to operate as an editor.[25] And when asked about the essentials of photography he downplayed the significance of single images in favour of the intelligence of their arrangement:

> The essence is done very quickly with a flash of the mind, and with a machine. I think too that photography is editing, editing after the taking. After knowing what to take you have to do the editing.[26]

Individual images are not without merit, not least many of Evans's, but however singular they may seem, sooner or later they must be put together. In 1969, in what turned out to be his last significant work for the page, Evans was invited by Louis Kronenberger to select the section on photography for the anthology *Quality: Its Image in the Arts*. He chose what he felt were exemplary photographs from across the history of the medium. He insisted on a simple layout, typically stark in this messy publication, with a single image on the right and an invariably terse paragraph opposite. But even here Evans considered very carefully the sequencing of these apparently unrelated photos, and he let the reader know as much: 'No individual evaluation is implied in the order and manner of presentation of the photographs that follow. The picture placement has been arranged solely with regard to the visual effect of the plates in relation to one another, and to their impact collectively'. Nearing the end of a long career, he was still working out the complex dialectic between the one, the many and the word that had interested him at the outset, wanting his audience to feel their way into it but without too strident a guide.

Notes

1 Martha Rosler, 'In, Around, and Afterthoughts (on Documentary Photography)' (1981), in Richard Bolton (ed.), *The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography* (Cambridge, MA and London: MIT, 1989), footnote n.18, p. 338.
2 John Szarkowski, *Walker Evans* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1971).
3 Szarkowski, *Walker Evans*, pp. 9–20.
4 See Lawrence Bergreen, *James Agee: A Life* (New York: Dutton, 1984), p. 161.
5 See Chris Mullen and Philip Beard, *Fortune's America. The Visual Achievements of* Fortune *Magazine 1930–1965* (Norwich: University of East Anglia Library, 1985).
6 Douglas Eklund, '"The Harassed Haven of Detachment": Walker Evans and the *Fortune* Portfolio', in Maria Mouris Hambourg, Jeff L. Rosenheim, Douglas Eklund et al. (eds), *Walker Evans* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art and Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 121.
7 Evans in James R. Mellow, *Walker Evans* (New York, Perseus Press, 1999), p. 308.
8 See Lesley K. Baier, *Walker Evans at* Fortune *1945–1965* (Wellesley, MA: Wellesley College, 1977).
9 'Freewheeling Cameraman', *Fortune* (May 1948), p. 32.
10 See also Baier, *Walker Evans at Fortune*, p. 12.
11 This was the first of three portfolios Evans published on the subject: 'When "Downtown" was a Beautiful Mess', *Fortune* (January 1962), pp. 100–6; and 'Come on Down', *Architectural Review* (July 1962), pp. 96–100. See also Jeff Rosenheim et al., *Walker Evans and the Picture Postcard* (New York: Steidl/The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2009).

12 Walker Evans and Malcolm Bradbury, 'Collector's Items', *Mademoiselle* 57 (May 1963) p. 182.

13 Leslie Katz, 'Interview with Walker Evans', *Art in America* (March–April 1971), pp. 82–89.

14 Walter Benjamin, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility', second version (1935–6), *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility and Other Writings on Media*, ed. Michael Jennings et al. (Cambridge, MA and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2008), p. 23. The parallels between Evans and Benjamin run deep and can be best grasped by a comparative reading of Evans's 'The Reappearance of Photography' and Benjamin's 'A Little History of Photography', both published in 1931.

15 'Homes of Americans', *Fortune* 33 (April 1946), pp. 148–57.

16 See David Campany, 'Almost the Same Thing: Some Thoughts on the Collector-photographer', in Emma Dexter and Thomas Weski (eds), *Cruel and Tender: the Real in the Twentieth Century Photograph* (London: Tate Publishing, 2003), pp. 32–35.

17 Roland Barthes coined the term 'anchorage' in 'The Rhetoric of the Image' (1964), in Stephen Heath (ed. and trans.), *Image-Music-Text* (London: Fontana, 1977).

18 Luce and Longwell in Loudon Wainwright's *The Great American Magazine* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), pp. 21 and 29.

19 John Tagg, 'Melancholy Realism: Walker Evans's Resistance to Meaning' (2003), *The Disciplinary Frame: Photographic Truths and the Capture of Meaning* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), p. 96.

20 See, for example, Leslie Katz, 'Interview with Walker Evans', *Art in America* 59 (1971), pp. 82–89.

21 I am referring to Martha Rosler's *The Bowery in Two Inadequate Descriptive Systems* (1974–5), a sequence of straight shots of shop fronts in New York's Bowery distinct accompanied by endless euphemisms for drunkenness.

22 See David Campany, 'Conceptual Art History, or, a Home for *Homes For America*', in John Bird and Michael Newman (eds), *Rewriting Conceptual Art* (London: Reaktion Books, 1999).

23 'The term should be *documentary style* … You see, a document has use, whereas art is really useless. Therefore art is never a document, though it certainly can adopt that style.' Katz, 'Interview with Walker Evans', p. 87.

24 Denis Hollier, 'The Use-Value of the Impossible', *October* 60 (1992), p. 23.

25 See the interviews with Walker Evans conducted by Paul Cummings in October and December 1971, in The Smithsonian Archives of American Art.

26 Katz, 'Interview with Walker Evans', pp. 82–89.

SCULPTURE, PHOTOGRAPH, BOOK: *THE SCULPTURES OF PICASSO* (1949)

Patrizia Di Bello

The Sculptures of Picasso, with an essay by Daniel Henry Kahnweiler and 'Photographs By Brassaï', was published in London and Paris in 1949.[1] Commissioned in 1943, the book had been ready for its French publisher Editions du Chêne since 1945 or 1946, but publication had been delayed by postwar paper shortages.[2] In the end it came out first in London, published by Rodney Phillips.[3] Like many art books of its kind, the issue of authorship is somewhat ambiguous. Library catalogues consider Kahnweiler the author of the book, yet its fame and current circulation on the market rest far more on its photographs by Brassaï,[4] while Kahnweiler's bibliographer defines his essay as the introduction to a book by Picasso.[5] Kahnweiler, who had been Picasso's dealer on and off throughout his career, was one of the champions of modern sculpture and had written important essays on art such as *The Rise of Cubism* (1916), which was translated for Documents of Modern Art, the series edited by Robert Motherwell, in 1949,[6] and 'The Essence of Sculpture' first published in 1919.[7]

As Brassaï recollects, it was the publisher who asked Picasso to do 'an album of his complete sculpture', and Picasso agreed only on condition that the photos be done by Brassaï.[8] Brassaï's biographer, however, thinks that only Picasso could have 'accomplished the amazing feat' of convincing a publisher to produce such a book in the middle of a war.[9] In this chapter, however, I am going to focus on the book itself, rather than its authors, to see what it tells us about the role of sculpture photobooks in the development of sculptural aesthetics circa 1949. The actual object I have looked at and reproduced here is from the 1949 English edition. It was given to me as a present by a friend, a surprise I decided to interpret in the spirit of the Surrealist 'found object', as a kind of 'involuntary' sculpture case-study. In other words I do not come to this as a scholar of Picasso, Brassaï or Kahnweiler, but as someone interested in sculpture photobooks as a particular type of photographic object.