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Dust Bowl, USA: Depression America and the Ecological Imagination, 1929-1941

Brad Lookingbill

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Dust Bowl, USA: Depression America and the Ecological Imagination, 1929-1941 Brad Lookingbill Whether romantic or tragic, accounts of the dramatic events surrounding the North American Dust Bowl of the “dirty thirties” unearthed anxieties buried deep in America's ecological imagination. Moreover, the images of a landscape of fear remain embedded in the national consciousness today. In vivid form, the aesthetic of suffering captured in Dorothea Lange's photographs and Woody Guthrie's folk songs created the myths and memories of the Depression generation.

Dust Bowl, USA is a critical examination of the stories that grew out of the Dust Bowl experience. Across the nation, newspapers, magazines, books, films, and songs produced imagery of blight for local and mass audiences. As new technology, irrigation innovations, and conservation programs were introduced on a wide scale during the 1930s, the saga of the frontier continued to unfold through accounts of dust, drought, and desertification.

In piercing the myths brought forth in legends, lore, allegories, and anecdotes, Brad Lookingbill provides a revelatory insight into the history of the cultural narratives that have come to define an era.

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