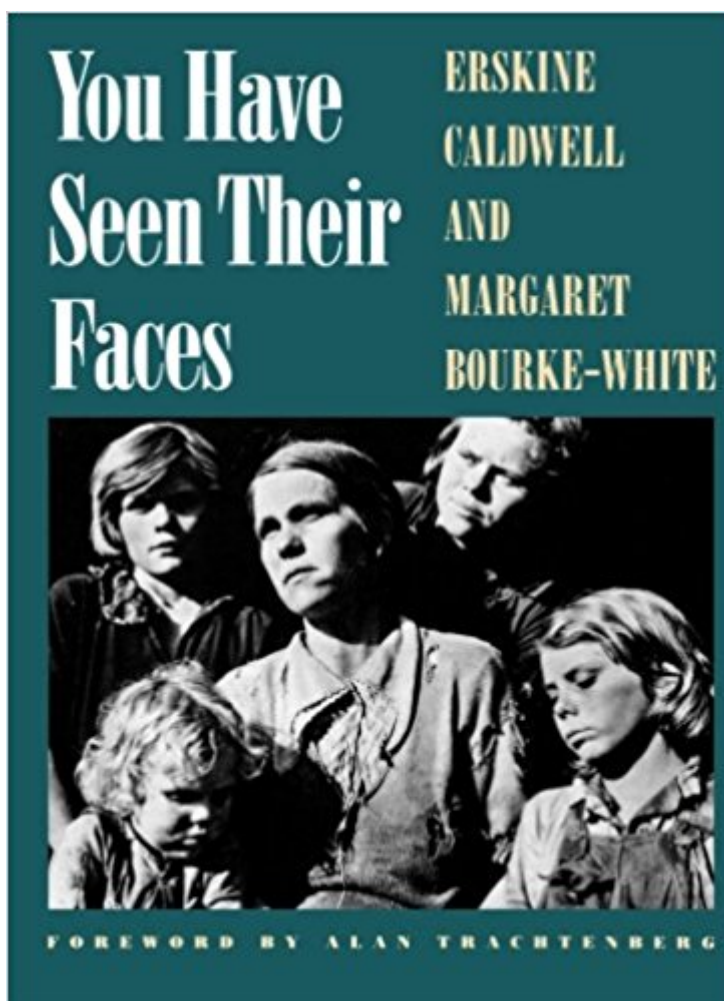


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# You Have Seen Their Faces (Brown Thrasher Books Ser.)



## Synopsis

In the middle years of the Great Depression, Erskine Caldwell and photographer Margaret Bourke-White spent eighteen months traveling across the back roads of the Deep South from South Carolina to Arkansas to document the living conditions of the sharecropper. Their collaboration resulted in *You Have Seen Their Faces*, a graphic portrayal of America's desperately poor rural underclass. First published in 1937, it is a classic comparable to Jacob Riis's *How the Other Half Lives*, and James Agee and Walker Evans's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, which it preceded by more than three years. Caldwell lets the poor speak for themselves. Supported by his commentary, they tell how the tenant system exploited whites and blacks alike and fostered animosity between them. Bourke-White, who sometimes waited hours for the right moment, captures her subjects in the shacks where they lived, the depleted fields where they plowed, and the churches where they worshipped.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*You Have Seen Their Faces* contains some of the best work of both writer and photographer.

(Current History) I don't know that I've ever seen better photography. . . . Mr. Caldwell has done some of his finest writing for this book. (New York Times)

Erskine Caldwell (1903-1987) was born in Newnan, Georgia. He became one of America's most

widely read, prolific, and critically debated writers, with a literary output of more than sixty titles. At the time of his death, Caldwell's books had sold eighty million copies worldwide in more than forty languages. He was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1984. Margaret Bourke-White (1906-1971) was among the world's most celebrated photojournalists. One of the original staff photographers at "Fortune" and "Life" magazines, she is best known for her portraits of world leaders as well as such series as those on the Depression-era rural South, World War II, India, South Africa, and the Korean conflict.

Just read this book for the first time. I am a 42 year old woman from South Carolina who has been researching her family tree for several years now. I knew that my paternal grandfather's family was extremely poor and that they "worked other people's land" Someone once described their existence as being similar to the family Caldwell wrote about in Tobacco Road. This book is beautifully written and predicted the civil rights movement thirty years before it happened. A very good book for someone interested in learning about the history of poverty in the South and how it affected not just the Black population but the impoverished whites as well. It eloquently explains how poverty and ignorance bred anger and unrest between the poor whites and the poor blacks of the post civil war depression era south. The photographs are beautiful and stunning. I think it should be a required book for the average high school student studying the history of the deep south and all of it's issues of the early to mid twentieth century. Amazing that it was written in the mid 1930's and you can still see and almost feel the pain of hunger and absolute poverty in the faces and eyes of the people photographed and hear the sadness and hopelessness in their voices.

The stories were great but the paper and reproduction of photos was poor. Really below my expectations. With the interesting subject it's a shame the reproduction ruined the beautiful photography.

Perfect!

The text is well written (but you must read the introduction.) The photos look like they could be great, but the quality is horrible as some reviewers have mentioned. I wonder if the people who have mentioned such beautiful pictures in their reviews saw a different edition than this University of Georgia Press paperback. The print quality makes me sad, especially since I'm from Georgia.

Historical text is valuable reading, however the photographs are nearly invisible because they are printed on the poorest quality paper imaginable, similar to newsprint. Unfortunate because the photographs by Margaret Bourke-White are among the best of its genre.

Having experienced some of the tenant problems, this book gives an accurate account of how it was for Black and White share croppers/farmers. A few Land owners were very fair with their tenants, however, the majority were only in it for the profit. Life was unpleasant for the tenant(s).

Important memories of a time most forgotten. Very impressive for when it was written

Glad I reads the book but I was interested in the photography and this paperback is worthless for that purpose .

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