



# Photography and Politics in America: From the New Deal into the Cold War

*Dr. Lili Corbus Bezner PhD*

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In the early and most intense years of the cold war, social documentary photographers often found themselves in ideological turmoil or, worse, in trouble with the government. In *Photography and Politics in America*, Lili Corbus Bezner argues that many of the photographers of this period retreated from overt political content. Although many critics defended the trend, arguing that truly visionary art transcended politics, Bezner notes that the cold war era effectively silenced some of the most socially engaged photographers in American society.

In this compelling book, Bezner brings back many of those silenced voices and offers the first detailed analysis of social documentary photography from the Depression through the early cold war years. She traces the political and artistic struggles of socially concerned photographers, often using original and never before published interviews with artists. She explores the little-known history of the controversial, blacklisted Photo League and leading member Sid Grossman. And she recalls some of the most important moments in American photographic history of the 1950s, such as the blockbuster exhibition *The Family of Man* and Robert Frank's influential book *The Americans*.

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