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| Abbott, Berenice (1898-1991) |
| **[Enter any *variant forms* of your headword – OPTIONAL]** |
| Berenice Abbott was a photographer, theorist, teacher, and inventor who first learned photography as Man Ray’s studio assistant in Paris. In 1926, she established an independent portraiture studio in Paris, attracting clients from international avant-garde circles. She befriended French photographer Eugène Atget and, after his death, acquired thousands of his prints and negatives with help from Julien Levy. Through her advocacy, Atget’s oeuvre became a touchstone for avant-garde and documentary photography in Europe and the United States.  Returning to the United States in 1929, Abbott embarked on a study of New York City titled *Changing New York* (supported by the Federal Art Project 1935-1939), while developing unique theories of documentary photography and realism predicated on ‘communicative interaction’ (Weissman). She taught photography at the New School for Social Research and was active in the Photo League, which was comprised of a number of New York photographers who had similar political, social, and aesthetic interests. Often collaborating with Elizabeth McCausland, she authored pioneering essays about the history and theory of photography including the pedagogical text, *A Guide to Better Photography* (1941). |
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| Further reading:  (Abbott and McCausland)  (Weissman) |