

Sean Gordon

Arch 321

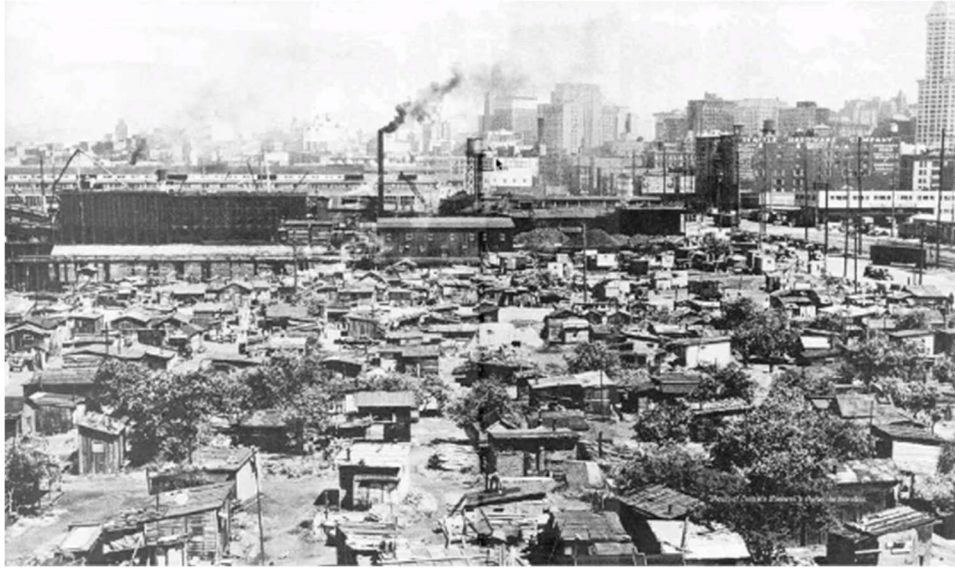
### Module 3, Lecture 1 Response

This lecture focused on the effects of the Great Depression on housing and businesses and the actions and changes that followed.

As the Great Depression began, the Chrysler building was being quickly constructed during an intense competition to build the tallest skyscraper. It reigned as the tallest building for 11 months before being surpassed by the Empire State Building in 1931. The building had, and still has today, an enormous presence in pop culture, due to movies like King Kong and various photographs of the death-defying workers during its construction. However, having been built amid the Great Depression, the building was not profitable for its owners until 1950, and was nicknamed the 'Empty State Building'.

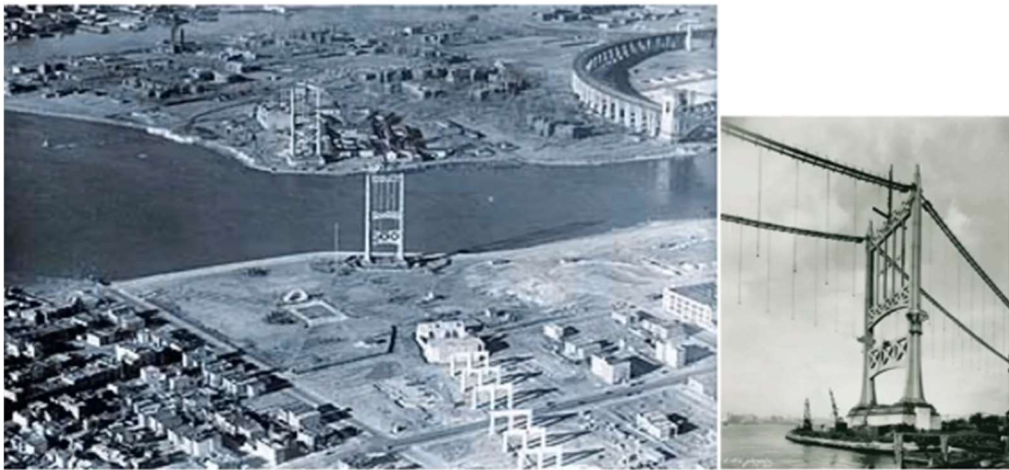
With the Great Depression as the central theme of the time, new president Herbert Hoover began attempts to reduce the impact of the stock market crash. Hoover believed small, local government could pull the US out of the depression, and better represent the people during the crisis. The policies unfortunately were not effective, with the unemployment rate increasing and shantytowns mockingly called Hoovervilles popping up in zones of transition. America was ready for a change and found it in the form of electing Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Roosevelt initiated the New Deal, creating a system of relief, recovery, and reform that was successful in changing the country for the better. Creating a temporary welfare state, large projects like the Triborough Bridge were partially funded by the government to get the private sector's wheels spinning again. These projects created jobs for skilled and unskilled workers alike, and many of the creations are still in use today.



An example of a Hooverville, handmade with scraps to provide quick shelter. These poor areas juxtaposed against the tall buildings of the city, occupied by the previously rich and poor alike, provide a vivid illustration of the difficulties faced during the Great Depression.

Triborough Bridge, 1930-1936, connects Manhattan, Queens and the Bronx  
PWA project, Architect: Othmar Amman. Spearheaded by Robert Moses



\$5.4 million from New York City  
\$44.2 million from PWA  
Average month: 1,000 workers on the site (peaked at 2,600)

This image of the Triborough Bridge project gives a good example of the scale of some of the public works projects created during the Roosevelt presidency. The amount of jobs created during a project like this pulled many Americans out of the hole the Great Depression created.