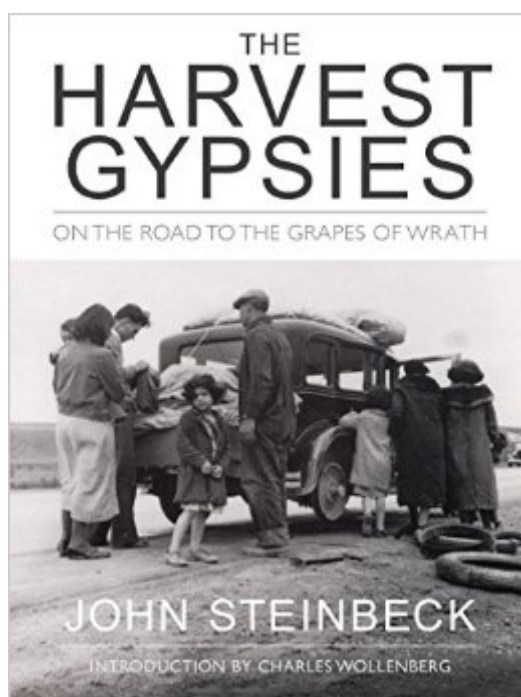


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# The Harvest Gypsies



## Synopsis

Selected by NYU as one of the century's best books of American journalism. Gathered in this volume are seven long-form articles that John Steinbeck wrote in 1936 about the plight of migrant farmworkers during the Dust Bowl, accompanied by photographs by Dorothea Lange and others. Steinbeck toured the squatters' camps and Hoovervilles of California, creating unforgettable portraits of once strong, independent farmers reduced to misery. The inquisitiveness and outrage of an investigative reporter combined with the expressive powers of a novelist in his prime fueled *The Harvest Gypsies*, which in turn furnished the factual and emotional roots for *The Grapes of Wrath* and has long been hailed as an American classic in its own right.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (21 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

Were the "Grapes of Wrath" published today, it may like other recent books, have been classified as historical fiction as opposed to a novel. I am thinking specifically of "Artemisia" that was published as both in different countries. How the work is classified is not critical, as either way it is one of the finest pieces of literature that has been written, and for many people, Steinbeck's finest work. "The Harvest Gypsies" is a collection of 7 articles that Mr. Steinbeck wrote as a journalist. All were concerned with the issues he dealt with in the resulting book. This small volume is greatly enhanced by the photographs of Dorothea Lange, and the introduction of Charles Wollenberg. One of the people the book was dedicated to was "Tom", actually Tom Collins, who was a manager of a federal migrant labor camp in California. The lines of fact and fiction are eventually blurred with him, as Tom

Collins was the model for the character of "Jim Rawley" manager of "The Wheatpatch Camp" in "The Grapes Of Wrath". Ms. Lange's photographs could have been illustrations for Mr. Steinbeck's book, for when viewing them you can pick out the faces that could have accounted for the members of Steinbeck's epic. This is a very brief book, but it portrays the migratory farm workers lives, as being even worse, if that can be imagined. A novel always offers the ultimate refuge of being fiction; these 7 articles and their photographs take away that solace. The brutality, random murder, and disease that was rampant, and the State of California that allowed the behaviors, are atrocious.

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