

FRIDAY 4TH SEPTEMBER

This famous picture, often referred to as ‘*Lunch atop a Skyscraper*’ was taken in September 1932. The picture looks spontaneous, but was staged by the owners of the ‘30 Rock’ skyscraper in New York as a **promotional campaign** for the new building.

Whilst this was not an ordinary lunch break for the 11 steelworkers in the photograph, the danger was real and they really were 260 m above the ground, on the partially constructed 69th floor. However, the men were used to working at this height without harnesses.

1932 was during the Great Depression and the campaign aimed to show New York as thriving, growing city, and it worked. The building opened in 1933 and had new tenants immediately and was 85% full by 1937 and the 70th floor observation deck had nearly 500,000 annual visitors.

There were several photographers present at this promo shoot and the exact photographer who took this picture remains unknown. The identities of most of the men in the picture are unknown too, though a few have been identified as Irish, Swedish and Slovak immigrants, not surprising as most construction workers at this time were migrants.



- How does this picture make you feel? How does it make you feel about the city of New York?
- Does knowing the photograph was staged make it less powerful? Have you seen similar in any modern **promo campaigns**?
- Would you have sat on the beam?

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This picture, often referred to as '*Lunch atop a Skyscraper*' was taken in September 1932. It was a staged **promotional campaign** for the new '30 Rock' building in New York.

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- How does this picture make you feel?
- Does knowing it was a staged **promo** picture change your view of the picture?