AHST 4342-501 (27532)
History of Media and New Media Art
Spring 2018
Dr. Charissa N. Terranova
University of Texas at Dallas
Arts & Humanities
T-Th 1:00-2:15

Thursday 01/18/18

Discussion

Painting, the Daguerreotype, and Telegraph in the work of Samuel FB Morse

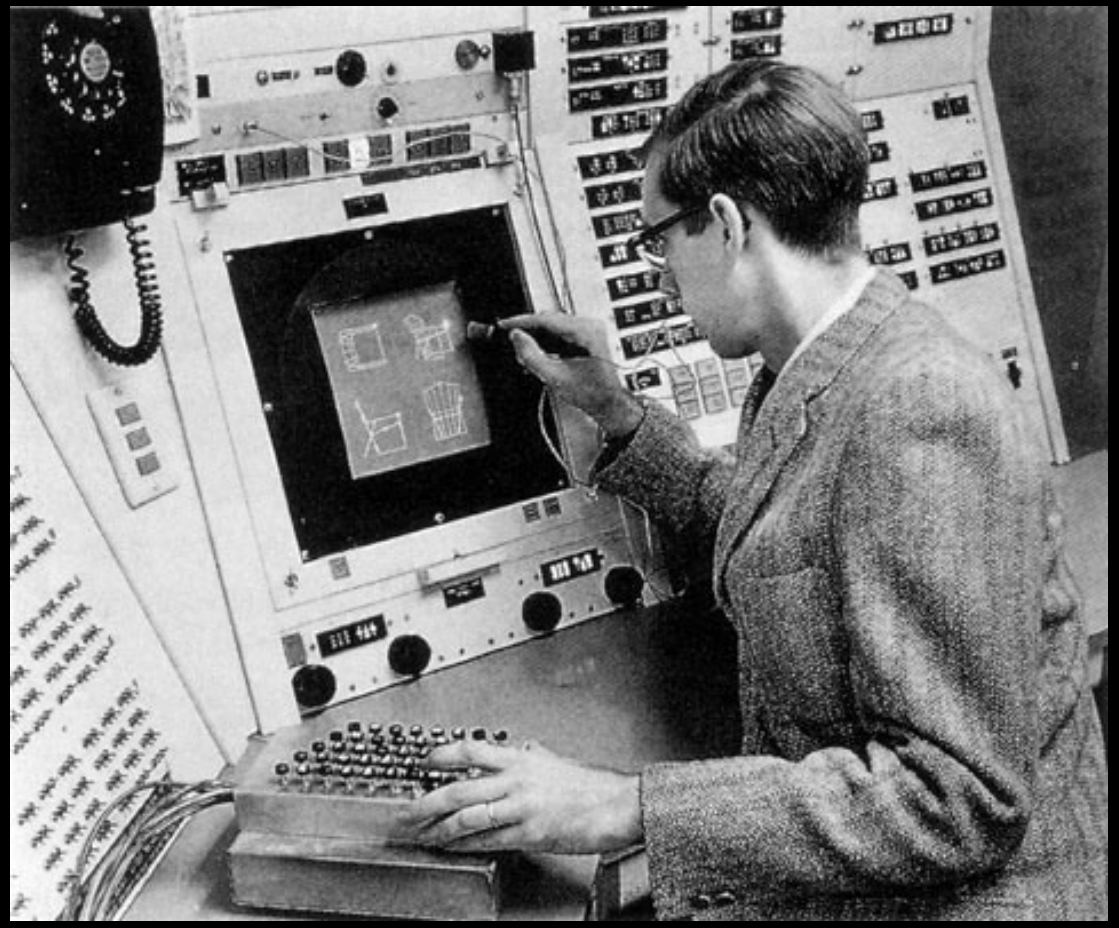
Review of Edward Shanken ‘survey’…

Introduction to Terms

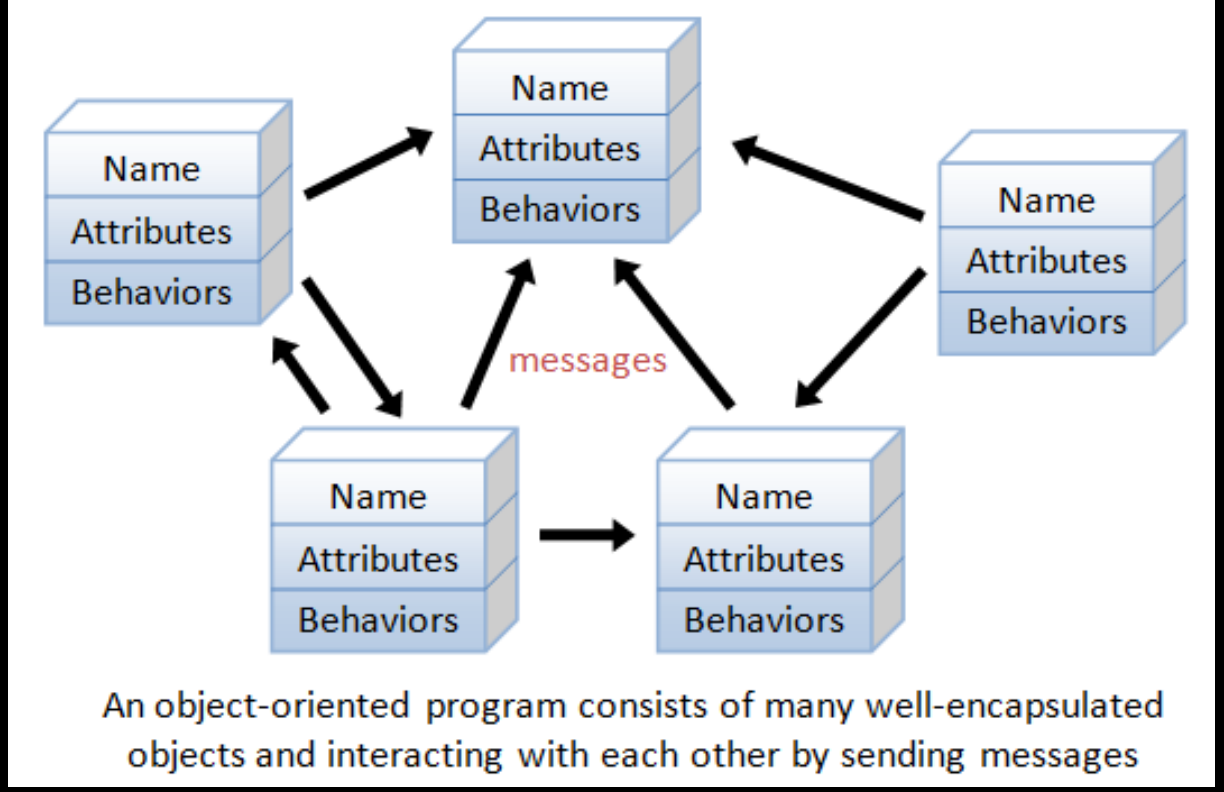
Medium
Media
Mediation
Remediation
Recursion

Student’s question:

After reading through the assigned material, I want to know how Ivan Sutherland (an electrical engineer) went from creating a sketchpad on the first interactive computer graphics system to developing object oriented programming? Not only is that an amazing feat in an of itself, but to do it in 1961, where [sic] computer was still in the infancy, is astounding?



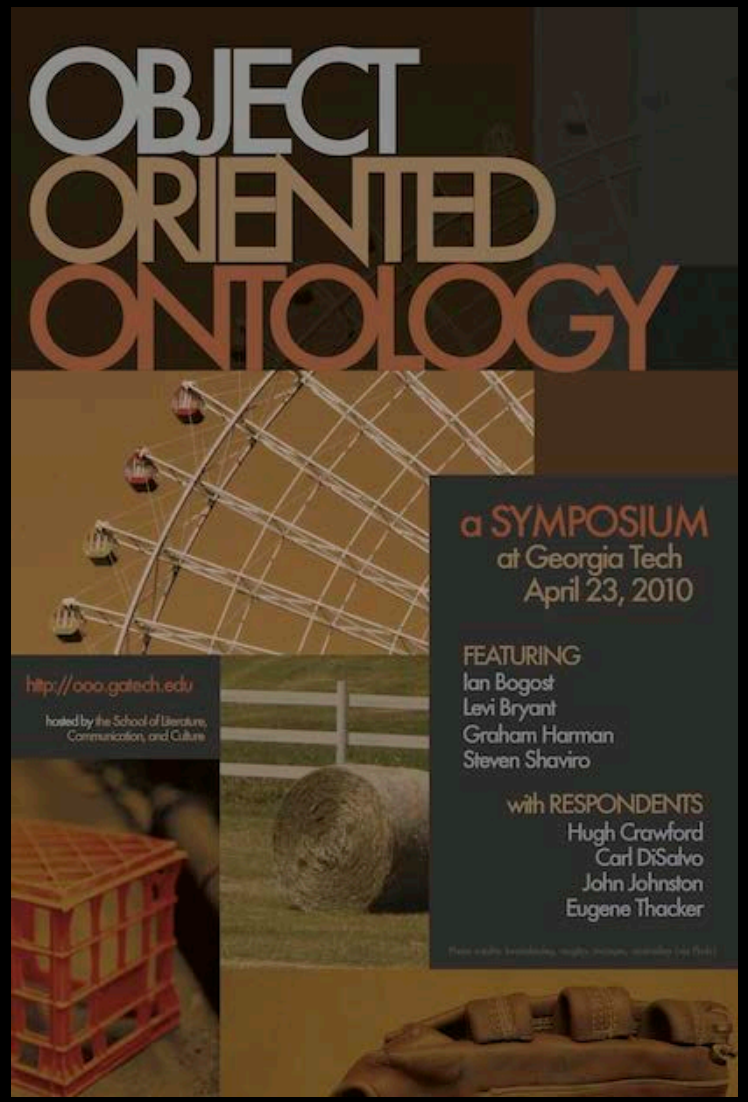
Ivan Sutherland using Sketchpad in 1962



***O**bject-**o**riented **p**rogramming* (**OOP**) refers to a type of computer programming (software design) in which programmers define not only the data type of a data structure, but also the types of operations (functions) that can be applied to the data structure. In this way, the data structure becomes an object that includes both data and functions. In addition, programmers can create relationships between one object and another. For example, objects can inherit characteristics from other objects.
https://www.webopedia.com/TERM/O/object_oriented_programming_OOP.html

OOP, is a model for writing computer programs. Before OOP, most programs were a list of instructions that acted on memory in the computer. Instead of a procedural list of actions, OOP is modeled around objects that interact with each other. Classes generate objects and define their structure, like a blueprint. The objects interact with each other to carry out the intent of the computer program. https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Object-oriented_programming

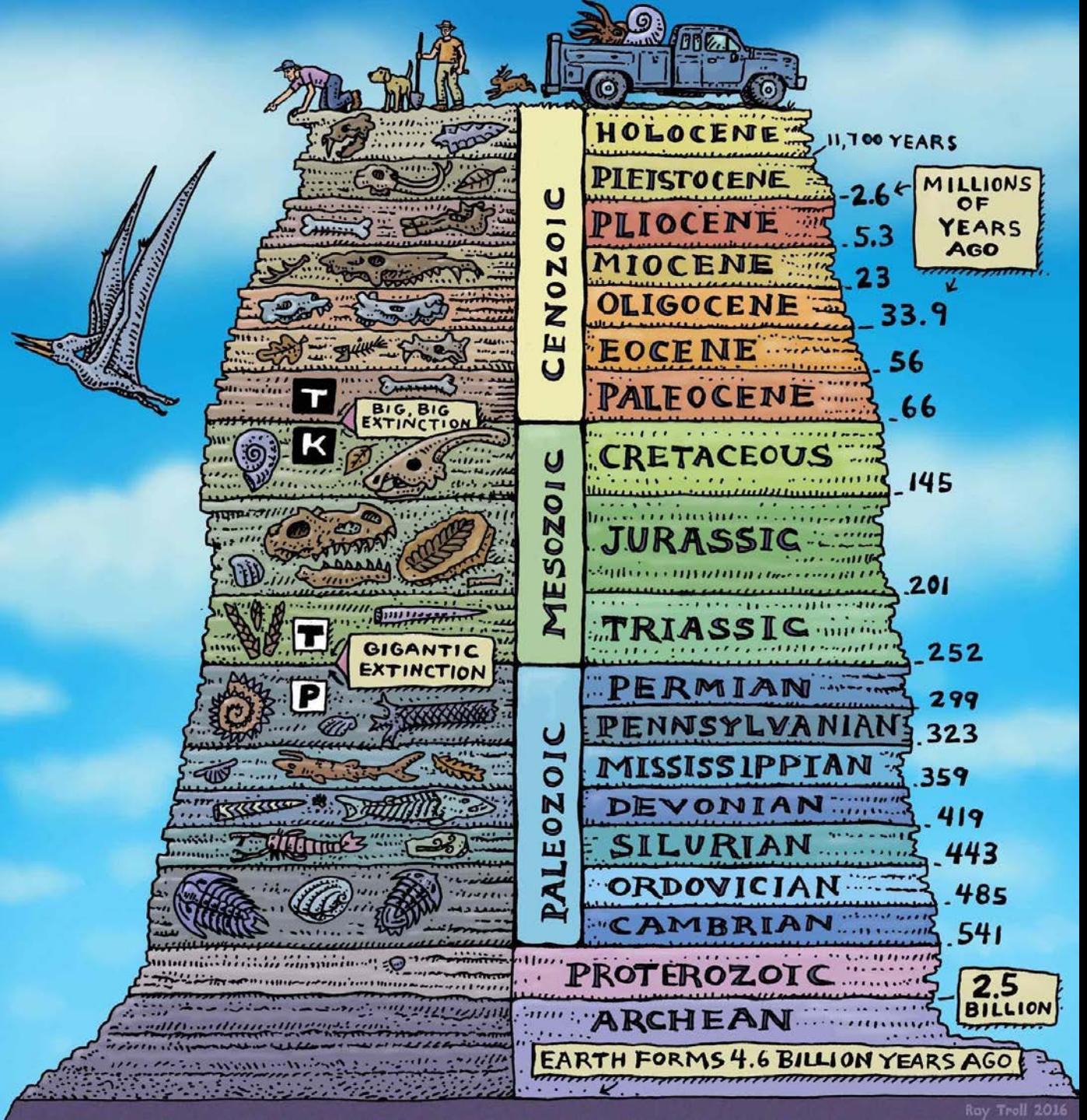
Object-Oriented Ontology [OOO]
Object-Oriented Feminism [OOF]

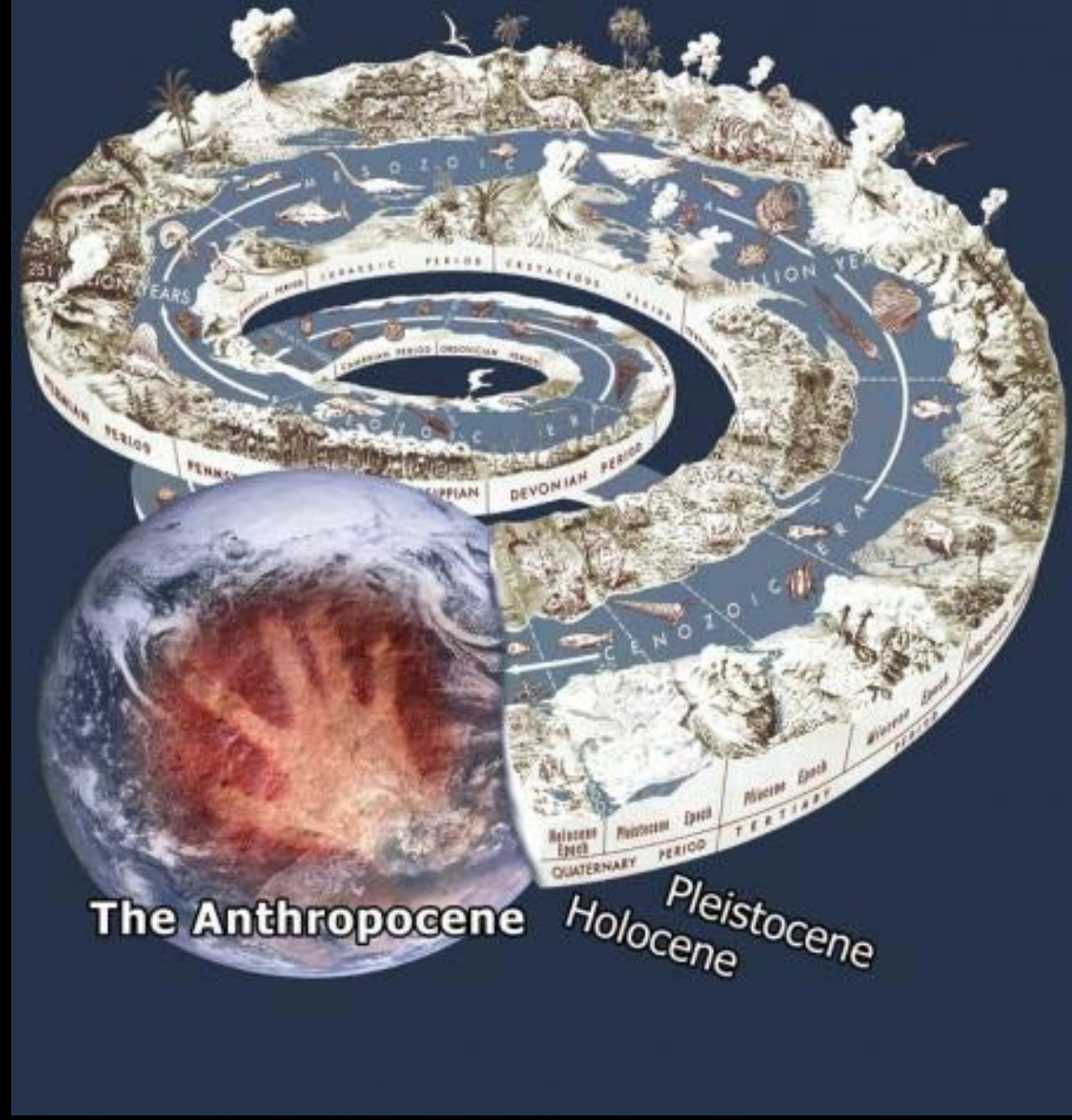


phenomenon and noumenon

the thing as it appears to an observer versus the thing-in-itself

Getting beyond anthropocentrism…
Getting beyond anthropocentrism via machines?



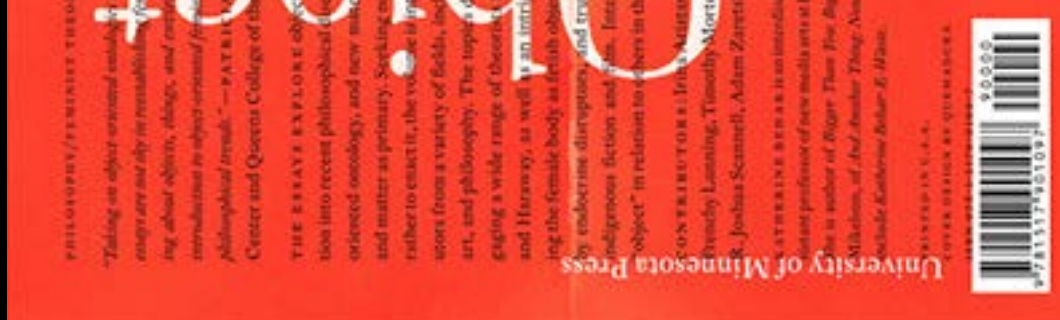


Anthropocene: relating to or denoting the current geological age, viewed as the period during which human activity has been the dominant influence on climate and the environment.

Katherine Behar, Editor

Object-Oriented Feminism

BEHAR
OBJECT-ORIENTED FEMINISM



University of Minnesota Press

Above left: Samuel FB Morse, Gallery of the Louvre, 1831-33 Oil on canvas, 73 ¾” x 108”

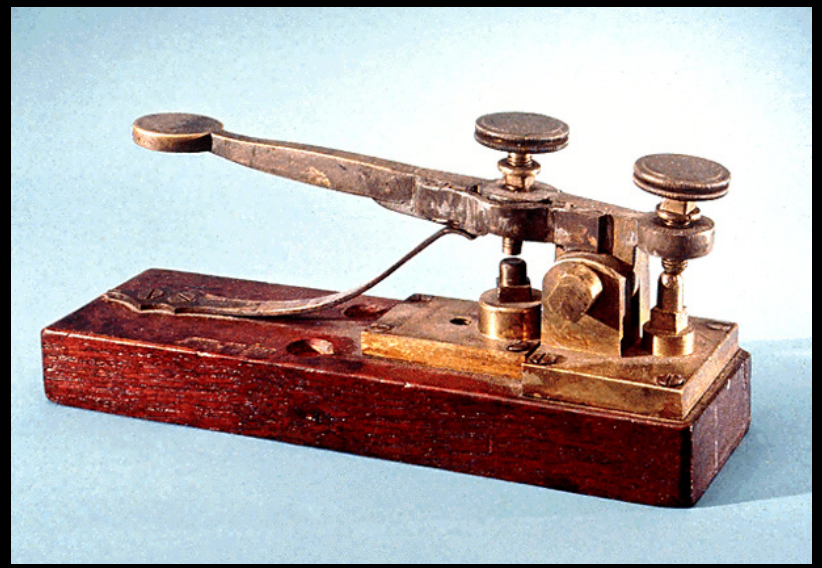
Above right:

Morse Code, invented by Samuel FB Morse, 1838

Morse code key

Letters		Numbers	
A	•—	1	•—————
B	—•••	2	••———
C	—•—•	3	•••——
D	—••	4	••••—
E	•	5	•••••
F	••—•	6	—••••
G	——•	7	——•••
H	••••	8	———••
I	••	9	————•
J	•———	0	—————
K	—•—		
L	•—••		
M	——		
N	—•		
O	———		
P	•——•		
Q	——•—		
R	•—•		
S	•••		
T	—		
U	••—		
V	•••—		
W	•——		
X	—••—		
Y	—•——		
Z	——••		

Below left; Telegraph Key, improved upon (not invented by) Samuel FB Morse, 1830s-1840s

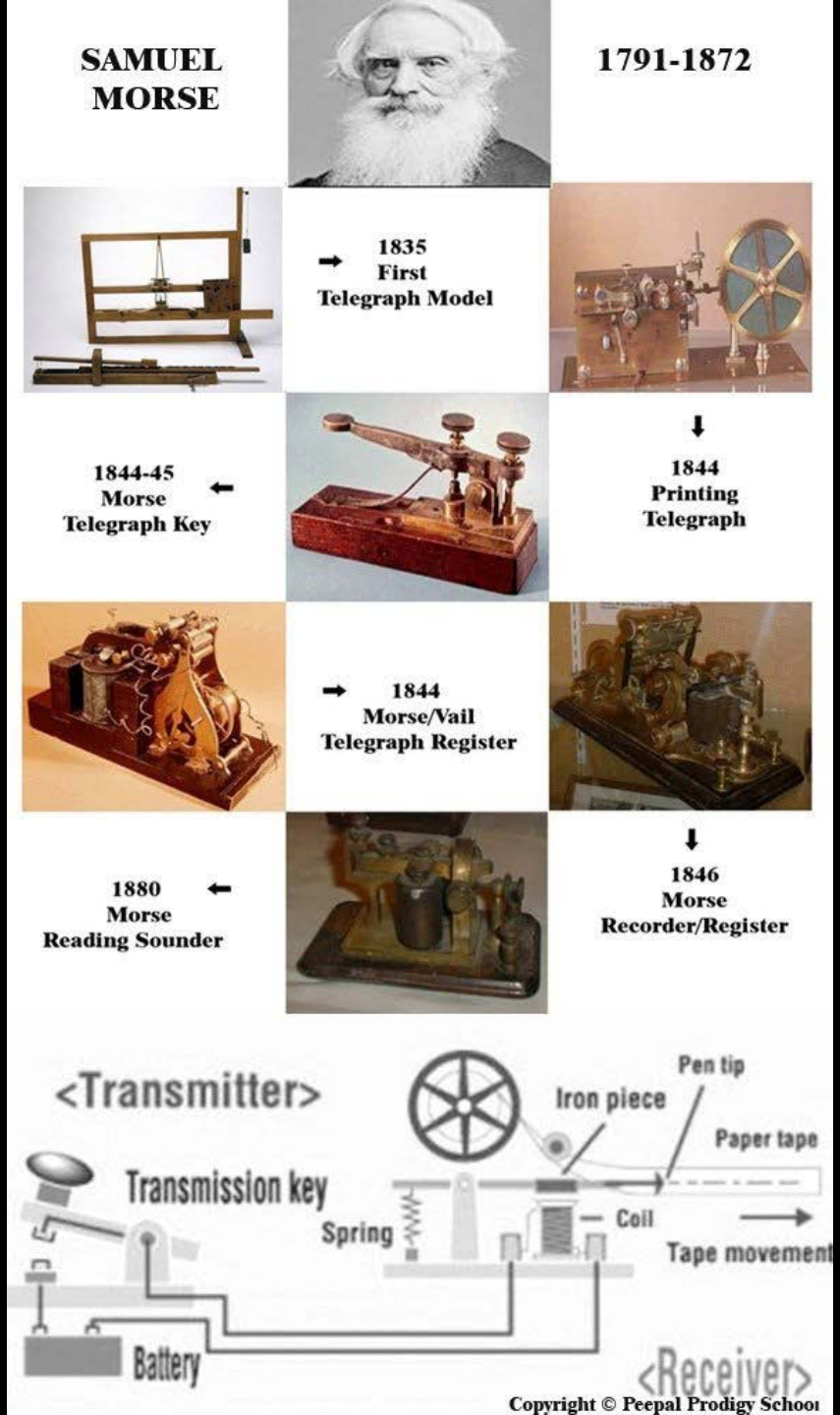


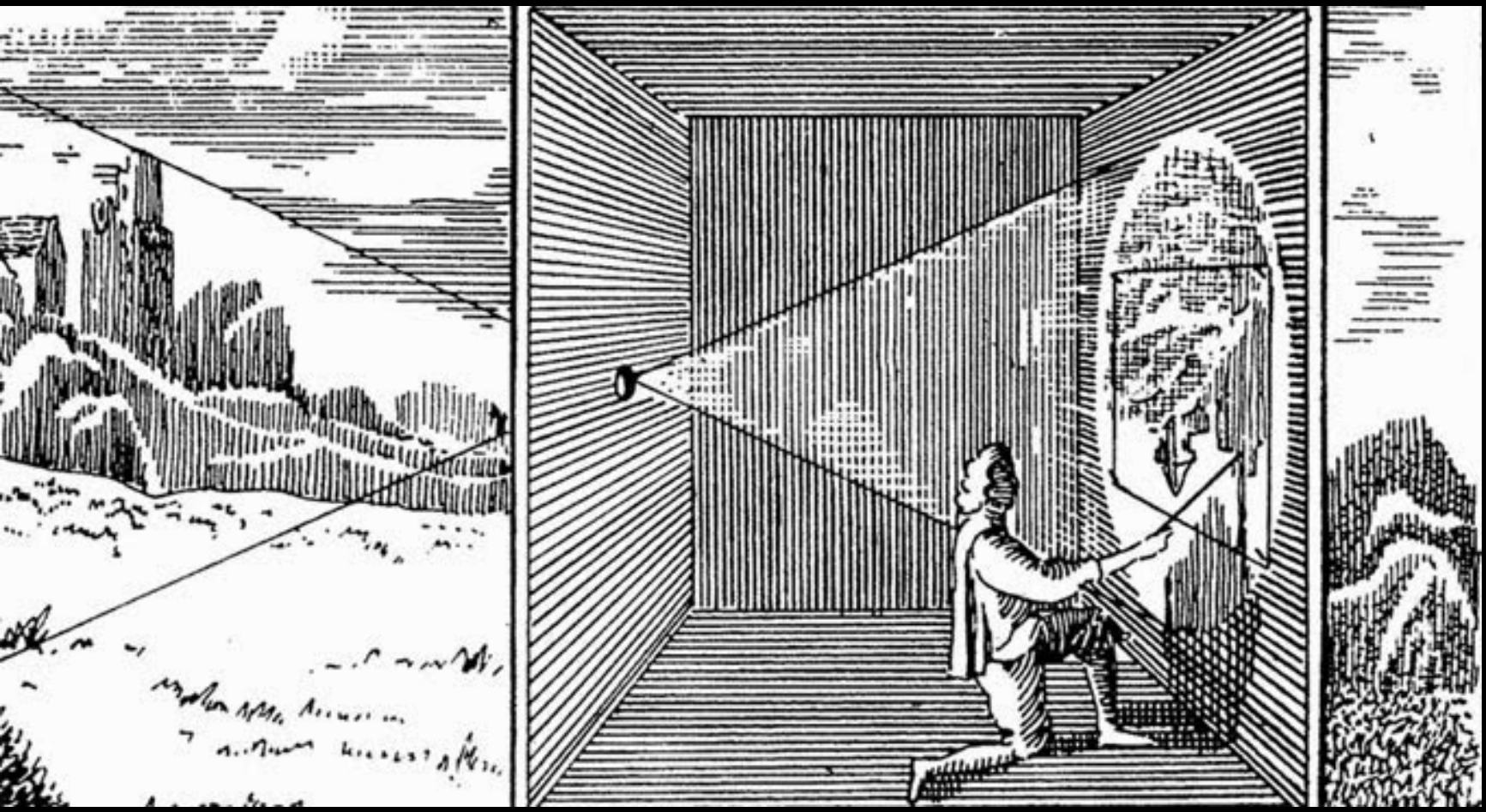
Lower right: Samuel FB Morse and John William Draper, Still-Life, spring 1840, quarter-plate daguerreotype

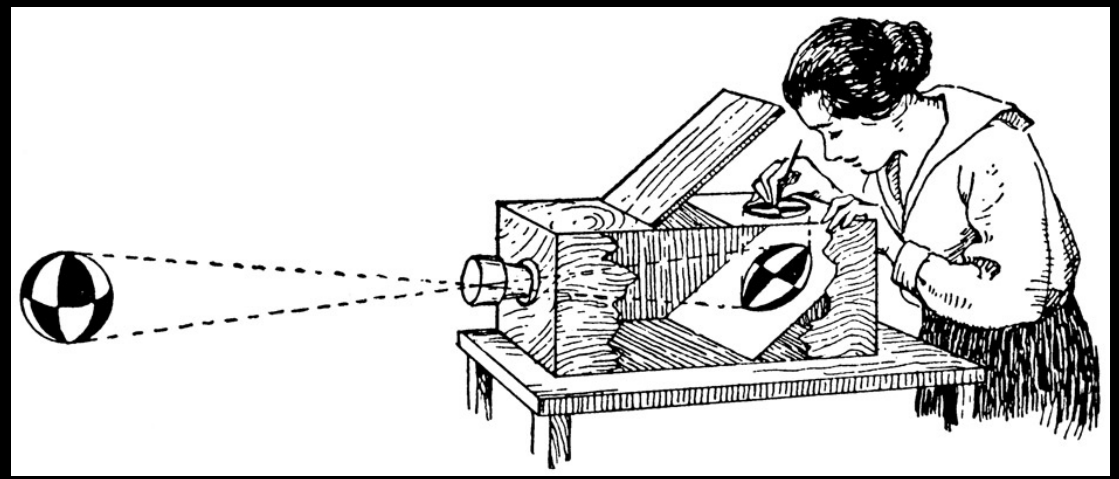
What are the many inventions dealing with reproduction or copying made or co-invented by Samuel Morse?

The first of Morse's experiments directly related to mechanical imitation took place in New Haven. By chance, Silliman was the Morses' next door neighbor, and during the summers of 1820 and 1821 Morse and Silliman often worked together on various chemical and electrical experiments. At some point the two conducted proto-photographic experiments, attempting to affix an image to a chemically treated surface via exposure to light.[3] They succeeded in producing what in essence was a negative image; however, like the other proto-photographers Thomas Wedgwood and Humphry Davy, they were unable to create a positive image or to fix the image so that it would stop continuing to develop.[4] Another instance of Morse's dedication to mechanical reproduction is his attempt to create a marble-carving machine for the replication of sculpture. He designed the machine sometime in the winter or spring of 1823, and by that summer he hired a local mechanic, Hezekiah Augur (an accomplished self-taught woodworker and sculptor), to construct the design. By December, Morse's machine had produced a successful copy of a bust of Apollo. However, after discovering that a patent for a similar machine had been granted to Thomas Blanchard in 1820, Morse moved on.

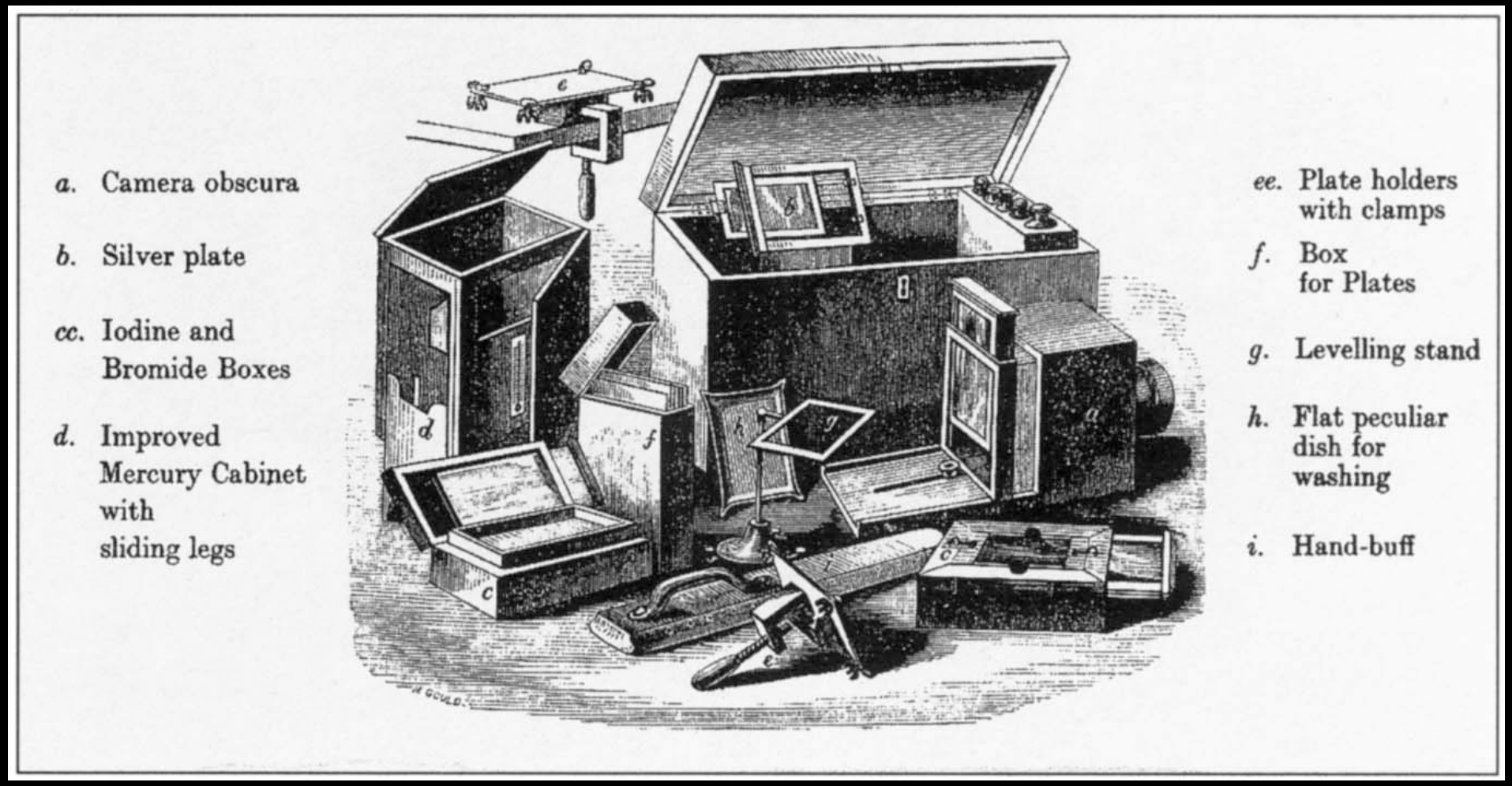
Gillespie, pp 101-102







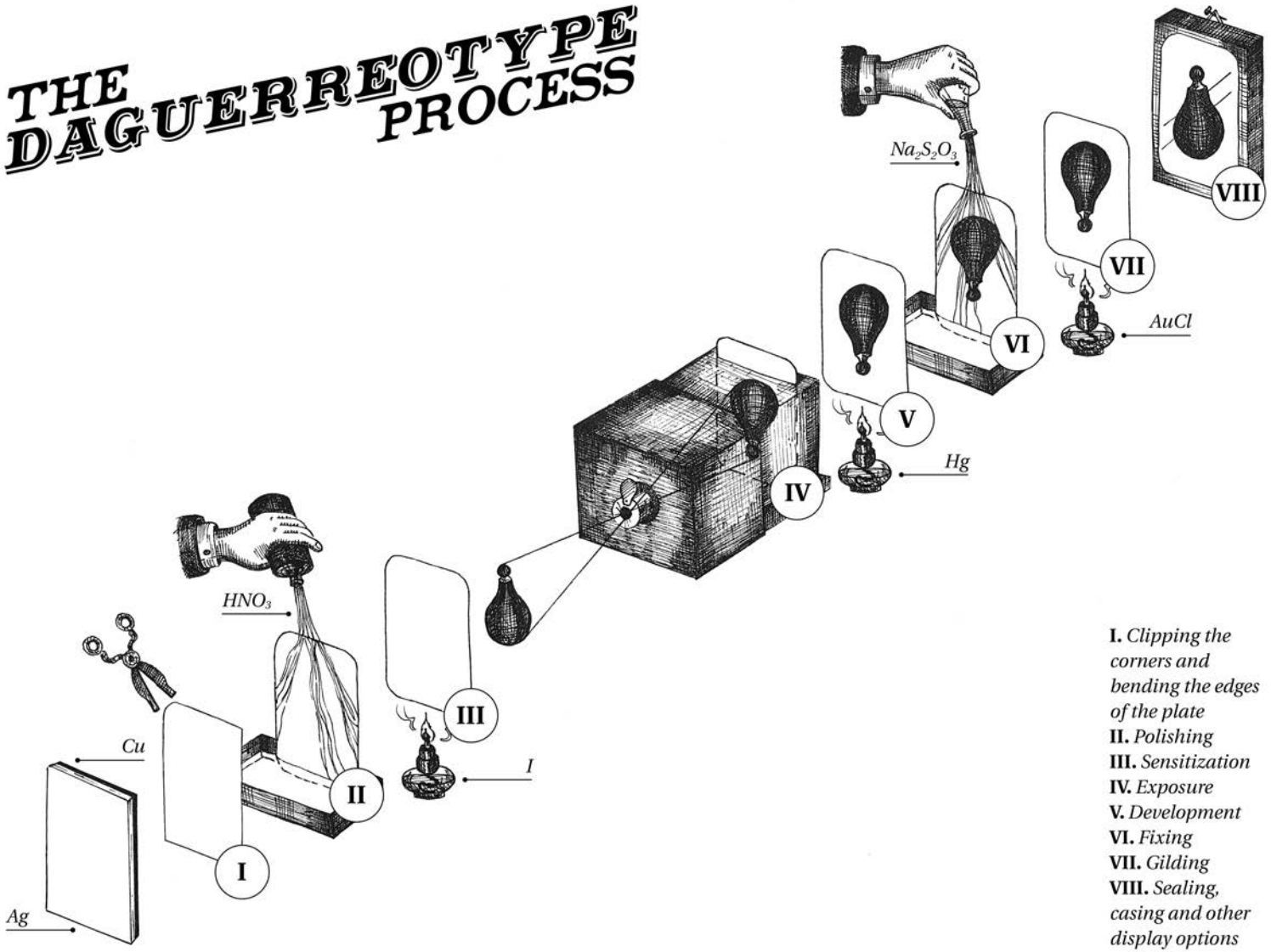
CAMERA OBSCURA
“dark room”



Apparatus and equipment for making daguerreotypes, from an advertisement published in 1843

Louis Daguerre, inventor – 1839

How often did artists use technologies of reproduction according to Gillespie?



Photographing works of art was not uncommon among early practitioners. Both Daguerre and Hippolyte Bayard (who created a direct-positive photographic method that failed to win the same governmental support as the daguerreotype) produced works that featured groupings of sculpture. The same is true of François Gouraud, a student of Daguerre's who was in the United States in late 1839 through the early 1840s, selling French daguerreotype equipment and offering demonstrations and lessons in the medium, and with whom Morse quarreled in the press.[15] Other early French plates by makers such as François Alphonse Fortier and Baron Armand Pierre Séguier also typically feature groups of sculpture with a painting or print included. William Henry Fox Talbot, the Englishman who introduced a paper photographic method, produced images of single sculptures, most famously his *Bust of Patrocles* (1843), and various images of prints. Morse

Gillespie, p. 106

Samuel FB Morse and John William Draper, Still-Life, spring 1840, quarter-plate daguerreotype

According to Gillespie, how is Morse and Draper's "Still-Life" different from other uses of the daguerreotype?

Samuel FB Morse and John William Draper, Still-Life, spring 1840, quarter-plate daguerreotype

Still-Life differs from other early examples, however, in its direct representation of art and science; it also seems to be the earliest-known photograph that features a collage of prints as its primary subject, with sculpture relegated to a secondary position. – Gillespie, 106

Student question:

Has the evolution of art and science always been intertwined, or has it only been through rapid advancement of technology in recent history that has enabled foundational changes of how art is generated and perceived?

Has the evolution of art and science always been intertwined, or has it only been through rapid advancement of technology in recent history that has enabled foundational changes of how art is generated and perceived?

Cleaned up version:
Has the evolution of art and science always been intertwined, or is their interconnection the result of recent technological advancement?

How did Morse view the function of the daguerreotype in the realm of art?
As a medium?
Heuristically?

Still-Life bears an obvious formal resemblance to *Gallery of the Louvre*, with its works of art similarly chosen and arranged by Morse, but the two share important ideological similarities as well. *Gallery of the Louvre* was one of Morse's greatest efforts to elevate standards of public taste, and he made parallel arguments that the daguerreotype, too, could be used as a pedagogical tool to educate the public and uplift American taste. When he initially encountered the process, Morse marveled to his friend Washington Allston: "Art is to be wonderfully enriched by this discovery. . . . Artists will learn how to paint, and amateurs, or rather connoisseurs, how to criticise . . . and therefore how to estimate the value of true art." He continued this line of thinking in his speech to the National Academy of Design, proclaiming, "It is clear that in so far as individuals are interested in observing [the daguerreotype's] wonderful production, their taste must be improved."[29]

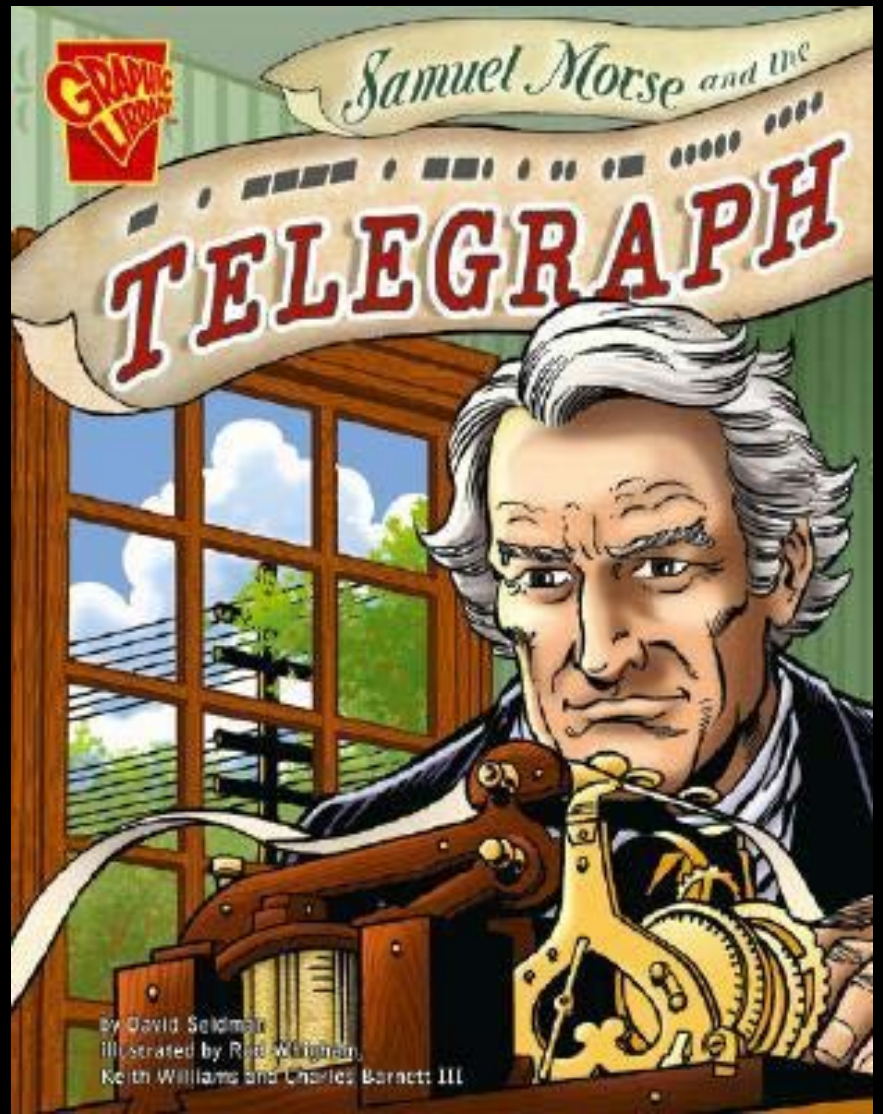
Gillespie, 107

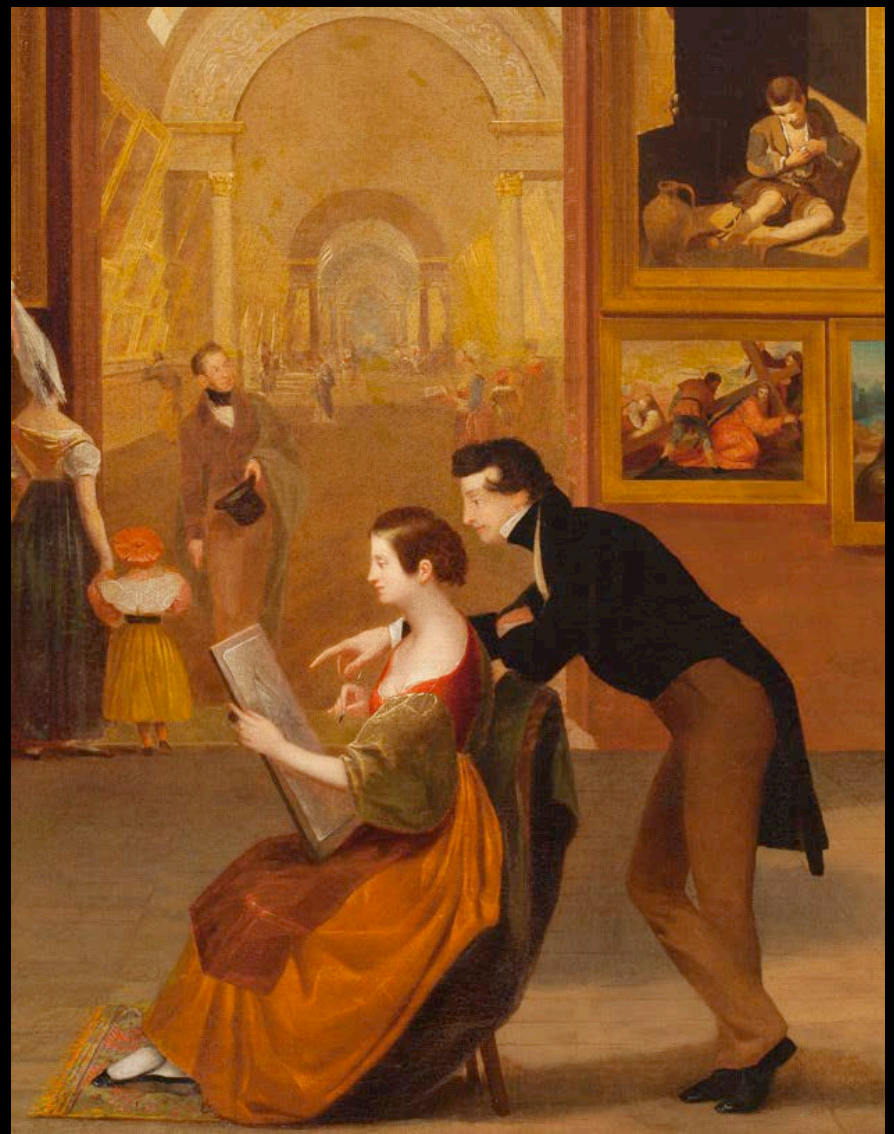
How did Morse view the function of the daguerreotype in the realm of art? As a medium? Heuristically?

Related questions from students:

- How did early optical technologies aid…enhance the arts?
- What is the role of mechanical technology when it meets traditional art?
- Why don’t more photographers today use the daguerreotype process?
- Can it be said that the daguerreotype encourages homogenization of style across various artists?

Student question:
Samuel Morse, the artist – Traditional or Avant-Garde?





Student question:

Why did Morse decide to abandon so many of his projects before completion (and potential new scientific discovery)?

Today, we commonly see a connection between Morse's ideas about imitation and copying within art from early in his career to his invention of telecommunication with the telegraph slightly later. Would he have made these connections?

Student writing:

Morse’s view on the use of technology can only be described as progressive and forward-thinking, which strikes an even sharper contrast with his definition of art, which one might term as narrow. Of course, one must take into consideration the time and place within which Morse worked: it would have been impossible for Morse to even conceive of the limitless territory into which art would venture, less than a quarter of a century after his lecture of 1840. He operated within an artistic environment that could only be described as rigid, dominated by the various academies of the time, and yet [he] still found time and space for innovation.

Sherrie Levine, After Walker Evans, 1979

APPROPRIATION

Walker Evans, Bud Fields and His Family, Hale County, Alabama, 1936

Walker Evans and James Agee, ***Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*** (1941)

Sherrie Levine after Walker Evans, Metro Pictures Gallery, NY, 1981

REPHOTOGRAPHY

Richard Prince, Untitled (Cowboy), 1989

Richard Prince, Untitled (Cowboy), 1991-92

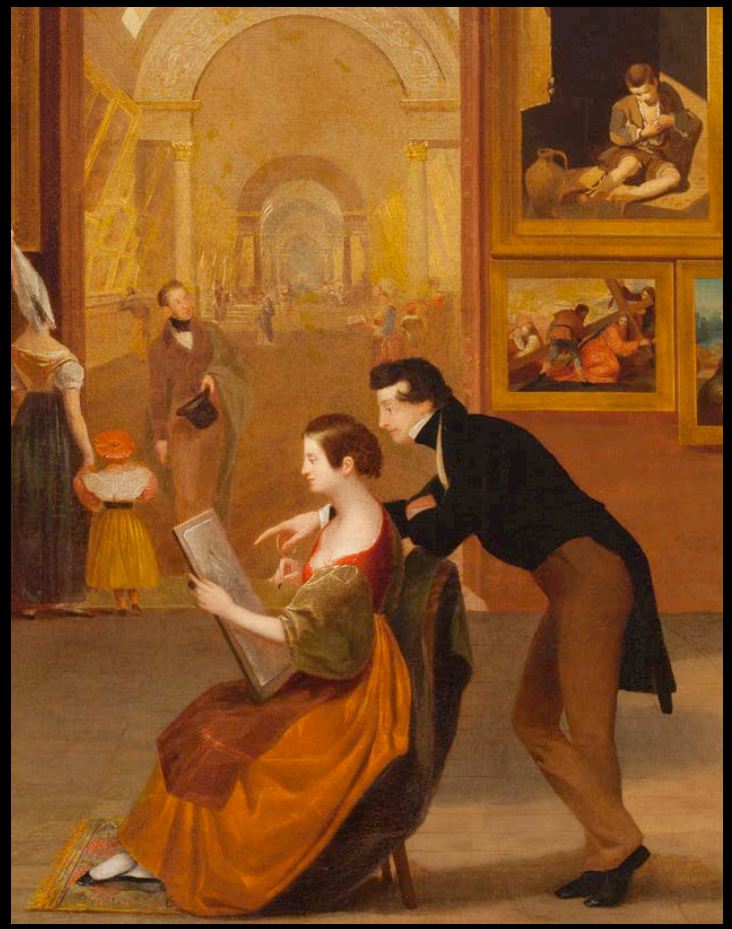
Richard Prince, Untitled (Kool-Aid), 1982-84

What distinguishes the definitions of “copy” and “copying” in these two images?

Samuel FB Morse, Gallery of the Louvre, 1831-33

Sherrie Levine after Walker Evans, Metro Pictures Gallery, NY, 1981

Richard Prince, Untitled (Kool-Aid), 1982-84



Detail, Samuel FB Morse, Gallery of the Louvre, 1831-33

What is the role of irony in both works?

What is the role of sincerity in both works?

What is the role of authenticity in both works?

What is the role of originality in both works?

What is the difference between these words? And, how would Morse have seen them? Related, synonymous, different, unrelated?

- Reproduction
- Copy/Copying
- Imitation
- Mimicry
- Simulacrum
- Hyperreality

- Reproduction *noun*: the action or process of making a copy of something; the production of offspring by a sexual or asexual process; a copy of a work of art, especially a print or photograph of a painting
- Copy/Copying *noun*: a thing made to be similar or identical to another; a single specimen of a particular book, record, or other publication or issue; *verb:* make a similar or identical version of; reproduce; imitate the style or behavior of
- Imitation *noun*: the action of using someone or something as a model; a thing intended to simulate or copy something else
- Mimicry *noun*: the action or art of imitating someone or something, typically in order to entertain or ridicule; in biology: the close external resemblance of an animal or plant (or part of one) to another animal, plant, or inanimate object.
- Simulacrum *noun:* an image or representation of someone or something; an unsatisfactory imitation or substitute; copy without an original
- Hyperreality *noun:* In semiotics and postmodernism, hyperreality is an inability of consciousness to distinguish reality from a simulation of reality, especially in technologically advanced postmodern societies.

How are we to understand innovation and invention in the life of Samuel Morse?

Within art?

Within technology?

Are there two distinct types of individuation at work here?