The Expanding Domain (1854-1880)

- Record keeping
- Staging photographs
- War & Expeditions
- Technical advancements
- Applications in the sciences
In the 19th century, photographs were considered to have a “neutral vision”
“If a thief should take the treasures, such an image could provide a new kind of evidentiary record in court.”

William Henry Fox Talbot, *Articles of China*, plate 3, from the Pencil of Nature 1844-46
Henri Le Secq, Tower of Kings, Reims Cathedral, 1851.
Hippolyte Bayard, *Eglise de Saint-Pierre à Louviers*, 1851
Hippolyte Bayard, *Self Portrait of a Drowned Man*, 1840
With photography’s so called, “neutral vision” is it moral to stage photographs?
The Mexican-American War [1846-1848]

Lithograph
Artist Unknown, Death of Major Ringgold of the Flying Artillery, at the Battle of Palo-Alto (Texas), May 8, 1846.

Daguerreotype Photographer Unknown, General Wool and Staff, Calle Real, Saltillo, Mexico, c.1847
The Crimean War
[1853-1856]

Technical Advances

(1854-1880)
Marcus Sparling seated on Roger Fenton's photographic Van, Crimea, 1855.
The American Civil War
[1861-1865]

Bergstresser Brothers, Bergstresser’s Photographic Studio,
3d Div., 5th Corp, Army of the Potomac, c.1862-64. Albumen silver print.
“The restraints and omissions in subject matter, as well as the carefully balanced compositions, probably owe to the sense prevalent during the war that photography was a type of historic writing, dedicated to recording the events, not investigating their tangled causes.”

- Marien Warner Marien Photography: A Cultural History
Tintypes of Civil War Soldiers
Matthew Brady, Abraham Lincoln, 1864. Collodian Glass Plate Negative
The first photographers were necromancers: their work fixed faces in time, sending a flood of memories into the chasm between the living and the dead. As a bulwark against grief and loss, a picture of a loved one was at once more visceral and more magical than anything that had existed before. Maybe it was inevitable, then, that nascent photographs, literally written in light, flickered between science and superstition, defying our sense of the tangible. Cameras gazed into our lives—wasn’t it possible that they could see a little further, too?

-New Yorker Magazine
October 27, 2017

William Howard Mumler,
Mary Todd Lincoln with the Ghost of Abraham Lincoln, after 1865. Albumen carte-de-visite.
“Give us a few negatives of a thing worth seeing, taken from different points of view, and that’s all we want.”

- Oliver Wendell Holmes
“War photographs taught viewers a modern skill: how to ignore or forget images when confronted by an excess of them.”

Mary Warner Marien
*Photography: A Cultural History*
The Franco-Prussian War
[1870-1871]

With the technological advancement of microphotography, “several tens of thousands of messages—virtually entire books—could be freighted by a single pigeon.”

A Wing and a Prayer,
_Pigeons and the history of battlefield communication_

Tom Vanderbilt
The American West

Photographer Unknown (Royal Engineers), Cutting on the Forty-Ninth Parallel, on the Right Bank of the Mooyie River Looking West, 1860-61. Albumen print from wet collodion negative.
Carleton E. Watkins, *From the ‘Best General View,’” Mariposa Trail, c. 1865-66
War and the Photography of Native Americans

- Westward movement brought regular conflict with Native Americans who wanted to stay in their ancient homeland
- These battles were seldom recorded by camera
“With the relentless expansion of Western political and economic interests during the mid-nineteenth century, photographers increasingly sought to highlight cultural, gender, and physiognomic differences amongst people.”

- Mary Warner Marien

Photography: A Cultural History
Repercussions?
Jon Thomson, The Cangue, 1871-72, from China and its People, 1874.
John Lamprey

*Front and profile views of a Madagascan Male*, c. 1868-69

Carbon Prints
From here I Saw What Happened and I Cried, 1995-1996

Carrie Mae Weems
Frederick Douglass sought to “erase the astonishingly large storehouse of racist stereotypes that had been accumulated in the American archive of anti-black imagery” and as a result, became the most photographed American in the 19th century.

- Henry Louis Gates Jr.
  *Frederick Douglass’s Camera Obscura*
  *Aperture 223, Vision & Justice*
Frederick Douglass
1817-1895