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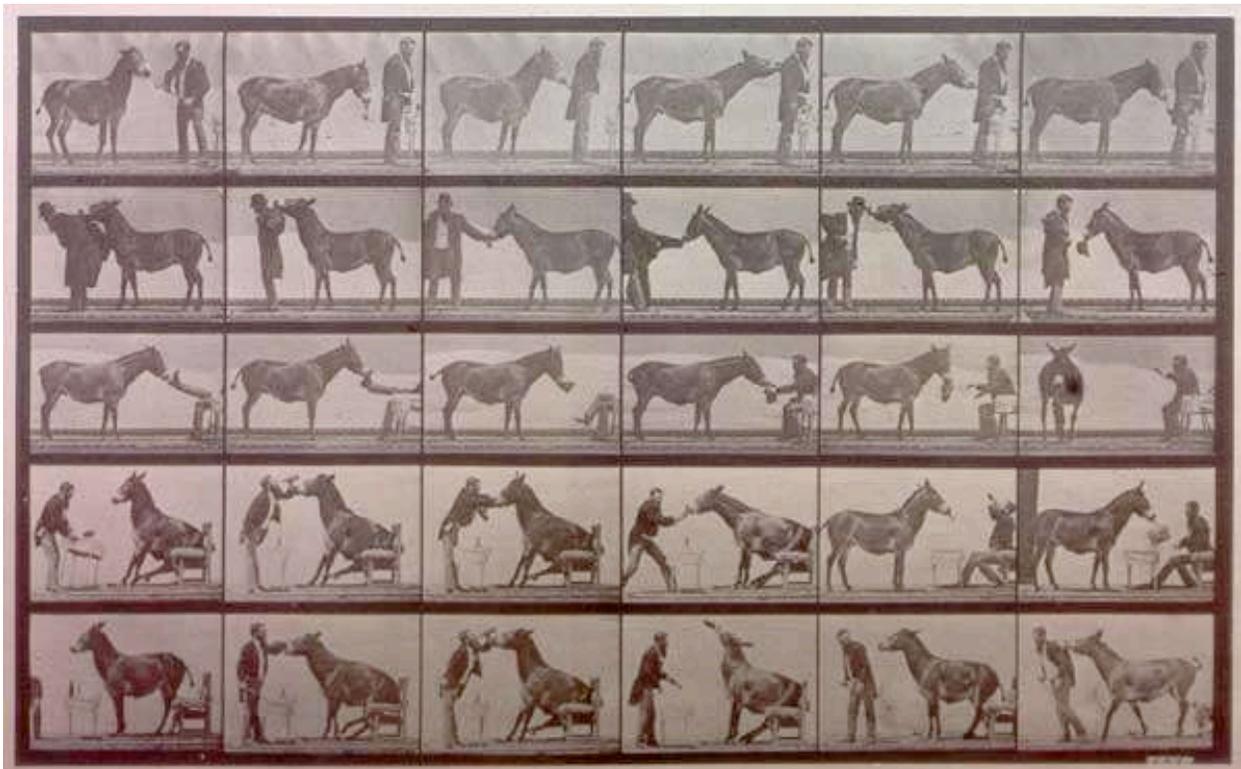
From *Looking at Photographs: Animals*

A. D. Coleman

(1995)

"Mule," 1885

Eadweard Muybridge, British-American



There is much in the visible world that can't be seen with the "naked eye." Photography has allowed us to observe and understand some of those things in new ways. One of the subjects that it's helped us to analyze is motion.

There are many ways to depict motion in photographs. One of them is by making pictures that stop or "freeze" things as they are moving. Eadweard Muybridge invented a

complex system for doing just that. He arranged a group of cameras in a line, alongside a track, timed to go off one after another. Then he let various animals (and people too) move down that track. The cameras made their *exposures* as the *subjects* moved along. When the resulting images were developed, printed, and lined up, they formed a *photographic sequence* that cut that motion into separate moments. For the first time, people were able to examine the different stages that are part of any movement. So these images have helped painters to depict human and animal motion more accurately. They have allowed scientists and doctors to study the ways in which human and animal bodies function.

This mule walking is an example of Muybridge's work. It looks very much like a strip of movie film. As a matter of fact, his experiments led directly to the invention of *motion pictures*. If you want to see how, you can try an experiment yourself. Make a photocopy of this series of pictures. Then cut out each one and stack them up, keeping them in their original order. Staple the stack on the left-hand side. You've just made a "flip book." Flip through the pages quickly, front to back, and you'll see the mule come to life.

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