Animation History

The Beginnings of Animation
Thaumatrope

- Device created in 1827 by English physician John Ayerton Paris which has two different drawings on opposite sides of a disk. When the disk is spun, the images merge into one.

- Paul Roget used the thaumatrope in 1828 to demonstrate his persistence of vision concept.
Phenakistoscope

- Phenakistoscope – A circular card with slits around the edge. Viewer held card up to a mirror and peered through the slits as the card whirled. A series of progressive drawings created a moving object.
Zeotrope

A similar device with progressive drawings on the inside of a drumlike cylinder.
Photography

- Animation on film only possible because of invention of photography in 1827 by Joseph Niépce.

- Earliest surviving photograph of a scene from nature taken with a camera obscura, *View from the Window at Le Gras* (1826)
Photography

Louis Daguerre, an assistant to Niépce, develops a new process for developing images in 1837 (tin-type photos).
Photography

During the American Civil War (1860-1865), New York photographer **Matthew Brady** becomes well-known by taking photos of the war.
Photography

- In 1885, George Eastman introduced transparent, flexible film and in 1888 marketed his Kodak camera, bringing photography to the average American.
Eadweard J. Muybridge

- Well known as a photographer in California, Muybridge is hired by former governor Leland Stanford to photograph the governor’s race horse. Stanford had a wager that all four hooves of a horse leave the ground when running. Muybridge’s job was to prove the theory.

- Using twenty-four cameras, a system of trip shutters, and high speed film, Muybridge’s series of still photographs give the impression of motion.
Eadweard J. Muybridge
America’s premier inventor, Thomas Alva Edison, who invented the lightbulb and the phonograph develops a motion picture camera (*the kinetograph*) and a projector (*the kinetoscope*) in 1891.
Auguste and Louis Lumiere

- Auguste and Louis Lumiere credited with first motion picture public screening in France in 1895.
“The Great Train Robbery”

In 1903, the landmark silent movie “The Great Train Robbery” debuted. It was created by former Edison cameraman Edwin S. Porter, was a commercial success, and lead to the rise of western movies.
“The Great Train Robbery”
J. Stuart Blackton

- Blackton started as a vaudeville performer known as “The Komikal Kartoonist” who drew lightning-fast sketches.

- After meeting Edison, Blackton became interested in putting his drawings on film. He formed one of the first film studios, the Vitagraph Company.

- In 1906 using a chalkboard, Blackton created “Humorous Phases of Funny Faces” which is known as the first animated film.
Humorous Phases of Funny Faces

©April 6, 1906
The Vitagraph Co. of America
Winsor McCay

- McCay works as a cartoonist for several newspapers.

- In 1911, McCay animates “Little Nemo” and in 1912 animates “How a Mosquito Operates.”

- In 1914, McCay brings “Gertie the Dinosaur” to life on film. It is included in his vaudeville act along with camera tricks where McCay appears on screen with Gertie. Gertie is regarded as the first successful cartoon character who paved the way for Felix the Cat, Betty Boop, Mickey Mouse, and Bugs Bunny.

- Uses animation to illustrate the “Sinking of the Lusitania” in 1918.
Gertie the Dinosaur
Gertie the Dinosaur

“And now Mr. McCay will show us what he thinks a Dinosaurs looked like in real life.”

Gertie
Celluloid

- From 1914 through 1920, several film and animation houses were started in New York.

- Bray employee **Earl Hurd** invents the process of inking the animator’s drawings onto clear pieces of **celluloid** and then photographing them in succession on a single painted background. This development in late 1914 simplified the animation process.
Otto Messmer

- In 1919, Otto Messmer created **Felix the Cat** for the Pat Sullivan Studios.

- Unlike Winsor McCay’s Gertie the Dinosaur, Felix the Cat was a studio character. The meant that audiences could look forward to seeing again and again. Felix was also exposed to audiences across the country.
Felix the Cat

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Felix_the_Cat
Felix the Cat
Walt Disney

- In 1923, became the first major animation studio to relocate to Southern California, following the lead of many motion picture studios.

- Became a strong force in animation with the release of Mickey Mouse as Steamboat Willie in 1928.

- Developed many innovative techniques in sound and color.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zg0e4WjL7G0&playnext=1&list=PLE871A3CA2394FBB7&feature=results_main
Walt Disney

- In 1937, released the first full-length animated feature entitled “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.”

- Developed the pencil test, storyboard, and the multi-pane camera stand.
Other Studios

- By the 1930’s, most major film studios had their own animation department.

- Max Fleischer (New York) created Betty Boop and Popeye.

- Warner Brothers animators included Friz Freleng, Tex Avery, and Chuck Jones and created Porky Pig, Elmer Fudd, and Bugs Bunny.

- In the early 40’s, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer animators Bill Hanna and Joe Barbera created a hit with Tom and Jerry.