

Photography is a commonly used medium in modern times, which is why many overlook its artistic capabilities. I would like to try and reveal that although photography is common, this does not degrade its value.

How can photographs be used to alter the history and future of a country?

Artists:

Carleton E. Watkins and William H. Jackson

Early in the 19th century the power of photographs as records was proven when Carleton E. Watkins and William H. Jackson's images of the Yellowstone and Yosemite landscape persuaded the U.S. Congress to set those territories aside as national parks. Due to the photographs the American government was influenced to sign a legislation creating for the first time anywhere a national park. This went against the idea of manifest destiny, which believed it was the settlers god given right to exploit the land he discovers.



Alice Seeley Harris, "traveled to the [Congo Free State](#) with her husband, [John Hobbis Harris](#) (a missionary). There she photographed Belgian atrocities against local people with an early [Kodak Brownie](#) camera. The images were widely distributed through [magic lantern](#) screenings and were critical in changing public perceptions of slavery and eventually forcing [Leopold II of Belgium](#) to cede control of the territory to the Belgian government, creating the [Belgian Congo](#)."



Dorothea Lange: "Lange's photographs humanized the consequences of the Great Depression and influenced the development of [documentary photography](#)."



"migrant mother"

Steve McCurry: McCurry's work strives to reveal vanishing cultures and conflicts throughout the world. His most famous work, "Afghan refugee Girl" covered national geographic in 1984. Accused of manipulating his photographs, ultimately altering truth.



Armin T. Wegner:

The young Turks were a rebel group who overthrew the throne of the autocratic ruler, Sultan Abdul-Hamid of the Ottoman Empire. The young Turks succeeded in their efforts when ottoman armies in turkey supported the movement. The Muslim government of the Empire grew weary that their two million Armenian citizens who closely followed christianity would side more-so with christian governments like Russia, who shared an insecure border with the ottoman Empire. In order to condense Turkish rule of ottoman territories they called for an extermination of the Armenian population. At the center of the chaos, German Soldier Armin T. Wegner who was stationed in the Ottoman empire witnessed the genocide of 1.5 million Armenians which he documented through his photography. Photography which is now considered to be a part of the core proof of the genocide.



