
'Lens Louse' or Astute Propagandist? Pancho Villa's Use of the Silent Newsreel in the Mexican Revolution

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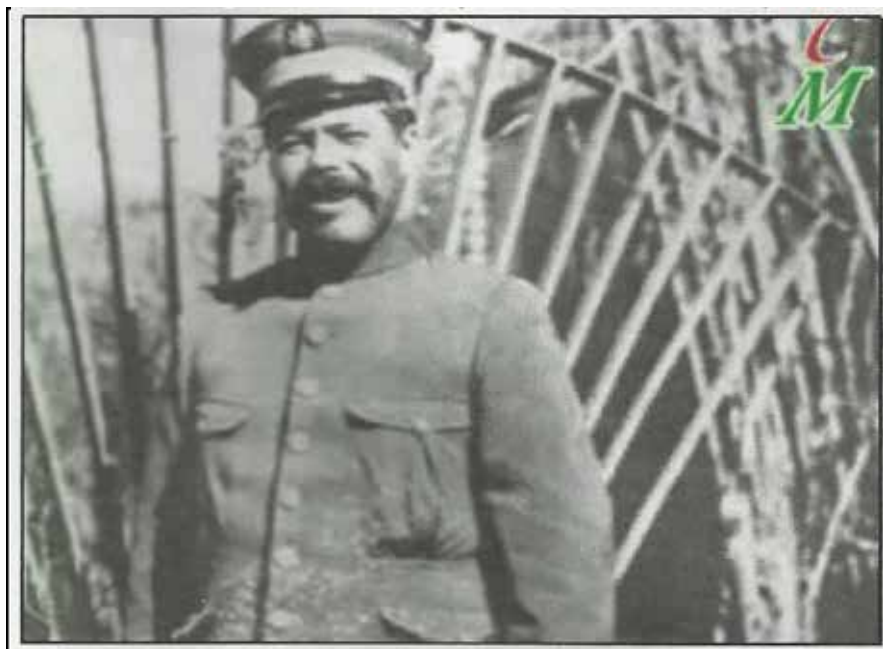


Photo from Pancho Villa Newsreal

As civil war raged in Mexico in 1914, factional leaders sought to gain support for their cause by presenting a positive representation to international observers. Pancho Villa, the most capable military leader of the rebel Constitutionalist army, quickly recognized the propagandistic value of the developing motion picture. This article asks what motivated Villa and what were the results of his embrace of the motion picture? Did he use film as a conscious public relations effort for the rebel cause or simply as an act of vanity? Is it possible that Villa, a provincial Mexican peon, saw the persuasive value of the newsreel that media moguls and public policy manipulators in America—like William Randolph Hearst—failed to recognize? This article takes the events that occurred and combine them with a historical discussion of the period's developing newsreel industry to answer these intriguing issues—intriguing enough to make a Hollywood movie then *and* today.

All parties in the revolution recognized the im-

portance of a positive portrayal in the American media. Participants on both sides generated so many self-serving reports that one Austin, Texas newspaper sarcastically wrote that it suspected all Mexican generals of grabbing the stationery and typewriters in retreat while abandoning the artillery.¹ Across the United States, stories and reports about Villa abounded in many newspapers and magazines of the time. Mark Cronlund Anderson's book, *Pancho Villa's Revolution by Headlines*, details well Villa's manipulation of the international press and his image portrayed abroad. Anderson, however, devotes only a few pages to Villa's use of the newsreel in his strategic media campaign. While Friedrich Katz treats the subject more seriously in his mammoth 900 plus page work, *The Life and Times of Pancho Villa* dedicates only five pages to Villa's use of the American media and Hollywood. This article adds the role of the motion picture to Pancho Villa's story—a role that deserves greater investigation.²

Students of Mexico know the story of the

Mexican Revolution well. Porfirio Díaz ruled as a strong man for over thirty years. The aging dictator announced that he would step down from power in 1910 and allow free elections to determine his replacement. As the date neared, Díaz retracted this commitment. Calling for revolution, challenger Francisco I. Madero, a foreign educated political activist from one of the wealthiest families in the northern state of Coahuila, disavowed the regime. A brief uprising persuaded Díaz to abdicate and depart for Europe, leaving Madero to unite the government and country. However, he failed to provide effective leadership and Mexico broke into regional and military factions. General Victoriano Huerta, a military career man left from the Díaz era, gained Madero's trust in quelling uprisings against the administration. Taking advantage of the instability, Huerta usurped power in 1913, resulting in Madero's murder and initiation of the most devastating conflict of the Revolution that lasted to 1920.

The factions rebelling against Huerta loosely united under the Constitutionalist banner with Venustiano Carranza, a career politician from the northern state of Coahuila, as the "First Chief" and Francisco "Pancho" Villa the most capable general. Villa (born Doroteo Arango), fled the oppressive life of a peon ranch hand and spent the next fifteen years gaining a reputation as a cattle rustler and fugitive from justice. Joining Madero's revolt, Villa quickly grew his group of fifteen men into a formidable force of well-armed horsemen. Although not fond of each other, Carranza promoted Villa to division general and he served as provisional Governor of the state of Chihuahua in 1913.

In early 1914, the war turned in the favor of the Constitutionlists. With their triumph growing inevitable and U.S. President Woodrow Wilson publicly behind their cause, Texas, and the rest of the country began scrutinizing Villa and Carranza as potential leaders of a Mexican republic. Newspaper editorials voiced their opinions as to which candidate represented the best choice. Some, like the *Abilene Daily Reporter*, viewed Villa as the man who could lead Mexico out of trouble. *The Dallas Morning News*, on the other hand, doubted Villa's character and supported Carranza as the one capable of making "worthy use" of power. As parties squared off in the Villa/Carranza debate, the *Austin Statesman* rejected both, opting for a yet-to-emerge non-military leader. Throughout 1914, the nation's newspapers and public opinion flipped from one leader to the other.³

Two opinions of Villa existed in the minds of the American public. One branded him a bandit, an opportunist, and an uncivilized butcher of prisoners. The other heralded him as a great general, savior of the Mexican peon, and receptive to American tutelage.⁴ Villa tactfully portrayed himself as the latter to the American press. Although most rebel leaders, including Carranza, accepted Wilson's envoys, they did not court American reporters.⁵ Unlike Carranza and other rebel faction leaders, Villa welcomed foreign correspondents. A corps of American reporters followed Villa and his troops on the march. He granted interviews in El Paso, Texas, and at his headquarters in the Mexican state of Chihuahua.⁶

This conscious effort to improve his public opinion successfully positioned Villa as Wilson's and the press's favorite. Once uncommitted American newspapers now began to promote Villa over the uncooperative Carranza. So committed to Villa, one newspaper proclaimed he should share in the Nobel Peace Prize while others lauded Villa as having "loftiness of purpose" and a as "man of lion heart." Businessmen once backing Huerta switched their support to Villa as the candidate best for commerce.⁷

While many examples abound contrasting the differences between Carranza and Villa when it came to the role of the United States and President Wilson's attempts to influence the Mexican Revolution, none provides a better illustration than the forced occupation of the port of Veracruz. On 21 April 1914, performing a supposed act of assistance to the rebel cause, Wilson occupied militarily the port of Veracruz, cutting off Huerta's main source of money and arms. Carranza, to Wilson's disgust, responded negatively. Carranza condemned the U.S. for invading sovereign Mexico and even hinted at joining with Huerta's troops in repelling the Americans.⁸ Villa cleverly grasped an opportunity to benefit from Carranza's impudence. Villa again played the press for a favorable portrayal, appearing to embrace the occupation with a quick repudiation of Carranza's threatening communication. He assured Americans that Carranza spoke only for himself and encouraged Wilson to "keep Veracruz and hold it so tight that not even water could get to Huerta."⁹ Villa, through reports in the U.S. press, provided Washington with the Constitutionalist sanction of the occupation that Carranza refused to voice.¹⁰ Even newspapers not fond of Villa, applauded his public support of Wilson.¹¹

Villa not only recognized the importance of the

international press in influencing the Mexican Revolution, but he also knew how to achieve a desired portrayal with the right statement at the right time. Even when a position was not popular with the Mexican people, as with the occupation of Veracruz, he still played to the desires of Washington and the American public. More astutely, even beyond that of his American supporters, Villa recognized and acted upon another important news medium—the newly developed newsreel!

A brief look at the roots of the newsreel helps evaluate Pancho Villa's use of this emerging medium. The European newsreel predates its American counterpart in popularity. In Europe, news shorts covered common, everyday events such as a lunch break at a factory or citizens walking in the park. These shorts being of local, familiar subjects that the viewing public recognized lent to the new medium's credibility and proved that it was no "trick."¹² In America, however, Thomas Edison's documentary-driven early experiments quickly became the popular "show business"-driven peep-show kinoscope of 1894, aimed at vaudeville-type audiences.¹³ Viewers queued to witness exciting, action-packed events such as prize fighting. As newsreels grew in popularity, wars fought around the world became the hot action. Americans liked to see battle scenes and found foreign locations intriguing. The Boer War fought in South Africa and the Russo-Japanese War provided action-packed footage in exotic lands.¹⁴ The Spanish-American conflict offered the first experience for the U.S. newsreel to participate in recording its own nation's involvement in war. The American viewing public was so hooked on war footage, that when the First World War broke out and filming was curtailed by the European warring parties, movie theaters in the U.S. resorted to showing "re-runs" of old war scenes.¹⁵

Although newsreels covered important world events, their recordings ranked as entertainment, not journalism. Like foreign correspondents, however, film companies sought nothing less than a "scoop,"¹⁶ prompting newsreelers from the start to manipulate what they filmed.¹⁷ Even more so than the "yellow journalism" of the time and the politically aligned newspapers that portrayed information biasly with a party agenda, motion picture news was tainted. From the beginning, operators experimented with simple techniques, such as varying the hand-cranked speed during filming and projection that made their subjects more amusing or meaningful.¹⁸ Because action amounted to the only requirement, if a

filmer missed a news event or the reality of the occurrence did not measure up to standards, they resorted to fabrication and reenactments. When print journalists viewed the recreations of the event they had personally covered, they often proclaimed, "the picture was even better than the battle itself."¹⁹ As Lowell Thomas, an original newsreeler for Fox Movietone stated, "Even if the news wasn't particularly interesting, we'd try to make it that way."²⁰ Because this was entertainment, false recordings passed off as actuality quickly became accepted practice in the industry.²¹ After all, this was show business, not journalism, and the audience was "completely hoodwinked."²²

The newsreel producers targeted a naive audience seeking entertainment, not true news. Newsreels constituted an advertised part of the billing, serving the same purpose as Walt Disney cartoons—fillers and warm-ups for the main attraction. The typical format of a 10-to 15-minute episode produced twice a week amounted to "a series of catastrophes ending with a fashion show."²³ A typical line-up consisted of a travel segment, a fashion segment, a celebrity segment, and the clincher, war footage.²⁴ Even before the actual film arrived in the U.S., movie producers released in trade publications the content of telegrams from newsreelers in Mexico as "teasers" promising intriguing scenes.²⁵ After production, the final package received promotion in industry journals for distribution on a statewide basis. Full-page ads assured that their films contained the best action, guaranteed to "crowd the theaters to the doors."²⁶

The viewing public, however, did not share film producers' sentiments. This new medium's vivid reality quickly gained it acceptance as a more accurate source of information, not a journalistic creation. The critical literature of the time confirmed public confidence as it repeatedly stressed the accuracy and reliability of the motion picture as a documentary medium.²⁷ So realistic was war footage that the U.S. army incorporated it into its troop training.²⁸ As one evaluator put it in 1911, "Cinematography cannot be made to lie; it is a machine that merely records what is happening."²⁹ The public and evaluators who should have known better wholeheartedly believed that pictures did not lie. Movie theater audiences accepted with confidence the raw history that rolled across the screen, considering it, over the biased, adulterated newspaper accounts, to be the true news of the day.³⁰

Quotations from the popular press, trade journals, and critical literature during the silent picture period lend

overwhelming evidence to this conviction. In 1910, *Leslie's Weekly* proclaimed, "A written description is always the point of view of the correspondent. But the Biographic camera does not lie." An industry critic announced in 1911 that the camera, unlike the "reporter with the pen," brought events free from the "policy of the paper." The journal *Moving Pictures* in 1912 extolled the journalistic value of the camera as a "truthful pictorial account of what takes place, not the garbled product of a vivid imagination." When evaluating war coverage, a critic in 1914 claimed film to be, "The only real and incorruptible neutral." Such prose as "incorruptible, utterly without bias, exactness, deadly accuracy," and "vivid realism" lauded the superiority of moving pictures over the written press.³¹

America's enthusiasm for motion pictures grew beyond the dramatic productions and news confined to New York City. The increasing demand for weekly newsreels as part of the standard package offered by movie houses prompted expanding the newsgathering operation worldwide. Most newsreel men worked independently of the home office, many as freelancers, and exercised their own discretion as to what, where, and when to film. Their offerings competed with other news gatherers for inclusion in the release tendered for public viewing. Needless to say, action, *exclusive* action, drove what photographers sought to film. Of a possible 100 feet of film that the newsman may have felt was nationally important, the film company might have deemed only 40 feet worthy.³²

During this period, Mexico offered the most promising area to expand. Not only was Mexico an easily accessible bordering country, but much of the revolutionary conflict occurred in its northern region. Mexico's military action included large horse-mounted cavalry charges led by charismatic leaders resulting in close combat and falling soldiers. Such action proved tailor made for American viewing audiences. The problem, however, was being where the action occurred. War took place over a wide territory, proving difficult for filmers to be at the right place at the right time to witness ambushes and impromptu raids. Understandably, reluctant army leaders suspicious of newsmen's motives did not welcome cameras in their ranks, resulting in the recording of little more than scenes of preparation and the confusion after a village raid.³³ Newsreelers sought a way to access battle-field "scoops." Villa, unlike his Mexican competitors and even the experienced news manipulators in the United States, recognized the use of the newsreel as a propaganda

tool—and the motion picture companies were very eager to become Villa's partner.

Although Villa's war lacked modern materials and techniques, he possessed enough foresight to recognize the value of modern technology. From El Paso, fresh off an impressive victory, Villa announced his interest in contracting the filming rights of his war. Competing newsreel companies had agents in the field seeking action on both sides of the Mexican lines, but getting close enough to film battle scenes proved elusive. Recognizing opportunity, Villa offered exclusive rights to his war and promised to provide horses, food, and protection for the moving picture operators. For a 50/50 split of the films' proceeds, Villa further guaranteed excellent action.³⁴ Representatives of several motion picture concerns promptly sent wires to their home offices in New York. Telegrams from such unimportant, remote places as El Paso usually languished on some intermediary's desktop. Harry E. Aitken, president of the Mutual Film Corporation, however, responded immediately. On January 3 1914, Frank M. Thayer, acting for the Mutual Film Corporation, signed a contract with Villa in Juárez.³⁵

Arrangements reported by newspapers included that Villa deploy and attack only after photographers' approval. Villa agreed to fight as much as possible between the hours of nine in the morning and five in the afternoon, no longer engaging in night attacks. If resulted footage proved less than satisfactory, Villa would conduct reenactments. For compensation, he received up front \$25,000 in silver and a percentage share of any earnings the pictures might gross.³⁶

The press and public may have believed these to be the terms, but Villa authority Friedrich Katz records another story. Having seen the actual document, Katz states that the contract simply specified that the Mutual Film Company received exclusive rights to film battles and that Villa would collect 20 percent of all revenue that the films reaped.³⁷

Mutual Film expected great things. The company designed and ordered ten special cameras rugged enough to withstand the test. This advanced equipment included special features that allowed remote filming.³⁸ Aitken confidently offered President Wilson the prestige of viewing the results first before public release.³⁹ So novel and lucrative was this arrangement considered for both parties that the London press suggested in jest that European governments adopt the practice as a way to offset their

military expenses.⁴⁰

Filming war in underdeveloped, foreign countries required a special type of person for the job. Cameramen in Mexico had to earn their right to film by displaying acts of valor with the troops, gaining the acceptance of the local community, and even participating in bullfights. A misstep could result in harassment, arrest, jailing, confiscation of equipment, abandonment in the desert, and assault. For the assignment, Mutual selected eight cameramen from across the country who had been "under fire before."⁴¹

Seeking details, *The New York Times* unexpectedly caught Aitken in his apartment. He hyped with showmanship the arrangement, coyly claiming not to wish the facts to get out. Aitken then promised a fresh supply of action weekly until Huerta fell. In addition to playing in American theaters from coast to coast, he described an ambitious distribution plan that also included Mexico and Canada. Aitken promised to exercise responsibility, as what might be caught on film could "strike terror into the hearts of his men." He tantalizingly added, "It isn't pleasant to contemplate the possibilities of such a situation."⁴²

A 1926 description vividly depicts the results of the marriage between Villa and the moviemakers:

Pancho Villa, Mexico's "man on horseback," bandit, rebel patriot, was riding, silver spurred and merry with conquest and sin, at the head of his tatterdemalion legions on to Juárez. The dream of glory that ever rides ahead of the "man on horseback" rode with the bold, brave Pancho, friend of the people, military heir-apparent to the kingdom of oil and gold and tobacco. "*Viva, Viva Panchito!*"⁴³

Through film, Americans came to know Villa as the "flamboyant heir-apparent" to the dominion south of the border.

Mexico provided the war while Villa played the romantic role that American viewing audiences imagined. Along with Pancho rode other intriguing characters, including Rodolfo Fierro, "the butcher," Resale Hernandez, the schoolmaster general, and Monclovio Herrera, professional cattle thief turned rebel warrior. Villa's war was of "feudal age," tailor made for American cravings. Valor, conquest, drama, excitement, and emotion followed this "silver spurred Alexander of the chaparral"—and so did the newsreel men.⁴⁴

Without risking success, Villa delayed battles

while Mutual positioned its cameras. Now, the great general advanced with an impressive choreographed offensive sweep forward, recorded for the world to witness. Next, the triumphant Villa, in close-up clearness, led his column through the streets of Ojinaga (a town on the border of Chihuahua and Texas) to the cheers of liberated villagers. It was no accident that beside him rode Francisco Madero's younger brother, Raoul.⁴⁵ Disappointingly, no battle scenes unfolded before the camera. The battle of Ojinaga, however, vividly revealed the damage of war to the extent that one reviewer claimed little imagination was required to piece together the story.⁴⁶ After Ojinaga, Villa learned how to combine war and photography. At the battle of Torreon (a town in Coahuila near the border with Durango), the camera succeeded in capturing an explosive shelling scene that featured enemy bodies flying from bomb bursts.⁴⁷ *The New York Times* recognized the Torreon footage as the first scenes of actual battle displayed at public theaters.⁴⁸

Although this provided the material desired by newsreelers, combat did not occur regularly or conveniently for filming. Villa took advantage of lulls in the fighting to enhance his public image.⁴⁹ Villa's demands that he be the focus of filming reaped accusations that he was the motion picture industry's first "lens louse:" a film personality so vain as to spoil the movie. The home office complained. They wanted more war footage, not Villa parading at the head of a column or arrogantly directing artillery fire.⁵⁰ If the cameramen balked at making him the focus of their filming when and how he desired, Villa denied the newsmen what they really wanted—access to combat.⁵¹ When Villa caught one newsreeler filming him with an unloaded camera, Villa ordered him unceremoniously escorted across the border with a stern warning not to come back.⁵² Had Villa lacked concern about his screen image, the photographer might have suffered greater indignity.

Nevertheless, what moviegoers saw of Villa back in America proved so popular that in March 1914 Mutual contracted for the making of a full-length feature film, *The Life of General Villa*. Crews went to Mexico to gather appropriate actual footage for incorporation into the studio effort in Los Angeles. Unlike Mexico's monotonous, disorganized, brutal, and routine war, professional moviemakers created for the public the ornamental, romantic war that they envisioned.⁵³ Villa willing gave up his common, drab attire for one provided by Mutual more

fitting a prestigious military leader. Rather than being a poor hacienda peon, Hollywood Villa stemmed from a well-off independent ranching family. Villa becomes a revolutionary seeking justifiable revenge for the rape of his sister by federal army officers.⁵⁴ Although only for a few minutes, thanks to the general's persistence in getting himself filmed, the actual Villa managed to appear in the final release. Not exactly a blockbuster, Villa's movie played enough to earn receipts that enabled it to break even at least.⁵⁵

As America searched for a Constitutionalist leader deserving its support, Villa skillfully manipulated his portrayal on screen as well as he did the American press. In the press, Villa aligned himself favorably with Wilson's goals. On the screen, Villa convincingly appeared the populist warrior that Washington sought. Villa did not handsomely straddle his mount before regimented troops of common citizens using contemporary artillery simply for personal vanity. Villa did not seemingly jeopardize his troops or the outcome of battle for the sake of honoring a whimsical movie contract. Villa did not seek to use motion pictures to gain immortality or celebrity status. Pancho Villa astutely manipulated this new form of public persuasion. He realized that a portrayal of organization and professionalism generated American public confidence in his ability and increased Washington's backing of him as the prominent rebel leader. In other words, Villa opportunistically incorporated the newsreel as part of an orchestrated media propaganda campaign.

Pancho Villa, a semiliterate peon in an underdeveloped country, recognized and astutely used this emerging news source to his advantage some five years before Americans utilized this opportunity. It was not until the First World War that influential Americans awakened to the potential use of newsreels to promote personal and political agendas and propaganda.

Why did American parties—government or private—with interests in Mexico not take advantage of this new media like Villa? Before 1914 or 1915, outside economic and political interests in Mexico lacked the cohesion or feelings of expedience to warrant manipulation of press reports coming out of Mexico. The oil, banking, and mining industries held different opinions about what was going on in Mexico and how to respond. Although business generally supported the stability that authoritarian rule provided, most U.S. and other foreign endeavors managed to operate profitably during the worst violence

of the revolution.⁵⁶ Even within individual industries, a united consensus did not exist. As in the oil industry, what was good for the small operator may not be best for the large one. What benefited U.S. oilmen may have been detrimental to British oil interests. Additionally, the Wilson administration voiced less inclination than previous governments to heed the cries of U.S. commercial concerns.⁵⁷

The U.S. government lacked accord as well. U.S. diplomats in Mexico remained from the previous Taft administration and opposed Wilson's strategies, siding with commercial interests and supporting strongly the authoritarian rule of Díaz and then Huerta.⁵⁸ Many historians believe the U.S. embassy played a major role in Huerta's snatching of power from Madero. Even after Wilson replaced many of the government's representatives with those sharing his ideals and goals, the remaining Taft men stayed defiant.⁵⁹ Conditions in Washington ranked no better.⁶⁰ This lack of a united and clearly defined diplomatic front resulted in Washington's inability to influence strategically what the press reported from Mexico.⁶¹

Although not united, the American journalistic press was another story. Many individual newspapers reflected the strong opinions of their editors, owners, or contributing interests. One publication might be interventionist, while another wished recognition of whichever leader occupied Mexico City. One may be pro-business while another supported Mexican social reform. One was Democratic while another Republican. Even when periodicals agreed that Huerta must go, they failed to support the same alternative leader. One that existed on the border represented that region's interests, while another in an Eastern metropolis had different views. Each had an opinion, if not an agenda in Mexico.⁶²

Yet, the newsreel did not reflect the editorialized press. If any individual possessed the means and motives to utilize all types of media for personal interests, it was William Randolph Hearst. His reputation for brazen manipulation of the press in pursuit of private and political agendas is monumental. Hearst mobilized all his resources in promoting the interventionist view. All, that is, but one. William Randolph Hearst also owned a newsreel producing company. William Randolph Hearst's newsreel company remained true to that industry's mission—entertainment.

In 1914, Hearst owned nine newspapers, including publications in the prominent cities of Chicago,

Los Angeles, Boston, San Francisco, and New York. He accessed international news with membership in the Associated Press International (API) and his own international news service. Hearst's wealth afforded him a luxury few other news barons enjoyed: worldwide coverage with his own foreign journalists. This resulted in exclusive reports that he sold to other papers in noncompetitive areas, expanding further his ability to influence the news available to the American people. Until the First World War, American international news sources remained limited, placing Hearst and his papers in a prime position to exploit what the American public read.⁶³

Hearst also pioneered the use of motion pictures to cover news events. Motion picture cameras accompanied correspondents dispatched by his *New York Journal* to cover the Spanish-American War in Cuba. In 1913, Hearst formed the first fully organized weekly newsreel production venture in the United States⁶⁴ and was the first in the industry to call this new product "news reel."⁶⁵ Film clips converged in Chicago from any and every part of the nation and the world for processing and distribution to theaters throughout the country. The military action in Mexico presented in Hearst's newsreel releases was as popular with the public as it was with his competitors.⁶⁶ Hearst newsreelers were apt at filming war, becoming a major supplier of the First World War footage commonly seen in movie houses across the country.⁶⁷

Hearst's organization employed people accomplished at filming war, and he had them in Mexico during the revolution. He also had good reason to exploit this opportunity. Hearst hated Woodrow Wilson and his policies in Mexico. He considered Wilson a man without convictions, condemning Washington's lack of decisive action and adherence to intervention. As an interventionist, Hearst newspapers demanded a stronger stand in Mexico. From Wilson's inauguration, through the Mexican Revolution, the First World War, and the president's promotion of the League of Nations, Hearst ranked as Wilson's most aggressive critic.⁶⁸

Hearst also held large investments in Mexico. Hearst and his mother owned over four million dollars' worth of investments in ranching, oil, mining, timber, and other property in Mexico. With the demise of the Díaz government, which he supported, the chaos of the revolution in Mexico directly threatened these interests. Villa irregulars overran and looted his 670,000-acre *Babicora* ranch in Chihuahua, killing one employee and

holding four others captive. Hearst believed Villa was personally involved in the theft of 60,000 head of his cattle, prompting personal calls by the Hearst family on the U.S. Secretary of State for redress. Hearst's ranch foremen maintained a 100-man army that protected the ranch and hunted Mexican bandits. Carranza's troops later occupied this property, forcing Hearst's caretakers to abandon the ranch and flee to El Paso.⁶⁹

This experience brought, with anger, an increased Hearst propaganda campaign calling for U.S. intervention in Mexico. His newspapers blatantly identified the rebels as bandits who waged war against Americans, and urged that the U.S. go into Mexico and stay. Hearst fended off accusations that his militant position was taken purely in pursuit of protecting his personal empire in Mexico, claiming strictly a concern for American lives. Hearst's journalistic assault continued beyond the revolution until 1921.⁷⁰

Whether for reasons of personal gain or true patriotism, William Randolph Hearst went to extraordinary lengths to influence, affect, and create United States policy and action towards Mexico. He sent spies to Mexico to gain inside information.⁷¹ He armed vigilantes to protect his Mexican holdings. He personally met and negotiated with a later Mexican president Alvaro Obregón.⁷² He paid large amounts of money for evidently fake documents in an effort to encourage American military intervention in Mexico.⁷³ More than once, he presented as fact what others considered fabrication.⁷⁴ He threatened, cajoled, and hurled accusations at U.S. presidents and politicians. He employed not only his newspapers, but also his movie production holdings in propaganda efforts.

William Randolph Hearst also owned a newsreel company. The popular quote attributed to him during the Spanish-American war, "You furnish the pictures, and I'll furnish the war," certainly indicates his willingness to use media other than his printed journalism for propaganda and profit.⁷⁵ It was not just in Mexico that Hearst trumpeted an agenda. Hearst so cherished his ability to determine outcomes that biographer W. A. Swanberg says: "He liked to run things, including the country."⁷⁶ One would expect Hearst, someone so intent on manipulation, to include the popular, influential newsreel in his arsenal. No evidence is found that he did, or even considered, doing so. Had Hearst recognized the propaganda potential of newsreels, he would have certainly exerted as much zeal in exploiting this medium as he did others.

Undoubtedly, Pancho Villa consciously played the American press to his advantage. He strategically sided with Woodrow Wilson, using the American press to enhance his position while Carranza sparred with Washington. Villa even took the position of supporting Wilson's occupation of Veracruz. This act by the U.S. so offended the total Mexican population that the premier historian on the affair, Robert E. Quirk, believes that still today, Mexicans are bitterer about Veracruz than the war lost to the United States in 1846.⁷⁷ This effort by Villa successfully drew Wilson's support to him as the answer to Mexico's problems. Wilson staunchly defended and promoted Villa to the American congress and to the European powers in Mexico. True, Carranza's arrogance and stubbornness did much to strengthen Villa as the choice, but Villa's apparent subordination to the U.S. certainly gave Wilson much ammunition to defend him as the better choice. Villa so convinced Wilson's agents in Mexico that he was the right choice that they lobbied Wilson to recant his recognition of Carranza. Even after Wilson confirmed his decision to recognize and back Carranza against Villa, Washington agents in the field continued to assist Villa in Mexico.⁷⁸

Judging Villa's success at using the newsreel for his cause is more difficult. The proceeds received aided in paying and supplying his troops, but the influence on the American public, however, is another story.⁷⁹ The amount of money paid by Mutual Film Company indicates the value it saw in Pancho Villa as a draw for the American movie viewer. The fact that Mutual made a full-length drama about his life in 1914 further confirms his screen popularity during the revolution. Since then, no less than five full-length Hollywood movies have dedicated their story to the life and adventures of Pancho Villa, including the recent 2004 HBO release.⁸⁰ The American public could read about the flamboyant general in the newspaper. But, to see him on the big screen directing the most powerful army in Mexico left an enduring impression. While sitting on his steed astride a big-horned saddle with a fancy sombrero atop his head and two shell belts across his chest, Villa created what became so powerful a stereotypical romantic image of the Mexican male that there has been little advance on this character of the silent era.⁸¹ This was actually an improvement over the "greaser" image held of Mexicans by many U.S. citizens and Hollywood at the time.⁸² The silent newsreel created, reinforced, and kept alive such a legacy.

If Villa's use of the silent newsreel garnered successful results, why did others not utilize it as well? In the United States, newsreel producers created entertainment. Even the resourceful William Randolph Hearst failed to view the industry any other way. Created for and intended to attract the movie-viewing public, newsreels originally reaped few profits. They existed for prestige, used only to round out the movie house's bill. Movie theaters were interested only in Mexican war action, not the politics or suffering of the population. The infant newsreel sprang from the drama movie trade. Its producers, editors, promoters, and creators sprouted from this industry. The agents in the field were cameramen, not journalists. Not until the First World War did governments and politicians begin to recognize the usefulness of film for propaganda purposes.⁸³ In the European theater, if a newsreel man wanted to film the action, he had to join the army and subject himself to official policy and censorship. This was true for all the countries at war, not just the U.S.⁸⁴

After the war, newsworthy events around the world played for the camera. The power brokers of politics and business began catering to the motion picture camera, choreographing events specifically for the newsreel. The second inauguration of Woodrow Wilson catered to a multitude of cameras by constructing a large platform purposely placed along the parade route to include the patriotic scene of the Capitol in the background. The Secret Service strategically supervised the filming.⁸⁵ In a letter to Twentieth Century Fox's newly created Movietone News, Wilson encouraged the company to devote its newsweekly to the promotion of his postwar agenda. Wilson hailed the motion picture industry as an educator and encouraged Fox to use its power for the "greatest service to the nation and to the world."⁸⁶ Once film gained sound in 1927, the perceived innocence of the newsreel vanished forever.⁸⁷ Like print journalism, motion picture news now had an editorializing voice.

By the 1930s, the industry had grown into an "institution similar to the newspaper," with an American audience of over seventy million viewing a single newsreel and where a single company accumulated over 100,000 feet of film a week.⁸⁸ Although news shorts continued covering actual current events, subjects received heightened drama and editorial opinion.⁸⁹ Twentieth Century Fox, a late comer on the scene, developed its Movietone News into the industry's largest player. Movietone operated in New York City a self-contained four-story facility

that functioned twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. The first floor housed a sound stage for film production, complete with a swimming tank. The second floor produced short subjects that accompanied the newsreels. The third floor housed the news department's cameramen, commentators, editors, contact men, and other relevant personnel. The fourth floor was a library. Here, all past and current newsreels, cut-stories and out-takes were kept for inclusion in future productions. An extensive sound library provided the "actual" noise added to the final product.⁹⁰

Between 1919 and 1963, Movietone News presented approximately 5,000 newsreel programs theatrically in America. More than 1,000 cameramen throughout the world shot over 100 million feet of film, with approximately seven million used in the final assemblages. At its height, Movietone produced these programs in 47 languages for over 50 different countries. Hearst Metrotone News acted in association with Fox between 1930 and 1934, sharing footage and sound equipment.⁹¹

So, how did an uneducated bandit in a "feudalistic" land come to recognize the usefulness of the newsreel while a news baron like Hearst did not? Perhaps the key to Villa's insights was his lowly social status. If media moguls like Hearst ever viewed their movie and newsreel creations, it was probably in the privacy of a studio or on one of their massive yachts. Villa, on the other hand, sat in the actual theater with the populace in El Paso.⁹² Perhaps he observed the spellbinding effect this new media held for its marveling audience as they "ohhhed" and "ahhhed" at the generals of warring armies in other parts of the world. One can imagine the light-bulb-of-

idea coming on over his head when he got the thought "that could be me on that big screen—bigger than life." In other words, the movers and shapers of government, business, and war did not recognize the mesmerizing effect of the newsreel on the public.

Another reason may be that Villa was provincial and, at best, functionally literate. During this period, Harry H. Dunn, editor of both Spanish and English language newspapers in Mexico City, made an interesting observation. Unlike in the United States, pictures, and cartoons in particular, carried great influence in Mexico. In a population that Dunn claimed to be 85 percent illiterate, cartoons often replaced written journalism for the lower class masses. He claimed that the Huerta regime exploited cartoons to such a degree that in a matter of months they produced so much hate for the U.S. and President Wilson that the federal army became capable of recruiting soldiers in rebel strongholds.⁹³ If this was true, perhaps Villa was equally susceptible to the powerful impact of a visual media. The silent motion pictures were just that—pictures in motion. Once the infant silent newsreel matured with advanced filming and editing techniques, including sound, Americans in politics and the industry recognized the propagandistic value of film. Perhaps it took a Pancho Villa to recognize first the value of the infant silent newsreel. Whatever the case, Pancho Villa skillfully manipulated his filmers to his advantage and astutely incorporated the newsreel along with his strategic use of the American press for successful propaganda. Although he was flamboyant and not shy about publicity, vanity motivated little Villa's appearance before the camera. Pancho Villa was no common "lens louse."

Endnotes

¹ Sandra Busby Freeman, "The Texas Press Reaction to Woodrow Wilson's Mexican Policy From 1913 to 1915" (Thesis, Abilene Christian University, 1982), 83.

² Mark Cronlund Anderson, *Pancho Villa's Revolution by Headlines*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000); Friedrich Katz, *The Life and Times of Pancho Villa*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998). This is by far the most definitive source on Pancho Villa's life and activities.

³ Carranza and Villa quickly began to compete for the revolution's leadership with Carranza distancing himself from the United States and Villa embracing Mexico's powerful neighbor. Many examples exist illustrating Villa's manipulation of the press with

several examples commonly used by historians. While these examples are found in local and national publications from New York to California, many simple reprints, this work highlights reports found in the Texas press. Busby, "Texas Press," 54-59; 61-62; 70-74.

⁴ The American press demonized Villa from coast to coast when in February 1914 he executed a wealthy British citizen. This may have caused Villa's seeking film coverage to rehabilitate his public image. For a discussion about the Benton affair, Villa's reaction to it, and the role of the press, see Robin Robinson, "The Benton Affair and its Influence on Foreign Policy in the Mexican Revolution." *Mid-America: An Historical Review*, 80: 2 (Chicago: Loyola University, 1998); A sampling of negative

portrayals of Villa in the press may be found in “Mexico—Viewed From Texas,” *Literary Digest*, 14 March 1914, 535-37; Congressional debate in Washington lauded Villa as “a great leader of men” while others condemned him as a “violinator of women.” Newspaper reports of this debate may be found in “Our Debt to Villa,” *Literary Digest*, 16 May 1914, 116 and “Shall We Join Hands With Villa?” *Literary Digest*, 23 May 1914, 1235 and “The Murder of Vergara,” *Independent*, 16 March 1914, 367 and “Mexico’s Darkening Outlook,” *Literary Digest*, 7 March 1914, 475; The European powers unanimously supported Huerta and despised Villa in Sir Thomas Hohler, *Diplomatic Petrel*, (London: John Murray, 1942), 188-89; Positive accounts of Villa include those by Wilson’s special agent with Villa, George Carothers in *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1913, (Washington: 1922), 902, 906, hereafter, *FRUSH date*, A witness account of restoration of order in Juárez in Oscar J. Martínez, *Fragments of the Mexican Revolution: Personal Accounts From the Border*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983), 219; Villa’s treatment of violators of his orders in Clarence C. Clendenen *The United States and Pancho Villa: A Study in Unconventional Diplomacy*, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1961), 40; and the U.S. customs agent in El Paso, Clifford A. Perkins, worked directly with Villa in Juárez in 1913 in Martínez, *Fragments of the Mexican Revolution: Personal Accounts From the Border*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983), 117.

5 Wilson’s special agent to Carranza was R.D. Sillman and to Villa was George Carothers in Hohler, *Diplomatic Petrel*, 196, 203.

6 Villa and reporters in Martin Luis Guzman, *Memoirs of Pancho Villa*, trans. Virginia H. Taylor, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1965), 136.

7 Busby, “Texas Press,” 72-75.

8 A discussion of Carranza’s response is found in Robert E. Quirk, *An Affair of Honor: Woodrow Wilson and the Occupation of Vera Cruz*, (New York: W. W. Norton Company, Inc., 1962), 115; Carranza’s official response in *FRUSH 1914*, 483; Even the ranking British diplomat in Mexico City considered the U.S. invasion of Veracruz an act of war in Hohler, *Diplomatic Petrel*, 192.

9 Villa quote found in *FRUSH 1914*, 485 and Guzman, *Villa Memoirs*, 145.

10 The *Literary Digest* credited Villa with saving the Wilson administration from a “position of profound embarrassment” in “Our Debt to Villa,” *Literary Digest*, 16 May 1914, 1166.

11 Busby, “Texas Press,” 59.

12 Raymond Fielding, *The American Newsreel 1911-1967*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972), 4-5 and Erik Barnouw, *Documentary: A History of the Non-Fiction Film*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), 8-9; 11.

13 Before motion pictures became “business,” William K. L. Dickson, assistant to Edison, in 1894 extolled the motion picture’s accuracy and educational value over the “dry and

misleading” printed press in Patrick Loughney, *The Art of Moving Shadows*, (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1989), 33; Things changed quickly, however, as from the beginning, the motion picture industry in the U.S. was a business competing with numerous other inventions. Newsreels could not afford to be anything other than “entertaining” in Douglas Gomery, *Shared Pleasures: A History of Movie Presentation in the United States*, (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 3-15.

14 Fielding, *The American Newsreel*, 9; 20.

15 Stephen W. Bush, “War Films,” *Moving Picture World*, September 19, 1914, 1617.

16 Lawrence Cohn, *Movietone Presents the Twentieth Century*, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1976), 4.

17 America has the dubious distinction of the first documented faked event (a Jim Corbett prize fight, 1894), choreographed to fit filming length and needs in Fielding, *The American Newsreel*, 10

18 Barnouw, *Documentary*, 15.

19 Fielding, *The American Newsreel*, 33.

20 Lowell Thomas statement written by himself in the introduction for Cohn, *Movietone*, 1.

21 Fielding, *The American Newsreel*, 37-39; A long list of fakes are provided in Fielding’s work. The more popular include, the use of crude models to portray the navel Battle of Santiago Bay, Cuba in 1898 (costing a total of \$1.98 to produce), 32-33; a more elaborate scaled set used to recreate the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire, 23-24; and a reenactment of Teddy Roosevelt and his Roughriders charge up San Juan Hill filmed in New Jersey, 31-32, 40, also described in Homer Croy, *How Motion Pictures Are Made*, (New York, Arno Press, A *New York Times* Company, 1918), 257; These, and other examples, are also discussed in Barnouw, *Documentary*, 22-26.

2 2Fielding, *The American Newsreel*, 33, 45.

23 “The Reel World of News,” *A Walk Through the 20th Century with Bill Moyers*, Episode 4. (Produced by the Corporation for Entertainment and Learning, 1984, distributed by PBS Video, 1988), video recording.

24 Fielding, *The American Newsreel*, 3 and Cohn, *Movietone*, 3, 5 and Richard Meran Barsam, *Nonfiction Film: A Critical History*, (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1973), 14.

25 “Pathe Cameraman in Mexican Battle,” *Moving Picture World*, 24 January 1914, 403 and “Mutual Films Battle of Ojinaga,” *Moving Picture World*, 24 January 1914, 421. Pathe is the newsreel portion of Mutual Films, just as Movietone News is to Twentieth Century Fox—each are used interchangeably.

26 Advertisement found in *Moving Picture World*, 31 January 1914, 540.

27 Fielding, *The American Newsreel*, 146; 43.

28 Croy, *Motion Pictures*, 265-67 describes an innovative technique that used film to assist American troops of the First World War

- in target practice and marksmanship training.
- ²⁹ Henry, "The Historian of the Future," *Moving Picture World*, July 8, 1911, 1565.
- ³⁰ Fielding, *The American Newsreel*, 45; Cohn, *Movietone*, 5.
- ³¹ All quotes found in Fielding, *The American Newsreel*, 146.
- ³² Croy, *Motion Pictures*, 252-55. By the 1930s, the industry had grown into an "institution similar to the newspaper" with an American audience of over seventy million viewing a single newsreel and where a company accumulated over 100,000 feet of film a week, of which only 800 would be used in "Camera!-Feeding the News Reels," *Popular Mechanics Magazine*, May 1930, Vol. 53 1930, 794-799.
- ³³ Croy, *Motion Pictures*, 257; "Wagner in Mexico," *Moving Picture World*, 18 July 1914, 440 is an article vividly accounting the difficulties inflicted on a newsreeler by both sides of the conflict in Mexico.
- ³⁴ "Admits He's a 'Movie' Star," *New York Times*, 8 January 1914, 2, reprinted from an El Paso newspaper.
- ³⁵ Terry Ramsaye, *A Million, and One Nights: A History of the Motion Picture*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1926), 670-71.
- ³⁶ Ramsaye, *A Million and One Nights*, 670-71 and Croy, *Motion Pictures*, 258 and "Warfare is Waged for the Movies," *New York Times*, 8 January 1914, 10 and Katz, *Life and Times*, 324-26.
- ³⁷ Katz, *Life and Times*, 325.
- ³⁸ "Villa at the Front; 'Movies' Sign Him Up," *New York Times*, 7 January 1914, 1-2.
- ³⁹ "More Film Men for Villa," *New York Times*, 8 January 1914, 2.
- ⁴⁰ "Jests Over Villa's 'Movies,'" *New York Times*, 9 January 1914, 2.
- ⁴¹ "Capturing Mexico With a Camera," *The Literary Digest*, 6 June 1914, p 1390-92; "Wagner in Mexico," *Moving Picture World*, 18 July 1914, 440 is an article vividly accounting the difficulties inflicted on a newsreeler by both sides of the conflict in Mexico; "More Film Men for Villa," *New York Times*, 8 January 1914, 2.
- ⁴² "Villa at the Front; 'Movies' Sign Him Up," *New York Times*, 7 January 1914, 1-2.
- ⁴³ Ramsaye, *A Million, and One Nights*, 670.
- ⁴⁴ "Villa at the Front; 'Movies' Sign Him Up," *New York Times*, 7 January 1914, 1-2. Ramsaye, *A Million and One Nights*, 670.
- ⁴⁵ Ramsaye, *A Million and One Nights*, 670-71
- ⁴⁶ Stephen W. Bush, "Mexican War Pictures," *Moving Picture World*, 31 January 1913, 657
- ⁴⁷ Ramsaye, *A Million and One Nights*, 673
- ⁴⁸ "General Villa in the Movies," *New York Times*, 10 May 1914, Sec 4, 7.
- ⁴⁹ One non-military activity Villa managed to get included in footage shown in theaters included his reconstruction of damaged railroads in "General Villa in the Movies," *New York Times*, 10 May 1914, Sec 4, 7.
- ⁵⁰ Ramsaye, *A Million and One Nights*, 672-73 and "General Villa in the Movies," *New York Times*, 10 May 1914, Sec 4, 7; Few members of Villa's army possessed skills in the use of artillery, especially Villa himself; but the theater goer did not know this.
- ⁵¹ Croy, *Motion Pictures*, 258
- ⁵² Ramsaye, *A Million and One Nights*, 672-73
- ⁵³ Ramsaye, *A Million and One Nights*, 673
- ⁵⁴ Katz, *Life and Times*, 325.
- ⁵⁵ "General Villa in the Movies," *New York Times*, 10 May 1914, Sec 4, 7 records this movie preceded by newsreel footage of the battle of Torreón as the main attraction at the Lyric Theater in May 1914. The movie broke even in Luis Reyes and Peter Rubie, *Hispanics in Hollywood: An Encyclopedia of Film and Television*, (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1994), 147.
- ⁵⁶ James Middleton, "Mexico, the Land of Concessions," *The World's Work*, January 1914, 297 and "Little Pictures of Mexico," *The World's Work*, January 1914, 312: A good after-the-fact analysis of commerce during the revolution is provided by Alan Knight, *U.S.-Mexican Relations, 1910-1940: An Interpretation*, Monograph Series, 28. Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies. (San Diego: University of California, 1987), See Knight specifically for: the lack of a united business front, page 94; the lack of molestation of Americans, and their business interests, pages 23-25, 49, 66.
- ⁵⁷ For the oil industry in particular, see Knight, *U.S.-Mexican Relations*, 53, 74, 92; for other industries, see pages 80, 127.
- ⁵⁸ Knight, *U.S.-Mexican Relations*, 15, 34; H. L. Wilson, U.S. Ambassador to the Diaz government, supported foreign interests in Bulnes, *The Whole Truth*, 124.
- ⁵⁹ A good example of U.S. diplomats in Mexico working against Wilson's policies is found throughout Edith O'Shaughnessy, *A Diplomat's Wife in Mexico*, (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1916). Edith O'Shaughnessy, wife of the top ranking U.S. diplomat in Mexico City, Nelson O'Shaughnessy, recounts the cozy relationship between the Huerta government, herself, her husband, and other foreign diplomats and how they openly opposed and worked against Wilson's policies; and "The Murder of Vergara," *Independent*, 16 March, 367 and "Mexico's Darkening Outlook," *Literary Digest*, 7 March 1914, 475.
- ⁶⁰ Congressional debate in Washington lauded Villa as "a great leader of men" while others condemned him as a "violinator of women." Newspaper reports of this debate may be found in "Our Debt to Villa," *Literary Digest*, 16 May 1914, 116 and "Shall We Join Hands With Villa?" *Literary Digest*, 23 May 1914, 1235.
- ⁶¹ Knight, *U.S.-Mexican Relations*, 94-95.
- ⁶² For a description of the varied positions on the Mexican situation and the diverse geographic location of newspapers from coast to coast, from large city to small town, see the reprint of a 1914 article "Our Strained Relations with Our Southern Neighbors,"

- The Mexican Revolution Reporter* 18, (May 1980), 177-79; For diverse positions within a single region see Freeman, Busby, "The Texas Press"; For a criticism of "yellow journalism" and "periodicals in the pay of monopolists" see the four page booklet William Temple, L. L. B., *The Mexican Revolution, and American Public Opinion*, (San Diego: A.H. Heath, 1911)
- ⁶³ The formation of Hearst's own American News Service, including the International News Service is found in Robert W. Desmohnd, *Windows on the World: The Information Process in a Changing Society 1900-1920*, (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1980), 312, 127-28.
- ⁶⁴ The name of Hearst's newsreel company is Hearst-Selig Company in Desmohnd, *Windows on the World*, 326.
- ⁶⁵ The Hearst-Selig News Pictorial was the first to advertise using the term "news reel" in Fielding, *The American Newsreel*, 87; The original advertisement is found in *Moving Picture World*, 7 March 1914, 1263.
- ⁶⁶ Desmohnd, *Windows on the World*, 326.
- ⁶⁷ Desmohnd, *Windows on the World*, 274; David Nasaw, *The Chief: The Life of William Randolph Hearst*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000), 245-47.
- ⁶⁸ William Randolph Hearst, *William Randolph Hearst: A Portrait in His Own Words*, ed. Edmond D. Coblenz, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1952), 38; W. A. Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst: A Biography of William Randolph Hearst*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961), 296; Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, 194-5; Nasaw, *The Chief*, 228-30, 242, 248, 249, 274.
- ⁶⁹ Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, 297; Nasaw, *The Chief*, 248, 58-60, 228-29.
- ⁷⁰ Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, 297-98, 9-11; Nasaw, *The Chief*, 248-49, 229; Hearst continued his war of words against Mexico until a personal meeting with President Obregón in 1921 assured him of his interests' security in Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, 338-39; Nasaw, *The Chief*, 381.
- ⁷¹ Hearst sent a representative to Mexico City to investigate the existing government's members and policies in Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, 394-95.
- ⁷² A personal meeting with President Obregón in 1921 in Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, 338-39.
- ⁷³ In 1927, Hearst's policy found direction. Hearst paid for supposedly authentic Mexican documents detailing plots by President Calles himself to wage war against the U.S., to colonize Mexico with Japanese to assist in this war, plots to further Communism, and plots to bribe members of the U.S. press, clergy, and legislator. No newspapers other than Hearst's carried such stories. Needless to say, such revelations caused a furor in both Washington and Mexico City. It was widely accepted that the documents were a forgery. Hearst responded with more "authentic" documents further substantiating his claims. Hearst caused such a stir, that the U.S. senate called for an investigation into Hearst and his documents. The Mexican extravaganza disappeared from Hearst newspapers the next day. Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, 396 and Nasaw, *The Chief*, 381-86.
- ⁷⁴ In 1915, the International News Service and the Hearst newspapers were accused of faking reports from countries at war and of pirating AP war dispatches in Desmohnd, *Windows on the World*, 312; In 1915, he published accusations that Japan and Mexico represented potential allies in an invasion of the United States. The basis of Hearst's evidence was so flimsy and manipulated that it constituted a fake in Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, 196.
- ⁷⁵ Hearst, *Memoirs*, 54. Although said of Frederick Remington and his drawings of the war, it indicates Hearst's recognition and use of other forms of persuasion than just his print journalism.
- ⁷⁶ Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst*, 295.
- ⁷⁷ Quirk, *An Affair of Honor*, vii.
- ⁷⁸ Brigadier General Hugh L. Scott, future U.S. Army Chief of Staff praises Villa before Wilson and exhausted every influence in attempting to dissuade Wilson from recognizing Carranza and then continues to support Villa in Hugh Lenox Scott, *Some Memories of a Soldier* (New York: The centruce Co., 1928), 515-18; Secretary of State Robert Lansing continued to promote Villa to Wilson even after the ouster of Huerta and the subsequent split of the Constitutionalist factions in *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, "The Lansing Papers 1914-1920," 545-51.; Special Agent George Carothers continues to work with Villa in *FRUSH 1914*, 557, 845.
- ⁷⁹ Katz states: "The favorable treatment that Villa received in films and other media in 1914 was of great importance to his standing both in Mexico and in the United States" in, Katz, *Life and Times*, 326.
- ⁸⁰ Movies other than the 1914 *The Life of Villa*, include the 1915 release of the first, re-titled *A Tragedy in the Life of General Villa*; *Viva Villa!* (1934); *Villa!* (1958); and *Villa Rides* (1968); all revolved around the common theme of Villa as liberator of the poor and dethroner of tyrants in Reyes, *Hispanics in Hollywood*, 147, 242.
- ⁸¹ Allen L. Wool, *The Latin Image in American Film*, revised ed. (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications, University of California, 1980), 49.
- ⁸² Silent features commonly portrayed Mexico as a backwater sleepy village and the Mexicans as "greasers" in Reyes, *Hispanics in Hollywood*, 5 and Wool, *The Latin Image*, 7-8.
- ⁸³ A contrast of American nonfiction film driven by commercial factors and the post-1917 Russian propagandist tradition is presented in Barsam, *Nonfiction Film*, 20-27.
- ⁸⁴ Richard M. Barsam, *Nonfiction Film: A critical History, Revised and Expanded*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 30-41 provides the best analysis of war film's developing propaganda recognition. European governments, engaged in the First World War before the U.S., officially and actively participated in using film for propaganda to the extent of driving projection trucks into communities that did not have movie theaters and projecting

scenes onto building.

⁸⁵ Croy, *Motion Pictures*, 255-56.

⁸⁶ Cohn, *Movietone*, 1.

⁸⁷ Film with sound created the modern politician: “Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his advisors were among the first to grasp the importance of sound newsreels, how to use them to shape public opinion. His close-ups, looking right through the lens at the people of the United States, were startlingly effective,” in Cohn, *Movietone*, 2; It is difficult to find any silent newsreel footage, especially some containing Villa and Mexico. When such footage is included in modern documentaries, silent footage is augmented with sound effects. This illustrates the significance of sound when even the supposedly scholarly documentary work of today resorts to adding fake sound as seen in *The Hunt for Pancho Villa*, The American Experience Series, WGBH, Boston, M.A., 1993, Distributed by PBS Video, 1993.

⁸⁸ “Camera!- Feeding the News Reels,” *Popular Mechanics Magazine*, May 1930, Vol. 53 1930, 794-799.

⁸⁹ Barsam, *Nonfiction Film*, 71-72.

⁹⁰ Cohn, *Movietone*, 6-7.

⁹¹ Cohn, *Movietone*, 4-5.

⁹² Villa viewed movies in El Paso in Reyes, *Hispanics in Hollywood*, 146.

⁹³ Harry H. Dunn, “How Mexican Cartoonists Have Created Anti-American Sentiment,” *The Cartoons Magazine*, December 1913 Vol. 4 no. 6. For a comparison with the type of cartoon presented in the U.S. press see the very good 330 page collection with analysis in John J. Johnson, *Latin America in Caricature*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980); For further contrast, see the classic work Bulnes, *The Whole Truth About Mexico: The Mexican Revolution and President Wilson’s Part Therein, as Seen by a Cientifico*, trans. Dora Scott, (New York: M. Bulnes Book Company, 1916). Bulnes, a 30 year member of the Diaz regime, uses statistics, history, and complicated philosophical argument, aimed at the educated American reader, in his defense of the *Cientifico* government and condemnation of Wilson and his Mexico policies.