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WAR, MODERNITY, AND MOTION IN THE EDISON FILMS OF 1898

This essay examines films created by the Edison Company of the US military campaign in the Caribbean in 1898 and their projection and reception in Vaudeville theaters and other similar venues in the larger urban areas of the US. Through an analysis of these films in regards to their production and reception contexts, it discusses relationships between entertainment, nationalism, and colonialism in this early cinema. Features foregrounding technology, production capacity, tourism, and military campaigns in tropical settings are examined in order to explore the blurred boundaries between journalism and entertainment in the context and how specifically the technology of the incipient cinema shaped these perceptions. The venues, in which they were exhibited, situated these war films within larger variety shows including oddities, acrobats, skits, and musical entertainment, together with technological exhibitions involving devices revered for both their destructive and constructive capabilities. It considers, furthermore, how tourism and the possibilities for travel related to the war shaped entertainment and dialogued with public desires regarding American empire and the roles of the Caribbean and, by relation, Latin America in these scenarios. The essay seeks to underscore, finally, how these films, and the war that they attempt to depict, resonated deeply with a type of audience and a corresponding mode of spectatorship that would come to expect an entertaining dimension in journalism.

Keywords: Silent cinema; war; entertainment; imperialism

An early advertisement for Edison's voyeuristic Kinetoscope reads: 'Edison Kinetoscope, The Life Producing Marvel.' Edison's major North American competitor, the Mutoscope, claimed in one of its advertisements to offer 'Living Pictures.' If still photography could promise a snapshot of 'reality,' then moving pictures could claim even more: to recreate life before your very eyes. The names of some of the different competing projectors and other technologies of the incipient cinema of the 1890s are suggestive of these and similar pretenses: Bioscope, Kinetoscope, Vitascope, Veriscope, Kineopticon, Cinegraphoscope, Phantoscope.¹ Their names suggest not only what these machines purported to represent but also what spectators presumably came to see and experience when viewing these films: 'life,' 'light,' 'movement,' and 'truth.' All of these terms suggest a matrix with which to characterize the subjects of the first films: trains entering a station, dancers

interpreting their giges, rounds of boxing, evidence of daring feats, or short, allegorical plays of good versus evil.²

The U.S.'s intervention into Spain's colonial war and into the independence struggles of its last colonies in Cuba, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico, however, would suggest a new role for the camera in North American vaudeville theaters, and give an ironic twist to the new technology's slogans, as film grew to complement photography and written journalism in rendering war. The representative potential of the 'life producing marvel' in documenting war was quickly recognized by newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst, who would fund the journey of Edison photographer William Paley to Cuba in order to film scenes of the U.S. intervention in the Island's war for independence (Musser 1991, 127). Thus, from its very first foray into war, film would interact with other media, participating in a web of texts that would spring forth from the ideological preoccupations of the era. This brusque transformation in early cinema – and the theretofore-unseen surge in popularity as audiences flocked to consume war footage in a nationalist frenzy – would mark a watershed moment in the role of the movie camera, a role whose novelty provoked Edison to begin advertising his projector as the 'Wargraph.'

Indeed, several different companies produced films related to the war. Even before the U.S.'s involvement, the Lumière brothers had produced short films of the Spanish army that were projected in Cuba by Gabriel Veyre, a company representative responsible for introducing the cinematograph to Cuba along with other parts of Latin America (Rodríguez 1992, 33; Agramonte and Castillo 2011, 23). And by the time the USS Maine had sunk on February 15, 1898, providing a premise for greater intervention, Veyre and Edison company representatives had been competing against each other for nearly a year for cinema audiences in Havana, in addition to filming scenes in the city, among them the *Wreck of the 'Maine'* (1898). Even Georges Méliès would produce three films related to the Maine, calling upon, for one, special effects involving filming actors through a fish-filled aquarium. Upon the occasion of the U.S. intervention, furthermore, the major North American producers were Thomas A. Edison, Inc. and the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company. The corpus of works that they produced included numerous films of troop mobilizations, training, ship loading, and similar activities. There are also films of homecoming parades, well-known military officers, and elected officials. Despite both Edison and Biograph having photographers in Cuba (and the Philippines) at the time of the intervention, neither captured (at least authentically) fighting on film. As a result, many filmed reenactments of events made their ways to the vaudeville screens, such as Edison's *Shooting Captured Insurgents* or *Cuban Ambush*. Most remarkable, however, is the oft-cited scale-model recreation of the U.S. routing the Spanish fleet in Santiago Bay, which was filmed by Albert E. Smith using cigar smoke and models of naval vessels, among other similar materials (Chanan 1998, 144; Agramonte 1966, 23–4; García Osuna 2003, 10; Rodríguez 1992, 36–40). Although these fictionalized, re-enacted, or staged pieces merit significant consideration, here, I will give particular attention to those non-fictionalized and frequently overlooked films created with the Edison Vitagraph. Whereas, furthermore, these films are frequently cited by both North American (Musser) and Cuban film scholars (Agramonte and Castillo; Douglas; Rodríguez) in

discussions of the early cinema, save for one notable exception (Vincenot) they are rarely analyzed significantly as textual objects or situated in an extra-cinematic context in favor, rather, of their being included in more exhaustive historical trajectories of the medium than I shall provide here. This discussion seeks to propose some further analyses of a selection of these films while exploring more carefully the contexts of their projection and reception in North American vaudeville theaters in recognition of the dispersive and varied generic realities of the incipient cinema. Finally, a more extensive consideration of parallel phenomena involving reception contexts in Cuba during the same period would consider particularly the ‘*exhibiciones imperiales*’ (Rodríguez 1992, 24) and theater productions to raise funds for the Spanish colonial army (25) as well as further analysis of the theater features immediately before and after the war, many of them apparently geared toward higher-class audiences than those of the North American vaudeville theaters (Agramonte and Castillo 2011). However, discussions of reception specifically during the U.S. intervention, absent in the existing scholarship, would involve a careful return to primary Cuban sources that are unfortunately beyond the scope of this essay, but worthy of significant consideration and comparison.³ And indeed, the greatest lacunae yet to be filled are precisely the itineraries and trajectories of the early silent cinema, Edison or otherwise, in the Philippines and Puerto Rico.

Manifest in the Edison films in consideration here is a tangle of themes already present in the fabric of pre-war texts with which audiences visualized their nationalism and belonging. Yet their particular configuration, in this case, suggests how this nexus of ideas spoke to the specific place of war in nationalist discourse. How, then, is one to interpret these films’ representations of ‘life,’ ‘movement,’ ‘truth,’ and ‘fantasy’ in the service of war? How does the irreverent yet moralizing tenor of the vaudeville theaters in which these films were screened relate to an interventionist war? What relationships may we discern between the period’s incipient tourism industry and the public appeal of films of a mechanized war waged in what was then perceived as a scenic yet ‘dangerously unsanitary’ tropical setting? And finally, how does the representation of motion dovetail with the ideological tenets subtending the intervention?

War films in vaudeville

The rise of vaudeville theater in the late nineteenth century spawned venues in the larger, industrialized cities in the US that crafted entertainment for a more diverse audience than did many of the male-only burlesques of the era, thus signaling a massification of North American entertainment directed towards a growing middle class (McDonnell and Allen 2002, 10). The entertainment columns of many of the period’s newspapers are peppered with statements such as ‘refined comedy bill’ and ‘refined,’ ‘clean,’ or ‘polite vaudeville’ in attempts to distinguish these venues from the more risqué entertainment of the burlesque theaters.⁴ Similarly, in their attempts to increase their audiences, some theaters even encouraged full-family attendance by special incentives for women and children.⁵ A significant consequence of these theaters’ interests in attracting wider audiences was their formulations of short, novelty stage-acts in which the aesthetic of the spectacle reigned.

Unlike the French and Italian operas, orchestral concerts, or Shakespearean plays offered in the higher-priced venues, vaudeville theaters promised their audiences sensational and easily consumable diversion at a very accessible price. Thus, vaudeville theatergoers were served up with a wide array of novelty acts ranging from the more conventional (musical impersonations, brief comical skits, and provocative dance numbers) to the more unique (acrobats, one-legged bicyclists, animal tricks, hypnotists, and freak attractions).⁶ Vaudeville entertainment was certainly unpredictable, 'saucy, and irreverent' (McDonnell and Allen 2002, 13). And yet much of this entertainment's boldness belies a certain underlying, rigid 'moralism,' characteristic of many North American films of the vaudeville era, particularly a class of film that 'intervene[s] "instructively" in all the aspects of urban everyday life, with the manifest intention of assisting in the adaptation of all the newly arrived country bumpkins to urban technology' (Burch 1990, 115). Little explanation is warranted to suggest how fictions depicting these types of interventions reflect in many ways the superficial features of U.S. foreign policy and how audiences' tastes were already well adapted for films purporting to depict the U.S. intervention.

There are, as well, other features of the period's entertainment and leisure that are essential in understanding the nature of the war films considered in this discussion. Certainly, much of the war coverage emphasized technology's role in increasing the speed with which news traveled. However, there is a point at which this public concern with new technology goes beyond an interest in its role in providing news, and becomes instead a type of spectacular adoration of technology in and of itself, which was a key aspect of not only the period's grandiose international expositions, but also its everyday entertainment (González Stephan and Anderman 2006). Both behind and beyond the vaudeville theater doors, spectators were dazzled by brilliant technological displays, which were frequently incorporated into varied programs including musical and theater performances, and, of course, Vitascope projections. An advertisement for a daily 'Electrical Show' at one venue in New York City announces not only 'electrical cooking lessons,' but also afternoon and evening concerts.⁷ Particularly noteworthy is the 'Gas Exposition' held at the Madison Square Garden during the winter of 1897, as it featured an array of displays and demonstrations spotlighting the different uses of gas together with lengthy concert programs including titles like 'The Gas Meter' (51) as well as a special selection of Vitascope films depicting gas heating and cooking (63). One of the most remarkable features of the exposition was certainly its centerpiece – the sixty-foot 'gas tower' created by Louis Tiffany especially for the event, and which used gas-fired burners, colored glass, flowing water, and steam to sculpturally represent the different uses of gas together with a formal rendering of a history of gas lighting (Figure 1).⁸ Yet technological demonstrations were not limited to only constructive uses; an announcement in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* urges readers not to miss 'a genuine collision between two 50-ton locomotives'.⁹ And certainly, the regularly updated wax museum displays at the Eden Musee in New York City depicting, among other atrocities, scenes of torture employing different devices, as well as executions of contemporary criminals via the newly implemented electric chair, fit neatly into this array of technological entertainment.¹⁰ (Figure 2). Unquestionably, the allure of film projection in vaudeville shows came in part from the technological sophistication that the projector itself

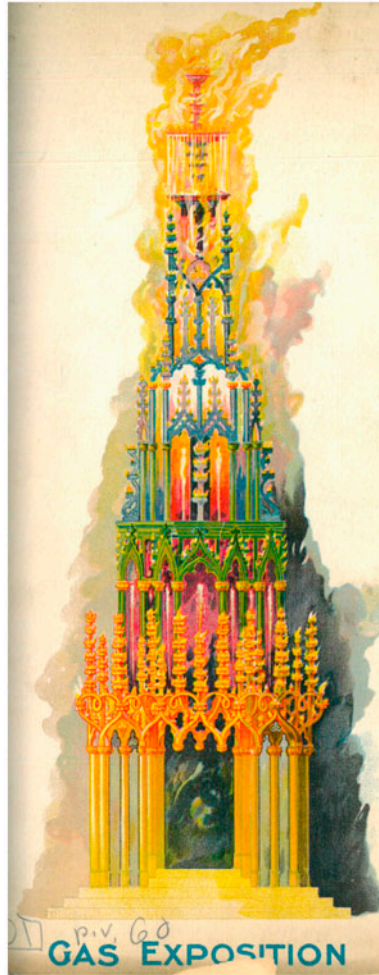


Figure 1 The Tiffany Gas Tower, detail from the cover of the *Official Catalogue of the Gas Exposition*. Image courtesy of the Science, Industry, and Business Library of the New York Public Library.

represented, allowing that audiences feel that they were experiencing the absolute latest advancement and its captivating presence.¹¹ As we shall see, however, the content of the films projected also appealed to the general fetishization of technology implied by the demonstrations previously described.

As Doane has suggested, the very technology of the cinema is an outgrowth of transformations in conceptions of time, moving toward a homogenization growing, in fact, from faster and more efficient travel, especially by train (5). And, indeed, evidence of this episteme qua travel abounds in the period's entertainment. Advertisements offering travel to foreign destinations and excursions to nearby vacation spots occupy the same columns as many of the theaters in some of the period newspapers (Figure 3). As one writer describes for *The New York Times*, 'even [tourists] of average means' were experiencing a boom in travel possibilities.¹² Not



Figure 2 Advertisement for an Edison Wargraph feature and wax museum display at the Eden Musee in New York City. From *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, May 8, 1898, p. 5. Image courtesy of the Brooklyn Collection at the Brooklyn Public Library.

only, then, were middle-class, *fin-de-siècle* North Americans enjoying entertainment catered to their tastes, but also a variety of summer and winter resorts, train excursions, and steam ship tours that were packaged as an escape from their regular activities. The general interest in travel and especially distant locations is also reflected in the entertainment of the period, as one advertisement for the Bergen Beach amusement park would suggest, announcing, in addition to a vaudeville show and Vitascope screening, the ‘Irish Village, Egyptian Encampment, [and] Moorish Maze’.¹³ Spaces such as these offered their patrons simulated visits to other locations or spaces whose aesthetic had the power to evoke the foreign or the exotic, with that characteristic familiar unfamiliarity typifying, arguably, how these places were coded in the North American imaginary, which is certainly the type of ambivalent proximity-distance of similar installations in the universal and international exhibitions of the same period (González-Stephan and Andermann 2006, 14).

Film historians have noted how travel was also a popular subject of the first reels screened in vaudeville, depicting, thus, street scenes or landscapes from around the globe (Musser 1990, 234; Allen 1977, 127–36). Among the many travel-related films that the Edison Company catalogs list are titles such as *Street Scene in Hong Kong*, *Boulevard in Paris*, *Funeral in Cairo*, *Turkish Infantry*, and *Arrival of Gondola [Venice]*.¹⁴ Indeed, the travel optic of these early films serves as an imaginary outgrowth of a material colonial enterprise which also permitted that lesser-advantaged viewers satisfy (at least visually) their desire to travel (Burch 1990, 32). Likewise, we may invoke Joseph Roach’s suggestion in a different context to see in these types of conspicuous mediated gestures toward ‘foreign’ locales a ‘vicarious tourism’ that provides audiences with the visual sensations of a fictionalized encounter with the unfamiliar through travel. It is but a small step to recognize how films of wars in distant lands could cross over into the genre of travel-related or tourism films already featured in vaudeville theaters. Arguably, we might provisionally observe how – in the spirit of Carl von Clausewitz – war may be a mere continuation of tourism by other means, a relationship that in practice was certainly more complex and dialectical, weaving production capacity, consumption, and desire into an inequitable colonial geography, with military occupation paving the way for civilian travel. And indeed, period journalism explicitly

AMUSEMENTS.

Bay Ridge, Md., Attractions.

The Ideal Resort for Washingtonians.
 Easily accessible. Good salt water bathing, crabbing, and fishing. Cool and refreshing. Salty breezes. Something to please all.

**CONEY ISLAND
STEEPLECHASE**

At Bay Ridge, Md.

This is one of the many popular attractions at this beautiful salt water bathing resort. Trains leave Washington, B. & O. road, week days, 9:30 a. m. and 4:30 p. m. Sundays, 9:35 a. m. and 1:30 and 3:15 p. m. Fare, round trip, 50c.

**The German Pier
And Roof Garden**

On the bay. Cool and commodious. All the delicacies of the season. Ideal place for pleasure parties and clubs for a day's or a week's outing. Beer, soda water, and all cooling refreshments.

Bijou Theater and Wargraph.

Continuous performance of latest and most popular attractions. Edward de Corsia, late of the "Sign of the Cross" company.

The Columbian Miniature Railway.

A novel manner of selling cigars and fancy goods. Attractive to ladies and gentlemen. See it. E. M. COLFORD.

The Merry-go-round.

Fine music. Latest and most popular tunes. For old and young. GEO. W. HILL, Proprietor.

Photograph Gallery.

Have your pictures taken at the bay. Artistic work at reasonable prices. J. R. RUFFHAM.

Be sure to see—
Hunt's Bohemian Glass Blower.

If in doubt or trouble,
Call on Queen Fredia, the Palmist.

Take a ride on one of the
Bay Ridge Riding and Race Track Horses.
 THOS. S. DOVE.

Bay Ridge Hotel,
 Excellent Meals.
 CROWLEY & PARKER.

Take a ride on
The Ferris Wheel.
 F. R. CHESTER, Proprietor.

Figure 3 'Amusements' column for Washington DC placing a Wargraph feature within a wide range of entertainment types. From *The Washington Post*, July 28, 1899, p. 9.

links the war with tourism. In one such example, a writer for the 'What Is Doing in Society' section of *The New York Times* describes the trip of one group of tourists to Santiago shortly after the war, remarking that 'they enjoyed particularly their two day's stay,' visiting not only San Juan Hill and El Caney, but also the Morro of Santiago, to see where captured American soldiers were imprisoned (April 2, 1899, p. 15). And, likewise, the conclusion of the war prompted the publication of numerous guides and collections of photos showcasing local specificities to North American readers as both pathological and erotic and desirable, anticipating arguably eventual encounters (Díaz Quiñones 2000, 221–2). The proximity of war to tourism, both historically and virtually, underscores the latter's impact and effects as a species of structural hostility composed, as well, of invasions, occupations, and dissolutions of sovereignty.

More interesting, however, is the use of film in explicitly simulating travel, which Robert C. Allen (1977) coins ‘Kinesthetic films,’ for they were ‘designed to produce an almost physiological thrill in audiences by giving the illusion either of being in the path of a moving object or of actually moving through space’. Noël Burch (1990, 38–9) notes a similar, yet far more sophisticated, use of film in creating a complete, simulated train trip in which patrons were seated in an enclosed car which moved along a circular track as films of passing landscapes were projected on screens in front of them. I cite these last two examples not because I am arguing that the Edison Wargraph films discussed here were created with the intent of explicitly simulating travel, but, instead, to draw attention to the primacy of simulation in the period’s entertainment and its unique character in vaudeville and similar venues. The prevalence of simulation – further evidenced by the numerous singer-impersonators occupying vaudeville stages or the wax museum displays of the most popular military officers – does much to explain the many filmed reenactments and scale-model naval battles that were presented as ‘actualities’ of the war.¹⁵ Certainly these ‘spurious’ films so frequently commented on with a sense of dismay by some critics (Chanan 1998, 144; Agramonte 1966, 23–4; García Osuna 2003, 10; Rodríguez 1992, 36–40) embody a remarkable element of deception, yet one that should be tempered by the understanding that the vaudeville context in which these ‘false’ films were presented was one characterized by an illusion-based entertainment composed of simulacra, and in which the uncertain limit between reality and fiction arguably fueled their novelty and appeal. And indeed, the very medium and technology of cinema, as Virilio suggests, sets out to deceive and shock, thus, an underlying concern with warfare, whose very surveillance technology and epistemologies of space and time, even, would develop in direct relation to that of cinema.

By 1896, the first film projections were incorporated into vaudeville shows in the U.S.¹⁶ The short, fragmentary films, many of which lasted less than a minute, were integrated into longer, thematic programs in which the projectionist interwove film and related song slides that cued the audiences to sing along with live musical accompaniment.¹⁷ A slump in film’s popularity in late 1897 found it disappearing from vaudeville programs, yet, upon the explosion of the USS Maine in Havana Harbor attendance surged as audiences rushed to view the special war programs that temporarily displaced other vaudeville acts as film came to interact with print journalism significantly (Musser 1991; Armengol 2006; Castonguay n.d.). The popularity of war features in vaudeville steadily increased throughout 1898, with similar features running in theaters in many of the larger, industrialized cities (Allen 1977, 139). The popularity, furthermore, spilled over into other forms of entertainment in the era, spawning not only theatrical stage renditions of war-related events but also large-scale reenactments orchestrated for an eager public (Figure 4).¹⁸

Thomas A. Edison, Inc., like the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company, was one of the major producers of the films included in these war features. The films considered here were originally parts of many of these shows. The impossibility of reconstructing one of the war features is due, in part, to the difficulty in capturing the dimension of performance that these shows originally embodied, with their element of audience participation, their fluid structure that accommodated

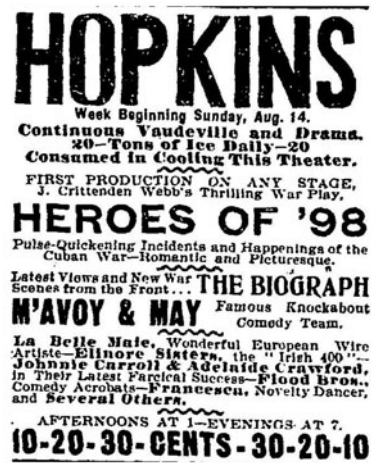


Figure 4 Advertisement for Biograph screening and the 'romantic and picturesque' dramatic production, 'Heroes of '98,' from the 'Amusements' Section of the *Chicago Tribune*, Aug. 14, 1898, p. 28.

and reacted to those responses, and, certainly, the live musical accompaniment that backed these fragments with patriotic airs. Nevertheless, the films considered here, many with the texts written to market these reels to theaters and projectionists, offer the possibility of analyzing how their representations fit into a larger picture of an ideological reinforcement through entertainment.

Motion and modernity

It is essential to situate this early cinema in a visual context for which the new technologies' contributions were perceived as building upon still photography. Kra-cauer, not without justifiable criticism, asked that we return to still photography as part of a conjectural archaeology of the moving image in order to isolate the basis from which the modern cinema would emerge. Thus, according to his formulation, the cinema makes still photographs move, and it is, therefore, this signature transformation that will shape all cinema. And indeed, before it could ever even narrate, or call upon elements of novelistic discourse, the theater, opera, or symphonic structure, or before it could even compress or expand the passing of time through montage, mesh perspectives, or titillate through appeals to scopic pleasure, the cinema, first and foremost, rendered movement. Movement, therefore, would define the first films, many of which sought to capture audience attention by showing the meanderings of people gathered on a street corner or the iconic arrival of a locomotive in a train station. Movement was so relevant to the early cinema, that one of its earliest North American critics, the poet Vachel Lindsay, would note the genre-wide centrality of speed (Lindsay and Kauffman 1970, 43) and even the personification of machinery in its earliest forms (43). Furthermore, since cinema enabled the explicit representation of movement, it would allow, then, that movement take on symbolic meaning. Indeed, the cinema created

the possibility of a language and rhetoric of motion, within which motion itself, whether that of the filmed subjects or that of the camera's eye as it passed over them, has the power to evoke meaning. Reviewing the titles of many of the films made of the war of 1898 reveals the prevalence of motion in the subjects that they each capture, as the theme of each film is as much the activity represented as the objects carrying them out: troops *disembarking*, *packing* mules, Rough Riders *embarking*, U.S. cavalry supplies *unloading*, etc. The display of motion becomes an exhibition of technological advancement and production capabilities – where one's ability to move and to move with speed is a demonstration of the power to control and to accumulate. How, then, does this motion figure into the constellation of ideas sustaining the impulse for a U.S. campaign to seize the last of Spain's colonial possessions?

The curious display of man's control over beast represented in *Trained cavalry horses* is a reminder of how discourses of progress and modernity were also premised upon assumptions regarding the human control of nature, here manifest in a rider's ability to command horses to kneel to the ground while mounted (Figure 5). It also suggests how motion, the ability to create motion and to control it, can capture the audience's interest by allowing one, through a chain of associations, to equate this motion with the eventual control of space. The control of movement – and, especially, the ability to move quickly – becomes the goal of these military preparations. This desire for speed becomes particularly evident in Edison's *Pack mules with ammunition on the Santiago Trail, Cuba* which shows a team of pack mules led by civilian horsemen that moves into the frame from a distance, growing closer to the stationary camera, a disjunction between stasis and movement forming a



Figure 5 Still from 'Trained Cavalry Horses,' Thomas A. Edison, Inc., William Paley, photographer. Still courtesy of the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division of the Library of Congress.

productive tension inherent, indeed, in the subsuming discourse of modernity and progress, yet here an inversion attenuated by the camera's ability to depict movement (Figure 6). The steady gait of the animals, and the measured steps of the men, who may also be Cuban collaborators, suggest the rather moderate speed of their movement toward their destination. The Edison catalog text, however, reads thus: 'A great pack train approaches rapidly, following the gray bell-mule. Cowboys dash to and fro, keeping them bunched. Clouds of dust arise as they pass.'¹⁹ While it is certainly true that the actual, hand-cranked projection speed of the film could have varied widely according to the projectionist, we may still sense in this catalog text an attempt to describe speed that is in fact absent from what was actually filmed. A viewing of the film at this actual filmed rate after reading the text finds one searching for the 'rapid approach' of the mules or for the 'cowboys dash [ing] to and fro.' It becomes clear from the disjunction between text and film here that it is swift motion that is desired and that is thought to be attractive to audiences.²⁰ Within the context of an exhibition of war films, this appeal to speed is also an appeal to technological advancement and the 'progress' that it would imply for viewers.

Likewise, the ethnic and racial specificity of discourses of progress – so evident in the explanations for the supposed justifications to intervene – would find, indeed, a place in considerations of movement in the Edison films. The foregrounding of 'darker-skinned' Cubans in *Cuban Refugees Waiting for Rations* does much to provide a visual counterpart to many of these discussions. Also, *Colored Troops Disembarking*, for example, depicts African-American soldiers descending a particularly steep plank, loaded with heavy backpacks and carrying rifles. One by



Figure 6 Still from 'Pack mules with ammunition on the Santiago Trail, Cuba,' Thomas A. Edison, Inc., William Paley, photographer. Still courtesy of the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division of the Library of Congress.

one, they proceed with exceptional care, as the stationary camera observes them from solid, level ground. It is telling that the catalog suggests that their movement is 'laughable' and makes a point of describing a commanding officer on the wharf who, on the other hand, 'struts' and commands them to 'hurry.'²¹ Indeed, the polarities, here, across the porous boundaries of racial and ethnic difference, find themselves reflected in the very visual counterpoint of subject positions, whether between soldiers and officers, their explicit blackness and his implicit whiteness, their projected 'inadequacies' as troops and his projected confidence and capabilities. And all rendered from the fixed but flickering subject position of a chemically registered mechanical eye, whose very technology would be situated and consumed, arguably, as an outgrowth of this very racialized discourse of modernity, progress, speed, and movement.

In Edison's *Morro Castle, Havana Harbor* a camera reviews the outer wall of *El Morro* from a moving boat, inaugurating, as Vincenot (2005, 44; 2010, 28) has suggested, the cinematic portrayal of an icon of both Havana, Cuba and its cultural colonization by way of the numerous other subsequent foreign productions there for which *El Morro* would be featured prominently (Figure 7). Visible, in this film, are the lighthouse and guard towers, and the proximity of the camera to the fort allows that it consume most of the visual field, emphasizing its immensity. Shot from a boat in the harbor, the moving perspective contrasts with the immobility of the massive structure, which recalls Doane (2002) suggestion to recognize in this early genre how moving perspectives, like this one, were part of the generic conventions for films of 'actualities' as opposed to re-enactments. The Edison catalog text provides clues to better understand the place of motion in this film:



Figure 7 Still from 'Morro Castle, Havana Harbor,' Thomas A. Edison, Inc. Still courtesy of the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division of the Library of Congress.

A most excellent picture of the grim old fortress which stands at the entrance of Havana Harbor. The high ramparts and lofty battlements look very formidable. Parts of the stronghold date back to the seventeenth century. While the yacht from which the picture is taken sails around the promontory, an excellent view is afforded of the entire fortress. Waves are seen dashing up against the rocks at the foot of abutments. The lighthouse and sentry-box are so near that the guard is plainly seen pacing up and down. The photograph is excellent; and in view of a probable bombardment, when the old-fashioned masonry will melt away like butter under the fire of 13-inch guns, the view is of historic value.²²

The text reiterates the opposition implied visually in the film between the mobility of the camera's lens and the static presence of the fortress. It goes even further by emphasizing that the structure dates from the seventeenth century, constructed with 'old-fashioned masonry.' Thus, not only is it immobile, but antiquated as well, due not only to its fixity but also the means of production that it represents. Let us recall here the notion of Modernity as motion – the pursuit of ever-increasing mechanization and automation propelled by a desire for celerity or *vitesse* (Virilio 1977). Thus, *Morro Castle, Havana Harbor* appeals to a sentiment that equates motion with progress, and that constructs an opposition between the mobile U.S. gaze from a boat moving through the harbor and the stationary Spanish fort that it contemplates. The display of motion, then, becomes an attempt to depict technical superiority, which works to render the Spanish presence as pre-Modern, as something of the past, or of another era. We could furthermore gather how colonial expansion and the destruction of one power by another were construed in the period as a basic mechanism of modernization. Additionally, the text endeavors to frame the present moment of the film's creation as the representation of a remote past by suggesting its eventual destruction through an interchange of the camera's line of sight with that of a battleship's '13-inch guns'.²³

Yet it is also through this opposition between camera and fortress, 'modern' and 'archaic,' that one can discern one of the paradoxes of the U.S.'s colonial enterprise. Significant in the description above is the emphasis on the historical value of the fortress, which is carried to far greater heights in the following fragment of a *Washington Post* article from the period:

I have seen the medieval architecture of Vera Cruz and the Aztec pyramids of Cholula [*sic*], but I can recall nothing quite as aged and gray and gnarled as the Morro. The disentombed palaces and thoroughfares of Pompeii would seem to be giddy, frisking, light-headed young things in comparison. The castle stands there upon an abrupt eminence of rock worn smooth and shiny by the eternal procession of the waves, a wrinkled and decrepit sentinel, a reminder to the spick and span Yankee that he is about to enter the old world, wearing always an air of piteous protest against having had to live so long and grow so weak and helpless. [...] It seems impossible that we should be within musket shot of this monument of antiquity, the Morro. [...] [H]ere amid these relics of antiquity the drama of the present day is enacting. It is like introducing the telephone and the electric light into Thibet or turning the pyramid of Cheops

into a Tammany polling booth, but the fact remains. Expectation, doubt, anxiety fill every mind and, strange to say, they all refer to matters as modern as the vitascope [...] resolving the problem of autonomy, of new forms of government, of political emancipation and individual responsibility ('Blanco and his Aims,' Dec. 1, 1897, p. 1)²⁴

I cite this rather remarkable text here not only because it reiterates the views reflected in the Edison film and catalog description, but also because it reveals the tourist optic of the period's entertainment previously discussed, suggesting a blurred boundary between the informative, 'visual newspaper' character of these films and their mode of representing distant and 'exotic' places for an audience desirous of travel. It is in the clash between these two functions that the inherent contradictions in the discourses of 'freedom' and 'progress' come to the surface. As the above fragment suggests, the Morro is at the center of this clash and as a result its meaning in the context of a Wargraph screening is paradoxical and ambivalent. For viewers, the Morro is both menacing and picturesque, threatening and desirable. It is an icon of 'pre-modern' Spanish rule embodying their military might and production capabilities (at least for North American viewers), destined to be dismembered by the bearers of 'progress'; and yet, it is also a venerable relic whose place in the great narrative of History situates it within a pantheon of imperial formations that should be preserved, for, according to the same writer, only 'a nation of ruffians as brutal as the vandals would destroy [it].' And thus we confront a compelling tension in the ideology accompanying the North American colonial enterprise: destruction as a means of progress; and preservation and acquisition as a means of seeking purchase in an expansive and 'universal' notion of history. This ambivalent movement both to destroy and to possess is unambiguously representative of the contradictions of the U.S.'s project in Cuba (and in Puerto Rico and the Philippines), where its goals of 'resolving the problem of autonomy, of new forms of government, of political emancipation and individual responsibility' frequently manifested in the form of prolonged political dependency, violations of sovereignty and economic subservience.

The language of motion also works to suggest the integration of a national self through war. Indeed, the U.S.'s intervention in the Cuban war for independence came forth in the wake of civil war and would signify for many a culminating and unifying event of a regionally fragmented territory (Díaz Quiñones 2000, 219). For instance, an analysis of Northern and Southern newspapers uncovers how many Southerners initially balked at the idea of participating in what they saw as a Northern project, only to later profess their unity with the North after having fought alongside them against a common enemy (Castonguay n.d., 'War at Home'). Furthermore, audiences at concerts and other war-related events frequently made gestures of embracing and accepting manifestations of Southern particularity in the interest of expressing national unity (ibid.). The U.S. intervention, thus, would work to mitigate the pervasive sectionalism characterizing North-South relations in the United States and transform antagonistic internal tensions into nationalistic fervor.

Reviewing the 'Texas' at Grant's Tomb suggests visually this idea through movement and a play of icons (Figures 8 and 9). This longer of the Edison films of

1898 is one of a number of others featuring naval vessels, which had gained significant attention for their relevance in a war of imperial scope and intentions. The subject in question is a massive gathering of naval ships on August 20, 1898 – ‘the largest [...] ever assembled in an American port,’ according to one journalist – that included a parade of five battleships, among them the apparently damaged ‘Texas’ whose ultimate appearance was initially held in doubt.²⁵ They were to proceed upriver to Grant’s Tomb where they would then fire a salute in honor of the deceased general and president. Period journalism describes the event ecstatically, foregrounding it as a mass spectacle, with some pieces emphasizing the sizeable crowds of ‘the poor,’ ‘tenement dwellers,’ and ‘the people’ gathered on rooftops and at docksides, as well as an ‘outpouring of femininity’ in excursion craft and rowboats crowding around ships for a view of the sailors, evidence enough of the fairly obvious fantasies of the period’s unchecked androcentrism and the masculinist overtones of its bellicose nationalism.²⁶ The film opens with a view of Grant’s Tomb, apparently shot from a moving boat on the Hudson River. The monument’s dome and columns, seen at a distance, slowly move toward the left of the frame as the boat moves downriver. A sudden cut brings the stem of the battleship ‘Texas’ into view, adorned with an enormous American flag that fills the screen

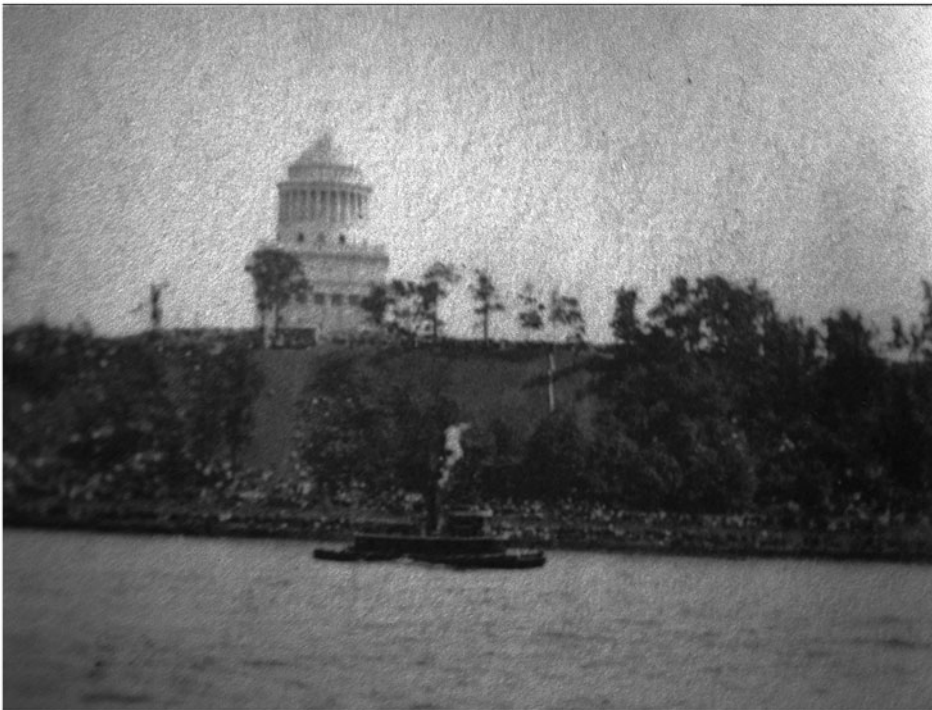


Figure 8 Still showing Grant's Tomb in the distance. From 'Reviewing the "Texas" at Grant's Tomb,' Thomas A. Edison, Inc., J. Stuart Blackton and Albert E. Smith, photographers. Still courtesy of the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division of the Library of Congress.



Figure 9 Still showing the bow of the 'Texas.' From 'Reviewing the "Texas" at Grant's Tomb,' Thomas A. Edison, Inc., J. Stuart Blackton and Albert E. Smith, photographers. Still courtesy of the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division of the Library of Congress.

just before passing from view as the camera moves down its sailor-covered deck toward the ship's stern.²⁷ What must be one of the many, civilian or federal excursion craft ferrying passengers moves quickly between the camera and the battleship, its waving women passengers clearly discernible, as it obstructs the view and frames, even, a leisurely spectatorship in the foreground that serves as a textually incorporated reminder of what is, indeed, the spectacle at hand. In and of itself, the cut in this film is already a novel device for this period, facilitating the possibility that the segment of the 'Texas' may not have even been filmed in the same place or likewise at the same time. As in other films, the proximity of the camera to the ship works to emphasize the immensity of the vessel for viewers. The film's use of implied motion through its primitive editing to shift from Grant's Tomb – an icon with the power to evoke the Civil War, and for some, the then incomplete project of Reconstruction – to the 'Texas' – a damaged ship returning from duty in Cuba – works to suggest a historic transition from a fragmented past to a unified and expanding present. The icons themselves could not be more telling: the static, stone tomb of the general who defeated the South and became a controversial president is replaced visually by a moving behemoth of war named for a Confederate state and embodying not only the height of production capabilities at the time, but also the possibility to expand national boundaries, implications made explicit in the view of one journalist who would remark that these many ships would soon be on their way to ports in Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Philippines as an occupying colonial presence.²⁸

Objects, events, geographies

Motion becomes both a mode of representing with these films as well as their very desired subject. This twofold presence of motion here, despite its appearance, is, in fact, a manifestation of one and the same idea: that of motion as an end in itself, for evidenced in motion is the status of a state's ability to produce and, thus, to destroy and to control. This ambivalence – that is, the tension between production and destruction – resonates tellingly with similar ambivalences in the rationale and organization of many of the international exhibitions of the period, which frequently showcased geographical imaginaries, technologies, entertainment, and simulation (González-Stephan and Andermann 2006). And, likewise, these films call upon while expanding an iconic vocabulary of power in which the state – in this case, as the military and its implicit organization of production and living labor – is rendered as spectacle both immediately and virtually for public contemplation. Yet whereas other more copious visual materials have provided opportunities to consider or reconstruct 'counter-images and anti-icons' (Andermann and Rowe 2005, 3), the limited corpus of surviving Edison and other period films together with the comparatively scant contextualizing materials provide few opportunities for the development of similar analyses. That said, more archival work remains to be done to build upon some of the already significant and extremely valuable contributions of film scholars (Agramonte and Castillo 2011; Douglas 1996; 2008; Rodríguez 1992; Vincenot 2005; 2010) in order to ask similar questions of the same period regarding specifically silent cinema reception and the nature of its extra-cinematic visual context in Cuba, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico during the war.

What these films and their contexts do provide, however, are the material to reconsider some tendencies in the study of visual and other objects, namely the centrality of the nationalist paradigm in histories of the cinema, the interest in revisiting the interface between the verbal and the visual, as well as, finally, object-oriented methodologies that overlook reception contexts and their essential materiality and status as events. As Paranaguá (2003, 16; 2015, 26) and others have noted the nationalist paradigm encourages inaccuracies in the histories of the cinema in Latin America. National cinemas did not develop in isolation, and especially in the early cinema their realities were simultaneously local, itinerant, and global. Indeed, as López (2000, 51) has demonstrated so cogently, the early cinema in particular and its first appearances in Latin America and the Caribbean map out a geography of capitalism and colonialism, and speak to the proximities between the large regional capitals and British, French, and North American enterprises and capital. And as one could likewise cite the histories of sound recording in the very same places involving companies like Edison, Pathé, and, later, RCA Victor, the implications of cinema in these contexts certainly apply to other media, and vice versa. Whereas the dispersive 'transnational' or 'international' realities of film production have reshaped Latin American histories of the cinema, the perception of this colonial relationship from the vantage point of the metropolises provides some interesting opportunities to consider the ambivalences of these technologies as they interact with different contexts. They reveal how they call upon and reinforce colonial imaginaries while germinating the possibilities of

responses to these relationships, not unlike those so rigorously examined in their incipient stages in recent scholarship (Reyes and Wood 2015; Schroeder 2008; Rodríguez 1992).

And while they complicate conventional historiographical geographies of knowledge, harboring, arguably, implications for Latin American and Caribbean cultural studies as a whole, these films also demand that we consider them as moments of reception such that they offer a different dimension of analysis beyond those tendencies in the study of visual culture concerned with how visual objects may operate at the interface of the verbal and the visual (Boido 2012; Peterle et al. 2013). They also call for their consideration as artifacts clearly related to a varied extra-generic, that is, non-cinematic context. While these films certainly conform to colonialist and nationalist discourses, their contexts of reception speak to a more varied and extra-linguistic social reality of gatherings and grouping, corporal proximities and the lived realities of spectatorship that venture into the realm of the gestural and the affective. Furthermore, what is unique about these early films is what we may only be able to recover fragmentarily through an imperfect elaboration of their contexts, that is, their status as remnants of a greater extra-cinematic audio-visual performance involving other media, and which served as a mechanism of collective public sociability in ways that print media did not at the time, however limited their early diffusion. In this regard, the Edison and other films of 1898 served as spectacles in a sense similar to that described in international exhibitions (González-Stephan and Andermann 2006), but different precisely in the flexible and kinetic relationship these objects shared with the contexts of their reception: they could move and they could circulate (and they did) but their reception, unlike the cases of print media related to the war (Díaz Quiñones 2000), implied a different type of collective consciousness at the moment of their reception, convening an audience, simultaneously gathered, and transforming them into a public in that very moment of spectatorship, a public organized around its desire for entertainment and around its adoration of technology and bellicose nationalism.

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Notes

1. Indeed, these are only some. A *Los Angeles Times* article of December 26, 1897 humorously enumerates the names of 50 different moving-picture technologies (11).
2. Film historian Robert C. Allen (1977, 127–8) places these first films in four categories: news, travel, documentary, and sports. As we shall see below, the Edison Wargraph films tend to blend the tendencies of three of these genres, occupying the boundaries between news, travel, and documentary. While this type of taxonomy is useful for identifying trends in a varied corpus of works, it can run the risk of suggesting a kind of organic relationship spanning over time and relating the films as if almost genetically to later cinematic or other visual forms which may only happen to share certain affinities with these first films while being created with little or no awareness of these predecessors' existence. Premising my approach here is the notion that we should also establish and explore horizontal relationships between these films and other media in their contexts.
3. Some of the central Cuban and other sources for this period are Agramonte (1966), Rodríguez (1992), Douglas (1996; 2008), García Osuna (2003), Vincenot (2005; 2010), and Agramonte and Castillo (2011).
4. See, for example, 'Amusements,' *The New York Times*, Oct. 2 or 9, 1898, p. 14; *Chicago Daily Tribune* Aug. 14, 1898, p. 28.
5. *The New York Times*, Jan. 27, 1897, p. 5; or *Chicago Tribune*, Apr. 14, 1898, p. 28.
6. Before the Wargraph screening at Proctor's in New York, for example, one could watch the 'Rossow Midgets,' which are described as 'funny little folks' (*The New York Times*, Oct. 2, 1898, p. 14). One reviewer writes of 'Kilpatrick, the one-legged bicyclist' at Keith's Union Square Theater in New York, describing him as part of the 'usual array of vaudeville entertainment' (*The New York Times*, Oct. 16, 1898, p. 18). 'Her Graiss and his baboon and donkey' were featured at Koster and Bial's in addition to Edison's Vitagraph in 1896 (*The New York Times*, Apr. 26, 1896, p. 10). At Hammerstein's Olympia, one could see not only 'Santanelli, the great master of hypnosis' give 'demonstrations of the power of mind over matter,' but also 'Papinta' perform 'her beautiful mirror and fire dance' (*The New York Times*, Apr. 19, 1896, p. 11). The Clark Street Museum in Chicago announces: 'Fattest married pair on earth [...] Over half a ton of wedded bliss!' followed by a Wargraph show (*Chicago Daily Tribune*, Aug. 14, 1898, p. 28).
7. *The New York Times*, May 5, 1896, p. 7.
8. An advertisement of July 27, 1897 announcing its 'Gas exposition' and display of the 'great Tiffany's gas tower' reads: 'Such a dawn of light ne'er seen before [...] GaS GAS GAS GAS' (*The New York Times*, p. 5). The exposition program brings together, of course, an array of advertising with lengthy discussions specifically of the history of different light sources. The structure, furthermore, insinuates how celebrations of technology like these reveal a specific relationship to wide-sweeping historical narratives beginning in antiquity and projecting into the future and encompassing gross transformations and epiphenomena. Indeed, the very description of the gas tower suggests how technology shifts from exhibiting use-value to exchange-value: 'In placing gas and glass, water and steam in his

creation, Mr. Tiffany has demonstrated not only the usefulness of gas, but its inestimable value as a decorative element, as well as its many economic advantages' (39).

9. July 25, 1896, p. 5.
10. The 'Stage Notes of the Week' section in *The New York Times* of Aug. 14, 1898 reads: 'While the [war films] remain an interesting feature at the Eden Musee, they are second to the many other attractions. [...] Particular attention has been paid to the Chamber of Horrors, and Martin Thorn occupies the chair in the Execution Chamber' (6). By this date, *Times* readers would have been well acquainted with Martin Thorn and his alleged accomplice, Augusta Nack. Numerous articles detailing their theatrical trials (contentious confessions, contemplated suicides) and the gruesome murder of which they were accused had appeared during the preceding year. What is particularly relevant to this discussion, however, is his execution in the electric chair, which, since its first implementation in New York in 1890, was at the center of a well-documented conflict between George Westinghouse and Vitascope 'inventor' Thomas Edison as to the economic viability of AC or DC current. Opposing the use of the electric chair, Westinghouse refused to supply the necessary AC generators to carry them out; Edison, however, eagerly complied, as part of his efforts to fuel a publicity campaign against Westinghouse and his AC technology, favoring, thus, his own DC generators. The 'painless' death secured by the, then, technologically sophisticated electric chair represented for its champions the use of technology in furthering civilization through a more 'humane' execution than that provided by hanging or firing squad. For Eden Musee attendees, I would argue, the appeal of Execution Chamber displays like that described here was simultaneously the aura of this new technology (and its association with the 'wizard of Menlo Park', Edison) and the awe of its destructive capabilities, which, as we shall see below, is similar to the appeal of many of the Wargraph films. Not surprisingly, early cinema includes an entire genre of execution films, many reenactments, whose implications as objects include the finality of death as marking the 'insistence and intractability of the real in representation' (Doane 2002, 145) and thus an ultimate confirmation of the medium's pretenses.
11. Underpinning my argument in this essay (that is, in part, that these films functioned as evidence of 'progress' for North American viewers) is the notion that these films are more so manifestations of technology and material production than they are texts for extended, reverent contemplation. As is frequently argued, this period bears witness to a general fetishization of technology. 'Aura,' therefore, is the most appropriate word to describe the almost mystical awe and fascination that these films and, especially, the projector, at least initially, inspired in theatergoers, as would the overwhelming numbers of spectators flocking to see films would suggest. See, for example, 'Crowds watch the Vitascope,' which describes 'fully 2,000' spectators 'crowding the streets' to view a public exhibition (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Feb. 12, 1898).
12. 'Instruction for Tourists,' July 17, 1898, p. 13.
13. *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Aug. 17, 1897, p. 3.
14. See, for example, Edison Company's 'Catalogue of New Films' (no date) or Edison catalog No. 135 (Sept 1902).
15. The reception of fake war footage reflects this observation. The patriotic fervor with which audiences consumed war footage, and with which, indeed, producers

scrambled to meet their demands, engendered the exhibitions of several spurious films purporting to represent actual events in Cuba or the Philippines. (There is no record of similar films of Puerto Rico.) Some were reenactments claiming to be authentic and others were apparently even unrelated footage of other events in other places that was presented as footage of the war (Allen 1977, 139–40).

16. The first films, however, were privately viewed via Kinetoscope in one of the Kinetoscope parlors that had opened as early as 1893 in New York, Chicago, and San Francisco (Phillips 1997, 28–9). By 1896, there were similar parlors in Cincinnati, OH, Detroit, MI, Los Angeles, CA, and Waco, TX (64–5). The Kinetoscope was also first featured in Cuba, by 1894, at the Manzana de Gómez (Agramonte and Castillo 2011, 23). For details of the Vitascope premier at Koster & Bial's in New York City, see 'Edison's Latest Triumph,' *The New York Times*, Apr. 14, 1896, p. 5.
17. Musser (1991, 136) remarks that the projectionist's role was such that many claimed authorship for their programs. Also, the fluid structure of the program and the projectionist's role allowed that the program be altered according to audience response.
18. In one review, 'The Man o' War's Man' is described as a 'scenic representation of a naval battle [which] arouses vociferous enthusiasm nightly' (*The New York Times*, 'Notes of the Week', May 8, 1898, p. 9). One reviewer describes 'Imra Kiralfy's naval spectacle' as a 'reproduction of the events [...] of the American fleets in the waters of Manila and Santiago' (*The New York Times*, Aug. 14, 1898, p. 6). An advertisement in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* of June 10, 1898 describes the 'naval' opera 'Paul Jones' as a depiction of 'the great battle of Manila' (5).
19. From 'Complete Catalogue No. 94, Edison Films' (1899), p. 10.
20. Similarly, the darting journalists represented in *War Correspondents* lend themselves to a similar reading as the band of reporters outrun a horse-drawn carriage to submit the latest events via telegram to their respective newspapers.
21. From 'War Extra. Supplement No. 4. May 20, 1898,' p. 6.
22. From 'War Extra. Supplement No. 4. May 20, 1898,' p. 5.
23. The conflation of the camera's line of sight with that of a weapon is a reoccurring theme in film history. Indeed, the idea is the point of departure for Virilio's analysis of the relationship between war and cinema. It is worth recalling here Marey's photographic rifle, which served as a significant precursor to the modern movie camera. Of course this relationship is also crystallized in the very language of cinema in English: 'shoot' film; a 'shot,' etc. What is certainly remarkable as well is the presence of these and similar references in common descriptions of the movie camera in period text.
24. *Vitascope*: Let us recall that, before dubbing his camera the Wargraph, Edison's camera was known as the Vitagraph. Vitascope, as used above, was the name given to the corresponding film projector.
25. '70 Warships In One Port: A Great Fleet Will Be Assembled ...,' *The New York Times*, Aug. 20, 1898, p. 3.
26. New York Greets Victorious Navy: A Marvelous Demonstration By The ..., *The New York Times*, Aug 21, 1898, p. 1. See as well: 'Battleships On Parade: Sampson's Fleet To Steam Up North River To ...,' *The New York Times*, Aug. 16, 1898, p. 5; 'Crowds See The Squadron: The Seven Steel Warships Off Tompkinsville ...,' *The New York Times*, Aug. 22, 1898, p. 2.

27. Regarding how (American) flags are used to evoke meaning in popular films, Lindsay (Lindsay and Kauffman 1970, 82) emphasizes the importance of national allegory, remarking: 'In a photoplay by a master, when the American flag is shown, the thirteen stripes are columns of history and the stars are headlines. The woods and the templed hills are their printing press, almost in a literal sense'. Additionally, Musser (1990, 244) reprints a *New York World* article of 1898 describing how a projectionist used an image of the American flag to homogenize the public's ambivalent response to images of President McKinley. The description of the film *How the Flag Changed in Cuba* further reflects the flag's representative power: 'The audience cheers, thinking they are viewing the end of the film, when, behold! our own starry banner appears on the screen. The audience is simply carried away, and you look about with pride at the enthusiasm displayed. You could almost hear the eagle scream were it not for the cheers, whistling and stamping of your patriotic audience' (from [Edison] Catalogue of New Films for Projection and Other Purposes; no date; p. 26). We could, furthermore, add to this films of 1898 like *Raising Old Glory over Morro Castle* or *Tearing Down the Spanish Flag*.
28. '70 Warships In One Port: A Great Fleet Will Be Assembled ...,' *The New York Times*, Aug. 20, 1898, p. 3. With regard to Grant, Martí's analysis of Grant in 'El General Grant: Estudio de la formación, desarrollo e influjo de su carácter, y de los Estados Unidos en su tiempo' reads in Grant's controversial career, marred with strife and scandal, and in the figure himself a milestone in the U.S.'s own becoming as a nation and the unification of North and South. Of Grant, he remarks: 'Desde sus ojos profundos, enternecidos por el agradecimiento al pueblo bueno que le perdonaba sus yerros y lo miraba en su hora de morir, contemplaba con un digno y elevado cariño a los héroes equivocados a quienes le fue dado un día combatir sin reposo y someter sin ira; y su mano descarnada, extendida al Sur desde la orilla de sus tumba con buena voluntad, ha sido recogida por amorosa admiración, como tesoro nacional, por sus gallardos enemigos. La nación de los hombres ha empezado, y este muerto, a pesar de sus grandes errores, ayudó a abrir camino para ella' (1991, 115).

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