

David Fincher has called The Social Network the Citizen Kane for this generation. Both films chronicle the rise of a media giant who changes the world. Citizen Kane follows Charles Foster Kane's ascent in the newspaper business and his influence on America at large. Kane is not a real person, but his story is based on William Randolph Hearst. The Social Network follows the creation of Facebook by Mark Zuckerberg.

Lecture: (8 pts)

William Randolph Hearst (take notes below about his life):

- Born in SF to wealthy parents in 1863
- Educated in private schools, attended Harvard Univ.
- 1887 took over San Francisco Examiner
- Published sensational stories and half-truths to earn public following
- Known for hiring away good writers and staff members - ruined other papers
- 1898 published public opinion toward Spanish-American War
- Entered politics 1900, 1902 had seat in House of Representatives
- 1903 married 21-yr-old Millicent Hillson, showgirl in NYC, had 5 sons
- 1917 became interested in showgirl Marion Davies, 1919 lived with her in CA
- Inherited 165,000 acre ranch in San Simeon from mother
- Spent rest of life building estate
- 1941 Citizen Kane set to release, tried to prevent widespread showing
- Died 1951 in Beverly Hills
- Net worth \$30B

Citizen Kane (take notes below about why it is always ranked in the top two films of all time):

- Bunch of genres in one
- Reflections while people reflect on Kane
- Keeps getting copied
- Wells, along with cinematographer Gregg Toland, popularized and perfected the technique of "deep focus," keeping every object in the foreground, center and background in simultaneous focus
- Cinematography: movement through objects; Welles and his cinematographer perfected a single take to move through objects forwards and backwards
- Popular Culture - it keeps getting quoted over and over again
- Breakfast Montage
- Indicative Lighting
- Powerful Mise-En-Scene (composition)
- Transitions: Welles perfects the dissolve with creative ways of overlaying similar images

Mark Zuckerberg (take notes below about his life):

- Born in 1984
- Father taught him basic Atari computer programming; father hired software designer to tutor him
- Attended Harvard, created Course Match and Facemash
- 2004 launched "The Facebook", immediately seen by three Harvard seniors as a website which was based on their intellectual property and ideas
- Dropped out of college, moved to CA to work on Facebook fulltime
- Accused of allowing sensational and fake news to filter into content

Napster (this name will be important in The Social Network). Research what Napster was and write FIVE sentences about who started it, what it was, and how it was eventually shut down (you can also add how it changed media):

Napster was a peer-to-peer file sharing application. It was founded by Shawn Fanning, Sean Parker, and Hugo Saez Contreras. It allowed digital audio file distribution. As it became popular, it ran into legal issues due to copyright infringement. It shut down in 2001 over lawsuits it lost.



napster.

Citizen Kane:

The film begins with something called *slow disclosure*. You saw this in *The Shawshank Redemption*. List three images and one word heard from the opening of the film:

1. Kane dies in his mansion and utters his final words: "Rosebud"
2. Newsreel
- 3.

Research: The terms "Xanadu" and "Kubla Khan" are mentioned several times. Name the poem that has both of these terms in it and who wrote that poem:

Kubla Khan by Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Irony: Kane spent his life in the media business producing newspapers. He believed in their power. The opening "hook" after the slow disclosure shows an evolution in media. How are people getting the news about Kane's death?

A "newsreel"

Research: Kane is called a "yellow journalist" – define that term:

Journalism and associated newspapers that present little or no legitimate, well-researched news while instead using eye-catching headlines for increased sales

At the **10% plot point**, the focus of the film becomes clear. What are the men in the room going to investigate about Charles Foster Kane's final moments before his death?

The meaning of Kane's last word "Rosebud"

Foreshadowing: Kane is shown as a young boy playing outside. What is he doing when we first see him when the banker arrives to take him away?

Riding on a sled

Inciting Incident: Kane's mother has her name on a piece of property with a gold mine on it. The bankers are going to invest in the land and manage it for her. She sends her son away to live with the banker Thatcher. Give **one reason** why she would do this?

So the fortune from the property could eventually be transferred to Kane

Irony: while Kane seems to enjoy the benefits of his money, he also seems keenly aware that the money is perhaps preventing him from growing as a person. Finish his quote:

"If I hadn't been very rich, I might have been a really great man"

Foils: Kane has many scenes early on where he seems to be the very opposite of one character. Who is his foil?

Leland

Starting Point: Kane enters the newspaper business and immediately wants to create a headline (think of the line "If it bleeds, it leads") that will attract attention from the public. He does not seem entirely concerned about the truthfulness of the information. What WORD does he want on the front page (the old editor says it is not true).

murder

Irony: the Inquirer will morph into a way to influence the public. The chief editor is seen standing outside the office (presumably fired or leaving of his own resignation). Kane soon says he wants to run his "Declaration of Principles" in the paper. What is the one thing he is promising the public (his first principle)?

To provide the people of the city with a paper that will tell all the news honestly

Characterization (Another Character's Comments). The character of Leland is important in this film. He gives the audience insight into Kane's character. He also seems to have a good grasp of Kane's possible future. Write down **TWO things** Leland says that reveal he understands Kane more than others do.

- There's a chance the newspapermen will change Mr. Kane without him knowing it
- All he ever wanted in life was love, from his wife in their marriage to the voters in his political career

Breakfast Evolution: Kane and his first wife Emily have their relationship defined in a series of breakfasts together that are shown one after another in a time lapse. Comment on their **FIRST** breakfast compared to the **LAST** breakfast shown and explain how that sequence shows a change in their relationship.

Describe breakfast one (conversation/clothing/tone);

Informal clothing "beautiful, my dear, I absolutely adore you" Talk about newspaper

Romantic tone

Describe final breakfast (conversation/clothing/tone):

Opposite ends of table Flowers removed

Say nothing to each other - reading newspaper - separating them

More constricting dress Candlesticks look like bars (prison)

What this sequence says about their marriage:

It has gone downhill

Key Scenes: There are two primary scenes between Leland and Kane that help define Kane's character and the relationship between these two friends. For each scene, write **THREE sentences** about what we learn about Kane and the relationship between these two men.

Scene One (When Leland is drunk and the two men have a conversation with just the two of them - the scene is filmed with a high angle for most of the time).

- Not interested in talking with Leland
- Leland thinks Kane talks about the people as if he owns them
- Only cares about himself, tries to persuade the people he loves them so they could love him back
- "Something to be played your way according to your rules"

Scene Two (After the night at the opera when Leland is passed out at his typewriter after starting a review about Kane's wife's performance):

- Leland writes about Kane's wife Alexander being incompetent, being a bad singer
- Kane finishes the writing for Leland, changing the review to a positive one, writing dishonestly
- Fires Leland so he could make his wife successful in the public image

Image: there is some dialogue that explains that after Susan leaves him, Kane begins violently destroying the contents of her bedroom. He suddenly calms down when he sees an object and says, "Rosebud." It is the same object that the audience saw during the slow disclosure. What object?

Snow globe

Climax: The film has spent much of its time pursuing the true meaning of one word. As the film ends, its climax is extremely important to Kane's character. What is the meaning of Kane's last word before he died AND explain why he would say that word.

Rosebud is the name of the sled he used in his childhood

It represented his childhood, the last time he was actually happy, before he got sent away to live with the banker

Resolution: What happens to Rosebud and why is that important?

Rosebud is burned in a fire, it represents his childhood/happiness being put up in flames

→ **The Social Network:** when we watch this film, you are going to be focusing on the relationships of the two main characters and a "tragic flaw" that can be applied to Zuckerberg and to Charles Foster Kane.



Both Kane and Zuckerberg can be looked at as men who allowed ambition and selfishness to overcome their lives. Being too ambitious is a common tragic flaw seen in contemporary films and the dramas of Shakespeare.

Macbeth's **fatal flaw** in the play is **unchecked ambition**, that is a desire for power and position, namely to be king, which is more important to him than anything else in life. He is willing to give up everything that he has in his life in order to possess the crown to sit on the throne.

Charles Foster Kane: List two ways he was overly ambitious and allowed that emotion to destroy relationships.

1. His desire for a successful political career and love caused his friendship with Leland to collapse

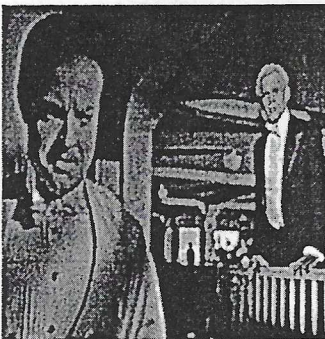
2. Wanted his wife, Susan Alexander to be successful even if she couldn't handle it, causing her to break up with Mark Zuckerberg: List two ways he was overly ambitious and allowed that emotion to destroy relationships. Kane

1. After obsessing over a final club during a date, Erica breaks up with Mark, and creates Facemash to get revenge, further destroying their relationship,

2. Mark allows Sean Parker to make Facebook's business decisions and provides him the ability to dilute Eduardo Saverin's stake in the company, angering him and causing his friendship with Mark to collapse,

Key Relationships: explain the evolution of the relationship between the characters listed below (how were they when we first meet them, what key events impacted their friendship, how was their friendship toward the end of their lives – or the end of the film?) **FIVE SENTENCE MINIMUM:** 5 pts.

Leland and Kane:



- When Kane creates the Declaration of Principles, Leland asks to keep the original document. It contained that he would "tell all the news honestly."
- Leland believed the newspaper business would change Kane, and that he was motivated by a desire for love.
- Leland and Kane's friendship starts to collapse after Leland tells Kane that he only cared about himself and wanted everyone to love him.
- Leland writes an honest review about Kane's wife's performance, but out of a desire to make his wife successful and be loved by her, Kane rewrites the review.
- Showing the end of their friendship, Kane fires Leland.

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Eduardo and Mark



- Mark and Eduardo create a website called Face mash, where people could rank girls.
- They both agree to make Facebook, where Mark would build the platform, while Eduardo provided financial assistance.
- After seeing Mark allow Sean Parker to make decisions for Facebook, he freezes the company's bank account.
- After signing contracts with Sean's investors, he learns that his shares of Facebook have been diluted.
- This causes his friendship with Mark to collapse as Eduardo's investment into the company turned into his ownership being diluted to a small fraction of the company.

Headline:

'THE SOCIAL NETWORK': THE 21ST CENTURY'S 'CITIZEN KANE'

In a brief paragraph, explain why the above headline from an editorial makes sense after watching both films. Explain the clear similarities between the two films: (7 sentences minimum). 7pts.

The influence of *Citizen Kane* lecture. 10 points

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1. Symbolic shots to reveal power.
2. The "eternal reflection" shot.
3. The "larger than life" political candidate
4. The "large open staircase" shot.
5. The "breakfast montage" scene.
6. The "shroud of death" camera shot.
7. The office party "marching band" shot.
8. The "temper - destruction" shot.
9. The "warehouse - resolution" shot.
10. The "shadow in the light" shot.
11. The "deep universal focus" shot.
12. The "one (long take)" shot.
13. The "single light" in the window shot.
14. The "headline" shot.
15. The child "playing out the window" shot.
16. The "no trespassing" shot.
17. The "low angle" shot.
18. The "tracking through objects" shot.
19. The *Citizen Kane* tracking shots in the hallway are famous. What was invented that smoothed out tracking?
Steadicam
20. The "mirror/glass" distortion shot.

When you watch *The Social Network*, find any TWO David Fincher shots that borrow from the above 20 influential *Citizen Kane* camera shots. 2 points.

1.

2.