

# [Why is citizen kane considered the greatest film ever made essay sample](https://assignbuster.com/why-is-citizen-kane-considered-the-greatest-film-ever-made-essay-sample/)

Citizen Kane, made in 1941, was revolutionary for its time and is still considered now as one of the greatest films ever made. It has inspired many other films and still goes on to be very influential in the film world. There are many reasons as to why Citizen Kane has been so critically acclaimed. However, there are a few main categories most of these reasons can fit into.

Citizen Kane has an incredibly complex storyline for its time. Throughout the film, there are many newspaper articles that are shown to help the audience understand what is going on without the characters having to explain. This is also because the main figure in the film, Charles Foster Kane, is the owner of many newspaper companies. So the use of the headlines is relevant to that as well. These also help break up the story and help to imply the passing of time.

The making of the film was also very complicated to do at the time. Orson Welles attempted to do something that had never been done before – show ceilings in his shots. Although this would seem quite trivial now, back in the 1940s, this was all very new. The ceiling shots were used to help make the film more believable, something Orson Welles was very conscious about.

He also used strangely out of proportion objects to indicate changes of status with different characters. In one scene, where Charles Foster Kane is losing a large part of his fortune, you see some windows at the end of the room, which appear perfectly normal sized. However, as Kane loses his wealth, and starts walking towards the windows, we see that they are actually a fair way away, and are also about 6 feet off the ground. This method was complicated to do and was also revolutionary for the time.

Citizen Kane also involved a lot of new-age special effects, some of which are still used today. In one scene, we see the camera pass through an ‘ El Rancho’ sign and through some glass into a room. This was done very cleverly using invisible wipes and flashes of lighting, which obscured your view of the scene disguising some of the bigger edits. The sign also had to be taken apart to allow the camera to pass through it. All of it is done cleverly and very realistically. There is also a scene where Kane passes through what one assumes is a hall of mirrors. As we see one Kane approaching, lots of others appear in reflections just behind him. At the time, this would’ve been very complicated to do, as you would not have been allowed to see the camera in any of the reflections in the mirrors.

Another special effect Orson Welles used was in the scene where Kane was addressing a large crowd. The ‘ large crowd’ actually probably consisted of only about 3 people. Orson Welles made the illusion of a crowd appear in a number of different ways. He did lots of low angle shots, which created the false impression that there were more people there than there actually were. He also used a trick were you use a photo of a large crowd with pin pricks in it and shine lights behind it. This creates the feeling of a large crowd very accurately.

Another reason why Citizen Kane is thought of as so good is because the script and the actors used were also revolutionary. The actors were able to talk over each other at the end of sentences which gave the feeling this was more improvisation, therefore more real, than scripted, which can sound fake.

The film also gives messages to the public, which was never really done before. It lets people realise that you shouldn’t believe all that you read in the newspaper because we can see first hand what kind of things editors are supposed to say, i. e. when Kane says, “ If the headline is big enough, the story is big enough.”

Citizen Kane was also fairly obviously based upon the life of newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst. He owned a lot of the newspapers in circulation in the USA at that time and tried very hard to prevent the film being brought out. He also gave it bad reviews in all of his newspapers to discourage people from seeing it. As a result, it did very badly at the box office. This was very brave of Orson Welles to make such a film as he was offending possibly the most influential person in America at the time.

Overall, I think that Citizen Kane’s massive reputation precedes it and our expectations of it are very high. However, I am not convinced that this film has been the ‘ greatest ever made’. It is nonetheless, very revolutionary and has, and probably will continue to, influence the productions of other major films.

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