How The Cowboy Makes His Lariat
Description of the Work

• Title: “How The Cowboy Makes His Lariat,” originally produced for *Paramount-Bray Pictograph: The Magazine on the Screen* No. 84.
• Length: 3:30 minutes
• Copyright: 1917, by Paramount-Bray Pictograph
• Provenance: Pathéscope Library
• Restoration: George Eastman House, 2005
• Manifestations:
  – Original theatrical release: 35mm
  – Pathé copy (GEH original master): 28mm
  – GEH Access copy: QuickTime video
  – GEH Restored copy: 35mm
Clues and Trails

• Inter-title card naming ‘Pedro Leon’ as the titular cowboy-demonstrator.

• Film’s title cards, indicating production by the Bray Studios, Inc. for the *Paramount-Bray Pictograph: The Magazine on the Screen* and its 1917 copyright.

• Distributor ‘tag’ title indicating the film as being distributed by Pathéscope library.
Imagining the West

- Dime Novels.
- Rodeo-Theatricals.
- Western Films.
101 Ranch

- NYMPCo. + Miller = ‘Bison 101.’
Pedro Leon

Pedro Leon, the Texas ranchman, shows how American cowboys make their own cinches and lassos.

Cowboy.
Roper.
Bit Actor and Ciné-Advisor.

Sea Lion Actor.
A new actor has been added to the Ince forces. Yesterday Pedro Leon, a cowboy, lassoed a sea lion off the shore near the studio. The creature is to be used in pictures.
John Randolph Bray

- Started as a cartoonist in the publishing business.
- His first animated cartoon *The Artist’s Dream* (1913) was picked by Charles Pathé and released in *Pathé Weekly*.
- Contract with Pathé to produce six animated cartoons in six months.
- Opened studio in New York in 1914.
Bray Studio, Inc.

- Compartimentalized the animation process: “The Henry Ford of Animation.”
- Patented innovative animation techniques.
- Produced the first color animated cartoon *The Debut of Thomas Cat* (1920).
- Closed animation division in 1927.
- Dedicated to war, educational, and industrial films.
Paramount Pictograph

- Launched in 1916.
- Described as a “topical weekly, to be edited as a magazine.”
- Contract of exclusivity with J.R. Bray to include weekly Bray-Cartoons.
Within the year, Bray had purchased the controlling share of the magazine.

He focused on the production of live-action segments.

Ran from February 11, 1917 to August 21, 1919.

Established new association with the Goldwyn Company, creating the Goldwyn-Bray Pictograph.
The Magazine on the Screen

- Differed from newsreels.
- Recognized both educational and entertainment value.
- Other examples include:
  - Screen Magazine (Universal)
  - Edison Conquest Program
  - Reel Life (Mutual-Gaumont)
  - Paramount-Holmes Travelogues (Burton Holmes)
  - World-Selig Library
Filmography: Themes

- Segments varied in tone and themes:
  - War and Current events: “Testing Men for Air Fighting” and “War Time Economy.”
  - Social Responsibility: “Helping the Deaf to Hear.”
  - Arts and Crafts: “Art in Bookbinding.”
  - Folklore: “How The Cowboy Makes His Lariat.”

- Seemed to have been shot in blocks:
  - “Sports and Pastimes of the American Cowboys” and “How The Cowboy Makes His Lariat.”
  - “A Submarine Destroyer,” “Salvaging Submarine Prey,” and “The Submarine Mine Layer.”
Filmography: Structure

• Generally *Pictographs* weekly editions included three live-action segments and one animated cartoon.

• Family oriented structures:
  – *Paramount-Bray Pictograph No. 88* (October 8, 1917)
    A Southern Deer Hunt, with R.F. Warner of *Field and Stream*
    Uncle Sam’s Hints to Housewives, No. 1, Soap Making at Home
    A Wood-Chopping Contest in New Zealand
    Bobby Bumps “World Series” (Anim.)

• Continuity:
  – “Unmasking the Mediums” (No. 65, 72, 75, 79, 86)

• Serials:
  – “Uncle Sam’s Hints to Housewives” (No. 88, 89, 90, 92, 94)
Distribution

- Available to any theatre, regardless of affiliation.
- De Luxe theater ad published in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* highlights “Also a Paramount-Bray Pictograph” as part of its program.
- Individual segments were also available for educational rentals.
How The Cowboy Makes His Lariat

• Not reviewed in “Short Subjects in Review” or “Motion Picture Educator.”
• Included in “Current Releases” listing.
• Possible reasons:
  - Pressing current events.
  - Critics lack of interest in western topics.
  - Segments of greater interest.
  - Lack of publishing space.
Further Research

- Study on the reception of western topics among critics.
- Complete filmography of the screen magazine.
- Analysis of segments released with “How The Cowboy Makes His Lariat.”
- Revision of theater programs issued the week of the segment’s release.
- Research on “Sports and Pastimes of the American Cowboys.”
Chickens!! The Clues!

- Ed Stratmann at George Eastman House.
- Title card.
- 28mm format.
- Pathéscope film catalog.
“Class A” = Non-Pathéscope film

End Card (Post Chickens)

Title Card

Pathéscope

APPROVED SLOW-BURNING FILM

INSPECTED BY THE

UNDERWRITERS’ LABORATORIES, INC.
Pathéscope

28mm Format

- French company, started marketing in America in 1913.
- Only 28mm company.
- Victor 28mm Projectors created in 1918.
- Schools, churches, community organizations and individuals rented Pathéscope films.
Owing to the New War Tax on films and the increased cost of labor and materials we are compelled to increase Prices of Films and Cost of Exchange Service.

Owners of Pathéscopes usually purchase five or more reels of film with their machine thus securing the most economical form of Owners Exchange Service.

Cost of Reels.

Each $35.00

There are two forms of Film Service.

(a) Exchange Service to Owners of Pathéscope Films.

(b) Rental Service to Non-Owners of Pathéscope Films.

(a) Prices for Exchange Service to Owners of Pathéscope Films

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner's Films Exchanged</th>
<th>After being used</th>
<th>One Reel</th>
<th>Three Reels</th>
<th>Five Reels</th>
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<tr>
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</table>

Annual Exchange Subscriptions, Payable in Advance

(Recommended as the most Economical and Satisfactory form of Service)

(a) Three Reels $90 per annum

(b) Five Reels $120 per annum

(b) Prices for Rental Service to Non-Owners of Pathéscope Films

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Transient Rental</th>
<th>One Reel</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

The following forms of regular service are recommended

Annual Rental Subscriptions, Payable Quarterly in Advance

(a) Three Reels $90 per annum

(b) Five Reels $120 per annum

Could the catalog have been published January 1918, just four months after release date?

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Class A.

“Cowboy…” reel # 313-a, Bray Pictograph.

“Chickens…” reel # 313-b, Bray Pictograph.
In the Archives

- Prints of *Paramount-Bray Pictographs: The Magazine on the Screen* are spread in different archives:
  - The National Archives of Canada: “Our First Flyers” (1918).