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Skewed Identity and Cordial Enemies: World War I Flying Aces



*Enemies In War Now Close Friends*¹

Thesis

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¹ "Enemies In War Now Close Friends." *The Scranton Republican*, December 21, 1928, accessed March 15, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/49732981/>.

"The young ace [Manfred Von Richthofen], who was Germany's premier airman, was known throughout the British forces as a "good sport" -- a clean and chivalrous, albeit fierce fighter. He seemed imbued with the spirit of cavaliers of old, battling for pure love of the game, rather than because of any rancour in his heart."² Manfred Von Richthofen, known affectionately as The Red Baron for the crimson color he painted his plane, was one of the most prolific fighter pilots of World War I. However he was not the only one. Many names rose from the battles in the sky, and among them heroes emerged, and rivalries were settled in a cloud of smoke and a hail of machine gun fire.

The fighting in the sky is a unique picture of the war, its own little microcosm that had its own separate way of life compared to the regular military on the ground. Massive swathes of lives could be taken in a day with seemingly little impact in the media, as a New York newspaper in 1918 casually mentions an additional "593 in latest casualties reported from Gen. Pershing swell the total to 46,014,"³ whereas a single pilot getting shot down could come with all manner of interesting reverberations. However there is some otherworldly magic seemingly attributed to the fighter pilots of World War I and there is no one concept or idea that created such a unique setting. The way the media pinned them as national heroes would give them fame, but it was their attitude towards each other both during and after the war that would make them legendary. The rise of the fighter pilot in World War I would produce heroes that the media would manipulate to garner nationalistic war support, though by the end of the fighting the pilots

² "Body of Richthofen, War Hero, Taken To Fatherland." *The Winnipeg Tribune*, November 19, 1925, accessed March 13, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/36411600/>.

³ "593 In Latest Casualties Reported From Gen. Pershing Swell The Total To 46,014." *The Evening World*, October 8, 1918, accessed April 10, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/88218271/>.

had actually treated each other with dignity and fellowship, ultimately using their fame to show that a war-torn world could mend.

Firstly, aviation was relatively new in 1914 as World War I began. While humankind had been devising and failing in various designs and tests to attain flight, it was not until the Wright Brothers' experiments in flight in 1903 that humans really began to lay claim to the skies. Upon success of these trials the brothers claimed that the age of the flying machine had come.⁴ What proceeded over the next decade was a rapid ascension in interest among the general populace in regards to all things aviation. This would in part be one of the reasons that aviation during war time was such a fiercely observed and reported phenomenon.

Next, one must take into account some of the debated reasons the war began in the first place. A thorough examination of the war and its potential causes can be found within John Keegan's *The First World War*.⁵ Nationalism was without a doubt a major factor in the war, as well as a myriad of defense treaties woven all throughout Europe like tripwires ready to force nations into war. Before they realized what had happened, Europe found itself enveloped in an all-out battle. Additionally this was one of Europe's first wars, at least on such a grand scale, that fought with modern weaponry. When the regular armies on the ground came to the realization that entire battalions could be eliminated in the blink of an eye from machine gun fire, or blown to bits by innovative artillery, the style of combat had to modify rapidly. Suddenly it was imperative to focus on defense over offense. Shortly prior to the war France had adopted a policy known as *offensive à outrance*. The idea was that by rushing forward, engaging the enemy, and

⁴ "Flying Machine Age Has Arrived At Last." *The Atlanta Constitution*, January 7, 1904, accessed April 14, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/34209443/>.

⁵ John Keegan. *The First World War*. New York, NY: Vintage, 2000.

accepting whatever casualties may result, France would be protected.⁶ This idea did not take into account the development of modern weaponry. The soldiers had believed the war would be swift, and that simply was not going to be the case. Out of these rapid modifications, trench warfare came to be, and the war suddenly found itself metaphorically and physically stuck in the mud. Soldiers died ignoble deaths from disease, or simply gruesome deaths from sticking their head a bit too far out of the trench. While the soldiers became physically and mentally drained, citizens of the warring nations also became morally drained. The nations needed their citizenry to remain in favor of the war.

Aviation was essentially brand new, and even before wartime it was wildly popular, especially in larger cities where more eyes could lay witness to the miracle of flight and the finances existed to support such new concepts. Also large cities such as New York, London, Paris, and Berlin served as the hubs for the production of newspapers. Obviously newspaper existed in more places, but in terms of population density with the highest potential for eyes to see and ears to hear of news, these places were unrivaled. Nations heavily depended on newspaper to provide not only updates of the ongoing war, but to actively push for war support by lauding accomplishments of its soldiers and the military's gains and victories. The problem was that the ground war was yielding very little in the way of victories that could be reported in the press. With the creation of the fighter pilot came the creation of perceived progress and the ability to pinpoint a nationalist icon. The media propelled this new variety of soldier into the spotlight, as their feats could be visibly marked, and the excitement of aviation added to the thrill of the fight.

⁶ Leonard V. Smith, Stephane Audoin-Rouzeau, and Annette Becker. *France and the Great War, 1914-1918*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003. 20.

Then finally there were the pilots themselves. From rookie pilot to famous ace, these men were converted to legend through the media. Unlike ground soldiers who had the dirty, albeit required deeds of slaughtering one another in the trenches, fighter pilots very often treated their war in the sky like a sport. If a plane was shot down, and the victor landed to check his prey, assuming both men were alive it was actually common for them to discuss what happened during the fight, and even talk of their lives and have a laugh.

A plethora of material has been written on the topic of World War I aviation, and specifically a fair amount on the topic of World War I aviation in regards to pop culture, that is, radio dramas, literature (fiction or non-fiction), music, and probably most important, cinema. Michael Paris' *From the Wright Brothers to Top Gun: Aviation, Nationalism, and Popular Culture*⁷ is a prime example of the pop culture-centric view aviation has acquired. While Paris falters a bit and has some trouble keeping an analytical focus, the idea itself is a matter of importance. That over five hundred films have been devoted to the daring and dazzling art of aviation is a testament to its impact on society. Whereas aviation itself serves as tinder, it is really World War I's fighter pilots that sparked the fire that led to aviation in cinema. Commonly presented are ideas of heroism and death-defying actions in order to take down whatever enemy the various films present. Deeply ingrained at the root of these films is that nationalistic ideology brought on by that early media during the war. Any given film may not have a particular nationalistic message, but it is the original concept of aviation in cinema that was fueled by nationalism, thus hints of that remain even in modern cinema.

⁷ Michael Paris. *From the Wright Brothers to Top Gun: Aviation, Nationalism, and Popular Cinema*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1995.

While cinema became the most far reaching method through which aviation could be glorified, it was of course not the primary initial avenue in which this new fascination manifested itself. Robert Wohl's *A Passion for Wings: Aviation and the Western Imagination, 1908-1918*⁸ is a great analysis of all spectrums of media representation from the public interest in the secretive Wright Brothers' experiments up to the celebrity worship of top pilots. Wohl's book is great because it is not simply an examination of the media itself. Rather Wohl really takes a somewhat circular look at aviation in media. That is to say, while aviation is itself a topic of interest among the general consumer of media art, it is the glorification from nationalistic reporting of that early age of flight, especially World War I aviation that leads to that same glorification within art and ultimately a self perpetuating interest in aviation as an exciting and heroic creation. The question as to whether or not aviation would have been looked upon as exciting even without various forms of art representing it is questionable, but suffice it to say that aviation being represented in art certainly increased its potential visibility among people. It is that cultural and societal impact that aviation in art has that Wohl presents in *A Passion for Wings*.

Adding onto Wohl's perspective, especially in the first few decades of aviation, is Joseph Corn's *The Winged Gospel: America's Romance with Aviation, 1900-1950*⁹ in which the author explores what aviation meant outside of art. Corn argues the concept of flight was treated with almost a religious reverence early on. The idea that it had its own separate ceremonies, creeds, and sacred spaces lends to this idea of a religious thought process. By learning to fly humans could ascend from the earthly plane and literally the sky was the limit. It was transcending to

⁸ Robert Wohl. *A Passion for Wings: Aviation and the Western Imagination, 1908-1918*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994.

⁹ Joseph J Corn. *The Winged Gospel: America's Romance with Aviation, 1900-1950*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1983.

something higher. It truly captured the minds and hearts of the population. Using this train of thought however one must see the pilot as an extension of religion. If planes were the tool for humans to ascend in, does that make these pilots likened to gods?

It was not just the *Triple Entente* forces during the war that became obsessed with aviation. Equal in obsession were the Central Powers. *A Nation of Fliers: German Aviation and the Popular Imagination*¹⁰ by Peter Fritzsche provides a look at the rise of aviation adoration from a German perspective. Something to note in Fritzsche's book is how divergent German interest was in aviation leading up to the war. Zeppelins were wildly popular and a celebration of southern German engineering. However during the war focus shifted to fighter pilots, and the hero worship with it. This of course then follows in line with the *entente* forces at that point. The influence of the fighter pilot overtaking interest is undeniable.

As an arguable counterpoint, lastly there is *Sky as Frontier: Adventure, Aviation, and Empire*¹¹ by David Courtwright. Within the book Courtwright argues that it is the pioneering of aviation itself that was so attractive. Especially so considering pioneers tend to be young and often well off men who have extra time to explore these new frontiers. The counterpoint behind such an idea would be to question whether or not it was the fighter pilot that really sparked interest, or would that interest have arrived regardless? Many fighter pilots were youthful and attractive, and the war caused them to rapidly push aviation tactics and technology to never before seen extremes. Then of course there is the media's involvement, propping up these pilots into legendary positions in order to bolster war support. Without the war, would the idea of

¹⁰ Peter Fritzsche. *A Nation of Fliers: German Aviation and the Popular Imagination*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992.

¹¹ David T. Courtwright. *Sky as Frontier: Adventure, Aviation, and Empire*. College Station, TX: Texas A & M University Press, 2005.

aviation as a frontier have been so extremely appealing so early on, or would it have taken some time? Regardless of the potential answers, there are two things that simply cannot be separated. Without the aircraft there is no pilot, and without the pilot, the magic of aviation is wasted. They are a permanently entwined concept.

Aviation had already exponentially grown in popularity among sportsmen before the war ever broke out. While the concept of motorized flight was brand new, ballooning had already been established for quite some time, dating back as far as 1783 when brothers Joseph-Michel and Jacques- Étienne Montgolfier took to the skies over France.¹² The idea of commercial airships had begun to appear in the early 1900s. As such things were considered a luxury for the wealthy, many hubs of aviation were centered around major metropolitan areas. An example of the lofty dreams for the future of aviation can be seen in the Ebell Aviation Club in Los Angeles. In particular club member Dick Ferris was interviewed by *The Los Angeles Herald* in January of 1910 and when questioned on the progress of aviation stated:

We have no idea of the progress that will be made in conquering the air. Within five years you will see airships plying between Los Angeles and New York. The aeroplane as we know it today, and as you will see it at the aviation meet, bears the same relation to aerial travel that the bicycle did to automobile traffic.

The aviation meet from January 10 to 20 will demonstrate the greatest flying the world has ever seen. We have famous and daring men coming, and I am certain that world's records will be made anew.¹³

Already a zeal for flight was manifested in the mind of people far before the war even began. It is interesting to note Ferris' specification that the club has famous and daring men coming,

¹² Richard Holmes. *Falling Upwards: How We Took to the Air*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 2013. 5.

¹³ "Ebell Club Hears Talk On Aviation." *The Los Angeles Herald*, January 4, 1910, accessed March 13, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/78611118/>.

indicating that perhaps even before fighter pilots came into being, young and daring pilots had already achieved a manner of celebrity status among them. This would be congruent with Courtwright's *Sky as Frontier* argument. Though before the war this celebrity status is really restricted to those who hold an interest in aviation already. Without that nationalistic sentiment, widespread fame could not be achieved by these early pilots. Important also is the fact that Mr. Ferris goes on later in the interview to mention the heavy financial burden the club accrues. Just like any early technology, access is restricted and costs are extremely high. This is something else to consider when examining how aviation may have progressed had the war not broken out. Aviation technology developed extremely rapidly during the war as nations realized the value of the airplane as a tool for reconnaissance¹⁴ and especially as a weapon. One of the best financiers of any prospective venture is a government protecting national interests, even more so when its citizenry supports the war, another reason why media would come to play such an important role in the rise of aviation. Whether or not aviation would have progressed as rapidly as it did without government support is debatable.

While the celebrity status among aviation members may have been restricted to the aviation circles early on, aviation itself was commonly making headlines in the pre-war period. On the thirty-first of December in 1910, *The Pittston Gazette* out of Pennsylvania published an article entitled "Events in 1910" with the subtitle "Wonders of Aviation - Items of Miscellaneous Interest, Accidents, Wrecks and Floods - A Chronological Review."¹⁵ Just the fact that aviation immediately is noted in the subtitle is an indication that it was a closely examined spectacle.

¹⁴ "British Warships Hurling Destruction Upon German Position At Middlekerke." *The Ottawa Journal*, December 19, 1914, accessed April 20, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/43917307/>.

¹⁵ "Events in 1910, Record of the Year from January to December." *Pittston Gazette*, December 31, 1910, accessed March 14, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/52124417/>.

Within the article itself there are thirty aviation related events the publication considers significant. These events vary from plane crashes to record breaking feats or competitions and races in which someone won a large sum of money as a prize. Aviation already had a fair amount of interest among people, it was just missing a specific spark to bring it completely mainstream. The spark would be much larger and substantially deadlier than most expected.

Testing the practicality of the airplane as a weapon of war had begun a few years before the beginning of World War I. The technology was new and needed refinement as early tests were rather crude in their efficiency, but the potential was certainly there. One of the first examples of military testing was in June of 1910. An article published by *The Junction City Weekly Union* from Kansas details an in-depth presentation of what tests would be conducted. Pilot Charles K. Hamilton would take to the skies carrying with him approximately two hundred to three hundred pounds of nitro glycerin bombs. At a speed between forty five and fifty five miles an hour he would proceed to drop said bombs over various dummy targets: fortifications, batteries, bridges, trains, and the like. In addition, two other pilots would follow to serve as aerial scouts flying in the Wright biplane, though these scouts were essentially unarmed and served really only as reconnaissance to help retain knowledge and mapping of the area below.¹⁶

Hamilton's group in some ways can be seen as an early equivalent to a flight squadron seen within that three plane structure: a bomber and escorts. As years of military aeronautic tactics would develop, varying formations would come and go, but a general structure of bombers and escorts would remain. Military pilot Wally Blackwell wrote an article describing bomber formations in World War II that shows the development of such tactics. From Box

¹⁶ "For War Purposes: Aeroplane Test to Be Made at Military Tournament." *The Junction City Weekly Union*, June 3, 1910, accessed March 15, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/93460423/>.

Formation in which planes would fly two by two in a diamond pattern, to Vee Formation in which two stacks of five planes would fan out in an inverse V shape, increasing visibility to potential enemy threat, the development of such formations began with Hamilton, but rapidly developed as was the trend with aviation tactics.¹⁷ While Hamilton's scouts had no weaponry on board, the idea that other planes would work and coordinate with, or protect, the bomber to succeed in a bombing mission is something that can be seen in modern flight. The problem in 1910 however was the technology was just not quite there yet. The bomber was inefficient, literally dropping bombs by his own hand, and the scouts served no other purpose than scouting. While that would seem to make sense from a logical standpoint, when it comes to military affairs most jobs serve a multi-purpose role. A soldier is most effective if they can do their job, but also defend themselves if need be. The scouts had no means of such defense, nor did the bomber for that matter. The only solace that could be had in regards to that on an international scale is that no one had really developed a way to attack other planes yet either, thus in the event of a war it would be a rather awkward flight spotting an enemy only to have no real way to attack them.

When the war came about, there still was not a very effective method of aerial combat. When enemy pilots first encountered one another in the air, most likely on the way to photograph one another's trenches, they would actually wave to one another as though they were all in a club together. After all, how exciting to see pilots from other countries, even though they may be enemies, they do share the passion and drive of that early aviation pioneer spirit. Before too long they began to throw objects at each other, such as bricks and even grenades,¹⁸ but of course these

¹⁷ Wally Blackwell. "398th Bomb Group Combat Formations." 398th Bomb Group Memorial Association. December 1, 2003, accessed April 17, 2015, http://www.398th.org/Research/8th_AF_Formations_Description.html.

¹⁸ William Kelleher Storey. *The First World War: A Concise Global History*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009. 130.

were ludicrously inaccurate and more dangerous to the thrower than the receiving plane, as the potential to fall out of the craft due to instability was a very real possibility. Finally pilots and their navigators, the ones who would sit in the rear seat, began carrying pistols and the seeds of the airplane as a weapon of war began to sprout.

One of the first aircraft shot down in the war was gleefully reported by the *Triple Entente* forces, as it was a German. This event, which occurred on 5 October 1914, can really serve as a miniature version of what military aviation would soon grow to be. It also marks the beginning of how the media would select specific keywords that would catch the attention of its readers, drawing them in and sweeping them up into that fiercely competitive spirit, which would create a sport-like subculture within warfare aviators.

Official dispatches received by the French government today give a graphic account of an aerial duel which was watched by thousands of soldiers of the French and German Armies Oct. 5 at Jonchery, in the region of Rheims.

A German aeroplane of the aviatric type ascended with two men, and after circling over the French positions was returning to its own lines when Sergt. [Joseph] Frantz, one of the most expert of French aviators, accompanied by his mechanic, Quinault, sprang to a machine and gave chase.

By a skillful maneuver the French aeroplane took the German on the flank and wounded the pilot and put a bullet through the gasoline tank.

A sheet of flame enveloped the aviatric and the machine dropped rapidly, landing close to the French lines. In the descent the unwounded man continued to fire his pistol until prevented by the flames.

Sergt. Frantz came to earth in a series of magnificent spirals. Both Germans were found burned to death in the embers of their machine. Frantz was decorated with the Legion of Honor and Quinault was awarded the military medal for their exploit.¹⁹

¹⁹ "Thrilling Aerial Duel Results in Death to German Aviators." *The Indianapolis Star*, October 8, 1914, accessed March 14, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/7557739/>.

It is important to note that this was before front mounted machine guns, which would become the dominant method of aerial combat by the end of the war. Quinault was actually using a machine gun which he had to stand up in the rear seat to operate, again providing a strong possibility that he could have simply fallen out of the seat entirely given any sudden instability of the plane.

There are a lot of very important details to consider in this prototype of what would eventually become known as dogfighting. First is the subtitle attached to the article itself, in large bold print: "Thrilling Aerial Duel Results in Death to German Aviators." This is intended to be exciting news. It is not listed as "French encounter with German airplane results in death" or "Aviators meet with unexpected fate"; these words are intended to create a reaction. The two words to single out would be "thrilling" and especially "duel." Both are words designed to grab attention and hold interest. Most importantly is the concept of calling these encounters duels. A duel is a battle to the death, harkening back to the age of knightly contests, and honor feuds. Dueling itself was something nobility tended to participate in, likening these pilots to aristocracy. While dueling took a steep decline leading up to the turn of the 20th century, there was still some who considered the concept romantic in nature.²⁰ By stating this as a duel, the already exciting field of aviation acquired a new level of competitiveness that had not been considered up to this point. Not only could humans ascend above their earthly chains, but they could compete and fight to find out who was truly the most superior flier. The birth of the fighter pilot really was a complete transformation for the love and appreciation of the daring and dangerous field of aviation.

²⁰ Kevin McAleer. *Dueling: The Cult of Honor in Fin-de-Siècle Germany*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994.

The caveat currently was the fact that it required two fliers to make a kill: a pilot and a shooter. Very rarely do heroes come in sets of two. Even among famous modern day duos like the iconic Batman and Robin in pop culture Robin is completely overshadowed by Batman. That was the missing link to the true rise of a national celebrity pilot. The creation of the front mounted machine gun, or more specifically the synchronization gear, or interrupter that allowed the guns to be fired without puncturing the propellers would allow the cat and mouse game to commence in full. This gear made its debut in 1915, developed originally by the French but perfected by Dutch engineer Anton Fokker for German use.²¹ With this technology, it was all up to the pilot: maneuvers, outwitting the opponent, successfully acquiring a target, aiming, and taking down the prey, all while managing to keep one's own aircraft stable and in the air. With all the pieces set it was just a matter of time before aces began to emerge, and with that, national acclaim. An article in *The Boston Post* in 1917 actually describes all who achieve the title of ace as also being recognized as a national hero.²²

During the remainder of the war scores were kept, medals were thrown out like candy at a parade and nations were quick to declare who they believed was their master ace, so that the country could rally behind him, as though while in the air his mission was two-fold: to eliminate the enemy, and proudly wave the national colors. A fine example of how eager nations were to latch onto an ace that could represent their country can be found in a short piece from *The Hutchinson News*, a newspaper out of Hutchinson, Kansas. While the focus of the piece is actually about a crash that nearly took French ace Rene Fonck's life, something that seemingly

²¹ Storey, 130-131.

²² "M'Connell Killed In France Wrote of American Fliers." *The Boston Post*, April 1, 1917, accessed April 20, 2015, www.newspapers.com/image/72030248/.

became very prevalent in the post-war period among pilots, there is a background of Fonck within that sums up how quickly an ace could rise from a face in the crowd to a hero.

The American infantry and artillery of the First division were burrowed in shell holes to what was known as the Montdidier sector in front of Beauvais, just after the March drive of the Germans. Overhead they saw six German planes shot down within an hour and a half.

A few days later they learned that these planes had been shot down by one man, Second Lieutenant Rene Fonck, of the French air service. France acclaimed him immediately as her ace of aces, and a few days later the nation's enthusiasm knew no bounds when he repeated his feat.

Thereafter for many of the French the war consisted in a game whose greatest interest was the rapidly climbing score of air planes shot down by Rene Fonck of his promotion to first lieutenant and to a captaincy, and his acquisition of new medals.²³

It had without a doubt become a game. Even in the modern age pilots are still famous for their scores of downed enemy planes. "Forty Aeroplanes Down By A German" in boldface type adorns the front page of the 1 May 1917 edition of *The Moberly Monitor-Index* out of Missouri²⁴, the exploits of famous German ace Manfred Von Richthofen, The Red Baron. Harkening once again to previous dueling games such as gladiatorial arenas in Rome or jousting tournaments among knights during the Middle Ages, if they managed to put on a good show, people would rally behind them.

However in this new form of duel, the pilots represented nations, and the destruction of the premier pilot could be very difficult news for a nation to bear. It was the age of nationalism.²⁵ The fact that these pilots had the potential for greatness, as well as great danger every time they

²³ "Fonck Was Nemesis of Many a Boche Plane." *The Hutchinson News*, September 21, 1926, accessed March 15, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/8524370/>.

²⁴ "Forty Aeroplanes Down By A German." *Moberly Monitor-Index*, May 1, 1917, accessed March 16, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/4624148/>.

²⁵ Glenda Sluga. *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013. 11.

were in the sky made watching their performance riveting. Rene Fonck may have been in the pilot seat, but he and the squadrons around him represented France in the sky, just as Richthofen's Flying Circus squadron was fiercely representing Germany.

The newness of aviation coupled with the stagnancy of the ground war created a fierce contrast. The ground war was not exciting, but the battle in the sky was, so of course it garnered more attention as a result. Part of this attention was the creation of legends. However what defines a legend? Should not a legend be a character who is beyond the grasp of mortality and whose feats and deeds live for eternity? Perhaps that is too archaic a view on a legend. Perhaps the idea of a legend shifted just as much with the shifting of warfare during the time. While one could argue the intricacies of legends, there are some undeniable facts when it comes to pilots of the time that lend to, at the bare minimum, standing apart from the sea of regular soldiers.

These pilots were indeed pioneers. While ballooning had been established for some time, the idea of fast and furious motorized flight was in its infancy, and the air of danger about the whole affair was certainly an attractive quality. Many of these men were attractive and charismatic individuals, though newspapers may have commonly boosted their egos quite a bit. A description of Rene Fonck in *The Iola Register*, Kansas, reads closer to the description of a personals ad rather than a war hero: "The French ace is 32, blond, unmarried, humorist, diplomat, and sportsman," a bit later in the article it states "he avoids night clubs on the grounds that he is 'a knowing young man,' and declares that he has been too busy to marry, although he acknowledged that he has received many proposals from young ladies willing to be the wife of an international hero."²⁶

²⁶ "No Inquiry in Fatal Ship Drop." *The Iola Register*, September 21, 1926, accessed March 15, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/1067276/>.

Manfred von Richthofen received similar treatment during the Nazi regime in the late 1930s, albeit the Nazis were less interested in how Richthofen looked and more interested in using his name to espouse and invoke the image of a true Nazi:

[Richthofen's] flaming red death chariot, which he had painted a different color that all could know him, swept defiantly through the western skies, a challenge to all comers. A fearless, steel nerved fighter, who could crack down one enemy plane after another with unerring skill, yet, so stories say, he was equally famous for his chivalry which spared the life of many an adversary disabled in fight.

The glory of heroes is oft interred with their bones. Not so with Von Richthofen. His comrades may still exultantly exclaim, "Von Richthofen flies again." This time he is soaring to sainthood.

The name of Von Richthofen will not die. Aside from his personal enduring appeal, the ace has a mission to perform in the new Germany of Adolph Hitler. His life preaches the sermon "der fuehrer" wants preached, so he is being substantially erected an icon to exemplify Hitler's new "mann typ."²⁷

The idea of a pilot being ascended to sainthood most certainly falls in line with Corn's *The Winged Gospel*, although Corn's focus was with the American public, this idea spans across the Atlantic into the European sphere. Rather it seems in the post-war period, Western obsession with consumerism led to aces being used in advertisements for products, very similar to how film and music celebrities in the modern era lend their name to promoting goods in order to garner attention to the product. During a visit to the United States in 1926 Rene Fonck was used in an advertisement for ginger ale. The article showers the war ace in praise before quoting what Fonck had said about the ginger ale in such a stiff and odd manner that it takes on almost a humorous atmosphere:

²⁷ "Famous German Ace Acclaimed by Nazis as Symbol of New Order." *The Salt Lake Tribune*, April 21, 1935, accessed March 14, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/16859089/>.

For all time, the name of Rene Fonck is written in history as a hero of France. This greatest of living aviators was decorated so often during the war that he has hardly room enough to wear his medals. Since the war he has added to his other honors by being elected a member of the Chamber of Deputies.

During his recent visit to this country, Rene Fonck became acquainted with Clicquot Club Pale Dry Ginger Ale. Here is what he said about it:

"Never before have I been in a prohibition country. It is less arduous than I thought, and one thing that makes it so is this Clicquot Club Pale Dry Ginger Ale. I think it is a delicious drink, refreshing and delicate in flavor. It is very dry - what in French we call *Sec*. Yes, Clicquot Club is a drink I thoroughly enjoy."²⁸

These men were truly given a celebrity status, and yet it was from the media reporting in such a way that made them seem larger in life and placed them on such a high pedestal. They were treated above human, especially in the case of the projected sainthood of Richthofen. However by far the most interesting aspect of the aviators of World War I was not how these pilots were represented, but how the pilots themselves actually were.

Earlier it was mentioned that anyone who took to the skies and had a passion in aviation were treated as a big collective club of sorts. They were all aviators, members of this new and exciting field. The first military crafts up in the sky waved at each other as they passed by, presumably excited just to see fellow aviators. However the way fighter pilots would act towards one another was an experience that simply has yet to be replicated in any war since, and possibly before. There was a high degree of civility among the fighters. If it were not for the fact that they were attempting to shoot each other down, these pilots could easily have been mistaken as friends. Many times they actually did become friends after the war. There was no question among the ground soldiers however. If an encounter with the enemy commenced, it was sure to

²⁸ "Rene Fonck: The Great French Ace." *The Decatur Daily Review*, June 17, 1926, accessed March 13, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/10672205/>.

be a fight to the death. An article from *New Castle News* in 1916 described a battle in the trenches as “bloody combat in trenches and caves and underground passage ways where the soldiers grappled like wild beasts.”²⁹ Quite a different perspective than the lofty, handsome heroes of the sky.

Ernst Udet was Germany's number one living ace and was essentially the face of that nation's aviation in the inter-war period, known for his charisma and constant on-the-go traveling. He was rarely seen at home. In a 1927 interview published in *The Manitowoc Herald-Times* in Wisconsin, Udet recounts a story that really exemplifies the bond shared among aviators of the age:

On Sept. 10 1917, the French for the first time flew over that part of our lines with bombs. I dropped down amid a squadron of them and my shooting forced one of them to land. I had to do the same thing because of severe shooting my plane received. The comical thing was that the French loser made a beautiful landing and I, the German winner, made a rotten landing. The French came out of their machine and shook hands cordially. They even looked sheepishly at the sign they had painted on their machine -- "Here comes the destroyer." We had a laugh together over that.³⁰

Instead of taking the opportunity to attempt to finish one another off, these two enemies in war sat about and had a joke over an ironic slogan, considering the French pilot was the first to fall after such a bold proclamation. It is also of note that this interview slathers on heavy doses of the pilot adoration common of the time; noting his score of 62 allied crafts down, and the fact that he had participated in a bevy of dangerous and exciting activities such as gliding and motorcycle racing.

²⁹ "Fort Vaux Is Captured By Germans." *New Castle News*, June 8, 1916, accessed April 20, 2015, www.newspapers.com/image/73038513/.

³⁰ "In War He Was "The Wasp"---Now "The Flying Flea"---Ace Udet, Soon to Fly to U.S., Brought Down 62 Allied Planes." *Manitowoc Herald-Times*, September 7, 1927, accessed March 14, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/8444083/>.

Another of Udet's accounts can be found within *The Sandusky Register* out of Ohio in 1931. When Udet arrived to participate in an air show, he brought with him the number tag of an allied plane he had shot down and conversed with: American pilot Judge Wanamaker. Udet wished to return the tag as a sign of goodwill. There he also met with William Waldmueller from Cleveland, who once had saved Udet's life. Udet had been forced down and Waldmueller, knowing deadly and poisonous gas was near the area, grabbed and ran with Udet to a nearby cave for safety.³¹

These experiences simply do not invoke images of warring nations. They sound more like friendly competition with potentially dangerous results, not unlike a sport, which seemed to be the case a lot of the time. Even the Red Baron, the most infamous of aces, was treated with great reverence among all nations. Referring back to the 19 November 1925 edition of *The Winnipeg Tribune* that was mentioned earlier, when Richthofen's remains were finally returned to Germany many compared him to a cavalier of old, battling for the thrill of the contest, without rancor in his heart. Within that same article there is mention of the burial itself, a spectacular show to say the least:

His body was treated with the greatest reverence, a special lead coffin was procured, and for a time he lay almost in state in a tent near the fighting lines with a guard of soldiers. A sentry stood over the fallen plane.

He was buried in the Fricourt cemetery, with fullest military honors, while a great fleet of Allied planes circled overhead. Distinguished French, British, and Belgian officers came long distances to do him honor, and the last rites were among the most impressive seen along the front during the war.³²

³¹ "Once-Hated German Ace Now Is Hit of Air Races." *The Sandusky Register*, September 3, 1931, accessed March 14, 2015, www.newspapers.com/image/4931147/.

³² "Body of Richthofen, War Hero, Taken To Fatherland." *The Winnipeg Tribune*, November 19, 1925, accessed March 16, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/36411600/>.

Again, the presentation is so otherworldly and extreme that it very well could be mistaken for some major religious figure perishing. While ground soldiers may have been blown to pieces, dozens at a time, they would see nothing remotely close to the level of fanfare that aviators like Richthofen would receive.

Many pilots certainly developed an affinity for catching the public eye, and seemingly enjoyed being in the spotlight, but being in that spotlight may have come with unwished for pressures as well. A celebrity is still human, and humans are frail and prone to mistakes. In the field of aviation, mistakes can be the end of one's life, and there are quite a few cases where this becomes a post-war pilot's reality. Citizens after the war seemed to look upon the fighter pilots as invincible, steel-nerved aviators that knew their craft inside and out. Of course they did, but aviation, just like any technology, advances rapidly. Faster and more technically difficult planes were being developed even during the war. Unfortunately, many pilots had either near-death experiences, or actually died after the war in routine accidents. The question to ask would be was it because these craft were new and experimental, or did it have something to do with the glorified image the public eye bestowed upon the war heroes? Alternatively, perhaps pressure from the public eye pushed them to further heights than they may have reached without such an ego?

A pilot credited with a victory over the Red Baron, a feat very few had on their records, died during a routine flight. Captain A. G. Woodford, a pilot for Imperial Airways, was flying a mail plane with two passengers near Jask when his plane crashed and was engulfed in flame. All three members of the flight perished.³³ What happened? How could a pilot who was nimble and

³³ "Plane Wreck Kills War Ace." *The San Bernardino County Sun*, September 8, 1929, accessed March 15, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/48951205/>.

clever enough to take down the most notorious pilot during the war crash a plane on a routine flight delivering mail? While there is the possibility that there was some manner of mechanical failure, a large portion of accidents in life come from user error. Perhaps Woodford, as well as other pilots, grew complacent or even arrogant in their flying ability, assuming themselves invincible because of their records, or even the ego they had acquired from being hailed as heroes. *The Indiana Weekly Messenger* certainly placed the blame on overconfidence, relaying a study done by the office of the chief of the Air Corps that stated “sixty-three percent of all fatal airplane accidents in the army air corps, reserve and National Guard during 1928 were caused by errors on the part of the pilots.”³⁴ The same article even has a subtitle that plainly states “Overconfidence Blamed,”³⁵ to remove all doubt that it could be something else.

Another example can be seen in the extremely charismatic Fonck. On September 21st, 1926, Rene Fonck along with radio operator Charles Glavier and mechanic Jacob Istamoff attempted a transatlantic flight from Paris to New York. Upon taking off one of the landing gear wheels buckled and brought the craft down, crashing to the ground. The radio operator and mechanic burned in the wreckage, but Fonck managed to leap from the plane just in time, which most likely just added to his legendary persona. Even the article mentions Fonck has a “charmed” life.³⁶ In this particular case it was a matter of mechanical malfunction. It may not actually have been overconfidence, but a media-fueled ego certainly existed with some pilots. Also consider the possibility that avionic technology was possibly progressing too rapidly for these early pilots to keep up with. The same group of pilots that flew the first motorized aircraft

³⁴ "Pilots Blamed For Many Air Accidents." *Indiana Weekly Messenger*, October 31, 1929, accessed April 20, 2015, www.newspapers.com/image/10010037/.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ "No Inquiry in Fatal Ship Drop." *The Iola Register*, September 21, 1926, accessed March 15, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/1067276/>.

were now attempting transcontinental flight within only a couple decades. Then again, that danger may have added to the public's fascination of such pilots.

It is plainly obvious that aviation has had a massive impact in society in general. It continues to captivate the imagination of people the world over. Whether one looks at aviation in a romantic manner, such as in the creation of literature or art³⁷, a historical manner, like obsessing over the early model planes, or even futuristically, attempting to discover that line between airplane and the eventual conversion to spacecraft, the fact of the matter is that humans love the idea of flight. The difference today is that unless one is particularly interested in the concept of aviation itself, flight is a routine thing at this point. There are thousands of passenger jets in the sky at any given time³⁸, casually carrying their living cargo from one side of the planet to the other. There is nothing special, unless one feels that it is special. The early days of aviation were different. It was an incredible spectacle. Similar in the current age to experiencing a space shuttle take off. When up in the sky now, pilots are not really considered anything special. They are trained personnel just like any technician. Therein is the difference however. There was no manual in those first few years. Flight was far more connected to the human instinct then, whereas computers manage a lot of the work currently. That is not to discredit modern day pilots; their job is just as valuable now as it was in the past. However one can argue that there is a very human element in those early days of flight. The pilot was just as mystical as the plane itself.

³⁷ Jim Wilberg and Jack Herris. *Tumult in the Clouds: The Aviation Art of Russell Smith*. Indio, CA: Aeronaut Books, 2011.

³⁸ "A Map of Every Passenger Plane in the Skies at This Instant." *Smithsonian*. September 17, 2012, accessed April 21, 2015, <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/a-map-of-every-passenger-plane-in-the-skies-at-this-instant-39070996/?no-ist>.

In the news, pilots were transformed into larger than life figures that always seemed to be ready and willing to fight for their country, armed with a dashing personality, good looks, and preferably a machine gun on their airplane. Even the already famous were signing up to fly.³⁹ However, the pilots being transformed into warmongers for the visage of nationalism, regardless of which nation, was rather inaccurate from how they actually acted towards one another. They were still human beings, and they all shared a similar passion. Even though they were still fighting, the fact that they were all flying in the sky together created a unique club of sorts, a balance between fighting for one's country and sharing in that love of flying.

After the war, there was a shift in the newspapers. The numbers and scores remained, those would be etched into the annals of history permanently. Suddenly though there were faces being put to these already legendary names, and while the media had created these legendary giants through their reporting during the war, it was now their job to show that these were still men. Commonly seen was replacing what once would be written as enemy now changed to friends. Truly they were just showing who they really were, not what the media had designed them as during wartime. From killing machines to paragons of peace, the same pilots that were referenced as saviors of nations or demons to freedom and all manner of name-calling positive and negative now became proponents of peace in a war-weary world.

A prime example of this can be seen in a copy of *The Iola Register*, September 4th, 1930. In bold headlines a proclamation reads "French and German Air Conquerors Are Friends." The particular aces in this instance is French ace Dieudonne Coste and German ace Wolfgang Von Gronau. Most important is to notice the selective word usage within the article itself. There are

³⁹ "Famous Actor of Germany Captured by French Troops." *The Lincoln Star*, October 31, 1915, accessed April 20, 2015, www.newspapers.com/image/40594294/.

three separate sections that heavily leans towards an idea of brotherhood, peace, and unification, when a bit over a decade ago these words would have scoffed at the German's achievements and showered the French ace in praise. "Two trans-Atlantic fliers who faced each other across battle lines of the great war, were friends today, bound together in the fraternity of their conquest of dangerous ocean air lines."⁴⁰ Regardless of their national identities, there is the idea of a fraternity among aviators that transcends any sort of national allegiance. Coste expanded on that concept by stating: "aviation knew no border lines and fliers were all members of one family." Additionally, Mayor Jimmy Walker of New York City who had attended this meeting of fliers with Charles Lindbergh, mentioned that the meeting was "the greatest step towards peace" that he himself had ever witnessed.⁴¹

There is an article published in *The Scranton Republican* on 21 December 1928 that simply encapsulates everything discussed here. Within it one can see the media's propulsion of these war aces as legends, yet at the same time witness the levels of camaraderie and friendship among two former enemies: Rene Fonck and Ernst Udet, two of the greatest aces ever to live. Fonck and Udet met outside of a hotel in Berlin. It was the first time they had seen each other since the war, although now under seriously less tension. Cordial greetings were exchanged and the newspaper makes mention of the fact that the two used to fiercely fight one another in the skies above the battlefield. Also noted is their individual scores, common when discussing aces: 73 for Fonck, 62 for Udet. Now friends, Fonck makes a peculiar statement that lends more to the idea that while they may have had to fight because of the war, the bond between flying men runs deeper than warfare. "Yes I have found a new friend in the person of an old enemy, we were

⁴⁰ "French And German Air Conquerors Are Friends." *The Iola Register*, September 4, 1930, accessed April 19, 2015, www.newspapers.com/image/14776212/.

⁴¹ Ibid.

gunning for each other in the old days, but we can meet pleasantly together now. We talk the same language—the language of the flying man.”⁴²

His sentence is vitally important on a few levels. In it, he is essentially transcending the war on a small scale. Saying that while they were once enemies, but can now meet as friends essentially breaks down the walls of post-war tension. Additionally these two were some of the most wildly popular aviators of the time, so many eyes and ears would see and hear this news. Europe had lost so much during the war, on both sides of the trenches. There must have been some degree of solace to be seen in two war heroes meeting as friends. The article even ends in pleas for peace and harmony within the world. “When you look back upon all these things, how can one help being for peace?” remarked Udet. “Yes,” replied Fonck, “if you asked the views of the ex-service men I am sure there would be a crushing majority in favor of peace.”⁴³

During World War I and the height of nationalism, it was important to dehumanize the enemy. It is much more difficult to annihilate an army by thinking that they are human, just like everyone else. Instead it was about eliminating a threat, whether it was classified as evil, or backwards thinking, or any manner of thought that made the other side in direct opposition. The media did the same thing to the aces in the sky. They turned them into nationalistic idols in order to label them as their country’s own. It was not Udet versus Rickenbacker, it was Germany versus the United States. It was only after the war that these icons returned to being real people, albeit now grand celebrities in the eyes of the citizens. The unification and camaraderie that was created among former enemy aviators during the post-war period served as part of the grand movement of mending the Western world had to participate in after such a gruesome war. While

⁴² "Enemies In War Now Close Friends." *The Scranton Republican*, December 21, 1928, accessed March 15, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/49732981/>.

⁴³ Ibid.

The League of Nations forming⁴⁴ is definitely a macro concept in regards to mending, it can be difficult for people to agree on international politics. While pilots may be less important in regards to such grand politics, they were popular in the public eye. In seeing that, the media took those international celebrities and showed the world that it was possible to move on. However, what the media never showed was that those men, while once enemies, never really treated each other as such. When it comes to the aviators of World War I, there is a consistent semblance of civility and dignity amongst one another, a unique phenomenon that only furthers the immortality that these men achieved. They were indeed some of the most humane members in a war soaked in blood and spite.

⁴⁴ "League of Nations Holds Its First Session, Marking New Era in World." *The Daily Notes*, January 16, 1920, accessed April 22, 2015, www.newspapers.com/image/53142386/.

Annotated Bibliography

Primary Sources

A note on www.newspapers.com: Due to the nature of my paper this was a vital and absolutely necessary resource, as media representation is found in no better place than the media itself, newspapers especially given the time period. The website is an enormous undertaking in digital archiving, chronicling an incredible amount of newspapers by images. It is without a doubt the next best thing to physically holding the document itself, and substantially more convenient.

Atlanta Constitution, The. "Flying Machine Age Has Arrived At Last." January 7, 1904. Accessed April 14, 2015. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/34209443/>.

This was chosen due to the fact that it shows that right from the start people and the media had a vested interest in reporting on aviation. It was new, and exciting.

Boston Post, The. "M'Connell Killed In France Wrote of American Fliers." April 1, 1917. Accessed April 20, 2015. www.newspapers.com/image/72030248/.

Selected for its controversial statement that all aviators who achieved the status of ace were immediately recognized as national heroes. While controversial, there does appear to be a degree of truth to it, though the aces that scored dozens of kills were vastly more promoted than brand new aces.

Daily Notes, The. "League of Nations Holds Its First Session, Marking New Era in World." January 16, 1920. Accessed April 22, 2015. www.newspapers.com/image/53142386/.

As the day the League of Nations officially began, it was important to note when comparing it to the vast popularity that post-war aviators were receiving during the time, as well as to exemplify how the Western world was attempting to mend from the suffering of war.

Decatur Daily Review, The. "Rene Fonck: The Great French Ace." June 17, 1926. Accessed March 13, 2015. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/10672205/>.

An excellent little advertisement that plainly shows that the popularity of aces were being used for commercialism due to their popularity, not unlike movie stars in the modern era being chosen to promote various products.

Evening World, The. "593 In Latest Casualties Reported From Gen. Pershing Swell The Total To 46,014." October 8, 1918. Accessed April 10, 2015. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/88218271/>.

In this piece, it is shown how minor ground soldier casualties seemed to matter, as literally hundreds of lives are reduced to a mere number, whereas if an ace were to die his name would be honored in newspapers all over the place.

Hutchinson News, The. "Fonck Was Nemesis of Many a Boche Plane." September 21, 1926. Accessed March 15, 2015. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/8524370/>.

Not only does this article show Rene Fonck's rapid rise to stardom, but it also shows that people began to consider the air war a game, and began keeping score on who acquired the most points.

Indiana Weekly Messenger, The. "Pilots Blamed For Many Air Accidents." October 31, 1929. Accessed April 20, 2015. www.newspapers.com/image/10010037/.

This article was selected due to its direct relation that pilots had begun to grow arrogant in their skills, and user error was indeed rampant among pilots, not just mechanical failure.

Indianapolis Star, The. "Thrilling Aerial Duel Results in Death to German Aviators." October 8, 1914. Accessed March 14, 2015. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/7557739/>.

An important piece that lends to the idea that the media was using specific words to draw attention to the pilots fighting. By grabbing the people's attention, this begins an important conversion of pilot, to ace, to celebrity, or even national icon.

Iola Register, The. "French And German Air Conquerors Are Friends." September 4, 1930. Accessed April 19, 2015. www.newspapers.com/image/14776212/.

One of a couple pieces that represent how the media represented veteran aviators after the war. By stating things like this, it shows the citizenry that if two flying, dueling enemies can make up and be friends, then perhaps there was indeed hope for the countries to look past their former issues and move forward.

Iola Register, The. "No Inquiry in Fatal Ship Drop." September 21, 1926. Accessed March 15, 2015. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/1067276/>.

This piece, focused on Fonck, provides evidence that the media would commonly take opportunities to shower the famous aviators in praise, ironically due to the celebrity status they achieved from the way the media romantically reported them during the war.

Junction City Weekly Union, The. "For War Purposes: Aeroplane Test to Be Made at Military Tournament." June 3, 1910. Accessed March 15, 2015. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/93460423/>.

Selected due to the piece showing how aviation was quickly taking on a military presence, and how airplanes may be used not for traveling or sport, but as weapons of war.

Lincoln Star, The. "Famous Actor of Germany Captured by French Troops." October 31, 1915. Accessed April 20, 2015. www.newspapers.com/image/40594294/.

A piece selected to show that many of those who became pilots were young and daring, and even handsome, already famous actors took to the skies.

Los Angeles Herald, The. "Ebell Club Hears Talk On Aviation." January 4, 1910. Accessed March 13, 2015. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/78611118/>.

In this article, it is important to note that aviation was rapidly becoming a popular sport for the more well-off in society. It was still an expensive hobby, but clubs such as this show that aviation was rapidly spreading, as it had not even been a decade since the first flight had occurred.

Manitowoc Herald-Times. "In War He Was "The Wasp"---Now "The Flying Flea"---Ace Udet, Soon to Fly to U.S., Brought Down 62 Allied Planes." September 7, 1927. Accessed March 14, 2015. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/8444083/>.

A great and humorous article that shows that even during the war aviators treated one another with respect and civility. The story about landing, and not only conversing with an enemy, but sharing a laugh together is a very powerful image.

Moberly Monitor-Index. "Forty Aeroplanes Down By A German." May 1, 1917. Accessed March 16, 2015. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/4624148/>.

A short article selected for two reasons. Firstly, by immediately stating the kill record, it shows that the war in the air really had become a game, or sport of types. Secondly, considering this is from an American paper, I find it interesting that the German is not even named in the headline, showing perhaps some manner of bias, wanting to lessen the impact of Richthofen's name.

New Castle News. "Fort Vaux Is Captured By Germans." June 8, 1916. Accessed April 20, 2015. www.newspapers.com/image/73038513/.

An important article that shows a contrast between how the war in the sky and the war on the ground were being reported. While those in the sky were being painted as some manner of new age knights, those on the ground were being compared to beasts, grappling in the mud and caves.

Ottawa Journal, The. "British Warships Hurling Destruction Upon German Position At Middlekerke." December 19, 1914. Accessed April 20, 2015. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/43917307/>.

This was selected as it provides proof that, at the very least, airplanes were valuable for reconnaissance, in this case by spotting that large German formations were advancing on Allied positions.

Pittston Gazette. "Events in 1910, Record of the Year from January to December." December 31, 1910. Accessed March 14, 2015. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/52124417/>.

A general timeline of events, but the fact that aviation appears such a large amount of times in the piece shows that aviation was an important thing that was commonly reported on in the newspapers. Another example of showing that aviation was exciting and people wanted to hear about it.

Salt Lake Tribune, The. "Famous German Ace Acclaimed by Nazis as Symbol of New Order." April 21, 1935. Accessed March 14, 2015. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/16859089/>.

Whereas many of the Allied veteran pilots were being exploited for commercialism due to their celebrity status, Germany considered ascending Richthofen to sainthood, as well as Hitler claiming the expired pilot as a true symbol of the Nazi way. An interesting look at differing ideologies, and the fact that Richthofen was likened to a religious figure shows a lot of how citizens looked upon these pilots.

Sandusky Register, The. "Once-Hated German Ace Now Is Hit of Air Races." September 3, 1931. Accessed March 14, 2015. www.newspapers.com/image/4931147/.

Another article that shows how the world can mend after the war. A "once-hated" German comes to the United States to participate in an air show. The article also points out that he wishes to return the plates of one of his former enemies, surely shown as a sign of peace among the pilots, and in extension the nations.

San Bernardino County Sun, The. "Plane Wreck Kills War Ace." September 8, 1929. Accessed March 15, 2015. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/48951205/>.

Chosen to question how the war, and specifically the celebrity status that resulted, may have affected pilots. Chosen specifically because the deceased pilot had scored a victory against the Red Baron, making user error seem unlikely, though overconfidence may have been a factor.

Scranton Republican, The. "Enemies In War Now Close Friends." December 21, 1928. Accessed March 15, 2015. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/49732981/>.

One of the pinnacle articles chosen, this article essentially sums up the entire paper in an extremely condensed format. Two of the most famous aces, coming together and shaking hands as friends is an amazingly powerful image in the post-war period. Not only do they vie for peace within the article, but the moment was considered so important that a photograph was taken of the two, which is the image on the cover page.

Winnipeg Tribune, The. "Body of Richthofen, War Hero, Taken To Fatherland." November 19, 1925. Accessed March 13, 2015. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/36411600/>.

Another strong article, this again shows how even former enemies can celebrate the skills of a fellow aviator. The Red Baron was, and still is, one of the most famous pilots that ever lived, and the fact that his burial was so spectacular, even meriting a fly-by from planes from other, former enemy countries shows three things. The world was mending. There was respect among fellow aviators, regardless of national borders. Lastly, contrasting Richthofen's spectacular burial to thousands of ground soldiers buried in shallow, muddy graves with no fanfare shows how important aviators were to national pride.

Secondary Sources

Blackwell, Wally. "398th Bomb Group Combat Formations." 398th Bomb Group Memorial Association. December 1, 2003. Accessed April 17, 2015. http://www.398th.org/Research/8th_AF_Formations_Description.html.

Chosen to represent how Hamilton's group was actually a predecessor to a more modern version of a bomber squadron. The fact that these tactics hearken back to World War II may seem archaic, but it actually additionally shows how rapidly tactics in aviation progressed in the span of only a couple decades.

Corn, Joseph J. *The Winged Gospel: America's Romance with Aviation, 1900-1950*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1983.

A fantastic book that fits so well within the context of the paper. Multiple times throughout the paper it is shown how pilots were likened to some manner of otherworldly being. They had risen above the common man and flew the skies where no limits could hold them back.

Courtwright, David T. *Sky as Frontier: Adventure, Aviation, and Empire*. College Station, TX: Texas A & M University Press, 2005.

Courtwright proposes that it may not have been the pilots themselves that were the most exciting aspect, but the pioneering of aviation itself. This is of course a manner of counterpoint to the overall argument, but I feel no view is an absolute truth, and there may very well have been just as much idolization of the aircraft itself, though I feel this to be untrue due to the war propelling the aviators themselves into the spotlight.

Fritzsche, Peter. *A Nation of Fliers: German Aviation and the Popular Imagination*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992.

I felt it important to represent perspectives from all sides of the war, and Fritzsche's book is a great look at the rise of aviation through Germany.

Holmes, Richard. *Falling Upwards: How We Took to the Air*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 2013.

While not used extensively, I selected a small amount of text that provides weight to the claim that balloons had been around for a good amount of time prior to motorized flight. Holmes' book provided just the information I needed on the matter.

Keegan, John. *The First World War*. New York, NY: Vintage, 2000.

This book was listed as an entryway to World War I. It is an extensive examination of the entire war and any person not familiar with the events of the war should look to Keegan's book to help fill in some of the questions that may arise during reading.

McAleer, Kevin. *Dueling: The Cult of Honor in Fin-de-Siècle Germany*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994.

While not specifically chosen for the *Fin-de-Siècle* time period, this book provides weight to the idea that there were those that still found dueling a romantic notion. While the concept was dying out in the majority of the world, it still lived on in others.

Paris, Michael. *From the Wright Brothers to Top Gun: Aviation, Nationalism, and Popular Cinema*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1995.

A great book that lends a lot of weight to the thesis. Media representation pushed aviation, and especially the pilots, into the spotlight during World War I. This love of aviation remained in the minds of the people for decades to come. Paris' examination of over four hundred films involving cinema show just that.

Sluga, Glenda. *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013.

Another book used very little, but to provide some backing to a claim. Stating that World War I was the “age of nationalism” needed some backing, and Sluga’s book provided that within her text.

Smith, Leonard V., Stephane Audoin-Rouzeau, and Annette Becker. *France and the Great War, 1914-1918*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Within this book I chose to highlight a section on France’s military tactics leading into World War I. They, as well as other countries, had believed that the fighting would be fierce and fast, not sluggish and entrenched. The tactics highlighted show just that: the idea that by pushing forward and accepting whatever casualties may come was a tactic that would also be hastily abandoned.

Smithsonian. "A Map of Every Passenger Plane in the Skies at This Instant." September 17, 2012. Accessed April 21, 2015. <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/a-map-of-every-passenger-plane-in-the-skies-at-this-instant-39070996/?no-ist>.

Used for evidence of another statement. It is one thing to just say that today there are thousands of planes in the sky. It is another thing entirely to see a map of just how many are indeed flying at any given time.

Storey, William Kelleher. *The First World War: A Concise Global History*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009.

Another shortly used book. I was having difficulty finding a reliable source that provided evidence that before machine guns were provided in airplanes, pilots would wave, throw rocks, or grenades. Storey’s book finally provided the evidence that I required.

Wilberg, Jim, and Jack Hervis. *Tumult in the Clouds: The Aviation Art of Russell Smith*. Indio, CA: Aeronaut Books, 2011.

Provided to represent the various facets of the romantic view of the war. This, along with Paris’ examination of cinema in regards to aviation provide reasonable evidence that it is a beloved war, looked fondly upon.

Wohl, Robert. *A Passion for Wings: Aviation and the Western Imagination, 1908-1918*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994.

Wohl's book is more of a general overview of the various ways people became fascinated with avionics during that first decade. It is more of a blanket examination compared to some of the others, but is still worthwhile in context.

Appendix A

“Enemies in War Now Close Friends”

“I’m very happy to meet you,” said the German to the Frenchman. “But haven’t we met before?”

They had—these two well groomed men, vigorous in their thirties, who smiled at each other and cordially shook hands when formally presented in the lobby of a Berlin hotel.

One was Captain Rene Fonck, the greatest of French aces, who shot down 73 German planes during the war. The other was Captain Ernst Udet, the greatest of surviving German aces, who shot down 62 Allied machines.

Last Met in the Air

Their last previous meeting had been shortly before the Armistice, ten years ago. Instead of smiles and pleasant words they were matching flying skill and marksmanship as they rode through the shell infested skies over the battlefield.

Both were great craftsmen, and they came through alive. Now they are friends.

“Yes I have found a new friend in the person of an old enemy,” said Captain Fonck. “We were gunning for each other in the old days, but we can meet pleasantly together now. We talk the same language—the language of the flying man.

Fonck’s Gun Jammed

“I had great luck one day,” said Captain Udet as they talked together of war days. “You shot down three of my comrades, and probably the only reason I am able to shake your hand today is that your machine gun jammed just in time—for me.”

Fonck was here to visit the German aviation show. Jean Marbeuf, Berlin correspondent for a Paris newspaper, a good Frenchman and admirer of Udet brought the two famous aviators together.

“If these two men had been left alone ten years ago one of them would not have lived,” said Marbeuf, “Now they are able to meet in a friendly and fraternal spirit like two athletes after a sporting match. The interview between the two should be a redletter day in the history of Franco-German peace. They have set an example for old adversaries which will do more to seal friendships than political maneuvers.”

Fonck and Udet exchanged many reminiscences. Fonck was particularly when the German ace explained:

“I used to wait until night was about to fall and then, flying at a height of 15,000 feet, I would get seven or eight miles behind your lines, turn my tail towards the setting sun, and wait for your machines to return home. With the sun in their eyes they were easy to pick off.”

Udet spoke admiringly of the French commandant Happe, saying: “I remember on the 12th of October, 1916, a flight in which I shot down two planes over Oberndorf when I recognized

Happe. We knew him by his beard, which we would see flying in the wind. What audacity! We regarded him as an heroic madman.”

Both Plead for Peace

Their talk of war ended with words of peace.

“When you look back upon all these things, how can one help being for peace?” remarked Udet.

“Yes,” replied Fonck, “if you asked the views of the ex-service men I am sure there would be a crushing majority in favor of peace.”