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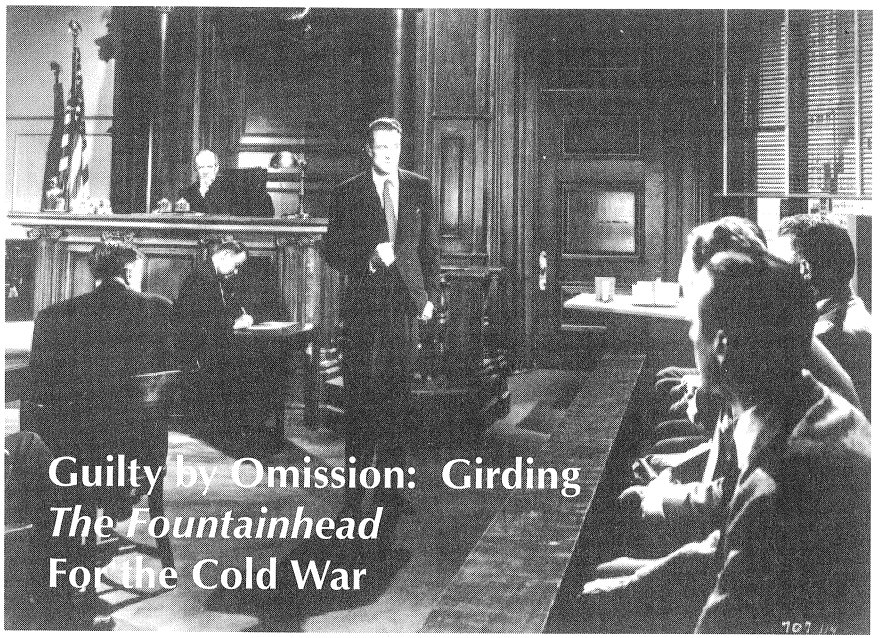

Guilty by Omission: Girding *The Fountainhead* For the Cold War

In a film where the hero breaks into the bedroom of the heroine and rapes her, why did the Johnson Office object only to the courtroom speech at the end (Branden 211)? Why did *New York Times* reviewer Bosley Crowther find "this tale most vulnerable on the point of the architect's acquittal and the arguments therefore" (8)? Part of the answer is that Ayn Rand, author of the 1943 novel and the screenplay of the 1949 film adaptation of *The Fountainhead*, saw to it that ideas registered foremost in all encounters with her works. Loudest applause and strongest censure alike were most likely to be responses to the philosophy these works promoted, which, in the film, finds its baldest expression in the courtroom speech.

Rand also promoted her philosophy in nonfiction books, magazine articles, interviews and, in 1947, in testimony before the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC). In these and other instances, as in her fiction, Rand returns so often and so forcefully to her philosophy's core precepts that the whole of it might faithfully be described as an exultation of "the individual" and an abhorrence of "the collective." In America, the definition of "individual" has not been so absolute, and notions about collectives have shifted depending on which collective was under consideration, and when.

The fixity of Rand's philosophic likes and dislikes makes her discourses stand like beacons by which some cultural transformations that went on around them may be charted. In particular, her philosophy stands in helpful juxtaposition to a national consensual shift in which a dominant notion of "the individual" became grafted to a duplicitous set of ideas that Americans, by 1949, had attached to "the collective." However, before examining *The Fountainhead* as a lodestar over cold war America, we will examine another, more familiar model for relating this film to its times.

Howard Roark has decided to defend himself in court for dynamiting the Cortlandt Homes housing development, an act to which he freely admits. His defense consists of a speech about individualists and collectivists. In the novel he tells the jury that collectivists have "swallowed most of Europe" (685). In the film he tells them that "much of the earth has been destroyed." In the novel Roark calls collectivists "gangsters" and "dictators" (683) and "tyrants" and "emperors" (684). In the film he calls them not one of these names. In the film the emphasis is not on tyrannical heads of state but colorless masses.

Roark tells the jury in the film:

> The parasite seeks power. He wants to bind all men together in common action and common slavery. He claims that man is only a tool for the use of others—that he must think as they think, act as they act, and live in selfless joyless servitude to any need but his own. . . . Every horror and destruction came from attempts to force men into a herd of brainless soulless robots, without personal rights, without personal ambitions, without will, hope, or dignity.

Hitler does not leap to mind as a real-world example of this sort of parasite. On the whole, changes in Roark's speech seem to reflect the shift, in America, from a hot war against fascism to a cold war against communism, and Raymond Durgnat seems to offer insight as to how it happened—that "in a relatively close-knit system like Hollywood's, everyone will respond to some of the moods and issues in the American air" (17).

However, *zeitgeist* approaches lead to wrong conclusions in this case. If Hollywood's close-knit studio system typically responded in the manner Durgnat describes, then Durgnat provides our first clue to understanding this atypical film in relation to its screenwriter's interactions with the studio that produced it. We can look to Durgnat for more clues to the same, by examining his attempt to fit *The Fountainhead* into an auteurist survey of the films of King Vidor.

"With *The Fountainhead*, Vidor boldly sets out to storm the citadel," Durgnat begins, but then he proceeds more cautiously (30). He finds Vidor mostly just nuancing the screenwriter's ideas, sometimes emphasizing and sometimes softening them (31). Likewise, he hears the director's voice mostly in second-part harmony with Rand's, in whose script "Vidor clearly found a useful tool for expressing some of his own beliefs, though it remains unclear where Miss Rand's end and Vidor's begin" (31). Durgnat wonders where Vidor might have *wanted* to change the script and, at one point, spots Vidor in "the speed and control of Roark's reactions" (32)—a citing suggesting that more fundamental elements of *mise-en-scène* appear, to Durgnat, to have been previously set. The space between the screenplay and finished film, usually a good space for auteurist operations, has this time left Durgnat's auteur with barely enough room to sign his name. Vidor almost drops out of the analysis altogether before Durgnat moves on—maybe thankfully—to his next term, which is Vidor's next film.

Durgnat's difficulties turn out to reflect more than what seems true. Rand was ready to follow her hero's example should any unauthorized changes be made to the blueprints she handed over to Warner Brothers. In response to Crowther's attack on the film—not in his review, but in a piece appearing eight days later on the front page of the Sunday *New York Times* arts section—she explained:

> Warner Brothers have given a great demonstration of courage and consistency: they have produced the most faithful adaptation of a novel ever to appear on the screen. My script was shot verbatim: this, to my knowledge, was the first and only instance of its kind in Hollywood. (24 July 1949, sec II: 4)

Barbara Branden's highly subjective Rand biography—based on taped interviews Rand gave in the 1960s—reports that "Vidor was, at worst, intimidated, or, at best, captivated by the blazing firebrand what was Ayn Rand. . . . He made concessions that were astonishing in Hollywood" (209). Also according to Branden, Rand's testimony to the courage and consistency of the producing studio was not entirely heartfelt—for she was shocked at the Hollywood premier to find a sentence cut from the courtroom speech. By her own standards, Rand had been betrayed. By Hollywood's, she had been handed the controls to a major studio's machinery for the broadcast of a virtually unmediated message.

In his book about HUAC and Hollywood, Victor Navasky writes that the first head of the Hollywood branch of the Communist party quickly came to understand that the "collective process of moviemaking precluded the screenwriter, low man on the creative totem pole, from influencing the content of movies" (78). As might be expected, a writer for whom "collective" was the dirtiest word of all, and who felt strongly enough that "independence is the only gauge of human virtue and value," might find a way to turn this totem pole upside down (Rand *Fountainhead* 683). Durgnat marvels that "the combined power of Cooper, Vidor, and Jack Warner couldn't prevail to at least modify Ayn Rand's comic-strip dialogue" (31). The finished product and Rand's taped recollections bear out the accuracy of Durgnat's observation, although it could be expanded in two directions: First, the combined power consisted of more than three individuals; and second, Rand controlled more than dialogue. Navasky describes the balance of "culture vs. commerce, message vs. entertainment, formula vs. originality" in Hollywood studio product, a balance owing in large measure to just the sort of collective processing that Rand found categorically intolerable (76). Accordingly, she swung each of Navasky's scales to the side of her choosing, restraining Hollywood's recuperative (or masking) power over outlaw scripts until it exerted little more on hers than the typewriter had on her novel.

She secured this control mainly through her screenplay. On one level, Rand's ideology checked studio and directorial intervention by informing a disposition that was unreceptive to collective modes of production. On another level, Rand's ideology locked out interference in the way it forcibly inscribed itself in the film. It is not possible to turn some scripts into classical Hollywood cinema without changing them. David Bordwell, Janet Staiger, and Kristin Thompson place characters at the centers of classical Hollywood narratives, engage them in plots driven by psychologically motivated causality, and argue that this center applies determinative stylistic pressure out to a classical film's edges (13). While there might be more of a gradation of applicability than these authors generally claim, their description is useful here because it describes just about any classical film better than it does *The Fountainhead*.

There was little Vidor or anyone else could do to bring this film into line because it was driven by characters with unconventional motivations. The unconventionality struck Crowther, who wrote that the film "is not, we'll agree, the most brilliant demonstration of logic in pictorial form." He criticized the Dominique character, a "peculiarly philosophical girl" and found fault with Roark's "unfortunately (and unreasonably)" falling in love with her (9 July 1949, 8). But it can be shown that characters in both the novel and the film exhibit highly consistent and "logical" behavior patterns. The problem is with the causality that determines their actions and shapes the narrative and the film.

In place of psychologically motivated characters and the film Hollywood typically built around them, *Variety* found "a film with an idea that it clings to with such complete tenacity that the end result is a cold, unemotional, loquacious feature" (29 June 1949, 14). The force at the center of this film is *ideologically* motivated causality. Durgnat observes that *The Fountainhead* "avoids the characteristic Hollywood ambiguities" (31). His observation (itself somewhat ambiguous) signals a reaction to the absence of conventional ambiguity—i.e., of temporarily or residually unresolved questions about psychological motivations or the "theme" of the film. The architect's acquittal and the arguments (and events) therefore leave most of the first type of question unasked, and no doubt whatsoever about the answer to the second.

One of the film's stylistic excesses and one of Warners's marketing strategies can be understood as attempts to disguise the oddball product the studio had on its hands. The copious score seems intended to compensate for the lack of Hollywood-style realism and drama, an impression that struck at least two other viewers: *Variety* wrote that "a sound score by Max Steiner and other competent technical assists to help cloak the plot" (29 June 1949, 14); and Crowther wrote that Vidor "has worked for his emotional effects with clever cutting, heavy musical backing and having his actors speak and behave in solemn style" (9 July 1949, 8). Another attempt to paper over the unorthodoxy is a full-page *Variety* advertisement depicting Roark (Gary Cooper) manfully gripping a helpless Dominique (Patricia Neal), with this line over their heads: "No man takes what's mine!" (1 June 1949, 21). The passion driving Rand's characters was only secondarily for each other, though, and primarily for ideas.

Did the public register the difference? Do box-office figures support or contradict claims we might draw from the negative reviews? *The Fountainhead* was a commercial success. It was the 38th highest grossing film of 1949 and took in $2.1 million, a figure well above

Variety's $1.5 million cutoff for a box-office success (4 Jan. 1950, 59). But how much of this success was to due to packaging and marketing strategies the studio could have applied to boost receipts for any film, and how much was due to favorable responses to *this* film? Let us consider some of the packaging and marketing strategies the studio applied.

The full-page ad already quoted was one of three ads for *The Fountainhead* that Warner Brothers ran in *Variety* between 18 May and 29 June 1949. No other studio ran three ads of any size for a single picture during this period, and Warner Brothers itself ran full-page ads—and just one apiece—for only three other pictures. We might surmise that most of the business resulting from such heavy advance promotion would accumulate early in the release period, and that favorable word of mouth would cause business to pick up—or at least keep it from dropping off sharply—deeper into the run.

Another factor that could have produced an early peak in business was the appeal of the film's star, Gary Cooper. At the end of 1949, *Variety* ranked the top 25 box-office draws of the year according to "a cold-blooded dollar appraisal based on the past year's product." Cooper was 22nd on this list of the "small handful of players who could be counted on to bring in at least some patrons" (4 Jan. 1950, 59). Also, Warner Brothers hyped the prestige appeal of this "10-million-reader best-seller" brought to life. No doubt the studio counted on some of these ten millions joining Cooper's fans during the first weeks of the run and then spreading word-of-mouth—which, *Variety* predicted, would be "either entirely pro or con, there being no middle ground to public acceptance of Rand's philosophy" (29 June 1949, 14).

The *Variety* prediction was accurate and public response was mostly con. As might be expected, the heavy promotion and big name caused an early surge in business, placing *The Fountainhead* first among newcomers in its first week. Meanwhile, *The Red Menace*, a Republic picture released the week before, made the same box-office report but placed well below *The Fountainhead*. This was on July 13. Where was *The Fountainhead* three weeks later? While it was still doing decent business in some cities, it had dropped to "runner up" status on the list of national box-office leaders, while *The Red Menace*—which had been in release longer and featured a "cast of unknowns"—ranked higher, at number nine. In comparison, *The Fountainhead* had peaked early and vanished quickly, probably owing its strongest response to elements other than ones that very many viewers had found intrinsic to the film.

We might suppose that word-of-mouth and reviews were bad because *The Fountainhead* was a didactic lesson in objectivist philosophy trying to pass as entertainment. But if the lesson had been found to be agreeable, or at least harmless, then this loquacious film ought to have simply vanished without causing the outrage among some reviewers (and maybe patrons) that it did. But Rand had entered the "collective 'atmosphere,' or climate of opinion" of Hollywood and proceeded as though in a vacuum (Durgnat 17). It is not surprising that the result was out of step with Hollywood fare of the day and that it has since failed to typify very much about cold war America in 1949. We might make an anti-*zeitgeist* approach to *The Fountainhead* and look for clues to the film's source and character precisely where it deviates from the prevailing national currents of its time.

One of Michael Paul Rogin's distinctions can help us. He writes that "cold war ideology established a double vision . . . between the free man and the state on the one hand, and the free state and the slave state on the other" (240). Importantly, he adds that cold war movies show "the historical displacement of the first opposition by the second" (240). David Riesman registered and promoted this displacement while it was in process. In an essay titled "Individualism Reconsidered," he wrote that "such terms as 'society' and 'individual' tend to pose a false as well as a shifting dichotomy" (26). He went on, after redefining individualism, to claim that "as so defined, society, the larger territorial organism, often provides the mechanisms by which the individual can be protected against the group" (26). This essay's appearance in *Individualism Reconsidered and Other Essays* marked its third appearance in four years. As such it seems reasonable to find the essay indicative of the same influential cold war conception of the individual that Rogin observes. Riesman's essay is especially useful to us because Riesman wrote it just months after the July release of *The Fountainhead*.

At a time when the reigning conception of the individual was not literally of the individual, but of individuals within a militarily protected free state—a collective of free individuals—Rand loudly proclaimed the rights of the literal individual above all collectives and common laws. While Americans were picturing themselves surrounded by an unseen enemy, one that was probably on the move *inside* the collective—seeking new hosts, infiltrating, propagating, and threatening the collective from within—Rand projected an image of a man alone against open sky, triumphant and free (even though he had exploded private American property), thoroughly exposed on all sides, eerily invulnerable all by himself. This brand of individualism—which Riesman certainly would have labeled one of the "older brands of ruthless individualism" (26)—suggests why *Variety* criticized the "anarchistic social theme" (29 June 1949, 14) and Crowther decried the "utter contempt for the masses of people that this picture passionately proclaims" (17 July 1949, sec. II: 1). Crowther went on—"It is, by some specious dialectic, society itself which becomes a cruel and inflexible 'collective' against the freedom of the individual man"—and on, hammering the point repeatedly:

> If Miss Rand intended this drama to be a warning against the present threat of militant Communism 'muscling in' on our free democracy, then she might have shown a little more confidence in the good old body politic and a little less glowing admiration for the genius who is a law unto himself. (17 July 1949, sec. II: 1)

The ire might have truly puzzled Rand. Roark's speech did contain all the right buzzwords. Cooper intoned with proper gravity: "Our country, the noblest country in the history of men, was based on the principle of individualism, the principle of man's inalienable rights. It was a country where a man was free to seek his own happiness." This—the same rhetoric that decorated calendars in kitchens and barbershops and classrooms all across late-1940s America—ought to have pushed the right buttons in any decade. The sentiments seem embraceable enough, so what happened? One mistake was the psychological deadness at the heart of the film. Another was the untimely literalness of the individualist theme. A third mistake was the lopsided depiction of two antipodal entities.

In each of two kinds of cold war movie, good and evil are together inscribed on the same level of abstraction from their referents. In films like *I Was a Communist for the FBI* (1951) and *Pickup on South Street* (1953), true-hearted Americans function, behave, and appear as such, and communists likewise act according to their label. *The Red Menace*—to take a less hyped (and nearly simultaneous) release that made less money but made it longer—"waves the flag" just like *The Fountainhead*, but also features "plenty of name calling," from its title to the "commie agents" and "fellow travelers" who circulate in the narrative. In this kind of cold war movie, the "distance" from the representations of good and evil to their real-world referents is "short."

In films like *Them!* (1954) and *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956), true-hearted Americans are still, loosely speaking, "the good guys," but they are figured more as denizens of planet earth than, specifically, as Americans. "Science fiction films presented an undifferentiated, homogeneous social world," Rogin observes (263). This world corresponded to representations of the Red Menace as giant radioactive ants or plants that hatch from pods and transform into soulless replicas of the folks next door. Arguing within a framework that splits American cultural history into "moments of demonology," Rogin writes that "at each moment the free man has both depended on and defined himself in opposition to his subversive twin" (237). Rogin's observation strikes at the heart of why Rand's cold war movie was (and is) uniquely unsatisfying as such.

The Fountainhead is explicit without naming names or, more accurately, it only names half of them. Rand holds up America as the noblest country in the history of men, and has Roark talk at length about the thing that is at that moment threatening to destroy it. But Roark never mentions communism. Leaving the subversive twin in the shadows—no matter how much sacralizing rhetoric is piled on—leaves the free man somewhat undefined as

well. Had she kept both referents under the surface, both behind the signs (as cold war science fiction does) then Rand's fuzzily defined collectivists would have corresponded to (and counterweighted) an undifferentiated homogeneous social world wherein Americans would recognize an America that was not explicitly named as such. Rand's canted discourse lifts one term above the surface and sinks the other one down below it. The film denounces an enemy it does not name, and we are made suspicious. Despite all the flag waving, the fuzziness of the enemy, the too-diffuse meaning of "collectivism," violates the sensibilities of a public that was embracing its own collective identity especially tightly in 1949. Robert Rossen returned to testify before HUAC in 1953 because, as he put it, he could no longer "indulge himself in the luxury of individual morality" (Navasky 73). Rand's out-of-step hero not only could, but did, elevate this indulgence to an American sacramental right.

If the film does not embody the collective ethos of its first audiences, what does it embody? There has never been widespread consensus on the content of Rand's philosophic thought. Den Uyl and Rasmussen describe her "uncompromising defense of laissez-faire capitalism" (ix) while Durgnat finds the novel attacking big business (31). Rand defies pat labels. Branden writes that her ideas were "unpopular, among both liberals and conservatives" (201), and Den Uyl and Rasmussen set out to show why "Rand cannot be labeled as either a conservative or a liberal" (x).

Phrases cropping up in some characterizations of Rand's thought suggest associations that run counter to her borrowings of rhetoric from the American Revolution and constitution. Peter Biskind subtitles an essay on the film "*The Fountainhead* and The Triumph of the Will" (316) and Durgnat describes Rand's devotion to "ego-über-alles" (31). The intention here is not to expose a fascist but to suggest that such allusions may help us problematize the binary opposition Rand puts forward in the film. The hovering third term raises the possibility that, in Rand's secret thought, democracy and communism might be more on the same side of the fence than she or her characters would care to admit.

There are more base similarities between Soviet Communism and American Democracy than Rand, in 1949, could afford to admit. In simplest terms, both systems organize, describe, require, and valorize groups and group effort. Rand's anarchistic social theme attacks communism where it embodies collectivist ideology in general terms—and so overlaps with democracy—as vigorously as it attacks those attributes imagined to set communism apart. The implications of such an overlap were not to find their way into successful mainstream American cinema until years later. Was Rand ahead of her time or just out of step with it?

At the 1947 hearings, John S. Wood tried to steer her toward clarifying a sticky point:

> Mr. Wood: Let me see if I understand your position. I understand, from what you say, that because they were a dictatorship we shouldn't have accepted their help in undertaking to win a war against another dictatorship.
>
> Miss Rand: That is not what I said. I was not in a position to make that decision. If I were, I would tell you what I would do. That is not what we are discussing. We are discussing the fact that our country was an ally of Russia, and the question is, What should we tell the American people about it—truth or a lie? If we had good reason, if that is what you believe, all right, then, why not tell the truth? Say it is a dictatorship, but we want to be associated with it. Say it is worthwhile being associated with the devil, as Churchill said, in order to defeat another evil which is Hitler. (Bentley 117-18)

We see here that dictators, tyrants, and emperors stand in for collectivists as readily as brainless, soulless robots do. It is not that Hollywood collected and injected cold war attitudes into Roark's speech, nor that Rand's attitudes changed on a curve with America's. At base is one author's gripe with collectives of all flavors and flags—whether the flags bear hammers and sickles, swastikas, stars and stripes, or the Warner Brothers shield. Here we see why it can strike Biskind that, "to Rand, democracy is virtually communism" (316), and why Den Uyl and Rasmussen can report the impression that Rand's target all along was western civilization itself (ix). More than anything else, which collective Rand targeted most explicitly reflected a private estimation of what the current market would bear.

The collective she targeted most explicitly in 1949 was not the United States, but hints of a broader animosity showed through cracks, in characterizations and events that would make viewers like Crowther sour at the utter lack of confidence in *any* body politic. Through one crack the film's arch collectivist, Ellsworth Toohey, reveals his loathsomeness in force when he organizes the staff of the *Banner* into a walkout to protest the paper's stand on the Cortlandt Homes case—this at a time when Hollywood itself had recently gone one-hundred percent unionized (May 128). But labor unions are collectives and, quite unconstrained by national trends toward their widespread formation, Rand detested them. Moreover, her film draws no distinction between the high-society busybodies who dislike Roark's designs (because they are too original) and the unnamed totalitarian regime that is at present destroying the earth. The enemy on Rand's hit list is more basic and ubiquitous than a red menace.

Like the novel published a year earlier, an article signed by Rand in the January 1944 *Reader's Digest* makes no mention of brainless, soulless robots and puts the emphasis squarely on dictators. But the film appeared five years later when U.S. relations with the U.S.S.R. were cooling fast, so why does it stop short of naming communism? John Cogley observes something clear in Wood's question above, that "in 1947 the wartime friendship between the United States and Russia was still a fresh memory" (488). Lingering freshness is perhaps why the film, two years later, turns up the heat on communism but still does not name it. In 1943 Rand left communism not only unnamed but barely implicated by a definition of collectivism that most explicitly targeted fascism. The novel and the *Reader's Digest* piece appear soft on communism, but when Rand wrote them, how did *she* feel?

When Wood pressed harder, she responded: "You don't have to come out and denounce Russia during the war, no. You can keep quiet. There is no moral guilt in not saying something if you can't say it" (Bentley 118). Rand kept quiet before the 1947 hearings, and in the 1949 film, the vitriol bubbled hotter but remained under the surface. But it was always there: in the *Reader's Digest* biographical note, which quotes Rand coming to the United States from Russia "in order to write as I please" (88); and it simmers in the novel, for example, when Roark tells the jury that "there is no such thing as a collective brain" (680).

Rather than trace a seepage of cold war attitudes into this film, we can identify an author's calculated response to their emergence. In the novel, the threat seems to originate simultaneously from outside and inside the United States. Europe is under siege, but Roark's references to collectivists as "second-handers" (681) repeatedly imply their codependency with individualists ("first-handers," although Rand never names them as such). Likewise, in *Reader's Digest* she describes two types of men—Active and Passive (89)—and again strongly implies that the collectivist impulse is native to the same system that produces individualists. The film, mostly by what it leaves out, plays down this codependency. Eliminated are all references to collectivists as "second-handers" and, another popular synonym in the novel, "altruists." Moreover, the film clouds arch collectivist Ellsworth Toohey's origin. In the novel he grows up in a Boston suburb while, in the film, his birthplace is unspecified and he speaks with a British accent (295).

In response to intensifying fears of a "them" that was invisibly and increasingly among "us," the film erases (some) terms and origins that point disparagingly to the United States. Simultaneously operating on the text is an impulse to pull back, to gauge against dropping temperatures any lingering goodwill toward recent allies. In the effort to weigh out these considerations, an enemy goes unnamed and, consequently, a dose of high-flown rhetoric comes to seem inauthentic. Like Steiner's score, the rhetoric does a bad job of masking less conventional (and more essential) elements. Surfaces of Rand's discourses are a motley of cloaking devices. In the above comment to Wood, she tucks a message in the mouth of Winston Churchill. Elsewhere she tucks it in the mouth of an American architect, who—by the associative power of his words—talks from behind an evocation of the Founding Fathers.

Rand and her characters season their speeches with "we"s and "our"s when they talk of America and American ideals, but under a moment of pressure before HUAC, another self-

sense surfaces:

> It is almost impossible to convey to a free people what it is like to live in a totalitarian dictatorship. I can tell you a lot of details. I can never completely convince you, because you are free. . . . Try to imagine what it is like to be in constant terror. (Bentley 119)

The constant terror that so imprinted Rand was not that of an unseen menace. The specificity and immediacy of the source of her anticommunism set it apart from the cold-war phantasms of American moviegoers. Rogin writes that "the free man and the military state are not two alternative poles in American ideology, nor are they merely a recent symbiosis. Their marriage goes back to the beginning" (240). This was not the case for Rand. The culture that produced her possessed no such legacy, and her aversion to "melting pot" assimilative processes sealed off her chances of absorbing it. This cold war movie was out of step because its author was, by experience and inclination, an outsider to the world of her audience.

What do we see when we look at this monolith moving through American history? Guesses about wordings, emphases, and shades of directness that might ease a private vision into the hearts of millions. Where reception bears out the correctness of a calculation, we see reflected something like a cold war *zeitgeist*. Where receptions turn cold, we see a personal agenda laid bare. Riesman noted that "the meaning of 'individualism' depends on the historical setting," which better explains reactions to this film than it does this film (26). For that one is better off looking elsewhere.

The Fountainhead conforms to neither of two kinds of cold war movie because the impulse of its author to discharge her worst—at the collective she hated most—was checked, and tipped out of working order, by her impulse to gauge and appease post-war political correctness. In 1947, when she criticized the 1943 pro-Soviet film, *Song of Russia*, Rand seemed most outraged by one line. She testified, "Here is the line, as nearly exact as I could mark it while watching the picture: 'I have a great responsibility to my family, to my village, and the way I have lived.' What way had she lived? This is just a polite way of saying the Communist way of life" (Bentley 115). The title of Crowther's attack "In a Glass House" (17 July 1949, sec. II: 1) might be applied here, for two years later, by refusing to name the name herself, Rand would author something distinctly un-American.

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Notes

1 Changes made to characters other than Roark suggest this shift as well. For example, Ellsworth Toohey tries to sell Peter Keating to his boss for a major design project. In the novel: "There's not another architect living who can equal Peter Keating in efficiency, taste, originality, imagination" (397). In the film: "Now, the greatness of Peter Keating's personality lies in the fact that there is no personality stamped on his buildings."

2 Durgnat holds his position despite these suggestions. He claims, for example, that when Vidor wanted to change the ending, he asserted that—like Roark—he had the right to destroy his work if the studio prevented him from completing it as he wished (34). The possibly apocryphal story indicates Durgnat's predilection to seeing Vidor as a wronged author and not Rand as a highly accommodated one. Elsewhere Durgnat equates Rand to Dominique Francon ("In full face at least, Patricia Neal bears a resemblance to Ayn Rand"—32), leaving Roark open for equation to Vidor.

3 This description of the Vidor-Rand working relationship typifies two sorts of claims that, separately, have tended to characterize Rand's and Vidor's work. Rand is often seen as a superhuman source of ideas and influence. In Branden's *The Passion of Ayn Rand*, Rand's eyes are "alive with an intensity of intelligence I had never imagined human eyes could hold. They seemed the eyes of a human being who was composed of the power of sight . . . . I saw them ferocious with concentration on a new idea or question that had not occurred to her before" (x). A more recent treatment—this of her philosophy—starts off with a pledge to "moving the discussion away from the emotional aura surrounding Ayn Rand" (Den Uyl and Rasmussen xi). By contrast, Vidor and his work are often characterized by "energetic" and its synonyms (see Durgnat 33, for example). Typically—and by comparison—Vidor is found to bring less imposing agendas to projects. For example, Durgnat finds in the director's sensibilities, first, a reflection of Hollywood's (20), then of Rand's (31); and film encyclopedist Ephraim Katz celebrates the ebullience and virtuosity of Vidor's style before describing the content of his later films as reflecting, mainly, concern with the box-office (1995). Taken together, the persistency of Rand's "passion" and Vidor's "energy" suggests that their relationship on the project was as Branden describes it—and as Crowther intuited it: that "King Vidor has hotly illustrated" what "Miss Rand has written" (9 July 1949, 8).

4 The cut line was, "I wished to come here and say that I am a man who does not exist for others" (212), the gist of which is expressed several times in the courtroom speech alone.

5 To credit Vidor for the actors' behavior and speaking might be, in at least one instance, to credit him with too much. Branden reports that Rand privately coached Cooper's delivery of the courtroom speech (209).

6 The dates and page numbers of the ads: 18 May, 12; 1 June, 21; and 29 June, 12.

7 The three other films: *Colorado Territory*, 25 May, 12; *Always Leave Them Laughing*, 8 June, 4; and *The Girl from Jones Beach*, 15 June, 17.

8 Advertisement in *Variety*, 18 May 1949, 12.

9 Box-office report in *Variety*, 13 July 1949, 3.

10 Rev. of *Red Menace* in *Variety*, 25 May 1949, 8.

11 Box-office report in *Variety*, 3 Aug. 1949, 3.

12 It might be argued that an anti-*zeitgeist* approach is still a *zeitgeist* approach and therefore just as problematic. I claim no understanding of how a film can osmotically acquire traits and reflections of a "time spirit." I take the notion of a *zeitgeist* to be a critical discursive entity with potentially useful heuristic properties, and I invoke the notion where I see it resonating helpfully in proximity with other entities—films, for example; and to these other entities I ascirbe (in this essay and generally) attributes and origins that are antithetical to the idea of a *zeitgeist*.

13 The two other appearances were in: A. William Loos, ed., *Religious Faith and World Culture* (Prentice-Hall, 1951); and *City Lights* vol. 1 no. 3, 1953.

14 Riesman mentions in a bracketed note that he writes in early 1950 (36).

15 See the last page of the novel and the last shot of the film.

16 A January 1944 *Reader's Digest* article by Rand exhibits the same tendency: "Individualism holds that man is an independent entity with an inalienable right to the pursuit of his own happiness in a society where men deal with one another as equals" (88).

17 Quotes from a rev. of *Red Menace* in *Variety*, 25 May 1949, 8.

18 Such overlaps made statements uttered at the height of Russia's allied World War II effort seem suspect a few years later. For example, when Lela Rogers testified at the 1947 HUAC hearings, she omitted "the story of how her daughter Ginger had been required to speak agitprop in the 1943 Dalton Trumbo picture called *Tender Comrade* (the offending line—'Share and share alike, that's democracy.')" (Navasky 79).

19 For example, in *Dr. Strangelove* (1964)—just before the world ends—the top echelons of the United States and Soviet governments merge in a fascistic dream of survival in a post-apocalyptic world.

20 Without necessarily implying anything about England and collectivism, the filmic Toohey's accent calls on one of Hollywood's older tropes. Christ's persecutors frequently whip up an air of malignant imperiousness with the help of the same. This has been seen as recently as *The Last Temptation of Christ* (1988).

21 Perhaps I cannot ignore the novel's enduring popularity completely. It takes many more patrons to make a Hollywood hit than to warrant a second printing. First printings are sometimes the beginning of a "run" that lasts for decades, which permits word of mouth to spread slowly and followings to build gradually. Brandon quotes Rand quoting her novel: "I did not know that I was predicting my own future when I described the process of Roark's success; 'It was as if an underground stream flowed through the country and broke out in sudden springs that shot to the surface at random, in unpredictable places'" (181n). Such mysterious and wending patterns do not make for good box office. There are other factors as well—for example, Rand's skills as a writer, which have a greater and more direct impact in a longer work (in a medium of words) than in a briefer work (that is filmed).

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