# wizard of oz political

wizard of oz political interpretations have long fascinated scholars, historians, and literary critics alike. The story of "The Wizard of Oz," originally penned by L. Frank Baum, is often viewed not merely as a children's fantasy but as a rich allegory reflecting the political and economic climate of late 19th-century America. This article explores the various layers of political symbolism embedded within the narrative, examining how characters, themes, and plot elements correspond to significant historical events and ideologies from the Populist movement to monetary debates. By delving into the political subtext of "The Wizard of Oz," readers gain insight into how literature can mirror and critique real-world issues through allegory and metaphor. This analysis also highlights the enduring relevance of Baum's work in understanding American political discourse and popular culture. The following sections will provide a comprehensive breakdown of the historical context, character symbolism, thematic elements, and interpretations that contribute to the political reading of "The Wizard of Oz."

- Historical and Political Context of "The Wizard of Oz"
- Symbolism of Key Characters
- Thematic Political Allegories
- Monetary Debate and the Silver Standard
- Populism and Agrarian Politics
- Legacy and Modern Political Interpretations

# Historical and Political Context of "The Wizard of Oz"

The political backdrop of "The Wizard of Oz" is crucial for understanding its allegorical dimensions. Written in 1900, the novel emerged during a period of intense political and economic change in the United States. The late 19th century was marked by rapid industrialization, economic turmoil, and growing tensions between rural farmers and urban industrialists. The Populist movement, which sought to address the grievances of farmers and laborers against the perceived dominance of big business and the gold standard, influenced much of the political discourse during this era. Baum's work is often interpreted as a reflection of these struggles, embedding contemporary political critiques within its narrative framework.

# **Symbolism of Key Characters**

The characters in "The Wizard of Oz" have been widely analyzed for their symbolic representations of political figures and societal groups from the late 1800s. Each major character is thought to embody specific aspects of American politics and social issues.

# **Dorothy as the American Everyman**

Dorothy Gale represents the everyday American citizen, particularly the rural Midwestern farmer. Her journey through Oz mirrors the struggles and aspirations of ordinary people navigating the complexities of a rapidly changing society. Dorothy's innocence and determination symbolize hope and resilience amid political uncertainty.

## The Scarecrow and the Agrarian Farmer

The Scarecrow is often interpreted as a symbol of American farmers who were perceived as lacking intelligence by urban elites, despite possessing practical wisdom and common sense. This characterization critiques the dismissive attitudes toward the rural population prevalent in political debates of the time.

#### The Tin Man and Industrial Workers

The Tin Man represents industrial laborers who were dehumanized and mechanized through factory work. His rusting and immobility reflect the hardships and exploitation faced by workers during the rise of industrial capitalism, highlighting issues surrounding labor rights and social justice.

# The Cowardly Lion as Political Leadership

The Cowardly Lion is frequently linked to political figures such as William Jennings Bryan, a prominent Populist leader known for his advocacy of silver coinage and reformist policies. The lion's perceived cowardice symbolizes the political hesitancy or ineffectiveness of leadership during critical moments.

# Thematic Political Allegories

Beyond character symbolism, "The Wizard of Oz" incorporates broader political themes that reflect the ideological battles of its time. These allegories critique social structures and power dynamics while offering commentary on governance and policy.

## **Illusion of Political Power**

The Wizard himself is a central allegory for political leadership, representing figures who maintain power through deception and illusion rather than genuine authority or competence. His role critiques the facade of strength projected by politicians who ultimately lack substantive solutions.

# Struggle Between Rural and Urban Interests

The journey from Kansas to Oz symbolizes the tension between rural America and the emerging urban-industrial complex. The contrasting environments and challenges faced by Dorothy and her

companions reflect the economic and cultural divides shaping political discourse.

### Quest for Wisdom, Heart, and Courage

The desires of the Scarecrow, Tin Man, and Cowardly Lion for intelligence, compassion, and bravery can be seen as metaphorical demands for political and social reforms. These traits embody the qualities necessary for effective leadership and societal progress.

# Monetary Debate and the Silver Standard

One of the most prominent political interpretations of "The Wizard of Oz" centers on the monetary debate of the late 19th century, particularly the conflict between the gold standard and the advocacy for silver coinage.

# Yellow Brick Road and the Gold Standard

The yellow brick road is often interpreted as a representation of the gold standard, a monetary system that many farmers and Populists opposed. The road's allure but ultimate failure to lead to true prosperity parallels criticisms of gold-backed currency policies that many believed favored wealthy industrialists.

# Silver Shoes as Symbol of Bimetallism

In the original book, Dorothy's silver shoes (changed to ruby slippers in the film adaptation) are viewed as a symbol of the silver standard or bimetallism. Advocates of bimetallism argued that incorporating silver into the currency system would expand the money supply and aid indebted farmers and working-class citizens.

# **Economic Hardship and Political Reform**

The monetary allegory highlights the economic hardships faced by many Americans and the political movements that emerged to challenge the status quo. This context provides essential background for understanding the novel's underlying messages about economic justice and reform.

# **Populism and Agrarian Politics**

Populism plays a central role in the political reading of "The Wizard of Oz." The Populist movement sought to empower farmers and laborers through political reforms and economic policies that countered the influence of big business and monopolies.

#### Farmers' Alliance and Political Mobilization

The Populist movement emerged from the Farmers' Alliance, which organized rural citizens to demand fairer economic conditions, such as regulation of railroads and banks. The novel's depiction of the struggles faced by characters like the Scarecrow reflects this grassroots political activism.

## **Critique of Corporate Power**

The story critiques the dominance of corporate interests and monopolies, which were seen as oppressive forces controlling the economy and politics. This critique aligns with Populist calls for government intervention and regulation to protect ordinary citizens.

# **Hope for Democratic Change**

The journey through Oz symbolizes the quest for democratic empowerment and social justice, central goals of the Populist agenda. The characters' transformations suggest the potential for political awakening and reform.

# **Legacy and Modern Political Interpretations**

The political allegories in "The Wizard of Oz" have continued to resonate in contemporary analyses, inspiring new interpretations and debates about the role of literature in political discourse.

# **Enduring Symbolism in Popular Culture**

The novel and its adaptations remain potent symbols for political commentary, with references to its characters and themes frequently appearing in discussions about leadership, economic policy, and social justice.

#### **Academic and Political Discourse**

Scholars and political analysts often revisit "The Wizard of Oz" to explore its insights into populism, monetary policy, and political power dynamics. Its allegorical richness makes it a valuable resource for understanding historical and modern political challenges.

# **Broader Implications for Literary Political Analysis**

The case of "The Wizard of Oz" exemplifies how literary works can serve as mirrors to political realities, offering nuanced critiques and fostering public engagement with complex societal issues through storytelling.

• Political Symbolism of Characters

- Monetary and Economic Allegories
- Reflection of Populist Movement
- Critique of Political Leadership
- Legacy in Modern Political Thought

# **Frequently Asked Questions**

## What is the political interpretation of The Wizard of Oz?

The Wizard of Oz is often interpreted as an allegory for the political and economic issues of late 19th-century America, particularly the Populist movement and debates over monetary policy.

# How does The Wizard of Oz reflect the Populist movement?

The story's characters and plot symbolize key figures and ideas from the Populist movement, such as the Scarecrow representing farmers, the Tin Man representing industrial workers, and the Yellow Brick Road symbolizing the gold standard.

## What does the Yellow Brick Road symbolize in political terms?

The Yellow Brick Road is commonly seen as a symbol of the gold standard, a monetary system that was a central issue in 1890s American politics.

# Why is the character of the Wizard considered a political figure?

The Wizard represents political leaders or the presidency, often interpreted as a figure who uses illusions or rhetoric to maintain power without providing real solutions.

# How is the Tin Man interpreted politically in The Wizard of Oz?

The Tin Man is thought to symbolize industrial workers who were dehumanized and rendered heartless by factory labor during the industrialization era.

# What role does Dorothy play in the political allegory of The Wizard of Oz?

Dorothy is seen as the everyman or the common American, whose journey reflects the struggles and hopes of ordinary citizens during the political upheaval of the 1890s.

# Is The Wizard of Oz a critique of the gold standard?

Yes, many scholars argue that the book critiques the gold standard and advocates for bimetallism or the inclusion of silver to inflate currency and relieve debtors.

# How does the character of the Lion relate to political themes?

The Cowardly Lion is often interpreted as a representation of William Jennings Bryan, a prominent politician who was seen as lacking the courage to take decisive action.

# Has The Wizard of Oz been used in modern political discourse?

Yes, The Wizard of Oz continues to be referenced in political discussions and analyses as a metaphor for political deception, economic policy debates, and populist movements.

# **Additional Resources**

#### 1. The Wizard of Oz and the Politics of Populism

This book explores L. Frank Baum's "The Wizard of Oz" as an allegory for the Populist movement in late 19th-century America. It delves into the symbolism behind the characters and the Yellow Brick Road, interpreting the story through the lens of political and economic reform debates of the era. The author argues that the narrative reflects the struggles of farmers and common people against industrial monopolies and political corruption.

#### 2. Emerald Politics: Power and Governance in the Land of Oz

"Emerald Politics" examines the political structures and power dynamics within the fictional Land of Oz. It analyzes how authority is distributed among different regions and characters, drawing parallels to real-world political systems. The book also discusses themes of leadership, legitimacy, and rebellion in the context of Oz's fantastical society.

#### 3. Yellow Brick Road to Reform: The Wizard of Oz as Political Allegory

This study interprets "The Wizard of Oz" as a commentary on late 19th-century American politics, focusing on the economic and social reforms proposed by the Populist Party. It highlights the symbolic meanings of key elements like the Silver Shoes and the Emerald City, illustrating how Baum's work reflects contemporary political debates. The book offers a detailed analysis of how fiction can serve as a vehicle for political critique.

#### 4. The Silver Slippers and the Politics of Currency

Focusing on the monetary symbolism in "The Wizard of Oz," this book discusses the historical context of the gold and silver debates in the United States. It presents the Silver Slippers as a metaphor for the free silver movement, advocating for bimetallism to support struggling farmers and workers. The author provides a comprehensive overview of how Baum's tale mirrors economic conflicts over currency standards.

#### 5. Oz and the American Political Imagination

This volume explores how "The Wizard of Oz" has influenced and reflected American political thought over the decades. It covers interpretations of the story in various political contexts, from Populism to modern policymaking. The book also investigates how Oz serves as a cultural symbol for

political ideals, challenges, and transformations.

6. Populism and the Yellow Brick Road: Political Themes in Baum's Oz

This book delves into the populist themes embedded in Baum's narrative, examining how the story critiques political elites and champions the common citizen. It discusses the characters as representations of social groups and political interests within the Populist movement. The analysis extends to the implications of these themes for contemporary political discourse.

#### 7. Governance and Authority in the Land of Oz

A political science perspective on the governance structures depicted in "The Wizard of Oz," this book analyzes the roles of rulers like the Wizard and Glinda. It explores concepts such as legitimacy, power consolidation, and the distribution of authority in a fictional yet politically rich setting. The work provides insights into how fantasy literature can mirror and question real-world political systems.

#### 8. The Political Allegory of Dorothy's Journey

This book interprets Dorothy's adventure as a metaphor for political awakening and social change. It traces the journey as a representation of the struggles faced by marginalized groups seeking justice and representation. The author emphasizes the transformative potential of political engagement as depicted through the narrative arc.

9. From Kansas to the Capitol: The Wizard of Oz and American Political Identity
This work investigates how "The Wizard of Oz" reflects and shapes notions of American political identity and values. It discusses themes of democracy, individualism, and community embedded in the story. The book also considers the enduring relevance of Baum's work in contemporary political culture and discourse.

### **Wizard Of Oz Political**

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wizard of oz political: The Wonderful Wizard of Oz as a Political and Economic Allegory Sontje Neldner, 2020-07-14 Seminar paper from the year 2016 in the subject English Language and Literature Studies - Literature, grade: 1,3, University of Cologne, language: English, abstract: When Lyman Frank Baum wrote and published his fairy tale The Wonderful Wizard of Oz in 1900, he might not have known this would be the start of several books about the marvellous world of OZ. However, the story about the little girl named Dorothy, who accidentally lands in Oz and tries to return to Kansas, is the most popular of the Oz books. Nevertheless, by focussing on the land of Oz and its analysis it is indispensable to concentrate on The Wonderful Land of Oz, The Emerald City of Oz and other books, as well. L. Frank Baum always disclaimed that there is a deeper meaning behind The Wonderful Wizard of Oz and declared: "The story was written solely to pleasure children of today." (Littlefield 1964: 58). Moreover, L. Frank Baum "never allowed the consistency of the allegory to take precedence over the theme of youthful entertainment" (Littlefield 1964: 58). Thus maybe, The Wonderful Wizard of Oz is well known all over the world and in every age as one of the most famous

American folklore. Nonetheless, there are some allegories that can be seen and interpreted by reading the Oz books. At first, there is a political aspect including the time in which L. Frank Baum grew up, the places where he lived and the political view he had, even though he had never declared his political attitude. In addition, The Wonderful Wizard of Oz can be interpreted in an economic way, connected to L. Frank Baum's history, as well. Hugh Rockoff, Professor of Economics at Rutgers University, (1990: 739) claims that the book is "a sophisticated commentary on the political and economic debates of the Populist Era." However, some people, for example Bradley A. Hansen, (2002: 257ff.) disagree with the position that there are any allegories in Baum's Oz books. Nevertheless, these interpretations are just a few options of analysing The Wonderful Wizard of Oz but they form the most important aspects to have a focus on.

wizard of oz political: Projecting Politics Elizabeth Haas, Terry Christensen, Peter J. Haas, 2015-04-10 The new edition of this influential work updates and expands the scope of the original, including more sustained analyses of individual films, from The Birth of a Nation to The Wolf of Wall Street. An interdisciplinary exploration of the relationship between American politics and popular films of all kinds—including comedy, science fiction, melodrama, and action-adventure—Projecting Politics offers original approaches to determining the political contours of films, and to connecting cinematic language to political messaging. A new chapter covering 2000 to 2013 updates the decade-by-decade look at the Washington-Hollywood nexus, with special areas of focus including the post-9/11 increase in political films, the rise of political war films, and films about the 2008 economic recession. The new edition also considers recent developments such as the Citizens United Supreme Court decision, the controversy sparked by the film Zero Dark Thirty, newer generation actor-activists, and the effects of shifting industrial financing structures on political content. A new chapter addresses the resurgence of the disaster-apocalyptic film genre with particular attention paid to its themes of political nostalgia and the turn to global settings and audiences. Updated and expanded chapters on nonfiction film and advocacy documentaries, the politics of race and African-American film, and women and gender in political films round out this expansive, timely new work. A companion website offers two additional appendices and further materials for those using the book in class.

wizard of oz political: Reelpolitik Ideologies in American Political Film Beverly Merrill Kelley, 2012-03-22 In Reelpolitik Ideologies in American Political Film, Beverly Merrill Kelley examines more than a century of political movie history, providing a thorough historical background for diametrically opposed political ideologies in order to facilitate debate and dialectical learning. Kelley explores 185 American political movies (categorized by ideological themes and presented in chronological order) in order to illustrate the history of film as well as the history of the specific political ideology. Each chapter includes a case study which provides an in-depth analysis of the single film that best illustrates the ideology at hand, including: The Candidate (populism), Wall Street (elitism), The Godfather (fascism), All the President's Men (anti-fascism), Patton (interventionism), and M\*A\*S\*H (isolationism). Reelpolitik Ideologies in American Political Film establishes a paradigmatic analysis of political films that details the cyclical nature of ideological dialectic throughout American history and identifies the values, attitudes, and beliefs of the voters who choose not to affiliate with Republicans and Democrats, and who often determine the outcomes of elections. The text also includes an extensive ideological filmology spanning more than 100 years of American cinema. This study represents a bold investigation of the political and social values of American film, and is an essential text in the study of the relationship between culture and politics.

wizard of oz political: A Radical Political Theology for the Anthropocene Era Ryan LaMothe, 2021-11-18 Given the fierce urgency of now, this important book confronts and addresses key problems and questions of political theology with the aim of proposing a radical political theology for the Anthropocene Age. LaMothe invites readers to think and be otherwise in living lives in common with all other human beings and other-than-human beings that dwell on this one earth.

wizard of oz political: Historical Perspectives on the American Economy Robert Whaples, Dianne C. Betts, 1995-05-26 This book is a student reader of the key topics in American economic

history.

wizard of oz political: Political Campaigns and Political Advertising Frank W. Baker, 2009-06-04 Examining political campaigns and political advertising through the analytical lens of media literacy, this well-illustrated and timely handbook guides readers through the maze of blandishments and spin that is the hallmark of the modern political campaign. It dissects the persuasive strategies embedded in the political messages we encounter every day in the media and demonstrates the importance of critical thinking in evaluating media stories. Key concepts of media literacy are applied to political advertising in traditional media (newspapers, television, radio) and on the Internet, the new frontier of the political advertising wars. Dealing with blogs, social networking, user-generated Web sites, and other electronic formats familiar to young voters, this lively introduction to the new world of political messaging appeals to readers' affinity for visual learning as well as their ability to discern messages in text. Unique in applying media literacy concepts to the political context while directly addressing students and general readers, this book not only explains but graphically demonstrates both established techniques of political framing and the new avenues of persuasion being pioneered in digital media. It will also interest viewers who like their political news in traditional media but unconventional formats.

wizard of oz political: Political Perversion Joshua Gunn, 2020-10-10 When Trump became president, much of the country was repelled by what they saw as the vulgar spectacle of his ascent, a perversion of the highest office in the land. In his bold, innovative book, Political Perversion, rhetorician Joshua Gunn argues that this "mean-spirited turn" in American politics (of which Trump is the paragon) is best understood as a structural perversion in our common culture, on a continuum with infantile and "gotcha" forms of entertainment meant to engender provocation and sadistic enjoyment. Drawing on insights from critical theory, media ecology, and psychoanalysis, Gunn argues that perverse rhetorics dominate not only the political sphere but also our daily interactions with others, in person and online. From sexting to campaign rhetoric, Gunn advances a new way to interpret our contemporary political context that explains why so many of us have difficulty deciphering the appeal of aberrant public figures. In this book, Trump is only the tip of a sinister, rapidly growing iceberg, one to which we ourselves unwittingly contribute on a daily basis.

wizard of oz political: Political and Civic Leadership Richard A. Couto, 2010-09-14 This work within The SAGE Reference Series on Leadership provides undergraduate students with an authoritative reference resource on political and civic leadership. This 2-volume set focuses on the 100 most important topics, issues, question, and debates specific to politics and civic society. Entries provide students with more detailed information and depth of discussion than typically found in an encyclopedia entry while avoiding much of the jargon, detail and density one might find in a journal article or a research handbook chapter. Key Features Includes entries written by a global panel of renowned experts Offers broad coverage of important, of-the-moment topics related to political and civic leadership, including explorations of the personalities and environments of political leaders, leadership roles in governance and allegiance, citizen activists and civic engagement, political campaigning, urban politics and leadership, public management, ethics in politics, policy development and implementation, executive management of public opinion, political speechmaking and the bully pulpit, congressional leadership, crisis management, and more Considers the history of political and civic leadership, with examples from the lives of pivotal figures, as well as the institutional settings and processes that lead to both opportunities and constraints unique to the political realm Provides students with more depth than usual encyclopedic entries while avoiding the jargon, detail, and density of more advanced works Features an approachable and clear writing style with appeal to undergraduate researchers and offers a list of further readings after each entry, as well as a detailed index and an online version of the work to maximize accessibility for today's students

wizard of oz political: Political Anxiety in Golden Age Children's Classics and Their Contemporary Adaptations Jasmin Sültemeyer, 2021-07-05 As striking, counter-intuitive and distasteful as the combination of children and anxiety may seem, some of the most popular children's

classics abound in depictions of traumatic relationships, bloody wars and helpless heroes. This book draws on Freudian and Lacanian anxiety models to investigate the psychological and political significance of this curious juxtaposition, as it stands out in Golden Age novels from both sides of the Atlantic and their present-day adaptations. The stories discussed in detail, so the argument goes, identify specific anxieties and forms of anxiety management as integral elements of hegemonial middle-class identity. Apart from its audacious link between psychoanalysis and Marxist, feminist, as well as postcolonial ideology criticism, this study provides a nuanced analysis of the ways in which allegedly trivial texts negotiate questions of individual and (trans)national identities. In doing so, it offers a fresh look at beloved tales like Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, The Wizard of Oz and Peter Pan, contributes to the dynamic field of adaptation studies and highlights the necessity to approach children's entertainment more seriously and more sensitively than it is generally the case.

wizard of oz political: Political and Protest Theatre after 9/11 Jenny Spencer, 2011-12-22 This collection documents and examines political and protest theatre produced between the 9/11 attacks in 2001 and Obama's election in 2008 by British and American artists responding to their own governments' actions and policies during this time. The plays take up topics such as the ongoing wars on terror, Blair's support of U.S. policies, the flawed intelligence that led to the Iraq war, and illegal detentions and torture at Abu Ghraib. The authors argue that engaged artists faced a radically different sociopolitical context for their work after 9/11 compared to earlier social protest movements and new forms of theatre, and different emotional strategies were necessary to meet the challenges. The subtitle Patriotic Dissent suggests the double stance of many artists—influenced by patriotic expressions of national solidarity, yet critical of the ways that patriotic language was put to use against others. The articles represent a broad range of theatre: Broadway musicals, documentary theatre, adaptations of classical theatre, new plays by British playwrights, street performances and installations, and musical concerts. The contributors' case studies evaluate the effectiveness of important instances of political theatre and protest from this decade, arguing for the significance, relevance, and continuing necessity for evolving forms of political theatre today.

wizard of oz political: Politics and Politicians in American Film Phillip L. Gianos, 1998-01-26 Films have been a part of U.S. society for a century—a source of great enjoyment for the audience and of great profit to filmmakers. How does a mass entertainment medium deal with some of the great sources of dramatic real-life political and economic conflict—the Great Depression, the Cold War—in a way that attracts an audience without making it angry? How does an industry, which has from its beginnings been the subject of attacks from social, political and religious groups deal with political issues and conflicts? This book is an attempt to examine these questions; it is also an examination of some of the greatest and most interesting American films ever made—westerns, gangster films, comedies, war films, satires, and film biographies—to see what American films say about politics and politicians, and what these films, in turn, say about the audience for which they were produced.

wizard of oz political: Problems of Political Secularism Kenneth J. Long, 2024-01-04 America's debates over secularism are not what they seem. Far from being primarily about religion and its place in politics, these battles over ill-defined secularism are now seen as a diversion in an escalating culture war caused by incapacitated government. Government's failure to generate needed policies have made Americans angry and unkind: liberals becoming increasingly condescending while the right becomes more transparently racist. Politicians, unable to legislate, still need voters, and they succeed by swiftly changing "issues," which are often coded as religious but are mostly about everyday matters. Kenneth J. Long argues that public failure elicits personal vice. The liberal values of tolerance, acceptance, and inclusion are "virtues" of the condescending. The belief in science, a tool, is strange at best, and the disdain for the anti-scientific is likewise condescending. For the right, "Christian" is increasingly popular among those who are growing ever less religious and serves as cover for a racist white identity politics. Problems of Political Secularism: Broken Politics, Unkind Cultures illuminates the troublesome outcomes posed by "protecting" autonomy through restraint of representative government and by pitting constituency

against constituency to "safeguard" faith from government and vice versa. People of goodwill, faithful and not, are needed to redirect our focus from the symptoms (cultural warfare) to the structural governmental causes.

wizard of oz political: *Politics, Hollywood Style* John Heyrman, 2017-12-20 This book analyzes major films about the American political process from the 1930's through the 2010's. Films are grouped historically and analyzed for their portrayal of American politicians and the political system, uncovering patterns and trends regarding the ways that American politics is portrayed. It also explores how politics are reflected in and affected by these films. For example, compromise is often portrayed as a mistake, and heroes generally seek to redeem a corrupt political system. This book categorizes films by how politics are depicted in them (e.g., cynically, idealistically, etc.). This book also considers the depiction of race and gender in films, as well as the ideological slant of the stories told.

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leading economists working today. The story of money is the story of earth's most inventive, destructive, and dangerous animal: Homo sapiens. It is our story.

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wizard of oz political: Film Criticism, the Cold War, and the Blacklist Jeff Smith, 2014-03-26 Film Criticism, the Cold War, and the Blacklist examines the long-term reception of several key American films released during the postwar period, focusing on the two main critical lenses used in the interpretation of these films: propaganda and allegory. Produced in response to the hearings held by the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) that resulted in the Hollywood blacklist, these filmsÕ ideological message and rhetorical effectiveness was often muddled by the inherent difficulties in dramatizing villains defined by their thoughts and belief systems rather than their actions. Whereas anti-Communist propaganda films offered explicit political exhortation, allegory was the preferred vehicle for veiled or hidden political comment in many police procedurals, historical films, Westerns, and science fiction films. Jeff Smith examines the way that particular heuristics, such as the mental availability of exemplars and the effects of framing, have encouraged critics to match filmic elements to contemporaneous historical events, persons, and policies. In charting the development of these particular readings, Film Criticism, the

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