

## ORSON WELLES (1915-1985)

### LIFE

Orson Welles, despite his father's wealth, went through a rough childhood that would impact the rest of his life. Following his father's descent into alcoholism and the separation of his parents, he also watched one of his siblings institutionalize and another die of hepatitis at an early age. After his mother died when he was six, Welles returned to live with his father. They travelled around the world from Jamaica to Far East with Welles looking after his alcoholic father and grieving over the loss of his family. He had to be an adult before he could enjoy his childhood.

He met his first mentor at Todd Seminary for Boys, Roger Hill, who encouraged Welles to pursue his creative endeavours. His love of theatre started here after he performed on stage. He also performed in a radio adaptation of *Sherlock Holmes*, which he wrote himself. At the age 15, he lost his father. Since Orson had abandoned his father in a bid to encourage him to stop drinking, he always felt guilty over his father's passing alone in a hotel room. Afterwards, he chose to travel instead of pursuing college (he had received scholarship from Harvard College).

After a brief spell in Europe appearing in small roles on stage and performing in New York theatres, Welles founded the Mercury Theatre, whose actors and actresses would later appear in Welles' movies. While staging and performing plays, Welles also worked in radio as an actor, writer and director. His infamous narration of the 1938 radio series of H.G. Wells' *The War of the Worlds* was so successful that some of the audience panicked assuming that the Martian invasion, the novel's centre plot, was indeed taking place.

Orson Welles' film career began in 1939 when he signed a then-unprecedented deal with the RKO Radio Pictures, an agreement still considered to be the greatest contract ever offered to a filmmaker in terms of creative control. Ironically, this would also mark the beginning of Welles' constant fights with Hollywood studios over the control of his films. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to suggest that perhaps the only two movies Welles enjoyed a total control were his debut *Citizen Kane* and his last movie *The Other Side of the Wind*. In almost all the films he directed, he either suffered from limited budget or producer's wrath.

Welles was a prolific filmmaker, actor and producer who left behind a gigantic tally of finished and unfinished projects. Most of the time, due to budget constraints, he had to stop filming to appear in other movies so that he could fund his own productions. Due to his flamboyant style and slow pace, the studios took over most of his movies in the editing room and left Welles frustrated. His last movie, unfinished at the time of his death, was completed and released in 2018 by his long-time friend Peter Bogdanovich and producer Frank Marshall.

Orson Welles died on October 10, 1985, following a heart attack at the age of 70.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

Orson Welles is arguably the most influential American director of all time, whose films have frequently been ranked in the greatest movies lists including, but not limited to, *Citizen Kane*, *The Magnificent Ambersons*, *Touch of Evil*, *The Trial*, *Chimes at Midnight*, *Othello*, *The Lady from Shanghai*, etc. Some of his most notable achievements include 1941 Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay for *Citizen Kane* (shared with Herman J. Mankiewicz), Palme d'Or at the 1952 Cannes Film Festival for *Othello*, and the Golden Lion at the 1970 Venice Film Festival for Career Achievement. A list of honours he received during his life and posthumously is as follows:

- 1942: *Citizen Kane* received nine nominations at the 1941 Academy Awards, including Best Picture, Best Director and Best Actor in a Leading Role for Welles.
- 1943: *The Magnificent Ambersons* was nominated for four 1942 Academy Awards, including Best Picture.
- 1947: *The Stranger* was nominated for the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival.
- 1958: *Touch of Evil* received the International Critics Prize, and Welles was recognized for his

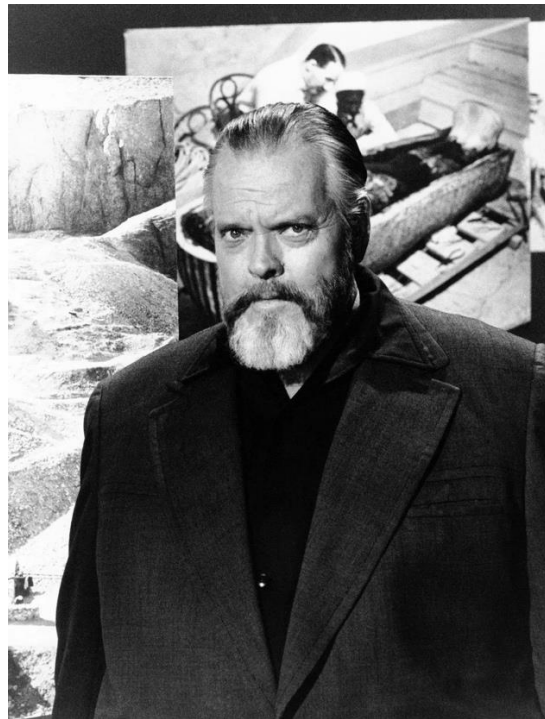
body of work at the Brussels World Film Festival.

- 1966: *Chimes at Midnight* was screened in competition for the Palme d'Or at the 1966 Cannes Films Festival and won the 20th Anniversary Prize ("Honneur") and the Technical Grand Prize. In Spain, it won the Citizens Writers Circle Award for Best Film.
- 1970: Orson Welles was given an Academy Honorary Award for his career work.
- 1985: Welles received the Career Achievement Award from the National Board of Review.
- 1998: In 1998 and 2007, the American Film Institute ranked *Citizen Kane* as the greatest American movie.
- 2002: Welles was voted the greatest film director of all time in two British Film Institute polls of directors and critics.

## FILMOGRAPHY

### Completed feature films

- 1941 *Citizen Kane*
- 1942 *The Magnificent Ambersons*
- 1943 *Journey into Fear* (Co-director with Norman Foster)
- 1946 *The Stranger*
- 1947 *The Lady from Shanghai*
- 1948 *Macbeth*
- 1951 *Othello*
- 1955 *Mr. Arkadin (aka Confidential Report)*
- 1958 *Touch of Evil*
- 1962 *The Trial*
- 1966 *Chimes at Midnight (aka Falstaff)*
- 1968 *The Immortal Story*
- 1973 *F for Fake*
- 1978 *Filming Othello*
- 1992 *Don Quixote* (Shot between 1957 and 1972 • Completed and released posthumously)
- 2018 *The Other Side of the Wind* (Shot between 1970 and 1976 • Completed and released posthumously)



## THEMES

### ROMANTIC LOVE

***Citizen Kane*** Love appears as contentious as it is multi-faceted between Kane and his wives, albeit toxic at times. Many characters point to Kane's hunger and search for love, but the discussion is always marred with negative connotations. According to Leland, Kane loved nothing and nobody but himself. According to Susan, Kane loved so that he could be loved back. The insinuation is that love was just a trade, an investment for Kane. He was going to get something out of it, one way or another, otherwise love wasn't worth this time. From Emily: her status as the niece of the President. From Susan: the project of an opera singer. Kane's love was contingent on the fact that he had to be loved back. That's why he failed to love.

***The Magnificent Ambersons*** The movie demonstrates the destructive power of love in its many incarnations. Between Eugene and Isabel, it is disguised as pride, terminating a relationship before it begins. Between Eugene and Fanny, it manifests itself as envy and grudge, which leads to scheming and manipulation. Between George and Lucy, it becomes a subtle power play between the parties: the former trying to dominate the latter and the latter trying to shape the former. In every occurrence, love is destined not to be consummated between the lover and the beloved. Even the marriages—between Wilbur and Isabel and Eugene and his wife—have dead spouses. Nobody can survive love in *The Ambersons*. If there is love, then there is destruction and death.

***The Lady from Shanghai*** The movie's take on romantic love is as cynical as it is circular, perfectly crystallized in the Chinese proverb Elsa quotes: "It is difficult for love to last long. Therefore, one who loves passionately is cured of love in the end." This fatalistic nature of love is in line with the movie's circular narrative: "One who follows his nature keeps his original nature," Mike says after he learns about Elsa's true identity. Nobody changes because everybody already is. Love is only a by-product of human nature, which is the real engine behind people's schemes and plans. Love is a nuisance for Arthur, but an efficient tool for Elsa and perhaps a fatal mistake for the other men. Whoever is in love in the movie is doomed: Arthur's hopeless connection to Elsa means that killing her will mean killing himself as well. Mike is so foolishly full of lust that he cannot see past his desire; George, too, fancies Elsa and perhaps hopes to run off with her. *The Lady from Shanghai* represents the femme fatale who controls men with the promise of lust that will never be satisfied.

***Mr. Arkadin*** The film has a very subtle theme of romantic love that decides the fates of almost all major characters. As already mentioned, Arkadin shows ill-advised paternal care towards his daughter and the other characters, like Raina, Mily, and Sophie, have suffered or are suffering from romantic love throughout the story. Raina, despite knowing what kind of a man Stratten is and what kind of a job he is hired to do, seems to have fallen for him. Her infatuation and her desire to please him is so strong that she follows the instructions of a man she's known for only a brief amount of time, disregarding her father in the process. Her sorrow at the end of the movie is multi-layered: the two men whom she loved are now gone, and she might have had something to do with it. Sophie's love acts similarly in that she still loves Gregory Arkadin, but that man, too, is long gone. She has a new life, a new business and new husband(s), and yet, Sophie still has a soft spot for Arkadin even after the latter's betrayal. The movie doesn't spend too much time developing her character, but Mily also seems to be romantically tied to Stratten. Her dream of becoming rich is less about her motivation for money than being a romantic criminal couple who become rich *together*. Like Raina, she also does whatever Stratten tells her to do, and like Raina, that also leads to her tragic end.

### PARENTAL LOVE

***The Magnificent Ambersons*** Married with a man she doesn't love, Isabel directs all her attention and love towards her son, George. He becomes the centre of her life. She dotes on him. She spoils him. And like a moon, she cannot help but orbit around her son disregarding her own wants and wishes. This borderline oedipal relationship ultimately decides Isabel's life trajectory. George grows up to be a spoiled, entitled, self-centred person who cannot even tolerate the idea of his mother being with another man. Isabel is too powerless to go against her own son. She sacrifices her happiness and her life at the expense of those of George, who ultimately pushes Isabel to a lonely death.

***Mr. Arkadin*** Arkadin's love for his daughter is his main motivation behind the plot he

devises. This paternal love urges him to protect her, to control her sexual life, and to oversee her choices. It is as obsessive as it is toxic. He regards Raina as his daughter and his most valuable asset as if he is running a "daughter business". She is just another corporation he has to supervise. He is even ready to murder his old friends and associates just to make sure that his daughter never learns about his dark past. He cannot lose her. That's where his reason to live comes from. She is too essential to his being. In some respects, this toxic love feels uncomfortable, as one of the characters attests in the movie. It's a strange type of love that evokes Freudian tendencies, an obsessive animalistic drive which ultimately propels a powerful man into suicide.

**Chimes at Midnight** There is a triangular relationship between the three important characters in the movie that defines and characterizes fatherhood: Falstaff is a better father than a friend; Henry IV is a better king than a father; and Hal is a better warrior than a son/friend. All these relationships revolve around fatherhood and paternal figures in a man's life. Falstaff represents fatherly compassion and mentorship while Henry IV can only offer his son hereditary power and monarchical advice. However, each of these men lacks one crucial aspect that requires another man to fill in the gap. Hal seeks out a man like Falstaff because his father cannot provide him with the love, care and guidance Falstaff offers. On the other hand, Hal cannot stay friends with Falstaff because his real father is the one that can bestow upon him the power he needs.

## FRIENDSHIP

**Citizen Kane** The fraternal homoerotic friendship between Kane and Leland is contested and complicated at every turn. At first, Mr Leland supports Kane in his quest to be the voice of the working people. He even idealizes Kane, imagining that he'd become a history-altering figure in American history. When the newly-hired journalists arrive, he worries that they would change Kane. He wants to protect both Kane and his fight. He campaigns for Kane for political power. Unfortunately, when Kane as a revolutionary project fails, he also ceases to be a friend. Kane's infidelity, betrayal and tyrannical nature cannot overcome the power of friendship for Leland.

**Chimes at Midnight** One of the most important themes of the film is the unlikely friendship between Falstaff and Prince Hal. It is also, due to the hierarchal gap between two men, skewed towards Prince Hal. Both parties have a different understanding of this relationship. While Falstaff sees Prince Hal as a true companion, the latter uses Falstaff almost as a pawn in his own training as a man. Prince Hal's friendship is therefore opportunistic. He tells Falstaff that he is the sun while Falstaff belongs to the "base, contagious clouds." He tells Poins: "What a disgrace is it to me to remember thy name or to know thy face tomorrow." And yet he stays with Falstaff, Poins and the rest of the tavern company till they don't suit him anymore. This friendship, on a more symbolic level, represents a deep breach in society: the court representing power and the tavern representing the governed are two separate social spaces that can never interact.

## SELF LOVE

**The Stranger** Mary's love makes her vulnerable and gullible, but the defining characteristic is its self-referentiality. It's a product of her ego. She is momentarily paralyzed by love's attractive power so much so that she sacrifices her own well-being in the service of it. But she eventually replaces it with something else. Agent Wilson's observation of her is quite apt: "...but that she could ever have given her love to such a creature." Her love is so intricately connected to her sense of self that she cannot endure devaluing it. That's why she sticks with Kindler at the risk of becoming a criminal. And that's the same ego that ultimately wants Kindler to kill her when she figures out the truth. She "couldn't face life knowing what I've been to you." Who was she? A lover to a mass murderer. It is about her, not Kindler, when she adds: "But when you kill me, don't put your hands on me! Here! Use this!" She feels spoiled and violated. Her dignity overpowers her love at the moment of truth and her shooting Kindler repairs her own sense of worth.

## COMPASSION

**Citizen Kane** There is the maternal compassion Mrs. Kane displays for her son so powerfully that she agrees to part ways with him. She makes sacrifices so that he could have a better future without being abused by his father. There is the paternal love, not from Kane's biological father but from his business partner, Mr Bernstein, who supports his decisions no matter what, encourages him in his

actions though they might be unethical, and protects his legacy. Finally, we see Mr Thompson feeling sorry for Kane after learning more about his tragic life. Though he is supposed to be an objective journalist, he is impacted by Kane. Like every person who has known Kane, Mr Thompson cannot help but feel compassion towards the man.

## SUSPICION

**Othello** Iago's plot is to try and create situations where people second-guess other people's motivations, which breeds distrust and suspicion. Brabantio suspects that his daughter must have been bewitched by the dark-skinned Othello thanks to Iago's provocation. Othello suspects his wife of disloyalty because of Iago's conspiracy. Even Roderigo, despite his suggestible nature, is suspicious of Iago's plans regarding Desdemona and Cassio. The world Iago wants to construct in Othello is a place where nobody trusts anybody, except Iago, who then provides them with the facts and the tales he thinks are appropriate.

## REMORSE

**Macbeth** Macbeth is a tragic character, but not a remorseful figure by the end of the story. He accepts that he is going to die and fights till the bitter end, but he does not accept to bend the knee for Malcolm. The apparitions, his wife's suicide and his disgraceful reign make him contemplative and a thinker, but do not transform him into a man with regret. There is no chance for redemption. It is Lady Macbeth who has to carry the burden of their crimes and sins. After the murders of Lady Macduff and her children, she admits they have gone beyond the point of no return. "Tis safer to be that which we destroy than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy," she tells Macbeth. Her immediate illness, sleepwalking, and her eventual suicide are how repentance looks in the play. At least, remorsefulness allows Lady Macbeth the chance to take her own life compared to Macbeth, whose head is cut off by the most honourable character in the story.

**Othello** Regret is an emotion for those who are capable of self-criticism and introspection. Therefore, by definition, Iago is incapable of it. His looking down, from a hoisted cage, at the funeral procession without a tinge of emotion is proof of his lack of any remorse. Fortunately, there are other characters in the film who rue their acts. Cassio, for one, regrets his recklessness that led to mutiny. He believes that he has hurt his reputation beyond repair after Othello's rebuke. Emilia's regret in aiding Iago is more complex as she was always duty-bound to her husband in marriage. She hands him the handkerchief—an essential part of Iago's plans—despite suspecting that he's going to use it for evil purposes. In her final speech, we can hear the angst in her voice as she exposes Iago. Perhaps, the biggest regret in the film is that of Othello, who realizes that he murdered his innocent wife. His suicide can be construed as half-payment, but it's not enough. He also wants Cassio to record him in history without changing what he did and who he was. He regrets being Othello, and he wants it to be known by everyone.

## JEALOUSY / GREED

**The Magnificent Ambersons** As alluded in the movie, Aunt Fanny's only role within the Ambersons family is to be an aunt. Unmarried and unemployed, she has nothing to hold onto in her life except her undying love for Eugene. Unfortunately, this is also unrequited as Eugene has been in love with the Ambersons' pretty daughter Isabel. Fanny has no choice, but to endure their love from afar. What is worse is that she has also had to endure being teased about it constantly. Her sorrow turns into bitterness, which in time turns into toxic jealousy. After Wilbur's death, Fanny is so envious of the possibility that Eugene and Isabel can get together that she manipulates Isabel's son into breaking up the couple, which she manages. Alas, Eugene never considers Fanny even after Isabel's death. The final scene shows who she has always been: a woman in tears.

**The Lady from Shanghai** Mike's parable about sharks reveals the nature of the upper-class, rich people Mike resents. Their true nature that they follow to the bitter end is driven by greed and gluttony. They want more because they have more. Arthur has Elsa followed because she is just like him: She wants more by getting rid of Arthur. Elsa's plot to kill Arthur will ultimately give her the control of Arthur's fortune. It's not enough that she lives in luxury: she wants to own luxury. George agrees to be her accomplice because he wants the insurance money. All these sharks want so much more of everything that they eventually eat themselves.

**Othello** In Othello, jealousy is represented less as a natural urge and more as a construct. It's Iago's villainy and racist hatred that breeds jealousy in Othello like a wild plant. When Iago starts weaving his web of conspiracy, Othello at first disregards the suggestion, or even the mention, of jealousy. He refuses to live his life under the shadow of envy. His wife being honest and loyal is a given for Othello (which can also be explained by Othello's trust in the patriarchal system, in which women had no agency even for adultery). Iago, however, keeps adding different angles to the construct by calling upon women's so-called prurient nature and the question of race. "I know our country disposition well. In Venice, they [women] do let heaven see the pranks," Iago tells Othello and adds: "As to be bold not to enter into a marriage of her own clime, complexion and degree whereto we see in all things nature tends." Jealousy here is a composite emotion constructed out of misogyny and racism.

## WAR

**Chimes at Midnight** Orson Welles portrays war not as a romantic pastime but a bloody and murky affair among men who cannot be differentiated on a battlefield. The way he shoots the battle scenes makes it impossible to tell friend from foe, which is the point. Death is ugly and muddy, certainly not honourable nor venerable. Falstaff puts the code of chivalry in context for everyone before the war begins: "What is honour? A trim reckoning! Who hath it? He that died o' Wednesday." Robert Bell agrees: "Yet the film presents no countervailing zeal for heroic self-sacrifice ... Chivalric heroism is a straw man, Falstaff the only vital spirit and viable alternative." Falstaff, standing pat amongst men who are fighting to kill, is the life-affirming counterpoint to war.

## REPUTATION

**Othello** "I have lost the immortal part of myself and what remains is bestial," Cassio says in despair after being dismissed by Othello. In the world of a soldier, the body is accepted to be an expendable item. His name, rank, and deeds are what survive the body. Cassio knows this as does Othello when he tells Cassio: "What is the matter that you unlace your reputation thus and spend your rich opinion for the name of a night-brawler?" A soldier's reputation is what prevents him from becoming a beast. This proves to be rather prescient as Othello, after killing Desdemona and thereby becoming a beast himself, pleads with Cassio that, when the latter relates these unlucky deeds, he should "speak of me as I am. Nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice." This is Othello's reputation: He has killed his innocent wife and himself. He doesn't want any revision of his deeds. He wants Cassio to tell it as it is. This is going to be his reputation: a bestial man.

## AMBITION

**Macbeth** Characters in Macbeth are rarely passive agents during the course of the story. All of them act on their ambitions either to do good or evil. Macbeth, consumed by his desire for power, murders anyone who stands in this way. Lady Macbeth manipulates her husband into acting on his desire so that she can share the power with him. Banquo, perhaps the most passive amongst them, is still ambitious about the fortunes he was foretold regarding his future and that of his sons. It is no coincidence that all these characters meet their death by the end of the story, which enables us to compare them with the equally ambitious characters of Macduff and Malcolm. These two characters, as the carriers of justice, lean on their ambition in order to bring back the status quo of law and order. Their ambition is in the service not of their own kingdom, but of the kingdom on earth and in heaven.

## REVENGE

**Macbeth** It is not only Macduff who embarks on a journey of revenge. The king's son Malcolm and the Holy Man also seek to bring justice back to the world. Macduff's story is that of the hero who must leave home to slay the dragon (fiend). Revenge is a motivation for him. For Malcolm and the Holy Man, revenge is dressed up as duty rather than personal quest. As the true heir, Malcolm is mandated to establish the old and reliable power structures within monarchical succession. That's his fight of revenge—for the law of the land. The Holy Man's motive is more divine than earthly in that he has to fight against the demonic power of the unnatural to establish the old and reliable power structures within God's world. That's his fight for revenge—for the law of the Lord. His revenge is steeped in God's fury.

## MARRIAGE

***The Lady from Shanghai*** The movie portrays marriage not as a peaceful and happy institution between two people who love each other, but as a trap that people find themselves boxed inside. In the case of Elsa, she was forced into marriage because she is being blackmailed by Arthur. In the case of George, marriage acts like a prison that he wants to escape by murdering Arthur. Though we later learn that George lies about him being married, the overall point stands: Marriage, in the lives of these crooked people, represents a broken contract between somewhat unwilling participants. It is the antithesis of freedom. Even Arthur, after marrying Elsa by blackmailing her, realizes that he, too, is trapped in it because killing Elsa would mean killing himself as well.

***Othello*** Marriage appears not as an institution between two equal beings, but as an extension of society that regulates women's relationship with men. After obeying her father, Desdemona willingly marries Othello with the understanding and acceptance that she will now obey him. A progressive character like Desdemona, who goes against the accepted norms by entering into a multi-racial marriage contract, still submits to her husband without questioning. She even resigns herself to the idea of death instead of fighting for herself as if it were yet another order from her husband she has to obey. Even though their marriage is built upon romantic love, Othello's and Desdemona's union is fundamentally similar to that of Emilia and Iago. Despite being strong, honest, and witty, Emilia also obeys Iago and his wishes within the confines of their marriage. She knows that Iago has foul plans for the handkerchief, and yet, she still delivers the goods. "Tis proper I obey him, but not now," she says before exposing Iago. Her rebellion only comes towards the end after the tragedy has occurred. Her "reward" for breaking the contract and disobeying her husband is death.

## QUEST / INTRIGUE

***The Stranger*** Agent Wilson is determined to find out where Franz Kindler / Charles Rankin is and bring him to justice sooner or later. He first allows Meinike from the prison with the intention of trailing him to catch Franz Kindler, then follows him pretending to be a old clocks expert.

***The Lady from Shanghai*** As a narrative tool, the voice-over signals to us that the story we are about to watch has already ended and that characters have experienced the consequences of their actions. On one level, it takes the "fun" out of watching a story unfold as we know the narrator, Mike, has survived. On another level, though, this choice turns this whodunit story into a whydunit, which creates intrigue and suspense. The movie begins with Mike announcing that "If [he]'d known where it would end, [he]'d have never let anything start," an ominous sign of what is to come: fake murder plot, real murders, plot twists and four mysterious characters whose stories are never fully revealed. The element of suspense as well as mystery and intrigue are baked into the story thanks to the use of first-person, retrospective narration. We are invited on a journey of exploration. Part of the appeal is that, since we can only know what Mike knows, we may never learn the truth. The famous hall of mirrors scene symbolizes not only the many identities of these flawed characters but also the complicated and sophisticated nature of the story, almost impossible to untangle.

***Othello*** Iago's sophisticated conspiracy creates dramatic irony in that we, the audience, are aware of his motivation and all of his plans (directly from the horse's mouth at that) while all the other characters are none the wiser. This leads to intrigue and suspense as we keep wondering if the tragedy will come to pass the way Iago plans, or if he will be thwarted by some divine intervention. We watch the story unfold, speculating whether Othello will indeed succumb to Iago's manipulation, whether Roderigo will hopefully realize he's been used as a pawn and whether Emilia can prevent the downfall.

***Mr. Arkadin*** The film has the structure of a thriller with its central mystery being its titular character Gregory Arkadin. Until we meet him, he's portrayed as a mythical character with a sinister past and a present secret. The fact that we are first introduced to him in a masquerade is a symbolic gesture that strengthens the cloud of enigma surrounding Mr. Arkadin. There is even a meta-narrative buried in the plot: Gregory Arkadin doesn't know about Gregory Arkadin. The subsequent investigation and interrogation of a bevy of outrageously varied characters do nothing but add more questions to the central wonder of the narrative: Who is *really* Gregory Arkadin? What is his dark secret? And how is Sophie related to that fundamental riddle? All these questions form the engine of an adventurous plot.

***Touch of Evil*** The film's first image is a time bomb in the hands of an anonymous man, which heightens the stakes from the very beginning and adds a significant amount of suspense and intrigue that spans the entire length of the movie. Interesting part is that the mode of intrigue functions like a virus jumping from one host to another throughout the movie: it originates in the bomb, then moves onto Susan and her dealings with the cartel, then travels back to Hank and his intuition-based detection methods, and ends with Tana. We are constantly invited to question those characters' motivations: Who planted the bomb? Why did Susan not tell Miguel about the photograph or Pancho holding a flashlight at her? Why is Hank so determined to frame Sanchez? And why does Tana seem like she knows everything just by looking? Tana is indeed one of the biggest sources of intrigue. It is assumed that she has a past with and almost a psychic connection to Hank. The way she tells Hank that "he has used up all his future" while playing tarot cards makes us wonder who she really is. And at the end of the movie, instead of delivering the closure, Tana leaves us even with more intrigue by another Hank-related judgement: "He was some kind of a man." As she walks away from the camera, we are left to believe that she was also "some kind of a woman" who, at times, had an angelic quality that belonged more to a fantastic world than to reality.

***The Trial*** The biggest mystery of the story is what crime Josef K. has been arrested for. In perfect Kafkaesque fashion, we never get an answer because that is not the point of the movie. The mystery drives the plot, it shapes the characters' choices and it produces the situations, but it is not revealed because the mystery is not the story. If anything, the story is the real mystery: What is this tale all about? Is it the individual's inevitable defeat by the powers-that-be? Or is it about the unnamed and unspeakable evil that seals our fate?

## POWER

***Citizen Kane*** Power could be analysed in many different ways in the interpersonal relationships. Kane's innate power comes from his wealth, but he also garners an additional power through his newspapers. While the former gives him the opportunity to purchase material goods, the latter bestows upon him an authority that he abuses to further his social, political, and personal interests. What defines Kane and his legacy is chiefly the power he has over people: the way he wields it to manipulate his friends, his business partners, and most importantly women into becoming minions of Charles Kane. He demands that the chief of editor fabricate stories so that his newspaper can compete with his rival; he pushes for the Spanish-American war by manipulating public opinion so that he can increase his circulation; he refuses to accept being blackmailed by his political archenemy, which ironically strips him of political power; he forces Susan to take opera lessons though Susan does not want to; he publishes fake reviews to promote his wife's performance. At every turn, he refers back to his innate and tyrannical power to course-correct, but nothing prevents him from dying alone in a castle. From Kane's perspective, power emerges as a vulnerability that only reveals the weakness in him. Aside from Kane's fragile masculinity, there are two other characters who discover and utilize their power much to Kane's detriment—Leland and Susan. The former rejects Kane's \$25,000 check and sends it back in an envelope, which also contains the original document of Declaration of Principles. For Susan, the moment arrives before she leaves Kane for good. She realizes that this decision alone.

***Macbeth*** The movie offers a two-pronged discussion over the question of power. On one side, people are subjected to law and order as regulated by monarchy, military and religion, which together determines the course of their lives. All these modes of power are manifestations of the God's own grace on earth. Shakespeare, however, creates a dichotomy by pitting the natural order against the destructive power of the supernatural by creating the faceless witches. They are, by and large, a derivative of the Satan figure who spreads fear and evil by diverting people from the good. "Fiend" is what Macduff calls Macbeth, evoking the image of the devil. In the final battle between the representations of the good (Macduff) and the evil (Macbeth), the witches also make a final appearance to remind the audience of their relentless power. The good may have prevailed over the evil, for now, but the source of the evil is still among us, powerful and alluring.

***Othello*** The film is an intriguing narrative in terms of locating where and in whom power lies. The Duke and the Venetian Council hold military power in deciding to send Othello to war with the Turks. They also exert judicial authority in mediating the dispute between Othello and Brabantio. On an individual level, Othello has a mandate to govern Cyprus through his power bestowed upon him by



the Duke and the Council. There is also historical and systematic power in patriarchy, which seems to be fluid, flowing from father to husband in deciding women's fate. These are all institutional influences either inherited from or mandated by a superior entity. There is also the soft power to tell a good story. Othello has that power, which helps him woo Desdemona. Iago, among other things, is a supremely talented storyteller, which gives him an immense power over the others. He is able to run many story lines together, all simultaneously working towards the same result, while people and situations change constantly. In that sense, Iago is the world-maker, a supreme being, capable of creating fictions and having people believe them. Since such power is inherent to one's self, no institution or entity can renounce or withdraw it. He may be just an ensign, but also the most powerful man in the story.

**Mr. Arkadin** There are two kinds of power in the movie—hard power and soft power. The former is all about the wherewithal to direct people, manipulate situations and manufacture results, the power Mr. Arkadin holds in abundance. It originates from money and is executed through violence. It is aggressive, coercive and based on fear. He uses it on his daughter to shape her life, on Stratten to manipulate him into doing what he wants, and on others to access information germane to his ends. Soft power, which relies on co-option rather than coercion, is all about strategy and policy. As the other side of the Arkadin medallion, Sophie uses soft power in her dealings. Her decision not to employ the information regarding Arkadin's dark past allows her to keep the status quo, which serves her needs. While Arkadin uses the information to attack Stratten, Sophie chooses *not* to use what she knows. The power not to act is in and of itself a display of power. It's a subdued diplomacy. Her power lies in her ability to decide not to act whereas Arkadin's power almost always forces him to react. They are complete opposites in terms of how they execute their authority.

**The Trial** Power flows from a system into an elite group of people through a paradoxical chain because those people are the ones who have invented the said system in the first place. Therefore, the Law emerges as an exclusive game, in which power always stays within. The individual is categorically and systematically deprived of it. It is the Law that determines who will hold the power over whom. The initiated—lawyers, judges, clerks, court officials—understand the dynamics which is by design kept away from the uninitiated on whom such power is exercised. Therefore, in an ironic twist, the Law creates hierarchy rather than parity. The official court painter draws the picture for all of us to see. When K. asks him if he will be free, the painter says: "Ostensibly... ostensibly free." Individuals will stay as a subject even when they are allowed to walk out.

**Chimes at Midnight** In *Chimes at Midnight*, the transfer of power through royal succession is shown broken. Henry IV usurps the crown by denying the true heir, Edmund Mortimer. Therefore, his reign is mostly about fighting against plots, rebellions and assassinations since his power is considered illegitimate. During the Tudor period, one available outlet outside the usual framework of hereditary monarchy is war. The victors claim the throne and power. Hotspur Percy and his accomplices choose war against the illegitimate reign of Henry IV for the purpose of claiming power back for themselves. Ironically, this war is partly responsible for the coronation of Prince Hal as he comes out victorious in his battle with Hotspur and ultimately succeeds his father as the legitimate king of the realm.

**The Other Side of the Wind** The director holds the power around the movie set, setting scenes up, directing actors, evoking emotions and provoking contemplation. His artistic power lends him an authority he may also choose to wield outside the framework of art. The man within the artist can also be seduced to utilize the power of the artist as is case with Hannaford. Looking at the fates of his leading men, it is clear that he abuses his power to dominate and subjugate them in a way to replicate what the journalist refers to as the 'master-and-slave dialectic'. This is not a relationship between people of equal status. It is a hierarchal dynamic between a dominatrix and his subjects, which turns him into a tyrant.

## POLITICS

**The Stranger** Politics is not the main concern of the movie as it was supposed to be a Hollywood thriller, but it still permeates the story in subtle ways. Orson Welles, via documentary footage of the Holocaust, introduces the politics of war as a meta-commentary. The monster lurking in the shadows becomes a war criminal responsible for genocide. Suddenly, the police procedural is not only entertainment, but politicized to lend the movie a political heft. Orson Welles was very vocal about his

anti-Nazi views, and *The Stranger* gives his political activism another potent platform. Having Kindler mention the “extermination” as a solution to an imagined problem involving a race is his way of rendering the idea as ludicrous as possible.

***The Trial*** The movie presents and explicates bureaucracy less as a matter of paperwork than a potent system that traps individuals within its procedures that are inscrutable to the uninitiated. In this game, the lawyers, clerks, judges and even the official painters hold all the power against people who cannot move through the system’s procedures to defend themselves or prove their innocence. The decision is up to the powers-that-be who have designed the bureaucratic barriers. The painter, of all people, gives a glimpse of the legal bureaucracy when he asks K. what kind of acquittal he wants. “Ostensible, or definite acquittal or deferment?” Then, Titorelli lists all the other steps following the acquittal: “Third arrest, fourth arrest, fourth acquittal...” all point to a convoluted maze that entraps whoever dares to enter it.

***Chimes at Midnight*** The movie goes back and forth between the court and the tavern, each representing a different social level in the Middle Ages. The tavern scenes are almost always full of entertainment with patrons laughing, drinking, and enjoying themselves in the company of others. The camera is always on the move, following the joy whenever it goes. “The court represents the real world of politics and war, while the tavern is a Brueghel-like scene of play and fun,” Robert Bell writes, pointing out the dichotomy between these two important social spaces. One can see the castle, and therefore the court, looking from the tavern, but one cannot see the tavern from anywhere within the castle. The invisible line between the two is consecrated by the new king himself after banishing Falstaff (read: the tavern) from the court. The two are like the Pauli exclusion principle in physics: “Two objects cannot occupy the same space at the same time.” The final frame of the movie showing Falstaff’s casket outside the tavern leading away from the castle is a poignant reminder of the incompatibility of the two.

## CLASS

***The Lady from Shanghai*** Class plays an intriguing role in the film. On the surface, Arthur and Elsa represent the cold upper-class, while Mike is the down-to-earth member of middle-class. Mike’s characterization of them as “sharks eating at themselves” conforms to the image of the rich as predators and the poor as their prey. Welles’ classism is subtler and more sophisticated than the Rich-Poor binary opposition as we learn that Arthur actually comes from a low socio-economic background. “The great Bachrach, who kept me out of his club, because my mother was a Manchester Greek,” Arthur says. His vertical migration through class lines represents an uncomfortable truth: His money keeps him there, not his blood or status. For him, money has become the measure of life. The Rich use money, but the Poor need it. And Arthur needs money to hold onto his power. As he boasts about getting Bachrach on perjury, he says: “He died bankrupt. And here I am.” As he talks about his maid, Bessy, he equates her happiness with her salary. In a way, Arthur has bought his way into the upper-class and he will stay there so long as he is rich. Elsa is not immune to this, either. We are not told about her background, but she admits she’d be penniless if Arthur divorced him. The threat of losing money, hence her hard-earned status in society, is enough reason to kill Arthur. In a rather twisted irony, all these powerful, rich, upper-class individuals die, while only the poor member of middle-class survives

## TECHNOLOGY

***The Trial*** One of the changes Welles made to the story is to inject some 1960s technology. “Although I have tried to be faithful to what I take to be the spirit of Kafka,” Welles justifies his modernization, “the novel was written in the early twenties, and this is now 1962.” Therefore, he introduces, for instance, a machine that can reportedly tell K. what he is charged with. “Well [the machine]’d need the data, economic, sociological, psychological,” K. says in a bid to transform and understand the concept of crime as a matter of fact. In a scene cut from the final edit, this assumption is further developed. The supercomputer, by processing K.’s data, predicts that K. will commit suicide. This is an amazingly prescient move from Welles. Beside the fact that he may have inspired Douglas Adams, he also undercuts the bureaucratic power of the Law by offering a fresh perspective on the concepts of crime and punishment.

## LAW / JUSTICE

**The Stranger** The movie presents a consistent moral structure, in which Evil is defeated by Good. Probably the film's least interesting part, its ending, wraps up this moral universe by having the pure and innocent soul kill the devil in a heavily symbolised moment. The "fiery sword of Siegfried" that Kindler discusses during his ironic dinner monologue ultimately becomes the sword of the American town that delivers the justice to him. And it is of no coincidence that Mary, who deals the first blow, happens to be the daughter of a Supreme Court Justice. In this world, where the moral order is momentarily disrupted by Evil, murder also becomes an accepted form of justice, a "Carthaginian peace" if you will.

**The Lady from Shanghai** The courtroom scene plays out like a caricatured version of a trial bordering on self-parody. The "trial by ambush" practice, which is rarely if ever seen in real-life cases, is stretched to its almost absolute limit in order to make the process absurd. Nothing that happens in that courtroom resembles a proper trial. The defense attorney on the witness stand cross-examining himself looks like something out of a Groucho Marx routine than a criminal trial. And all this is relevant and functional considering the movie's intention. In Welles' world, justice for the little man will never come out of a courtroom as the law and justice system are stacked against people like Mike. As the fall guy, he has been played, manipulated and controlled by everyone. His place in the defendant chair has been engineered by the sharks who will never let him off the hook because that's not in the nature of a predator—hence the flaw in the justice system: That it does not always protect the innocent. Justice is found outside the courthouse. Through a rather cheeky closure, the movie insists that it is actually found in the funhouse.

**Touch of Evil** Similarly, Welles' treatment of law enforcement is not binary. While Hank and the local DA office represent the corrupt side of power, Menzies and Miguel emerge as idealizations of benevolent power. The DA office, while trying to protect one of his own, refuses to hear Miguel's evidence and supports Hank. This enables corruption and creates a culture of toxic fraternity that prioritizes an internal code over the law. Even if Hank's morally ambiguous methods are self-serving, his ambition to catch murderers and solve crimes still serves society. Miguel Vargas emerges as another law enforcement figure, through which Welles offers a nuanced argument *vis-à-vis* morality. Miguel plays the chivalrous man of justice who protects the weak, the innocent, and the pure at all costs. The ironic twist is that he, too, resorts to extra-legal methods to achieve his end. On the surface, it seems that the "good" law enforcement agents, Miguel and Menzies, utilize their collective authority to deliver justice for a more noble purpose, but they still cross the line as do their "evil" counterparts.

**The Trial** Orson Welles opens the movie with the parable "Before the Law," a text that was published in the 1915 New Year's edition of *Selbstwehr* before it appeared in the novel, *The Trial*. What this parable conveys is that justice is for everyone and therefore no-one. The assumption that every individual is equal before the Law is just that, an assumption. In practice, not everyone will be allowed to enter the system to receive justice because the way it is set up privileges some over others. The guard ensures that it stays that way; the guard could be a lawyer, a judge, or even an advocate's maid. The official court painter, who knows every judge and every procedure, tells K. about the mazelike corridors of the Law, which makes K. dizzy. The tragedy is that, as soon as he understands how the Law works, he is unable to get out.

## PSYCHOLOGY

**The Stranger** The investigator Agent Wilson employs his rather clumsy psychoanalysis on Mary while trying to explain away her unwillingness to accept the presented truth. His reference to Mary's "subconscious" is unfortunately erroneous as there is no such thing as subconscious in psychoanalytical literature; however, his larger point regarding psychology still stands if we assume that he actually means "unconscious mind" in the theory of repression. In Mary's case, this plays out in a fascinating manner. First, the relationship between her ego and her love causes a split in her psyche, forcing her to push the truth deep in her consciousness. Second, the resulting repressed guilt surfaces in the shape of a dream in a very Freudian fashion. She dreams about Meinike, who appears to move away, but his "shadow stayed there behind him and spread out just like a carpet." She course-corrects her cognitive dissonance when she eventually kills the source of her guilt, accomplishing her wish-fulfilment. Mary's character arc is an interesting dramatisation of psychoanalysis, which was getting more and more popular in America in the 1940s and 1950s.

## CINEMA

***The Other Side of the Wind*** In this movie, Orson Welles pays homage to filmmaking while also engaging in cynical and self-reflective metacommentary regarding the art form itself. Famous directors who appear as themselves; film students and critics who use esoteric language; the press who is always attacking the director... Welles is in a hurry to mock them with discernible disdain. A reporter's question – "Mr. Hannaford, is the camera eye a reflection of reality or is reality a reflection of the camera eye? Or is the camera merely a phallus?" – suddenly becomes absurd when Hannaford answers it with a "I want a drink." Welles takes the air out of this intellectual space completely. Or during an intense argument, a filmmaker can come out of nowhere and ask Otterlake: "What is the fundamental aesthetic distinction between a zoom and a dolly?" The bemused Otterlake's reply – "What possible difference can that make except to another dolly?" – turns the whole 'serious talk' into a cheap one-liner. His cynicism, however, is mostly geared towards Hollywood-branded of cinema. The French New Wave element (Claude Chabrol appearing as himself), a hat-tip to surrealism with the Dale dummies and midgets who come and go as they please with no narrative punch, and the American Independents (Denis Hopper's appearance as himself) can be interpreted as his respectful nods to the art of filmmaking. Aside from his general views on cinema, Welles also delivers a selflacerating critique of the director. Hannaford's last words in the movie-within-a-movie are also the last words of the great Orson Welles in cinematic form, his swan song on the art he dedicated his life to:

*Remember those Berbers up in the Atlas? They wouldn't let us point a camera at them. They're certain that it dries up something. The old eye, you know, behind the magic box. Could be it's an evil eye, at that. Medusa's. Who knows, maybe you can stare too hard at something. Drain out the virtue, suck out the living juice. You shoot the great places and the pretty people. All those girls and boys. Shoot them dead.*

## RELIGION

***Macbeth*** The supernaturalness of the witches is established very early on in the story. "What are these that look not like the inhabitants o' the earth, and yet are on't?" asks Banquo, referring to their abnormal existence. Welles chooses not to give them a face to heighten the sense of foreboding. These women are not innocent palm-readers who have the gift of clairvoyance. Emerging out of the fog and speaking in hush tones, they are indeed an extension of some ill and evil that exists out of time and space. They can appear at anywhere and at any time without being bound to physical laws. One can also assume that apparitions and ghosts Macbeth sees are of their making. Their supernatural power is reflected on the unnatural state of the world. When Lady Macduff points to the dark sky even though it's morning, the Holy Man answers her, "'Tis unnatural, Even like the deed that's done." Murder merges the supernatural with the unnatural.

***The Other Side of the Wind*** Religion is evoked in a couple of places especially when it refers to the status of the director within the hierarchy of filmmaking. For instance, Hannaford is called a God with Dale his creation, which also supports the master-slave dichotomy mentioned earlier. But the God, according to Hannaford, is an invention of the Jewish man to put down the Jewish mother, invoking a gender-based commentary on the role of God. "We're all ruled by the wind, aren't we, lady?" Hannaford tells Rich. The other side of the wind, as it were, is where the male image of God is destroyed by the ideal female image. At the end of both movies, the symbolic masculine figures are dead and destroyed: the phallus in Hannaford's film, and Hannaford in Welles's film. This is as an aesthetic statement as it is a religious one.

## VALUES

***Chimes at Midnight*** Valour, honour, chivalry and loyalty are the values that both the aristocracy and the common people are expected to uphold. The prince, as the elite member of monarchy, needs to conduct himself in a manner befitting his status by being a just ruler and a courageous commander. For the soldier, honour and loyalty manifest themselves as self-sacrifice in the face of death. Falstaff, as someone who is a knight and also a common man mingling with other commoners, refuses to comply with these long-established expectations, prioritizing his own life over vague definitions. His noncompliance is such that he creates his own rulebook to live by. "Honour is a mere scutcheon [shield]. And so ends my catechism," he says, pitting his values against those of the society of which

he is a member.

## CRIME

**Macbeth** In *Macbeth*, crime pays, but only to an extent and for a more ethical project. *Macbeth* and Lady *Macbeth* claim power through their criminal enterprise, but the pleasure of success happens to be very short-lived. In fact, there is no joy to be found in the fulfilment of their desires through murder and deceit. Both these characters suffer from their crimes. Sleepless *Macbeth* is tormented by the ghosts of his victims as he slowly loses his touch with reality, while Lady *Macbeth*'s only way for a total cleansing of her soul is to embrace death. Crime, in its manifestation as disruption of earthly and heavenly authority, inflicts both bodily and spiritual damage to the perpetrators. Individual becomes corrupted with no chance of a redemption except by death.

**Mr. Arkadin** Crime appears as the essential motivator and plot engine in the movie. Its protagonist, with whom we are invited to identify, is a petty criminal peddling cigarettes and contraband goods. The antagonist has his whole life centred around crime: be it helping the Nazis or Fascists in building their regimes, or running a sex trafficking gang, or killing the members of the said gang so that his criminal past wouldn't surface. In fact, Gregory *Arkadin* is so deeply synonymous with criminal behaviour that he almost becomes a caricature of himself, a metaphor whose symbolic meaning goes beyond the story's borders. Indeed, the film scholar James Naremore suggests that *Mr. Arkadin* can be construed as a Cold War allegory with Guy Van Stratten resembling a young, athletic Richard Nixon and Gregory *Arkadin* a stand-in for Josef Stalin. Stratten, Mily, Sophie, and all the peculiar interviewees Stratten interrogates throughout the story are or were part of a criminal underground network at some point in their lives. Raina, who seems to be the only innocent party, is eventually impacted by the consequences of a criminal enterprise.

**Touch of Evil** The movie turns the tables on expectations regarding the cartel, or mafia, by setting them up for failure from the outset. Susan is supposed to be threatened and scared by them, but she challenges them and even insults its leader with impunity. Another member of the cartel, a rogue youth, tries to throw acid at Miguel's face, but fails miserably. Welles ensures that we get a separate scene in which the cartel leader berates that assailant for acting without permission, a sign that the leadership is in disarray and the cartel may just be a source of ridicule rather than threat. This view is supported by the scene between Grandi and Hank. The power dynamics between the two men is so skewed towards Hank that we are frightened more by a detective than a cartel leader.

## GENDER

**Citizen Kane** Even though the movie reinforces patriarchal gender relations and roles, a close reading also reveals that women are not always placed in a subordinate position against men. In the final moment, it's women who make choices despite Charles Kane. His mother, Mrs. Kane, sends her son away so that he can have a better future despite her husband's complaints. She successfully swats him away to achieve what she wants to achieve: a better life for her son. Similarly, Charles Kane's first wife, Emily, decides to confront Kane's lover and eventually makes the decision to leave him of her own volition. Her indictment of Kane is also spot on. When he says, "There's only one person in the world to decide what I'll do. And that's me," Emily answers: "You decided what you were going to do, Charles, some time ago" suggesting that Kane's corruption has already begun. And Susan, who has been ignored by everyone throughout the movie, realizes her power in the final scene and leaves Kane to gain her independence. It's her choice that triggers the domino effect of Charles Kane's downfall.

**Macbeth** Lady *Macbeth* and Malcolm manipulate *Macbeth* and *Macduff*, respectively, by appealing to their manhood to shame them into doing the thing they want them to do. When *Macbeth* has second thoughts about the plan to murder the king, Lady *Macbeth* insinuates that *Macbeth* has lost his manliness. "If you weren't a man, then what kind of animal were you when you first told me you wanted to do this? When you dared to do it, that's when you were a man." She further provokes him by saying that she, as a woman who has "given suck and know How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me," would have murdered the baby before dismissing the chance of becoming "something more than a man". Malcolm, too, asks *Macduff* to "Dispute it like a man" rather than wallow in sadness after learning about the death of his family. And gender also works on *Macduff*. "Oh, I could play the woman with mine eyes and braggart with my tongue! But, gentle heavens, cut short all intermission,"

says Macduff, finally deciding to “act like a man” as he prepares for the attack. Malcolm gladly accepts it: “This tune goes manly.” Gender stereotypes play a role in Lady Macbeth’s fall from grace as well. Her “Unsex me” prayer plays on the assumed characteristics of men and women, in which women must shed their femininity and become more like men to act heinously. The punishment of this “unnatural” conversion is death by suicide.

**Othello** Othello’s world is neatly demarcated in terms of gender roles and relations: women are subordinate to men. A woman is first owned by her father and then passed to her husband, both of whom define and determine her world in a setting that constantly reaffirms this one-way interaction. Even Desdemona’s rebellion is marked by her obedience to the male rule: “You are lord of all my duty,” she says to her father. “And so much duty as my mother showed to you preferring you before her father so much I challenge that I may profess due to the Moor.” Not love, but a sense of duty is called upon and it is that sense of duty that condemns Desdemona to death as she cannot even defy her husband’s explicit desire to murder her. “Kill me tomorrow. Let me live tonight” is the tragic fate of women under patriarchy. Emilia, through her speeches and actions, manages to buck the norm by bringing in a proto-feminist point of view; however, her life is short-lived as her reward for her progressive views is not dissimilar to Desdemona’s—death by a man.

**Touch of Evil** What is “touched by evil” is that which is innocent, pure, and preferably virgin. Susan fulfils this destiny. She is utilized in the movie as bait, a sacrificial lamb, among men fighting over her honour. Her husband, who is the literal law, is there to protect her against the forces of evil. That’s his manifest destiny, while Susan’s is to enable his. In his memo, while explaining the reason why he split the newlyweds and used parallel editing, Orson Welles refers to the women’s “classic failure to fully appreciate and sympathize with that sense of abstract duty so peculiar to the male.” The so-called duty is highly gendered in the movie. For Miguel, it is his duty to protect Susan’s honor so that “[n]othing’s been touched by all this... filth.” On the other hand, Susan’s duty is to let him perform his societal duty by becoming an object that deserves to be saved. In the balcony scene where Susan is screaming for help, onlookers laugh at her, assuming that she is a prostitute and therefore does not deserve to be saved. Her body, as an object, has already been touched by evil; therefore, there is no manifest destiny or duty to be fulfilled. Susan’s “polluted body is transformed and becomes invisible to her husband.” It is frustrating because the movie, in the first half, introduces Susan as a courageous, powerful and strong woman who can defend herself. It’s the second half that completely erases and disregards that image, turning her into a plot device amidst the men’s fight for power.

**Chimes at Midnight** *Chimes at Midnight* is a film about, of and by men. When women appear on screen, they are either a prostitute, a mistress, or a nagging wife who doesn’t understand the ways of men. The fact that the tavern is the only place where we see women, albeit always in a role of serving men, is an accurate portrayal of Middle Ages where women never held positions of power. There is not a woman present in the court. The only time we see a female interacting with any kind of power or royal personage is when Hotspur’s wife, Kate, tries to prevent Hotspur from leaving home. Even then, she’s always in the background or getting chided while Hotspur deals with courtly business.

**The Other Side of the Wind** “Men only like men,” Valeska says, to which Hannaford replies: “And women keep us away from each other.” This little dialogue could be interpreted as confirmation of Rich’s insinuations that Hannaford possessed the girls of his leading actors so that he could possess the men. The suggestion is that Hannaford regarded women as only conduits in his attempt to possess, overpower, direct or otherwise create his actors/men. There is a sinister sexual component to this master-slave rhetoric; however, larger narrative examines gender roles, which Hannaford also seems to be breaking down in his movie. “But if I cut him off ... what will be left of him? An amputee, perhaps, an emotional basket case,” Valeska completes her train of thought on men loving only men. Hannaford’s tragedy is that he is tired of his own image as a despotic man who abuses men and women, hence the ending of his movie in an attempt to reverse the gender roles. He indeed becomes an emotional basket case in the end who commits suicide in a car to put an end to his own misery.

## SEXUALITY

**The Trial** Women in *The Trial* are awkwardly and inexplicably attracted to the accused men. Leni uses her sexuality to manipulate the Advocate’s clients, who are all men. The courtroom guard’s wife is being harassed by a Law student right in the middle of K.’s defence, and everybody seems to consider this to be business as usual. The wife herself tries to seduce K. with the promise of legal

help and her husband seems to be unable to prevent her. Even the little girls are driven by an inexplicable urge to touch and spy on K. in the painter's hut. The Advocate's explanation is as good as any: "It's just... something about them, something... attractive." Curiously, none of the accused in the movie are women. There seems to be a linkage between the sexuality of women and the crimes of men, both of which are mediated through the legal system.

***The Other Side of the Wind*** The movie-within-a-movie represents sexuality in its many different stages. 1) Male pursuing female, 2) Male courtship, 3) Sexual tension, 4) The act of sex, 5) Female sexual empowerment. Both the male and the female actors stay muted throughout the movie, which amplifies their actions and demeanours. Dale, who plays the leading man, gets uncomfortable when The Red takes the initiative in the car despite him being the pursuer up until that moment. When, with Hannaford's directing, The Red's sexual advances turn oppressive and possibly violent, Dale walks off the set, angry at the position he was put in. That's the deeper story of the movie-within-a-movie as shown in the final scene: The Red destroys a phallus, symbolically replacing the male power with female power. Sexuality, in the movie, appears to be a function of power relations and authority.

TIME

***The Magnificent Ambersons*** "When times have gone, they aren't old, they are dead," Eugene says during the dance scene. "There aren't any times but new times." One can argue that old times never die or go away, but emerge as memories, grudges, hatred and love. And new times are not always shiny and welcoming because they can also destroy, kill, or amputate individuals, societies and families. The movie's treatment of decay has two dimensions: one is related to individual time and the other is about societal time. In the former, people remember, people get old and people live the consequences of their actions, whereas, in the latter, technological progress manufactures a slightly different time, out of synch with individual time, in which interactions are forever altered. The *Magnificent Ambersons* demonstrates the tragic friction between these two forms of time: for individuals, time is never dead, but frozen in memories and remembrances; for society, time is forever changing, creating new history every moment. It is ultimately the language of death and decay. "The point of *The Ambersons*," Orson Welles says in the 1982-documentary *Arena*, "everything that is any good in it is that part of it which was really just a preparation for the decay of *The Ambersons*."

***The Stranger*** Franz Kindler / Charles Rankin and Meinike have worked in the concentration camps as a Nazi officers. They are hiding from the law. However their past catches up with them and they die at the end. Franz Kindler tries to hide his past and Agent Wilson tries to expose him in his new town.

***Mr. Arkadin*** In the movie, the past emerges almost as a physical space that has a real and tangible connection with the present. Even the movie's flashback structure makes this relationship as relevant and inevitable as possible—at least as far as the Orson Welles' original conception goes. For Gregory Arkadin, the past is where his identity was forged, so it is something to be destroyed by getting rid of everyone that has a connection to it. For Sophie, too, the past is where her story was forged, but it is something to be cherished and embraced. Arkadin fears his past whereas Sophie understands it. Arkadin uses his past as a weapon, while Sophie uses it as a shield. Arkadin wants to divorce himself from the shackles of time, whereas Sophie hides herself in a protective cocoon. In each case, identity emerges as a function of the past. Both Arkadin and Sophie have new personas in the present; however, the former wants it to be isolated, while the latter appreciates its continuity.

***Touch of Evil*** The story is a fast-paced murder mystery set in the present time containing no flashbacks; however, the weight of the past is felt throughout. We are given two very important characters with which to track time: Hank Quinlan and Tana. Hank's memory about his wife's murder is the main construct behind his motives and psychology. It's his first "sin" that he's been trying to undo by punishing others' "sins". Deep down, he knows that this is futile, hence his need for nostalgia and wish fulfilment. It is no coincidence that, after killing Grandi, Hank goes back to Tana's brothel because it's the place that "sure brings back memories." It's where he can find some peace in the safety of his memories. There is very little interaction between Hank and Tana. Hank sits in the chair, drinking while she plays cards. In their only interaction, Tana tells Hank that he's used up all his future, meaning that his end is approaching. Tana, in one sense, represents the nostalgic past that Hank wants to retrieve. With her mysterious air, she is Hank's conscience and memory. She *is* time itself. "What does it matter what you say about people?" she says. Through her, we think that life is transient anyway, that we all change, and that past is in the past.

## TRANSCIENCE / APPEARANCE

***The Magnificent Ambersons*** The small Indiana town where the film is set provides the audience with a strong symbol of impermanence. The message is clear: even a powerful and wealthy family cannot fight against the current of time and progress. Eugene's prescient soliloquy is most illuminating in highlighting the precarious nature of power, wealth, progress and status as they relate to families, towns and civilizations. "With all their speed forward, [automobiles] may be a step backward in civilization," he says. "It may be that they won't add to the beauty of the world or the life of men's souls. I'm not sure. But automobiles have come." The change is here: Adapt, or perish. It is almost as if the fates of the small town and the Ambersons have already been decided the moment the idea of automobiles came about.

***Othello*** Iago is the only character in the film who splits himself into many personalities and appearances. He is a distinctly different person in almost all of his interactions with people. There is a different Iago for each and every one of them: Roderigo, Brabantio, Othello, Cassio and Emilia. He dominates, he plays the honest servant, he is the instigator and he is the trustworthy friend. Iago is none of them and also all of them, a composite psychopath who can take on any appearance to ensure he gets what he wants. In all the other characters, appearance is important as it relates to their reputation, not manipulation. Cassio is devastated after being stripped of his rank; Desdemona cannot bear being called an adulteress; and Othello wants history to reflect his name and his deeds as exactly they are.

***Mr. Arkadin*** There are several party and carnival scenes, all of which contain symbolic and at times literal references to masks, personas, hoods, and statues. The point is that the film's central characters all play a game of identity, marked by different masks and personas. Mr. Arkadin is seen wearing a mask the first time he appears on screen, a not-so-subtle reference to his façade revealed later. Similarly, Stratten, who appears to be friendly with Raina, is only trying to hide his real identity as a con-artist to get what he wants. There are also several shots of animal statues, bats hanging upside down and a flea expert, all of which could be regarded as references to the animalistic features of some characters. Arkadin, for one, makes a subtle point about himself as he tells the story of a scorpion who stings a frog that carries him across a river. "Couldn't avoid it. It's my character," the scorpion (read Arkadin) says. The flea expert makes a similar connection between crooks and fleas. "They're just the stupidest, the fleas of the world," he tells Stratten, who he knows is just another crook, a flea.

***Chimes at Midnight*** The film offers two kinds of deaths: one that takes place in battle, which is messy and bloody, and one that takes place in bed, which is likened to a peaceful sleep that "hath divorced so many English kings". When death comes for a soldier, it robs him of his life; however, when death arrives at in a king's bedroom, it merely sends him to sleep for another king to be coronated. This symbolic dichotomy reveals the different types of deaths the society conceptualizes: For monarchy, death brings the next in line, while for a soldier death takes him away, nameless.

## ORIENTALISM

***The Lady from Shanghai*** Played by a blonde Rita Hayworth, Elsa's identity as a Chinese woman is complicated. It is similar to the construction of Arthur's upper-class status: In their core, they are not what they pretend to be. Elsa is not Chinese, and Arthur does not come from an upper-class background, but they choose to wrap themselves in these cloaks for protection and influence. The reason Welles may have chosen to associate Elsa with an Asian identity is a more complicated question. There is a deep literature of Western fascination with the exotic East, which manifests itself in movies of this ilk as either sexual threat from Asian men or sexual fascination with Asian women. In Elsa's case, however, the so-called sexual threat is inverted. Instead of being the target of sexually devious Asian men, Elsa becomes the sexual threat who lures a white man into her trap as a white woman with an Asian heritage. The stereotypical expectations are, thus, subverted in the eyes of the film viewer. Yes, she's the femme fatale, but an orientalized version of it. As the scholar and poet Michael Davidson argues, Elsa's layered identity is still the product of Western fear vis-à-vis "yellow threat" as "Caucasian woman is ruined not by villainous Asians but by associating with them."

## BORDER



***Touch of Evil*** The film plays off the idea of border on several levels. As a physical concept, border forms the setting that separates two countries, or two cultures. In some ways, this separation leads to segregation between those two parties that fall on opposite sides of the border; segregation leads to xenophobia, racism, and bigotry. A similar split occurs on a moral level between the two opposing forces: Evil and Good. The small border town, while separating the two nations, also offers a place for a showdown between good and bad. This distinction, just like the physical line of a border, gets blurry now and then. Evil, manifested as Hank, is not an irredeemable mythical devil; we are asked to feel somewhat sorry for him. In the same way, Good, in the form of Miguel Vargas, steps over the line in trying to trap Hank. The symbolic border between good and bad, like the physical line marking the border, can be lifted momentarily. Miguel, in trying to rid the world of evil, ultimately gets touched by the same.

## RACISM

***Othello*** Xenophobia and bigotry form the backbone of the story of Othello, a dark-skinned military commander who is married to the white daughter of a Venetian senator. Iago incites Desdemona's father, Brabantio, by playing off the latter's bigotry. He makes a reference to lascivious Othello's "gross clasps," creating a grotesque and subtly racist image in Brabantio's mind regarding their union: The Beauty and the Beast, so to speak. Brabantio presses charges on Othello before the council for "abusing, stealing and corrupting her by magic spell," expressing his outrage in these words: "Fair and happy would ever have to incur a general mock, run from her father to the sooty bosom of such a thing as that.<sup>4</sup>" Direct insults to Othello's body, dehumanizing references to his charm or lack thereof stem from the fact that the only sin the Moor commits is to have a darker skin when compared to fair Desdemona. That's Brabantio's real outrage, and of course, that of Iago, whose racism works in a much subtler manner. Iago's racism becomes especially clear when he starts "working" Othello. He suggests that Desdemona went against her nature by marrying Othello and not a man "[o]f her own clime, complexion, and degree." This is a below-the-belt punch to Othello's unspoken and repressed anxiety about his status, which Iago ruthlessly abuses. The green-eyed monster Iago refers to at various points in the story is never jealousy, but Othello the Dark himself.

***Touch of Evil*** It is not far-fetched to argue that Welles based Hank Quinlan on the Los Angeles Sheriff, E. Duran Ayres, who testified during the Sleepy Lagoon Trials<sup>iv</sup> as an expert witness that Mexicans as a community had a "blood-thirst" and a "biological predisposition" to killing, citing "the culture of human sacrifice practiced by their Aztec ancestors." Hank has a similar xenophobic and racist profile in his dealings with Mexican characters, treating them as inferior to himself and, by extension, to Americans. Class, socio-economic status, or level of education does not matter in Hank's bigoted mind. His marker is race. Shoe clerk or special prosecutor receive the same treatment from Hank because they share one common denominator: They are both Mexicans, and, therefore, inferior.

## CHARACTERS

### IDEALIST / DECISIVE

**Charles Foster Kane (Citizen Kane)** Even though he owns the 6th largest fortune in the world, Kane chooses to be the publisher of a small New York paper as "it would be fun." Instead of focusing on making more money, Kane decides to become a champion of the underprivileged. His Declaration of Principles sets him up to be the voice of the common people. By doing so, he also goes against his own business interests. When confronted, he admits he is actually two people: one of them is the rich Kane and the other is the Kane with a duty to protect "decent, hard-working people."

**Lucy Morgan (The Magnificent Ambersons)** Lucy's dominant personality trait is her steadfastness and her insistence to follow her logic rather than her heart. From the moment she meets George and up to the moment they split up, she knows they are incompatible. She is shell-shocked by George forcefully inviting her to the sleigh ride. When he tells her he wants to be "a yachtsman," this is not the answer the daughter of an inventor wants to hear. She is insistent that they will not marry, "Not for years." During the send-off, she pretends she doesn't care about whether they may never see each other again. She knows she is in love, but she also knows that there is no future in and with George. Just like the head-strong Isabel she is supposed to replicate in the movie, Lucy

trusts her instincts and spurns a man she loves.

**Agent Wilson (The Stranger)** Agent Wilson is determined to catch the “obscene” monster that is Franz Kindler because he wants this Nazi horror to be eradicated, root and branch. He is willing to release Konrad Meinike because he knows he will lead them to Kindler, something the Commission is reluctant about. This doesn’t deter Wilson because he knows Kindler won’t stop. To him, Kindler is a cancerous cell that needs to be dealt with before it spreads once again. That’s why he tells the Commission that he is taking full responsibility. His determination comes from his desperation.

**Miguel “Mike” Vargas (Touch of Evil)** As an officer of the court and representative of his country, Miguel Vargas feels obligated to help Hank instead of enjoying his honeymoon with his wife. His country’s reputation and his own moral code behave him to ensure that the law is upheld. When Hank interrogates Sanchez, Miguel sticks around to observe as he is mindful of Hank’s racism and dark past. In order to expose Hank, he leaves his wife in a remote motel and investigates Hank’s old case files. Miguel’s strict honour code reminds Hank of an angel so much so that Hank accuses his partner of becoming an angel himself by way of association: “Vargas will turn you into one of these here starry-eyed idealists,” he says, mockingly. But that’s who Miguel is: An honourable idealist who is touched but not wholly stained by evil.

**Josef K. (The Trial)** K. is a character who is supposed to cower and acquiesce. Like the other accused men, he is expected to exist in an indeterminate state. His family and friends as well as the law encourage him to follow usual procedures, which are designed to keep him arrested. However, K. is not afraid of taking the road less trodden. When he witnesses how Bloch has been made to wait for years, he takes his fate into his own hands by dismissing his attorney. At the court house, while each and every accused are waiting for their trials in a quiet acceptance, K. tells the guard to let him out instead. “Can you tell me how to get out of here? I’ve had enough of this place,” K. says, not mincing his words. “I only came here because I wanted to see if the inside of this famous legal system was as loathsome as I guessed it was.” He makes every attempt to reach his own decisions and is ready to face the consequences. His decisiveness is an expected result that even his executioners don’t know how to handle.

**Henry “Hotspur” Percy (Chimes at Midnight)** Percy’s wife doesn’t understand his rush to go to war. She wants him to tell her the truth, or she will break his finger. Percy is almost amused at his wife’s anger. “Love? I love thee not! I care not for thee, Kate,” he says as he prepares to leave. “This is no world to play with mammals and to tilt with lips. We must have bloody noses and cracked crowns.” Percy wants the war. Percy wants power. And he wants it *now*. He cannot wait to receive what is his by right. After losing the one-on-one combat with Prince Hal, Hotspur highlights his ambition in the form of his own eulogy: “I better brook the loss of brittle life than these proud titles thou hast won of me. They wound my thoughts worse than thy sword my flesh.”

## PRINCIPLED

**Arthur Bannister (The Lady from Shanghai)** Power is what makes Arthur Bannister tick. It’s his ability to shape not only his life, but the lives of people around him through the use of his fortune, status, and information. He has never lost a case. His marriage is based on blackmail. He mocks and bullies his partner, George, which probably forces the latter to join forces with Elsa in a plot to kill him. Like most dominant men, his power originates from his weakness. He is insecure about the class his mother, and by extension he, was born into. He can’t change that, but he can hurt the man who kept him out of his club due to his mother being “a Manchester Greek.” That is power for Arthur. Power gives him the right and agency to erase the past and repackage himself with an upper-class façade as well as to exploit the past so he can carry around a trophy wife who bestows upon him that upper-class status.

**Macduff (Macbeth)** Macduff is resolved to kill Macbeth because he wants to establish the true heir as the king, but his individual quest is built upon his revenge. It’s not a chaotic or uncontrolled grief, but a sharp and debilitating one that provides him with motivation and strength. “But I must also feel it as a man,” he tells Malcolm, who urges him to weaponize his grief. Macduff will do that, for sure, but not before he incorporates the sorrowful memory of his family into his revenge. It becomes potent through love and remembrance. There is intention, resolve and power behind his quest for revenge. As he prepares to duel with Macbeth, he lets the tyrant know what fuels him: “My wife and

children's ghosts will haunt me still ... I have no words. My voice is in my sword." His family is his revenge.

**Sir John Falstaff (Chimes at Midnight)** Falstaff's reluctance to join the war could be construed as cowardly, or his refusal to part with his life along with other men in the service of the king could be seen as treason; however, Falstaff is not bound by the code of chivalry that govern these men. "What is honor?" he asks Prince Hal before the battle begins. "Honor hath no skill in surgery. Honour is a mere scutcheon. And so ends my catechism." This is his scripture. For Falstaff, there is nothing more honourable than wanting to stay alive and keep drinking wine. His code of honour, if any, is to stay alive and enjoy life. "If I had a thousand sons, the first humane principle I would teach them would be," says Falstaff after the war is won, "to forswear thin potations and to addict themselves to sack!" His principles do not fit the period or meet the expectations of a knight. That doesn't mean Falstaff has not built a code for himself.

CYNICAL

**Jack Hannaford (The Other Side of the Wind)** Hannaford doesn't like to talk about the movie he's currently making. He doesn't want to talk about himself. He doesn't even think that he's doing something original. "It's alright to borrow from each other. What we must never do is borrow from ourselves," he tells Otterlake as a thinly-veiled critic of his movies. But one can also sense that Hannaford's words refer to Hannaford himself. In the closing soliloquy of the movie, he questions his own art: "Who knows, maybe you can stare too hard at something. Drain out the virtue, suck out the living juice." He's cynical about the whole process of filmmaking and his latest movie remains unfinished as he dies.

CONTEMPLATIVE / REMORSEFUL

**Lady Macbeth (Macbeth)** This being a Shakespearean tragedy, Lady Macbeth cannot escape her own sorrowful end. She is intricately connected to Macbeth's destiny in that him falling into despair triggers more murders, which in turn pushed Lady Macbeth into depression. After the slaying of Lady Macduff and her little son, she realizes that they are too deep "in blood." They have gone too far. Witnessing her husband's descent into insanity, she tells him: "Naught's had, all's spent, where our desire is got without content. 'Tis safer to be that which we destroy. Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy." They are worse than corpses. During her sleepwalking, she keeps rubbing her hands to wash the blood off her skin to no avail. The murder has marked Lady Macbeth, and she knows: "What, will these hands ne'er be clean?" The gentlewoman's judgement of her summarizes the rupture in Lady Macbeth's soul: "I would not have such a heart in my bosom for the dignity of the whole body." Her suicide completes her ironic circle with its recall of her early statement: "What's done cannot be undone.—To bed, to bed, to bed!"

**Macbeth (Macbeth)** Despite his many fouls and faults, Macbeth emerges as a philosopher-king capable of deep contemplation of his self and his place in the world. His soul is wounded by the atrocious murder he has committed. And yet, it's also this split self that offers deep contemplation in the face of evil. Immediately after killing the king, Macbeth confesses that his life as he knew it has now ended "for, from this instant, there's nothing serious in mortality: All is but toys: renown and grace is dead; the wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees is left this vault to brag of." His tragedy is that he cannot stop because he's imprisoned in the promised future, having sacrificed his honourable past and present. In one of the most memorable passages in all Shakespeare, Macbeth puts forth the meaningless of his life: "Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage then is heard no more. It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

INTUITIVE

**Hank Quinlan (Touch of Evil)** One of the perceived advantages of having a limping "game leg" is that it sometimes gives Hank a twinge, "like folks do for a change of weather." That's how he is able to solve crimes. The moment he arrives at the explosion site, he immediately and correctly intuits that dynamite must have been planted in the car. He guesses, again correctly, that Miguel's attacker was a cartel thug. Although he later frames Sanchez, the movie's ending tells us that Hank's intuition was correct all along. The suggestion here is that Hank has developed so potent a moral code based on his clairvoyance that it has replaced the law.

## TORTURED

**Arthur Bannister (The Lady from Shanghai)** Though rich and incredibly successful, Arthur is not a soul at peace. His constant drinking to the point of passing out points to a deep-seated disquiet. He is indeed a tortured man, suspicious of everyone around him, including his wife and his partner. In a way, he wants out, but he is so deep in that his survival depends on the survival of others, especially his wife. When his detective tells him about the plot to kill him, he doesn't seem to be bothered. It's almost like an opportunity of escape for him. He clearly knows something incriminating about her. Whatever it is, he is aware that it will also bring about the end for him. The secret both makes and unmakes the couple. "Of course, killing you is killing myself," Arthur says in the famous hall of mirrors scene. "It's the same thing."

**Bloch (The Trial)** While talking to K. for the first time, Bloch wants to tell him about his case but is worried that K. might sell him out. "You won't give me away?" he asks K. "[The Advocate] is a revengeful man, very, very revengeful." This short exchange summarises the torment Bloch has received from the Advocate. Not only has he been made to wait even to be able to see the Advocate to receive counsel, he is also kept in a small cupboard with food and water delivered through a ventilator's gap. He is at a stage where he has to beg to the Advocate on his knees so that he can keep tormenting Bloch. And we know he has done so: "Yes, once he's aroused, he could do anything," Bloch tells a confused K. who asks if the Advocate would think of harming a client. "He doesn't draw any distinctions."

## ROMANTIC

**Eugene Morgan (The Magnificent Ambersons)** Eugene's love for Isabel foregrounds his character as well as the movie itself. The narrator (Orson Welles) introduces the town and the setting through Eugene's love—or more specifically Eugene's love for an Amberson. As the narrator discusses how people and traditions have changed over time, it is Eugene who is always shown on the screen, helping us trace the progress. When the narration focuses on vanished customs like the serenade, we watch Eugene break his bass fiddle trying to impress Isabel Amberson. The movie bookends itself with Eugene's love. At the beginning, it is silly and performative. In time, it gets hardened and becomes a tragic stone that Eugene cannot get out. It becomes such a blind spot that he is unable to notice Aunt Fanny's similarly hardened love for him. Even though the target of his love is long dead, Eugene stays true to his love and his beloved. His final act in the movie is to take the son of his beloved under his care so that he'd "been true at last to my true love."

**Mily (Mr. Arkadin)** It is repeatedly suggested or insinuated that Mily's feelings for Stratten are much stronger than Stratten's for her. Stratten wants to take advantage of this great opportunity to blackmail a wealthy man, so he gets very serious about the plan. Mily wants that, too, but the problem is that she doesn't *just* want to get rich. She wants to get rich *with* him. Stratten's intimacy with Raina bothers Mily in spite of the fact that his flirtation is nothing but business. Her threat to expose Stratten is less about her power than the lack thereof. She tries to coax Stratten into treating her well by holding out information regarding Sophie, but she can't even last even a minute before giving him the name. She wants a kiss; she wants Stratten to stop courting with Raina; she wants him to take her to wherever he is going. The message is clear: Let us be one of those romantic criminal couples, in the Bonnie and Clyde mould.

## PROGRESSIVE

**Desdemona (Othello)** It may sound like an oxymoron to call Desdemona progressive when she says things like: "And so much duty as my mother showed to you...I may profess due to the Moor, my lord" or "I would not stay to offend you" after being slapped by Othello in front of everyone. Still, Desdemona appears to be immune to widespread prejudice, bigotry and xenophobia directed against people of darker complexion in her society. She marries the Moor just because he is who he is: an adventurous story-teller with a soft heart. Iago's portrayal of typical Venetian women who enter into marriage "[o]f her own clime, complexion, and degree" does not apply to Desdemona, a noble exception Iago unfortunately abuses. Even when Desdemona is put on the spot before the Duke, the council and her father—read: patriarchy—she does not wilt, defending her love against all of these men and legitimizing her union with Othello. And for that, she is punished.

**Emilia (Othello)** Though Emilia obeys Iago in the same fashion as the women of that era, she also speaks of the equality of sexes and the agency women should exercise. During her conversation with Desdemona about infidelity, Desdemona insists that neither she nor Emilia are that type of people who would cheat on their husbands. Emilia pushes back by arguing that there *are* women who certainly do it. Why not? "Let husbands know their wives have sense like them. They see and smell and have their palates both for sweet and sour," she says in a long soliloquy that reminds us of *The Merchant of Venice*. Hers is the Shylock speech but for women: "And don't we have physical attractions, desire for fun, and weakness, just like men?" The language is proto-feminist, provocative and powerful, more like a sermon than an argument. And it's her prerogative to speak against the injustice even if it means speaking against her man. Before being murdered by Iago, Emilia unmasks the enmeshed: "I will not charm my tongue," she says defiantly in the company of powerful men. "I'm bound to speak."

## RACIST

**Hank Quinlan (Touch of Evil)** Whenever Hank interacts with a Mexican, he makes derogatory remarks. He tells Miguel that he doesn't sound like a Mexican since Miguel can speak English very well and without an accent. Later, when Miguel wants Hank to investigate his wife's harassment, Hank insinuates that she may have been willingly picked up by the young Mexican boy. When Miguel is incensed, Hank tells his partner "let's go back to civilisation," meaning the US side of the border. He cannot tolerate hearing a foreign language. He berates Sanchez and Miguel whenever they speak Spanish because Hank "don't speak Mexican," another thinly-veiled insult. When Miguel tells Hank that the shoe box was empty earlier, Hank gives a meaningful pause and says: "I know how you feel. *You people* are touchy." For Hank, meeting one Mexican means meeting all Mexicans. He regards them as inferior, sentimental and therefore untrustworthy.

## LOGICAL / PRAGMATIST

**Lucy Morgan (The Magnificent Ambersons)** Lucy believes that people will have to have a profession because life should be earned. She is fully committed to her father's automobile business and supports the future his father's inventions will bring. Things are not settled for her unless she knows the shape of the future. The only thing that guarantees stability is the profession one chooses. Therefore, George is not "it." He functions as a litmus test for Lucy's character. "You haven't decided on anything to do yet," she bemoans when George wants to learn why she thinks things are unsettled. And we understand her: She cannot build a future with someone who doesn't "intend to go into a business." George cannot earn a life. Therefore, George doesn't deserve Lucy.

**Agent Wilson (The Stranger)** Wilson displays a methodical approach in catching Kindler. First, he allows Meinike to believe that he has escaped prison to give him a false sense of security. Then, he follows him to Harper, Connecticut, where he likewise tricks the town clerk. After earning his trust by letting him believe that he's winning at checkers, Wilson gathers crucial information about the strangers. He reveals his suspicions to Mary's brother, Noah, to bring him to his side so that he would have more leverage in convincing Mary. Then, he starts working on Mary by first appealing to her humanity via Holocaust footage and then revealing the truth about her husband. He doesn't get discouraged when Mary refuses to believe him. His crude psychoanalysis reassures him: "But we have one ally, her subconscious. It knows what the truth is and it's struggling to be heard," which proves to be prophetic as Mary ends up exposing and killing Rankin. Agent Wilson approaches this investigation as if this was a war as evidenced in his celebration after Rankin's death: "V Day in Harper."

**Banquo (Macbeth)** While Macduff and Malcolm leave the castle for fear of retribution, Banquo stays with Macbeth because him becoming the king is a good omen for himself. "Why, by the verities on thee made good, May they not be my oracles as well, And set me up in hope," he tells Macbeth as they shake hands, metaphorically, over the king's death. "If you stick with me, when the time comes, there will be something in it for you," Macbeth tells Banquo in order to buy his silence. The latter nods in acquiescence. "I'll do whatever you say." It is in Banquo's interest to be on the good side of Macbeth, having just seen what he's capable of. It's also safer to be in cahoots with the evil man until he may find a better solution. His pragmatism is an interesting addition to the adaptation because Welles chooses to cut this line "...as long as I can do it with a clear conscience..." from the source to emphasize Banquo's opportunism.

**Guy Van Stratten (Mr. Arkadin)** Gregory Arkadin sends Stratten out on a wild goose chase to investigate his past, a job big enough to demand a highly specialized team of investigators. And yet, the opportunist Stratten travels around the world, all by himself, to track down each and every ex-convict and criminal from the underworld who might know something about Arkadin. He investigates, interrogates, and sometimes soft-tortures an assortment of idiosyncratic characters to fish the truth out of them. And he does find that truth. He produces a stellar confidential report exposing the man known as Gregory Arkadin and what does he get out of it? "I should receive 15,000 dollars for the job, but I believe I'll also get a bonus," Stratten says sarcastically in the added voiceover. "A knife in my back." Even that doesn't stop him. He finds and hides Zouk despite Mr. Arkadin's effort to thwart him. When that fails, Stratten uses and manipulates Raina to ensure his survival despite his love for her because that's what Stratten does: he is a relentless survivor.

#### ENTERTAINER

**Sir John Falstaff (Chimes at Midnight)** Falstaff, in his core being, is an entertainer. Even when he lies about fighting off a dozen rogue thieves, he knows that nobody believes him. Yet he keeps on for it's the performance that brings joy to Falstaff himself and his companions more than the money. When he realizes that he was hoodwinked by Hal, Falstaff, instead of brooding, turns this into a merry gathering. "What, shall we be merry? Shall we have a play extempore?" he asks, beaming. Together, they enact a scene between the king and the prince while the whole tavern watches and laughs. That's what Falstaff does: He is an actor, through and through. He entertains, and everyone loves him for it. When Falstaff tells Hal that his friendship has spoiled him because he used to be virtuous, everyone including Hal laughs at Falstaff because everybody, including Falstaff, knows this is just an act—entertainment.

#### PROUD

**Isabel Amberson Minafer (The Magnificent Ambersons)** We never hear from Isabel herself why she rejected Eugene. The information about her being embarrassed by Eugene's silly serenade attempt comes from the town gossip, and this is important. The movie tells us that lives are not only lived in this town, but constantly reproduced by talk. Within the context of Isabel's rejection of Eugene, the gossip angle makes even more sense because she is an Amberson. She cannot be embarrassed by a silly drunken lover no matter how much she may love him. She cannot star in a comedy script. Her rejection is as punitive as it is prideful.

**Sophie Radzweickz Martinez (Mr. Arkadin)** Sophie has a complicated relationship with the past. Stratten is shocked when he hears that Sophie chose not to expose Arkadin despite knowing the dark truth about him. For an opportunist small-time crook like Stratten, this is valuable information worth serious money. For Sophie, such information is part of her dear past with Arkadin, which she regards as more precious than any amount of material goods—including the money Arkadin stole from her. This has an inherent value that originates from her own redemption. It's such a strong feeling that even a character like Stratten "gets" it in the end. When he finds out that Arkadin killed Sophie, Stratten shouts that Sophie knew everything but didn't care. "She'd say: 'Live and let live.'" That's what Sophie did. She didn't want her money back; she didn't want to expose Arkadin, and she created a new life for herself out of the ashes of the old one. "Why not take care of your life," she says when Stratten first contacts her, "and leave the others alone?" Her redemption story is about her being alone with her memories. And her most prized memory will not allow that.

**Josef K. (The Trial)** What separates Welles' K. from Kafka's K. is that the former rejects being put in an inferior position against authority while the latter surrenders to it as the story progresses. As soon as the filmic K. understands that the Advocate uses his clients to show off his power, he dismisses him. When he makes a speech at the court house, he accuses the court of being a pawn in a conspiracy. "Can there be any doubt that behind my arrest a vast organization is at work?" he shouts. In the end, despite being sentenced to death, he refuses to give in and laughs at his executioners. "You'll have to do it," he tells them as his final defiance. "You'll have to kill me."

#### SELF-INVOLVED / ARROGANT

**Sir John Falstaff (Chimes at Midnight)** His moral code has taught Falstaff that his comfort is more important than his valour, which he sees as a distraction. "The better part of valour is discretion,"

Falstaff says, defending his feigning death on the battlefield. The king's soldiers fight for the monarch's life while Falstaff fights for Falstaff's life. During an impromptu play that he and Prince Hal stage in the tavern, Falstaff begs Prince Hal to stay in character despite the fact that they are being interrupted by the sheriff's men. "Play out the play, play out the play," says Falstaff in exasperation, disregarding the panic in the tavern. "I have much to say on behalf of that Falstaff." This is his schtick: Falstaff wants to be Falstaff all the time. He wants to talk about himself. He's full of himself.

**Prince Hal (Chimes at Midnight)** For Prince Hal, his tavern spell is temporary in such a way that none of these people matter to him. Nothing he does within the borders of the tavern count. Stealing is just a fun activity for him instead of an "illegal" act. He first rejects Poins' offer to rob pilgrims; however, when Poins tells Hal that "I have a jest [involving Falstaff]. A jest I cannot execute alone," the prince suddenly changes course and attends the robbery for the sake of messing with Falstaff. He's immune to law and admonishment as long as he stays in the tavern because he doesn't consider that type of life as real. *The tavern* doesn't count, and therefore his friendships with these people are transient, existing only in a vacuum that has no real-life consequences. "And herein will I imitate the sun," he says, while trying to justify his constant presence in the tavern, "who doth permit the base, contagious clouds to smother up his beauty from the world."

**Jack Hannaford (The Other Side of the Wind)** "The old man is a destroyer. What he creates, he has to wreck," Rich says, hearing how Hannaford disparages his actor, Dale. The indictment requires a slight revision: What he creates, he has to wreck *unless they are still valuable to Hannaford*. What is important to Hannaford is how the others serve Hannaford's ego. Dale walking off his movie set is a power move Hannaford cannot accept; thus, he tells the cameraman to keep rolling because "I'd like a record of this." That is his counter power move as he is the man holding the camera, a device of authority. Similarly, he dismisses Otterlake when he finds out Otterlake won't acquiesce. "I relate all I need to relate," Hannaford says at the end of their friendship. If he cannot dismiss people, then he consumes them. That's how he can keep himself relevant and at the top. "Then we must wait, my dear, for him to eat us alive," The Baron tells the reporter Rich with a snigger. "Unless, perhaps you are a critic. He does tend to rather push them to the side of his plate."

#### DOMINEERING / CONTROLLING

**Charles Foster Kane (Citizen Kane)** As he amasses more power, he turns into a tyrant who shapes public opinion in the service of his own political interests (e.g., "Fraud at the Polls" headlines) and his love interest (promoting his wife's opera performances). The main impetus behind his dictatorial tendencies is not the desire for ultimate power, but a childish hope to re-create his happy moments on the sled—his Rosebud. As he says: "If I hadn't been rich, I might have been a great man."

**Walter Parks Thatcher (Citizen Kane)** Thatcher's guardianship of Charles Kane plays out in a rather circular manner. He takes charge of the boy Kane and manages his money until Kane comes of age. And when Kane eventually bankrupts and relinquishes his control to Thatcher, he becomes his guardian once again, agreeing to pay to Kane an allowance "as long as he lives." In a way, Thatcher never stops being Kane's guardian because Kane never stops being a child. "Your methods," Thatcher complains, "you always used money to buy things."

**George Amberson Minafer (The Magnificent Ambersons)** George's privileged upbringing grants him an invisible shield to bully everyone around him. His entitlement originates from the status of his family. Even as a kid, he is aware of this power, which he wields to wantonly harass those he believes are below his station. He grows to be a hollow youth as well. Since the world revolves around George, he treats everyone either as a nuisance who gets in the way or a tool who helps him get his way. He likes Lucy, but their relationship is regulated by George's expectations. He prevents his mother's happiness just because he is in a toxic competition with Eugene. He teases Aunt Fanny about her feelings and, when she cries, he accuses her of being "so sensitive". All because he is constitutionally incapable of seeing past his own world. In essence, it is his insecurity that drives him to become a bully. He harasses people so that he doesn't have to sort out his complicated feelings. He is an enlarged baby rather than a grown adult. It is safe to stay as a spoiled child and rely on the protection his powerful family has granted him.

**Elsa "Rosalie" Bannister (The Lady from Shanghai)** The moment she learns that Mike has killed

someone in the past, she picks him as the fall guy in her plan. She exploits his infatuation with her by pretending to be a damsel in distress, needing to be rescued, so that he will become her knight. Once he is on the boat, she starts playing the fake romance to keep him on the hook and makes sure that not only they are seen, but that Mike knows that they are seen. After their first kiss is witnessed by Grisby—probably arranged by Elsa—she immediately lets Mike know that “now he knows about us.” Even Bessie tells Mike that she has to stay only because “[t]hat poor little child he married. Somebody's got to take care of her.” We can also infer that she told George about Mike's previous murder even though George says he learned it from Mr. Bannister. By extrapolation and relying on what Broome said before he was killed—“Nobody else seems to guess you're sweet on her” —we can safely assume that Elsa had been manipulating George as well with the same promise of love and lust.

**Iago (Othello)** What makes Iago such a tremendous villain is that he has several playbooks to choose from depending on situations that he wants to create and people he needs to manipulate. He is not just one or two steps ahead of everyone; he sees all the steps because he owns the game. He's basically a God-like figure. With Roderigo, he uses his desperate love for Desdemona as a means to stoke his lust. With Othello, he sows doubt and jealousy in a systematic manner by carefully choreographing several people's moves. He dominates his own wife, Emilia, without needing to finesse her because the marriage code obliges her to obey Iago. He is such a powerful figure that he knows what he needs to do in every situation against everyone. Be it love, jealousy, money, marriage or friendship, it's all the same. For Iago, they are simply tools to play the game. And he has a God-like handle over each of these.

**Gregory Arkadin (Mr. Arkadin)** Mr. Arkadin has enough clout, manpower, and money to control every part of his life: his daughter, his daughter's boyfriends, his job and his people. The biggest thing that is out of his control is his dark past—memory. In order to eradicate it, he chooses the nuclear option: finding each and every other person who knows the truth about him and then killing them. It's not about his inability to live with the truth about himself. He's terrified about the possibility that his daughter may find out about him. Since he can't *not* love his own daughter, he also has to control what she knows to ensure her love for him. “You don't know what it is to have conscience and no memory,” Arkadin tells Stratten, completely and deliberately misrepresenting himself. What he really means: “You don't know what it is to *have* memory and *no* conscience.” Now, that's control.

**The Advocate (The Trial)** The Advocate's power comes from his knowledge of the legal system, an authority he uses to emasculate his clients rather than to serve them. Bloch has been made to wait in his apartment-office for years. The Advocate sees him only occasionally, and even then, he may berate him for being late. He sends his maid, Leni, to further manipulate Bloch and K. so that they stay with the Advocate, guaranteeing his position of power. Even the bed he sleeps in looks like that of a king. He receives his clients while lying in bed. “And when I allow her [Leni] to... she tells me about these affairs to amuse me,” he says, confirming that his clients are a source of amusement for him.

**Jack Hannaford (The Other Side of the Wind)** The ultimate decision-maker on the movie set, Hannaford wants to control his actors' lives outside the movie set as well. All the leading male actors in Hannaford's movies disappeared or committed suicide. While discussing Dale's fake suicide attempt, Hannaford says, “But he stops trying to die. I cured him of that,” which suggests a relationship outside the framework of that of a director and an actor. In fact, one of the documentary crew points to this unhealthy attachment. “So, the boy's indebted to him even for that. Could you imagine a relationship more all-consuming? Between master and slave?” The reporter Rich counts off all the male actors: “Leigh, Kingman, Branch Sutter, Garvey...” Hannaford calls them “absent friends,” but they are the actors he dominated so forcefully that they all left him. He's obsessed with control: He orders dummies that look like Dale so that he can shoot at them.

## RUTHLESS

**Iago (Othello)** People mean nothing to Iago. They are but little pawns on his board for him to move around to achieve a specific outcome. He's as methodical as he is ruthless in playing this duplicitous, cruel and dangerous game with people's lives. After Roderigo fails to kill Cassio following Iago's orders, Roderigo becomes not only useless, but a loose end that needs to be tied up. Iago therefore kills Roderigo to silence him while also proving his “loyalty” to Othello by murdering someone who



tried to kill Cassio. The ruthless Iago appears once again when Emilia unmasks Iago's web of conspiracy. Despite the fact that his schemes are exposed, Iago still kills her without a moment of remorse. His ruthless nature does not discriminate: People are disposable.

**Lady Macbeth (Macbeth)** Lady Macbeth's evil is not so much natural as chaotic. She has no respect for rule of law when it comes to her desires. Her bone-chilling cruelty is not a side effect of her ambition, but an unavoidable ingredient. If need be, she could even kill her baby: "I would, while it was smiling in my face, have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums, and dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you have done to this." Her malice is her own device as she begs the spirits to help her become more cruel: "Come, you spirits that tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here, and fill me from the crown to the toe top-full of direst cruelty!" She wants to feel less like a woman and more like a man who could do the deeds her heart desires. She is determined to become impervious against the impact of her own savagery: "That no compunctious visitings of nature Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between the effect and it!"

**Gregory Arkadin (Mr. Arkadin)** According to Peter Bogdanovich, the Arkadin character was inspired by the Russian dictator Josef Stalin. One can see the immediate resemblance. Like Stalin, Arkadin also goes after his old "comrades" and associates in order to silence them so that he can hold onto power. In Stalin's case, power meant authorial dominance over his country and perhaps the world. In Arkadin's case, power manifests itself as a means to control his daughter's life and, by extension, her love. His struggle for power renders Arkadin ruthless because he is desperate. Like all tyrants in their ironic cocoons, he is actually afraid of what he is controlling. Despite all his might, his own unlimited power turns him into a cornered animal and leads to his tragic end.

**Hank Quinlan (Touch of Evil)** Failing to find his wife's killer as a rookie detective, Hank goes on a relentless revenge tour spanning years to catch murderers at whatever the cost, even if that means crossing the line. His almost infallible intuition has given him a false sense of superiority, and made him "a good detective, but a lousy cop." He disregards all due process and instead relies on his "game leg" to solve crimes. If he believes a suspect to be guilty and he doesn't have enough evidence, then he manipulates the circumstances or plants evidence to frame them. When Menzies brings this up, Hank's answer is succinct: he has not framed "nobody that wasn't guilty." Like all the corrupt people, Hank is a law unto himself: he is absolute authority, acting as a judge, jury and executioner.

**Prince Hal (Chimes at Midnight)** This is a man who announces: "I know you all, and will a while uphold the unyoked humor of your idleness. I'll so offend to make offense a skill." Therefore, it shouldn't come as a surprise to anyone, including Falstaff, that he does what he does. He even tells everyone how exactly he is going to act when he becomes king. During their impromptu play, Falstaff plays the prince and Hal plays the king. Falstaff says, smiling: "Banish not [Falstaff] thy Harry's company. Banish plump Jack, and banish all the world." Then comes Prince Hal's reply as king: "I do!" He pauses and adds: "I will." Even Falstaff, despite this being a play, experiences a moment of confusion and fear due to the seriousness with which Prince delivers that line. Hal knows from the very beginning that he is never going to keep Falstaff or the other "base, contagious clouds" beside him when he has power.

DUTIFUL

**Othello (Othello)** Othello is a man of love, but not necessarily a romantic one. He's more a dutiful husband than a passionate lover. He woos Desdemona by the stories of his journeys, but he wasn't telling them for the purpose of wooing her. It was Desdemona who had to give him a hint that he could actually woo her if he wanted. He says: "She thanked me and bade me, if I had a friend that loved her, I should but teach him how to tell my story. And that would woo her. Upon this hint I spake." It's the same with his military career. When he asked the Council to let Desdemona join him in Cyprus, he says he will never abandon his duty as a commander. "And heaven defend your good souls," he says, "that you think I will your serious business scant for she is with me." Be it marriage or war, Othello remains committed to his duty.

LOYAL / CHARITABLE

**Jedediah Leland (Citizen Kane)** During their early years, Kane and Leland are on the same

page in terms of utilizing the power of newspaper business to support working class. The Declaration of Principles, in which Kane promises to tell only the truth, strengthens the bond between them. Leland regards Kane not just as a good friend, but as a historical figure who may change the course of history. He believes that this document "might turn out to be something pretty important like the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution."

**Mr. Bernstein (Citizen Kane)** Mr Bernstein is a true Charles Kane loyalist, "from before the beginning ... And now after the end." Even Kane's objectively questionable motives and actions are not enough to sway Mr Bernstein. For instance, on the subject of Kane stoking the Spanish-American war, Bernstein offers an apologetic angle to defend Kane's warmongering: "That was Mr. Kane's war ... Do you think if it hadn't been for that war of Mr. Kane's, we'd have the Panama Canal?" He protects Kane's bruised ego by choosing a headline that suggests fraud in the elections. When Leland expresses his concerns over the newly hired editors changing Kane's agenda, Bernstein categorically defends Kane. He is the father figure Kane never had in his formative years.

**Isabel Amberson Minafer (The Magnificent Ambersons)** Eugene, in his letter, tells Isabel that she was a "selfless and perfect" mother. One can argue that her enabling and spoiling George is the reason for George's cruelty, which puts a serious dent on the "perfect" part of her motherhood. That said, it is undoubtedly correct that Isabel selflessly sacrifices her life for her son. In the same letter, Eugene begs her not to strike down his life a second time. She's been a mother long enough; now it's her time to be a lover. "Will you live your life your way," Eugene asks, "or George's way?" Eugene's mistake here is to assume that motherhood has an expiry date and that Isabel should at some point stop being a mother. At least in Isabel's case, it is not possible. Even on her death bed, Isabel is worried that George will catch cold. For Eugene, it takes Isabel's death and George's accident to finally acknowledge how important her son was for her. He tells Fanny at the end of the movie: "And that through me, she brought her boy under shelter again."

**Mary Longstreet Rankin (The Stranger)** As soon as Kindler realizes that Mary can bring him down, he exploits her love for him to bring her to his side. After all, this is a war between two sides: Wilson and Mary's family versus Kindler and Mary. At that moment, Mary has no choice but to stay loyal to her husband because Kindler has made this war hers as well by turning her into an accomplice. She now must protect Rankin and herself. Yes, she is loyal to him, but more crucially she is loyal to the values she's been brought up with. When those loyalties clash, she suffers a nervous breakdown. "That's the usual result of a person being inwardly divided," says Agent Wilson, and we agree with him because Good and Evil cannot occupy the same space. That conflict is also at work when Mary chooses to face Kindler alone, despite the risks: she has betrayed the Good and now has to fight in the name of it.

**Desdemona (Othello)** Let alone not cheating on Othello, Desdemona cannot bring herself to ponder her own infidelity even as a theoretical concept. When Othello accuses her of being a whore, she yells at him in disgust, calling on her Christian identity in order to protest that she would never "abuse her husband in such gross kind." That dirty thought cannot even enter her religious mind. Her virtue is not an ethical position she's worked out for herself; it's a given. She is Christian. She is married. How could Othello possibly entertain the idea of adultery? Her discussion with Emilia is illuminating about her character as a virtuous soul touched by evil. She would never cheat on her husband, "not by this heavenly light." When Emilia admits that she could do it for "the whole world," Desdemona shuts that door completely: "Oh, I do not think there is any such woman."

**Pete Menzies (Touch of Evil)** It could be argued that Menzies is more loyal to his own moral code than to Hank, but there are a couple of moments in the film that signal deep admiration and loyalty from Menzies towards Hank, too. When Menzies finds the sticks of dynamite in Sanchez's bathroom, he refuses to take the credit by announcing and celebrating Hank's famous intuition. Menzies warns Hank that Miguel is an important man and that he should be careful when Miguel accuses Hank of framing Sanchez. On cue, after Miguel does discover Hank's questionable past, Menzies fervently refuses to acknowledge the fact because he does not want to; he cannot be disloyal to his partner. Betraying his friend will also mean betraying himself as it was Menzies who has enabled Hank to operate for all those years. We can see how distraught Menzies is when he agrees to wear the wire to trap his friend. It's not just Hank who is being exposed. Menzies doesn't want to do that. He doesn't want it to be true. Alas, it is the truth and he must stay loyal to his code more than to Hank in the name of justice.

## SHORT-SIGHTED

**George Amberson Minafer (The Magnificent Ambersons)** George has always lived his life without making any plans or preparing for the future because he had his family's fortune and status to fall back on. He wanted to become a "yachtsman" instead of holding a job. He underrated automobiles simply due to his hatred for Eugene. Quick, momentary gratifications always took precedent over slow, surefooted plans. His "comeuppance" in a way points to his family's fall in that their pride and their failure to adapt to the evolving times have eventually determined their fate. The poetic justice has George break both of his legs in an accident involving an automobile, an agent of change that he's refused to acknowledge all his life, while the booming car industry brought about the financial end for the family.

**Henry "Hotspur" Percy (Chimes at Midnight)** The moment Henry IV dismisses his father and himself from the court, Percy is sent into a rage. Even the malicious, cold and calculating Earl of Worcester tries to rein his temper in. "I'll talk to you when you are better tempered to attend," he says, but Percy plows on: "I am whipped and scourged with rods, nettled and stung with pismires when I hear of this vile politician, Bolingbroke." Nothing can quench his thirst for power and blood other than war, which he eventually gets. When learning that his army might be in a disadvantaged position against the king's forces, Hotspur doesn't heed his cousin's warning about to wait until further support arrives. "O gentlemen, the time of life is short," he says proudly. "To spend that shortness basely were too long if life did ride upon a dial's point, still ending at the arrival of an hour."

## PROTECTIVE

**Zarah Valeska (The Other Side of the Wind)** She doesn't let the documentary crew know about her personal thoughts concerning Hannaford the director, refusing to acknowledge her possible romantic relationship or calling him God the Father. Her stoicism comes from her genuine personal connection with Hannaford and eagerness to protect him. Whereas everybody is eager to gush about the artist Hannaford, Valeska wants to protect the man. Her constant refusal to give a definite answer becomes an answer in and of itself. She eventually gets up and leaves the interview as the director pleads with her: "I do wish you could bring yourself to open up, just a little, on Jake." Valeska gets in a room and gives a short answer before shutting the door: "No sex at all."

## TRAGIC

**Desdemona (Othello)** Desdemona falls victim to circumstances of her own making: she dismisses the norms, she rebels against the order, and she marries someone she shouldn't marry. Her tragedy is her defining characteristics because it both makes and unmakes her. She is not a character per se, but a bundle of lessons Shakespeare wanted to impart. Danger 1: Desdemona is an innocent and pure woman wooed by a storyteller with a sweet tongue. Danger 2: Desdemona is too honest and soft-hearted not to notice the evil men taking advantage of her. Danger 3: Desdemona is rebellious and wild enough to marry a man of colour. So, don't be like Desdemona. Don't stray too far from your father and from your societal role. Don't commit the fundamental sin of miscegenation even if the man is noble and successful. The quintessential tragedy of Desdemona is that her fundamental character trait, her boldness against social norms, ultimately brings about her death: She *is*, therefore she is not allowed to be.

**Raina Arkadin (Mr. Arkadin)** "If you knew him, you'd see why," Raina tells Stratten, offering us a tremendous irony. We know that she is the one who knows nothing about Arkadin's past. In fact, her being ignorant is the reason why she becomes a pawn in the power game between Stratten and Arkadin. As both men fight to claim her, they want to control the narrative. Raina does not seem to matter to either of them, though on the surface it may feel like they are trying to win her over. Her tragedy is that she doesn't know who her father has been all those years and that her father's obsessive fawning over her is the reason for her being none the wiser. She's, in essence, just a plot point in these two men's lives. "Why use me to trick him?" she pleads with Stratten, who forces her to lie because he cares only about his own survival. Similarly, when Arkadin calls her at the airport, he only cares about his own image. Raina is just a battleground. "To save your life I had to kill my father" he tells Stratten. It is the terrible indictment of her own life. In the end, she is finally free of both men, but only because she loses them. This is her tragedy.

**Pete Menzies (Touch of Evil)** Tana's observation suggests that the love she refers to is more than the brotherly or fraternal love, but a homoerotic one between the two men. All those years, Hank has caught the suspects by relying on his "game leg" while Menzies has helped him deliver justice by enabling his intuitions and questionable methods. Their friendship was so strong that, during a gunfight, Hank wounded himself by stopping a bullet meant for Menzies. Hank has used a cane for his resulting limp. The ironic tragedy for Menzies is that it is that cane that ultimately forces Menzies to relent and face the real person behind his beloved partner/friend— a corrupt detective. Even Hank is aware of the irony and tragedy as his last words, after Menzies shoots him, prove: "Pete, that's the second bullet I stopped for you." It's Menzies' bloody index finger that Hank follows for the last time towards the filthy river. Hank killed Menzies who, in turn, killed Hank—partners also in death.

**Josef K. (The Trial)** Just like his literary precursor Gregor Samsa, K. also wakes up to a confusing morning: he is arrested with no clear charges brought up against him. All morning, he tries to find out about these strange men in suits who suddenly appeared in his bedroom to inform him of his arrest. He asks them about their IDs and the charges against him, but he is not given any answers. "Well listen, you don't deny anything or affirm anything. You just stand there and stare at me in the middle of my private bedroom," he says in frustration. Still, he gets nothing. In Titorelli's hut, he gets dizzy as he learns about how the law is really stacked against little men like him. On his way out, he tells Titorelli that he is surprised to learn how "ignorant I am about everything concerning this court of yours."

NOSTALGIC / WISTFUL

**Mr. Bernstein (Citizen Kane)** One interesting thing about the Rosebud quest is that the characters' answers, sometimes, reveal as much about themselves as the Rosebud itself. This is perhaps most evident in Mr Bernstein. When he offers that maybe Rosebud "was something [Kane] lost," he not only correctly contextualizes the mystery, but also opens up his character for further analysis. Mr Bernstein also lost something he cannot bring back. Just like Kane, forgetting is not an option for him, either. "A fellow will remember a lot of things you wouldn't think he'd remember," he tells Mr Thompson. For both these man, remembering is a curse, not a reward. For Kane, it's Rosebud. For Bernstein, it's the girl he saw for just a second on the ferry decades ago. "I'll bet a month hasn't gone by since that I haven't thought of that girl," he says in a wistful tone. Through Bernstein, Orson Welles transforms Rosebud into a metaphor, a symbol for a past lost in remembrance.

**Charles Foster Kane (Citizen Kane)** All his life, he tries to purchase back that happy moment with statues, material goods and even love from people, but the nostalgic past is proved to be as far away from him as anyone. His lonely tragic walk from the dressing room shows an infinite reflection of him between two mirrors, highlighting his many identities and personas. Who he is, we can never tell. The irony here is that everything Kane has bought only worked to prove that he could never buy the only thing he longed for—his Rosebud.

**Sophie Radzweickz Martinez (Mr. Arkadin)** When Stratten arrives in Mexico to question Sophie over her involvement in the gang business, Sophie says, "I'm married. I have business. Everything there was against me is buried long." The ocular evidence tells another story because, two minutes later, she brings out an old album containing pictures of her past life with Arkadin. Nothing is buried. Past never has and never will leave her. What makes her such a subtle character is that she does not want it to leave her. In this sense, she is the perfect foil for Arkadin in that the latter wants to detach himself from his past whereas she keeps the attachment. Even though she plays the "I'm someone new" persona, she has never managed to forget about Arkadin. She does not miss being the queen of a sex gang. Her nostalgia does not have blood stains. It's about her possibly unrequited love for a man who is out there to murder her.

**Hank Quinlan (Touch of Evil)** Hank is a man defined by what happened to his wife. His failure to catch her murderer has haunted him, hardening his soul and turning him into an obese tyrant. His power does not originate from his strength, but his vulnerability: He cannot forget. Remembering is his curse. It makes him cruel and ruthless because, deep down, he knows that he will never be able to undo his first mistake. His strangling Grandi to death in the same way her wife was killed years ago points to the lowest point in Hank's life. Out of Grandi's murder comes out not his victory, but his defeat. Afterwards, he goes to Tana's brothel, which he considers his sanctuary—a safe place where old memories reside. He asks Tana to read his future. "You haven't got any," she says, wistfully. "Your

future is all used up.”

**Zarah Valeska (The Other Side of the Wind)** During the second screening at the drive-in, Valeska sits in her car, observing the film rather than watching it. She is already reminiscing about the good old days she has lived with Hannaford and she knows the show is not truly over. When Hannaford approaches the car and calls her “beautiful” as he has always done, she says: “With an old friend, it’s quite enough to know he’s there... Sometimes to keep that feeling, we need to keep our distance”. This confirms that their friendship is at an end in the same way Hannaford’s career reaches its ugly end. She might be the only person who is truly sad about it, even more than Hannaford himself.

## RESENTFUL

**Jedediah Leland (Citizen Kane)** Leland never hides his resentment. According to him, Kane might have had a private sort of greatness, but he never gave himself away—meaning that he never wanted to be vulnerable. When he confronts Kane by accusing him of trying to own the people, he says: “You persuade people that you love them so much that they ought to love you back.” Love has always been an unequal exchange for Kane in which Kane does all the taking, but does not do any giving. In the final analysis, Kane has become the very thing Leland and Kane were supposed to fight against. The idea of Charles Foster Kane was, therefore, better than Charles Foster Kane himself, a realization that ultimately breaks Leland, turning him into an alcoholic and a bitter man.

**Raina Arkadin (Mr. Arkadin)** Living under the shadow of a towering figure like Arkadin is enough for any person to feel trapped. For Raina, this situation gets even more complicated because she loves her father and her father loves her. Raina, of course, loves her father, but she’s also bitter about the way he’s been treating her. For Raina, her father is a bogey man who eats people alive, an ogre who dominates every aspect of her life. She’s chained to him as though he is still holding her navel cord. When she meets Stratten in a hotel room hoping for a romantic getaway, she’s surprised to see Arkadin as well. “I wish you’d stop following me, dad,” she complains, “I’m tired of living the life of a rich gypsy.” She is as frustrated as she is bitter because she knows she leads the life her father considers appropriate, not the one she wants to live.

**Prince Hal (Chimes at Midnight)** Until the moment Prince Hal forsakes his old ways and joins his father in kingly matters, Henry IV acts as a cold and distant father. He prefers Hotspur to Hal even though the former is in open rebellion against the kingdom. “Yea, there thou mak’st me sad and mak’st me sin in envy that my Lord Northumberland should be the father to so blest a son,” the king says when he hears that Hotspur has managed to gather a strong force. He doesn’t see his son as someone who may have different likes and dislikes. In his mind, a son has a specific function that comes with a compulsory subscription to code of chivalry. Only when Hal displays that he can be that type of man, Henry breaks down and shows love towards his son.

## DEVIIOUS / CUNNING

**Franz Kindler / Charles Rankin (The Stranger)** According to Agent Wilson, what separates Franz Kindler from the likes of Goebbels and Himmler is his devious passion for anonymity. He preferred to stay in the shadows not because he didn’t have an ego, but because he was prepared for all types of scenarios including the defeat. He was calculating, he was ready, and he was a couple of steps ahead of everyone. His duplicitousness is a feature, not a bug. It is the reason why he’s so good at looking like an ordinary teacher married to a beautiful woman. He is a devious, two-faced monster. As the movie Usual Suspects reminds us, “The greatest trick the devil ever pulled was convincing the world he did not exist.” As soon as he sees his old friend, he understands that he was released so that he could lead the agents to him. At that moment, Meinike becomes a threat to his survival. This first murder starts a chain reaction, but Kindler stays calm. First, he gets rid of the dog. Then, seeing he has little room for manoeuvring, he surprisingly confesses to killing both Meinike and the dog by concocting a story that paints him as a victim in the eyes of his wife. The impetus behind this is his desire to control the only witness who could tie him back to Meinike. Mary is not his wife anymore, but his accomplice. And once he realizes that his wife has also become a liability and a threat to his survival, he devises a plan that not only ensures that Mary’s death will look like an accident but also gives him a water-tight alibi.

**Konrad Meinike (The Stranger)** Prison and God have not softened Meinike. Despite his

repentance, he is still the same Nazi war criminal who kills anyone who stands in his way. Only now he is under the spell of a different power. The man is the same man. Kindler clues us in on this cosmetic change when Meinike tells him that he's been freed by "the highest," the same code phrase he uses to communicate with the other Nazis. "The highest" means Hitler. When he hears this, Kindler is duly confused. "You don't mean?" he says, and Meinike immediately corrects him: "I mean God." It's now God in whose name he kills. It used to be the Nazi party and Hitler. Meinike is nothing but a blunt tool. He is as ruthless as he has always been.

**Sydney Broome (The Lady from Shanghai)** When he learns about the plot to kill Arthur, Broome says: "We've worked a lot of cases together. I'll be sorry if we make this the last." We get the impression that he's sorry because he cares for Arthur, but the truth is that he'll lose a great source of income once Arthur dies. While information means power for Arthur, it means money for Broome. And money means Arthur. "When you hear what I got for you, you'll say you bought it cheap," Broome says before revealing the plot. Information can be bought and sold. As such, it doesn't really matter where the money comes from. As soon as he figures out that George likes Elsa, he considers that as another valuable information to sell. "That ought to be worth extra, but I'll throw it in for the same price," Broome tells George, insinuating that Arthur would like to pay for it. George is not dumb about whom he is talking to: "What are you selling?" he asks immediately. "I can shut up, that's what I'm selling," Broome answers. Broome is not a detective, per se. He's an opportunist entrepreneur operating in information business, and he sells what he knows to the highest bidder.

**Banquo (Macbeth)** Banquo's strategy is different than Macduff and Malcolm in that he isn't publicly or privately hostile against Macbeth. He knows Macbeth now holds the country and thus all the power. During Macbeth's coronation, Banquo is labelled as "chief guest" as part of Macbeth's ploy to lure him into a false sense of security. But Banquo is smart. He has already made up his mind to leave because he knows what is coming. "Let your highness Command upon me," he tells Macbeth with a bow, but one can read his trepidation. His uneasiness isn't uncalled for because Macbeth has learned that Banquo is about to ride off. Macbeth asks him where he is going and if he is going to make it to the feast, where he is the chief guest. "Unless my horse goes faster than expected, I will be back an hour or two after sunset," he tells Macbeth, though both men knows that he is not returning.

**Iago (Othello)** Iago's famous utterance—"I am not what I am"—is an incisive character description delivered by the character himself. Iago admits that his good-natured appearance is just a façade that he maintains in order to achieve his end. He follows Othello only "to serve my turn upon him," but for this to happen, he needs to keep up that Janus-like persona at all times. We only see the true side of Iago when he deals with people that he has a total domination over: At first, Roderigo; then, his wife, Emilia. By the end of the story, he has a complete influence over Othello, as well, when he even tells him how he should kill Desdemona. However, his skilful transitions between his many faces eventually collapse and everyone learns about the real Iago: He is exposed as who he is—a duplicitous man.

**Guy Van Stratten (Mr. Arkadin)** What type of smuggler working in a foreign land doesn't act on a tip given to him by a dying stranger who out of nowhere reveals a name he claims is worth millions? That's the opportunity a man like Stratten will never turn his back on. It's his chance to hit gold by blackmailing a potentially dangerous Russian oligarch, and he accepts it with arms wide open. When Bracco tells Stratten he's going to get rich, "the greatest fool in the world" by his own admission, is there to snatch it without questioning. He doesn't tell the police what Bracco told him, which may have solved the case there and then. Maybe, he could make a deal with the police to escape jail. But Stratten knows better. This might be a once in a life-time opportunity for a small-time crook like him. He even accepts prison time because fortune has finally smiled at him.

**The Advocate (The Trial)** He keeps Bloch imprisoned in the maid's room so that Bloch can amuse him whenever he wants. "He's not a client," K. says of Bloch, "He's the Advocate's dog." The Advocate tortures the old man, berating and humiliating him whenever he receives him, and he never gives Bloch good counsel. In fact, after being made to wait for years, he reveals that his proceedings haven't even begun yet, which sends Bloch into a frenzy. Even then, the Advocate keeps his leash firm. "Quiet there, Bloch! Have you no shame, to behave like that in front of a client? You're destroying his confidence in me." He then makes Leni force Bloch to kiss his hand the way a subject kisses a king's hand. That's the Advocate's modus operandi. As K. leaves after dismissing him, the Advocate tells him: "To be in chains is sometimes safer than to be free."

**King Henry IV (Chimes at Midnight)** His usurpation of the crown from the true heir is not enough, and he knows that. During his coronation, he admits Mortimer's cousins and tries to squash their rebellion before it begins. He refuses to deal with the Welsh to release Mortimer, which would only mean him relinquishing the crown. He knows that he will have to deal with a rebellion when he says, "Worcester, get thee gone for I do see danger and disobedience in thine eye." He understands the villainy of the Earl of Worcester and offers peace terms during the parlay with him, trying to win the war without a battle. Even though he defeats the rebellion, he knows there is going to be another and another. He orders Worcester's death to send a message, but stops at killing the others to keep them in line.

**Juliette Rich (The Other Side of the Wind)** She is a journalist at heart, constantly questioning Hannaford's motives in making this movie and always having a male lead star. Her main suspicion is about Hannaford's sexual preference and his possibly homoerotic domination over his male stars. "It's not that he didn't make any female stars. It's just that he didn't make them stars," she says to a group of filmmakers in a bid to explain her thesis. "How he scores and who he scores with... that, my friend, gets us into some very interesting country." She is suggesting and arguing that he dominates his male actors both artistically and sexually. According to her, this is why he makes movies. "Expensive vice, isn't it?" she asks with a sneer.

#### MYSTERIOUS

**Elsa "Rosalie" Bannister (The Lady from Shanghai)** We don't know much about Elsa. Considering that this is a story told from Mike's perspective, it is understandable that she appears mysterious and enigmatic because that's how she hides: in plain sight. She claims to be from Zhifu, China, but we don't know much about her background. She can speak Chinese and seems to have a connection with Chinese underworld in San Francisco, which creates more questions than answers. During their picnic, Arthur insinuates that he was able to marry a woman like Elsa only because he had something incriminating on Elsa. What that is we don't know. The fact that she sets out to kill Arthur gives us a clue to her mindset, albeit a small one: there is something in her past, probably in connection with her life in China, that Arthur holds against her. She does not want it to be unearthed. Arthur's letter to the DA that "tells all about you, Lover..." confirms the dark past of this character.

#### RESOURCEFUL / STRATEGIC

**Mr. Potter (The Stranger)** He claims that he, as town clerk, runs the town. As such, he knows not "just about everybody" but "everybody" in town. Even the bus stops in front of Potter's drugstore, where the town of Harper begins. Wilson is greeted by Mr. Potter after he gets off the bus. Meinike also entrusts Mr. Potter with his suitcase. All this is to establish that Mr. Potter is indeed who he says he is: the resourceful Informant. By welcoming everyone to town, he also gets to record all the strangers who have arrived in town. The list he gives Agent Wilson proves to be crucial.

**Michael O'Hara (The Lady from Shanghai)** While he is gullible, his saving grace is that he is at least aware of his resilient nature, which turns out to be his main source of strength. When he realizes that he's been used as a pawn in Elsa's elaborate plan, he turns his passivity into a weapon. He pretends to attempt suicide and manages to escape by hiding among the members of another jury. At the opera house in Chinatown, he hugs Elsa only to look for the gun that killed George. His confronting Elsa is his culminating moment of victory that reveals his determination. He has managed to get to the bottom of this plot, and this will be his 'get out of jail free card'—literally. Those people might be dangerous sharks in search of prey, but their evil nature ultimately brings about their end. Mike's "innocent" and "foolish" nature, however, ensures his survival because he stays true.

**Sydney Broome (The Lady from Shanghai)** He is the only party who knows about all the plots and schemes other than the plotters and schemers themselves. We don't know if he's employing his own minions to tail people, but it seems like he intuitively knows where he is supposed to be. He knows about the plot to kill Arthur, which means he must have spied on Elsa and George; he knows about the fake murder plot, which means he managed to follow George and Mike without being seen; he also materializes almost out of thin air in any scene between Mike and Elsa. Mike notices this about Broome at the very beginning. "I saw you last night at the garage, it was," he tells Broome who replies: "Somebody else, Danny-boy, not me." He's the perfect spy for Arthur.

**Othello (Othello)** He has an honour code that he follows to a fault. When he is faced with punishment before the Duke's Council over Brabantio's allegations, he offers to resign not only from his position, but also from his life if he was found at fault. "If you do find me foul in her report the trust, the office I do hold of you, not only take away but let your sentence even fall upon my life," he says, suggesting that he is ready to die rather than bring dishonour to his reputation. Again, as soon as he learns that his most-trusted commander, Cassio, caused mutiny, Othello delivers the sentence. Despite Cassio's storied career in his army, Othello follows his principles and stripes his friend of his rank to protect the establishment.

**Macduff (Macbeth)** Once the army reaches Great Birnam Wood, Macduff orders his soldiers to bring down trees and wear the branches to conceal the presence of their army. "Macbeth's spies will give him inaccurate reports," he says to explain his strategic decision. The military camouflage, albeit a smart move, doesn't pan out the way Macduff envisioned within the irony of Macbeth's story. The scouts do indeed spot the English army and report the correct number; however, Macduff's soldiers carrying tree branches appear as if the Great Birnam Wood is moving towards Dunsinane Hill. Macduff's strategy, then, becomes another sign for Macbeth that the prophecy about his future is about to come to pass in the shape of his death.

**Emilia (Othello)** Being a good judge of character, Emilia knows what kind of husband she is married to. As she delivers Iago the handkerchief, she is already suspicious of her husband's motivation in acquiring the accessory. "If it be not for some purpose of import, give 't me again. Poor lady, she'll run mad," she says. She also knows Othello and Desdemona enough to conclude that there is a foul play. When Desdemona tells Emilia about what Othello did, Emilia is adamant that he must have been abused by "some most villainous knave, some base notorious knave, some scurvy fellow." In that scene, Iago, in Wellesian fashion, shows up in the deep-focus background and quiets Emilia as the latter slowly figures out who the knave is. In the end, Emilia proves to be the one to have connected the tragic dots. Alas, she arrives late to the scene, as it were, to expose Iago's schemes before the tragic deeds are committed.

**Miguel "Mike" Vargas (Touch of Evil)** It doesn't matter if the crime is committed in his jurisdiction or not; Miguel Vargas will chase after the monster. He's not so much a Mexican prosecutor as a protector of the innocent upholding the law far and wide. While he is investigating the drug cartel in Mexico, he also helps uncover a corrupt detective in the United States. The world is his courtroom. He won't rest until justice is served in all places. If it means going through old case files in a basement to find evidence to support his hunch, he will do it; if it means blurring the line between legal and illegal himself to catch a corrupt cop, he will do it; if it means wading through a filthy river during his honeymoon when his wife has just been attacked, Miguel Vargas will do it so long as good prevails in the world. He speaks English, he speaks Spanish, but most importantly, he speaks the Law.

**Susan "Susie" Vargas (Touch of Evil)** Susan never loses her composure even when she is faced with a serious threat. On her way to the motel after witnessing a terrible assassination, or when she is surrounded by a group of street thugs, she doesn't flinch. In fact, she follows the cartel thug to learn what he has to say about her husband; it might be important for him. During her meeting with the cartel leader, she is bold and headstrong in her defiance. She is the wife of a famous prosecutor; it's her duty to stay firm against evil. Even if she is scared, she won't show it. Until the very moment she is physically attacked and assaulted in the second half of the movie, Susan displays an enormous amount of courage, conducting herself in a brave and composed manner even when dealing with ruthless and scheming criminals.

**Leni (The Trial)** She may not bring those clients in, but it is Leni who helps the Advocate keep them. Her function in the story is to enable the Advocate's legal enterprise so that the clients stay uninformed and attached to the Advocate. It is Leni who urges Bloch to kiss the Advocate's man in order to apologize even though it is Bloch who is being shouted at. She maintains the *status quo*. She tries to prevent K. from dismissing the Advocate as well, but fails. Then, she suggests K. see Titorelli for help, but that suggestion, too, can be construed as another attempt to enable the system at the expense of the defendant. "You'll be back here," Leni tells a frustrated K., knowing what Titorelli would do to him. "You won't have any choice."

**King Henry IV (Chimes at Midnight)** Despite winning the war and squashing the rebellion, King Henry IV shows mercy to all those who rebelled against his reign except for Percy of Worcester. Since



he's aware that this is not the first rebellion he's going to have to face, Henry IV chooses to govern by compassion and mercy rather than oppression and fear. He knows that a usurper can be usurped. He shows that he can be fair and bring justice to the land. Before the war, he offers Worcester the chance to lay down his arms and receive the offer of his grace. "Both he and they and you, every man shall be my friend again, and I'll be his," Henry IV says. "We offer fair.

**Juliette Rich (The Other Side of the Wind)** As soon as she appears on screen, she sets the stage for her antagonistic assaults, asking Hannaford deeply uncomfortable questions that no-one has dared to ask. She questions the off-screen character in the movie spying on the boy and girl, suggesting that it could be Hannaford himself. She tries to provoke Hannaford and Otterlake by revealing that Otterlake will "walk away with 40 million dollars after his company goes public." She tells them, in front of everyone, they are friends because they need each other. Whatever she does, she does to expose Hannaford because she senses something sinister. When she eventually figures out Hannaford at the end of the movie, she immediately confronts him: "Hannaford has to possess [the actor's girl] because it's the only way that he can possess [his actor]." Hannaford's slap does nothing but validate her assessment. She has finally exposed the man in the artist.

#### AMBITIOUS

**Macbeth (Macbeth)** When the first prophecy comes true within a minute of learning about it, Macbeth seals his own fate. Validation begets confidence. Confidence leads to ambition. And ambition forces Macbeth to focus on the promised future at the expense of his present. "If good, why do I yield to that suggestion whose horrid image doth unfix my hair, and make my seated heart knock at my ribs against the use of nature?" he asks because even he is terrified of what he is capable of. Macbeth knows murder isn't the answer because violence begets more violence. He even resists his wife's coercion and manipulation but proceeds to kill Duncan anyway because the crown is too strong an image to withstand. Macbeth was always a resourceful man. It's the promised future and the allure thereof that transformed it into toxic ambition.

**Brooks Otterlake (The Other Side of the Wind)** Otterlake is the golden boy of Max, who has just walked out of Hannaford's movie. "Brooks Otterlake is money, not just success, but money," Billy says when they are discussing the possibility of asking Otterlake for funds. Based on Rich's report, Otterlake is soon going to receive 40 million dollars from the studio, and yet, Otterlake refuses to help his old friend, colleague, and mentor to finish his film. All he could do was to set up a screening. No more. This contention between competitive artists ultimately ends the friendship. "What did I do wrong, Daddy?" Otterlake asks sarcastically, pulling a line from Shakespeare, knowing Hannaford's obsession with the playwright: "Our revels now are ended." Translation: I am *the* Director, now. From this point forward, Otterlake won't have to worry about any accusation of being a Hannaford derivative.

#### MANIPULATIVE

**Fanny Minafer (The Magnificent Ambersons)** After her brother's death, Fanny now knows what is coming: There is nothing left that prevents Isabel and Eugene from marrying. Once she figures out that the couple are spending time in secret, she baits George into breaking them up. She packages her own thoughts as town gossip: "Everybody in this town knows that Isabel never really cared for any other man in her life." Her scheming works because she knows everyone, having lived with them for so long. She knows their weaknesses and vulnerabilities. She uses George's hatred for Eugene. She uses gossip to take the blame off herself. And she accomplishes what she sets out to do: The lovers never get together.

**Franz Kindler / Charles Rankin (The Stranger)** Kindler appears as an incredibly potent manipulator in two separate scenes. The first one is the family dinner immediately after his marriage to Mary. Agent Wilson, suspicious of Rankin's identity, asks Kindler about his thoughts on Germany. Kindler/Rankin, aware of Wilson's agenda, creates a perfect façade of an anti-Nazi persona on the spot, belittling German people and cursing their lust for another war. He ironically suggests the annihilation of German people as the "final solution", which almost convinces Agent Wilson that Rankin cannot be Kindler.

**George Grisby (The Lady from Shanghai)** The image that introduces the character George

Grisby is that of him peeping through binoculars. Another scene shows Grisby killing Broome in the yard. Again, Mike is not there to witness this, but he surmises it based on what he knows about George. And this is very indicative of the way George's character is developed. What we know about him is always that image of him, either behind binoculars, hiding somewhere, watching everyone's move. George always ends up being the one who "happens to be there" to witness Elsa and Mike kissing, or Elsa and Mike discussing their plans. He's been made into a schemer by Elsa and he plays his part perfectly. He's not the mastermind Elsa is: he's the enforcer. He's a useful idiot Elsa utilizes to make her schemes work. Mike's memory of George as a "voyeur" confirms this for us as well: George is always in the act of scheming. That's who he is. Nothing he says can be trusted. There is always another rationale or an ulterior motive behind every one of his moves.

**Lady Macbeth (Macbeth)** She wants to be the wife of a king more than Macbeth wants to be king, but she considers her sex as an obstacle. In turn, she uses it to her advantage to deceive and manipulate Macbeth. When he wants to back out, she accuses him of being a beast, less than a man, who has dismissed the chance of being "more than a man." She devises the murder plan on behalf of him and tells him what he should do: "When Duncan is asleep, whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey soundly invite him, I'll drug his servants' wine." He then *surely* could kill an old and unguarded Duncan, couldn't he? After the deed is done, "What not put upon his spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt of our great quell," which is exactly what Macbeth does. She has even engineered the aftermath: "As we shall make our griefs and clamour roar upon his death." She won't even let Macbeth suffer from remorse as that could give them away. She tries to placate him by saying: "What is done is done. Sleep—to bed, to bed."

**Leni (The Trial)** The moment K. steps into the Advocate's office, Leni seduces him by throwing furtive glances and touching him. Her influence on K. is such that he ignores the all-important meeting between the Advocate and the chief clerk about his own case and spends time with Leni. It is almost as though Leni seduces him away from the meeting so that K. stays uninformed and thus reliant on the Advocate. . Leni has used sex to keep Bloch in line so that she can manipulate him. "I kept him locked up in the maid's room, so he wouldn't disturb me when I worked," Leni tells the Advocate about how she's controlling Bloch.

## JEALOUS

**Othello (Othello)** Othello's jealousy is less organic than manufactured. During Iago's initial stage of manipulation, Othello first dismisses Iago's insinuations. "Thinkest thou I'd make a life of jealousy to follow still the changes of the moon with fresh suspicions? No!" He trusts Desdemona, who has chosen him among other fairer men, therefore he will not believe any word of infidelity *unless* he sees proof. It's not in him to be jealous of Desdemona. Therefore, Iago ups the ante by providing him with proof: first, the manipulated conversation between Iago and Cassio; then, the planted handkerchief; and finally, the lies about Cassio admitting his infidelity. Towards the end, Othello is a jealous man made so by Iago, a "green-eyed monster" himself, who has turned into an untameable beast.

**Gregory Arkadin (Mr. Arkadin)** Arkadin does everything to ensure the love of his daughter. As Raina's boyfriend says at the end of the film, Arkadin "loved her in a very strange way." He declares men "persona non-grata" just because they dare to date Raina. He employs minions to have his daughter and her potential boyfriends followed. Once he realizes that Stratten could steal Raina from him, he not only blackmails him, but also tries to paint him as a blackmailer in hopes that Raina rejects him. "I wish you'd stop following me, dad," Raina complains. "I'm tired of living the life of a rich gypsy." The love he has for her daughter is not a healthy one. It's obsessive to the point of destructive, a reverse Electra complex.

## INSECURE

**Susan "Susie" Vargas (Touch of Evil)** During her interaction with Joe Grandi, we get the impression that Susan is more annoyed than scared. She yells at Pancho and Grandi, calling them names with impunity and acting as if they are wasting her time. She even insults Grandi to his face with a mouthful: "You ridiculous old-fashioned, jug-eared, lopsided little Caesar". It's the same when Pancho holds a flashlight to her face in the motel room. Susan gives back. She responds. But we understand that it is all just a façade. She lets go of it when the stakes are revealed. As soon as Grandi delivers

his threat, Susan is faced with real life consequences for the first time. Her face betrays her calm demeanour as she asks if she is free to leave. Or when she is given the picture that shows her standing Pancho as if they were lovers, she once again is reminded of the real threat she and Miguel are facing. She retreats. She decides to stay with Miguel instead of returning to Mexico City because she is truly frightened. She has *been* frightened all along: she was simply trying to put on a brave face until she couldn't.

**Brooks Otterlake (The Other Side of the Wind)** "This is Mr. Hannaford's night. Let's save the questions for him," Otterlake says when a reporter approaches him; however, in two minutes, he is already talking about his films and how "he is third biggest grosser in movie history." Otterlake is painfully aware of the widespread belief that he has stolen everything from Hannaford. He tries to laugh it off cynically, but the insecurity is there, waiting to surface. When Hannaford tells Rich "[i]t's alright to borrow from each other. What we must never do is borrow from ourselves," everybody laughs at the joke except for Otterlake, who pauses for a second and contemplates this remark with a bitter smile for it is not a joke. To him, it's a brutal indictment. Even Hannaford knows that Otterlake is not a danger to his legacy because he is a copycat. Otterlake's earlier half-joke to Rich that "I'm never going to walk away from that" becomes more tragic and self-revealing in retrospect.

#### SUBMISSIVE / WEAK / FRAGILE

**Susan Alexander Kane (Citizen Kane)** Weak Susan is a person whose choices and wishes have been ignored by everyone including people who supposedly loved her. Her mother wants her to become an opera singer though Susan knew that her voice "isn't that kind". Kane treats Susan not as his wife, but as his project, trying to shape her based on his wishes, not hers. During the confrontation between Gettys, Emily and Kane about Kane's illicit affair with Susan, nobody cares about how the scandal might impact her. It takes Susan's suicide attempt for Kane to realize that Susan is a person, not his clay, who has her own wishes and her own dreams. Unfortunately this is Susan's tragedy, not her success: that her life is only noticed at the moment of her death. "You don't know what it means to know that the whole audience just doesn't want you," she tells Kane.

**George Amberson Minafer (The Magnificent Ambersons)** George's tragedy is what propels the story. It's his fall and, by extension, that of the Ambersons' that the movie is chiefly concerned about. Both of them refuse the moment in order to live in the glorious past, but the future arrives just the same at the expense of them. George's redemption arc appears two-fold: The literal "comeuppance" comes in the form of an automobile accident, while the symbolic one reveals his true character: Alone and defeated, by his mother's empty bed, he asks for forgiveness from God and from Isabel that he will never receive. And yet, it makes all the difference because, for once, he does something that reveals his vulnerability, his terrible fragility and his loneliness.

**Fanny Minafer (The Magnificent Ambersons)** Fanny never gets a moment in the movie that is only about her. She is always brought up and shown on the screen in connection with other characters: When she gets teased, it's Eugene she's tied to. When the subject is money, it's either her father or George who is relevant. Even when we hear about her life, we learn about it through other characters while Fanny stays offscreen. Her life trajectory is decided the moment she falls for Eugene, an unrequited love that has forever demoted her to being a side character in other people's lives. The movie makes this clear by never allowing us to see Fanny from her perspective. "You know, George, just being an aunt isn't really the great career it may sometimes seem to be," Uncle Jack tells George. "I really don't know of anything much Fanny has got. Except her feeling about Eugene."

**Konrad Meinike (The Stranger)** He wants to meet Kindler because he believes it is his mission to urge him to atone for his sins. He is a changed man now: from a Nazi agent to God's agent preaching peace. Therefore, Meinike regards his freedom as a spiritual gift from the "highest" rather than a physical absence of a prison cell. And he has come to help Rankin reach salvation. Of course, Rankin sees through the charade immediately: "They freed you so you'd lead them to me," he says, already plotting to get rid of him. At that point, though, Meinike has become so delusional that he describes Agent Wilson as the evil one who "was dressed like any other man. He even smoked a pipe."

**Michael O'Hara (The Lady from Shanghai)** For a cunning, intelligent and attractive femme fatale like Elsa, Mike is an easy target. He is a man of desire, so she immediately turns herself into an

object of his desire. Lust makes Mike vulnerable and open to suggestion. As soon as he enters Elsa's orbit, his trajectory is on a downward spiral. Under the spell of promised love and flesh, his only option is to do her bidding. At no point in film can Mike see past his desire, which renders him as the perfect fall guy. Among the sharks, he is the natural prey. And he admits it both at the beginning ("When I start out to make a fool of myself, there's very little can stop me") and at the end ("I'd be innocent officially. But that's a big word, innocent. Stupid is more like it").

**Macbeth (Macbeth)** Whatever he does to secure his future only works to diminish it—that's the heavy irony that fuels Macbeth's tragedy. His insecurity stems from the fact that his fate now relies on the witches and their prophecy, which renders him a child-like figure. The resulting vulnerability feeds his aggression. He tells Lady Macbeth that he's afraid of Banquo more than anyone not because Banquo is dangerous, but because the prophecy about Banquo is a threat to his well-being and power. Similarly, the order to kill Lady Macduff and her son points to his insecurity, which seems to have been amplified by the new prophecies. The locus of his sense of safety and security is outside him. It's something he cannot control. The more he acts on his vulnerability, the less safe he becomes until the vicious circle leads to his death.

**Mily (Mr. Arkadin)** Bracco whispers the two names exclusively into Mily's ears, which means she is free to run the blackmail game without relying on Stratten while he is in jail. She, however, does not have the means to execute a complicated plot like that. Once Stratten gets out of jail, he puts the plan in action, instructing Mily to get herself invited to Arkadin's yacht, which she does, and use her charm to see what she can find out, which she does. Since she is the only one who knows about the name "Sophie," she attempts to use that as a bait, but she backs down immediately when Stratten dismisses her out of hand. She cannot perceive the danger she is in when she drunkenly confronts Arkadin in his cabin because she cannot see the big picture. She cannot run the game. She's just a sidekick, who is seen and treated as expendable by both Stratten and Arkadin.

**Bloch (The Trial)** Bloch is treated like vermin by the Advocate and Leni. Even when he talks about Bloch's own case, he tells Bloch that he wouldn't understand the arguments made against him. He gives Bloch a book, knowing that it's "only meant to give him a bare inkling of the complications" that he never explains to Bloch. The Advocate makes Bloch fall on his knees and beg just to break his spirit. When Leni talks to the Advocate about Bloch, she acts like he is indeed a dog: "Once he asked me for a drink of water and I handed it to him through the ventilator. Then about eight o'clock I let him out and gave him something to eat." The Advocate's answer is as emasculating as it is revealing: "You're praising him too much, Leni." Bloch, to them, is less than a human.