

SOUR GRAPES
--A Critical Review of the Market Community

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Week of February 17, 2008
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Film Review of:
The Towering Inferno
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THE TOWERING INFERNO

(1974)

A film by John Guillermin and Irwin Allen, screenplay adapted by Stirling Silliphant -- from two novels, THE TOWER, and THE GLASS INFERNO.

Review by Paul Lambrecht.

This film pits two mid-forties diminutive tough guys against each other, Paul Newman and Steve McQueen, though they rarely share the screen together, and they don't have any time to do anything but cooperate.

Steve McQueen is the pissed-off fire chief who begrudgingly has to put out the flames of the world's tallest building, just finished in downtown San Francisco by world-class architect and smooth operator, Paul Newman.

The building's owner and stately citizen-at-large, has scrimped and shaved off six million from Paul Newman's plans by installing faulty wiring, and cutting corners though never (and this is stated more than once) falling below code and therefore being criminal.

A fire starts on the 81st floor during the building's gala opening, and both sizzling-eyed smoky-lunged heros have to save the partiers who are slow to move from the overflowing bar on the 135th floor or so, and various others who are trapped in the smoldering skyscraper.

Fred Astaire has a small mostly stationary role.