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Remodelling James Bond:

GoldenEye and *Casino Royale*

An enquiry into socio-cultural values

By

Johannes Landman

A Dissertation Submitted to the University of the Witwatersrand

In Fulfilment of the Requirements of the Degree

Master of Arts

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of MA at the University of the Witwatersrand. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.

Johannes P. Landman

June 30 2011

Dedication

To doing it,

whatever it may be.

To getting it done.

And to all those who help you

carry the burden

and share the joy.

Acknowledgements

Ma:

Vir die proeflees

en die skouer om op te huil

en die klankbord

en

vir die proeflees.

Pa:

My leeu.

Tanja:

You fought in the trenches with me, often at inconvenient times and despite my (occasional) laggardness.

You didn't lose your sense of humour.

And

You (also) think U2 are cool.

Abstract

This dissertation will argue that two James Bond films, *GoldenEye* (Martin Campbell, 1995) and *Casino Royale* (Martin Campbell, 2006), reflect the socio-cultural values of the decades in which they were made.

It begins by contextualising 'the figure of James Bond' as a popular hero and a 'mobile signifier' whose representations and connotations exist in a fluid-but-fixed relationship. This allows Bond to be remodelled to maintain a resonance with popular ideologies or socio-cultural values held about his associations. The subsequent research demonstrates this.

In order to do so the dissertation is divided into two sections: Part One focuses on women and Part Two on masculinity, conflict and geopolitics. Each part investigates the dominant socio-cultural values – or *zeitgeist* – of its focus topics in the 1990s and 2000s. Part One draws on feminist history and discourse as well as articles from the legal, financial and generally socio-corporate environments. Part Two turns to economics, politics, recent military history, its perceptions and sociology. Each section, having determined the socio-cultural values regarding the topic it focused on, demonstrates how these values are communicated in popular films of the 1990s and 2000s to further substantiate its argument and findings.

With the *zeitgeist* determined each section conducts an in-depth analysis of the two James Bond case studies. Both analyses demonstrate that these films clearly reflect the socio-cultural values of the decades in which they were made.

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