

# King kong: doomed love between beauty and the beast

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BUSTER**

In 1933, Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack gave birth to one of the world's most famous movie icons, King Kong. All across the globe, this story is known as the beast that falls in love with beauty, and ultimately meets his fate at the foundation of the empire state building. Adrift in the depression era Ann Darrow, an actress, finds her calling with a film crew leaving to discover the mysterious uncharted Skull Island.

Not knowing what they will encounter, they set forth in their expeditions; the crew discovers a land of creatures only heard of in fairy tales, while Ann discovers her affections for the beast that captured her and her heart. King Kong's been rewritten numerous times over the decades, and none has been comparable until the 2005 universal picture production of the film, directed by Peter Jackson. There has been some controversy surrounding the new version of this American timepiece.

Some say it is better than the classic, while others will not stray from the original. Peter Jackson tried to stay as close to the traditional theme as possible, but we cannot fight the fact that our culture has changed drastically in the last seventy-eight years. Therefore asking the question, " What side are you on, classic or modern? " First, we cannot tell the classic tale of forbidden love without our heroine. In both films, Ann Darrow is played by a charming actress whose alluring beauty bewitches the beast into docility.

However, in the original King Kong our heroine (Fay Wray) plays the prototypical role of the damsel in distress, which in the early 1930's was a common part for the female protagonist. The main objective for women were to play the subservient role, making the male seem superior, until the rise of

the feminist movement women seldom played the lead role in films. The feminist movement and empirical science arose together in 1848, and upon their awakening there came a curious notion, are women essentially that different from men?

As neutrality was beginning to surface, the feminist movement began to center their attentions on capsizing legal equality, this being the first wave of the feminist movement. The second wave hit in the 1960's, promoting equal rights and abolishing gender favoritism in economic, political, legal, and social structures. With all this said, women began to take initiative, no longer needing to be rescued, similar to Watts's rendition of Ann Darrow in the 2005 edition.

Ann (Naomi Watts) is compassionate and impertinent; even though she is terrified of Kong, she stays collected, assessing the situation she takes matters into her own hands, instead of waiting to be liberated. Films and media are an extremely strong force in our society, and now that women are given the opportunity to play dominant roles in movies, these selected ladies might start to revolutionize people's ideas about women in films.

Even though it may take more than just women being lead characters, it is a big jump from them being portrayed as the characters they were just years ago. The portrayal of our beautiful young actress is not the only significant difference in contrast to the films, also the relationship between beauty and the beast has changed. In the vein of the most commanding tropical cyclone,

Kong comes ripping through the forest obliterating all obstacles in his path, assaulting his way to the sacrificial altar where his offering awaits him.

When Kong reaches his benevolence, he is immediately taken back.

Mystified, by this strange creature with blonde hair and pale complexion, completely different from the indigenous dark skin girls he is used to.

Through the eager beat of the 1933 production, the spirited actress (Fey Wray) spends most of her time screaming her guts out while in the company of her savage companion never becoming at ease with him, she makes no attempt at emotional interaction. Kong is portrayed as an unintelligent beast, protecting Darrow like a dog would his bone, unlike the 2005 Kong.

This version of the oversize anthropoid has more of a connection with Ann. She senses his intelligence, reaching out to him, and risking his rebuttal, she shows Kong she is unafraid. Ann's compassion towards Kong tied their bond so tight that Kong will stop at nothing to keep her in his grasp. Even down to his last moments on top of the Empire State building, they are so connected that Ann trusts him full heartedly. Sitting in the tranquility of her protector's clutch, her eyes reflecting the tenderness she feels for him; Kong seems to know his era of dynasty is ending.

He wants to have these last minutes to breathe in the only source of pleasure he has known in a lifetime of loneliness, for this brief moment, he is at peace. Peter Jackson's rendition of the relationship between Ann and Kong signifies the one human being who set aside the outer shell of this ample creature and looked inside his soul finding a friend that would freely give his

life to keep her safe. This is a lesson we as a nation could take into practice when dealing with others in our current state of destitution.

The 1930's was a unique period, with our country in the state of The Great Depression, Cooper and Schoedsack had their hands full. They had to create something compelling enough that people would spend their needed money on a movie ticket. Cooper and Schoedsack did just that, they fashioned Kong precisely for the 1930's audience giving them their sense of wonder back. Bring their story to life they constructed various scenes never captured on film before, when the dinosaur's head breaks through the lake and starts to devour the crew, the audience was blown away.

The technology was extraordinary, the claymation creatures were shockingly realistic, and the dinosaurs' wobbly movement, posture, and behavior exemplified the scientific inquiry of the time. Through the creativity of stop motion photography and various filming advancements, the monster animator was able to take an 18-inch puppet and transform it into Kong, the eighth wonder of the world. Jackson recreates King Kong using the advancements of today's technology; utilizing his skill with CGI graphics, he is able to bring Kong to life.

The complexity of the effects is spectacular; from the dinosaur stampede to Kong's battle with the T-Rex, the digital artwork is breathtaking. There is no doubt Jackson did his homework in recreating the tragic tale of Kong and with the use of modern technical innovations he won the hearts of many Kong fans. Jackson's obvious love for the original King Kong is apparent in his

remake of the film; he did a magnificent job in the retelling of the story and appealing to today's audience.

The debate between the superior version of King Kong will forever continue, but we also need to take into consideration the era in which both films were created. The original was timeless, culturally set for its 1933 audience, when American culture was at its turning point. The era of silent movies were ending, at the same time The Great Depression was starting, bringing change in the production of films. Films began to reach out to the audience sending the message that everything will be all right.

While the modern version changes to appeal to today's audience, with all the progression in technology it is getting harder and harder to get the wow feeling needed to accomplish the same affect the 1933 Kong inspired. Even with all of today's glorious special effects, it remains inculcate to the story of Darrow and Kong. However, the special effects are essential in the painting of the story, showing the magnitude of the doomed love between beauty and beast. There are many beautiful qualities about each film, and instead of choosing a side, take pleasure in what both have to offer to our culture.