

Personal response to
movie skyfall directed
by sam mendes
essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

When my family finally dragged me along to see this movie, I could not stop talking about it for weeks after, and even now it is one of my favourite movies ever. Before seeing it, I was extremely hesitant. Being a huge fan of the Bond franchise itself as well as past Bond actors, this could have been a huge let down. Skyfall was the first Bond movie not based on one of Ian Fleming in the 50 years that James Bond movies have been around. Lucky for me and all the rest of the Bond fans out there, Skyfall was perfect. All the actors were brilliant, especially Daniel Craig playing Bond and Ben Whishaw who played a previously un-seen and a rather young ' Q,' the quartermaster and Bond's handler.

Though the movie explored more into James Bond's secret past, it was also interesting and looked into his future as well. In a world where technology is constantly developing and growing, the classic Bond way of dealing with things by shooting a gun and causing big explosions simply does not cut it anymore. This was one of the best themes in Skyfall; the idea of old, well-known methods vs. newer, futuristic explorations on how things should now be done. This theme is perfect for a franchise who has just celebrated its 50th anniversary of film making.

But, this movie also shows that while newer ways can often be more efficient, the tried-and-tested ways are often more beneficial. I feel that I and many others, including year 12 students, can connect easily with this aspect of the movie; struggling to adapt to growing times and yet willing to flow with it and see where it leads. A big turning point in Skyfall happens to be one of my favourite scenes and include my favourite actor, Ben Whishaw.

After being shot in the chest and terribly injured, followed by a rather

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extended vacation (previously thought retirement) Bond returns to help MI6 once more.

He is sent to the National Art Gallery so he can meet with the new Q and get his equipment. Now, in previous movies whenever Bond gets his things from Q, it's always been exploding gadgets and fancy, gorgeous cars handed over from a 70 year old man. Now, Q reveals himself to be a 32-but-really-he-looks-about-17 year old with hipster glasses and, as Bond points out incredulously, ' still has spots. ' Q quips back with ' age is no guarantee of efficiency,' which is completely true. Age no longer means you're wiser, it just means you have more years.

Bond replies with ' and youth is no guarantee of innovation. ' The crucial point for me, however, is when Whishaw's character replies, ' I'll hazard I can do more damage on my laptop sitting in my pajamas before my first cup of Earl Grey than you can do in a year the field. Because that's true for any hacking genius now isn't it? Almost everything is connected to the internet by codes and computers. The villain of the story, Silva, knows this too, and uses hacking to his advantage when previously other villains have used bodyguards or explosions (not to say that there aren't quite a few good explosions in Skyfall...

there are. And they're more than adequate.) Then, he hands Bond a simple emergency radio and a gun with his palm print encoded in the hold, which will shoot only for him. Bond snarks, ' it's not exactly Christmas, is it? To which Q replies, ' what were you expecting, an exploding pen? ' This is completely true.

007, and we the audience, were expecting exactly that, an exploding pen or some other gadget like in previous Bond movies. Also But this is not the case, and that's what makes Skyfall that little bit more exciting. I also absolutely loved the villain in Skyfall. Tiago Rodriguez, who goes by the name Raoul Silva, and is played by actor Javier Bardem, seems like the first Bond villain who has a reason to be evil.

Ex-00-agent himself, he was raded for 6 other MI6 agents and tortured until he went mad. Feeling abandoned and feeling that the same will happen to Bond, he captures Bond to talk to him. My grandmother had an island. Nothing to boast of. You could walk around it in an hour, but still it was, it was a paradise for us.

One summer, we went for a visit and discovered the place had been infested with rats. They'd come on a fishing boat and gorged themselves on coconut. So how do you get rats off an island? Hmm? My grandmother showed me. We buried an oil drum and hinged the lid.

Then we wired coconut to the lid as bait and the rats would come for the coconut and... they would fall into the drum. And after a month, you have trapped all the rats, but what do you do then? Throw the drum into the ocean? Burn it? No.

You just leave it and they begin to get hungry. And one by one...

they start eating each other until there are only two left. The two survivors. And then what? Do you kill them? No. You take them and release them into the trees, but now they don't eat coconut anymore. Now, they only eat rat.

You have changed their nature. The two survivors. This is what she made us...

you see Bond, we are the last two rats. We can either eat each other, hmm? Or... eat everyone else. That's the speech Silva proceeds to give Bond, and interestingly enough at a few points you can almost see Bond looking interested- like he's agreeing with this madman and would it not be for his love for England, he very well might think about joining Silva in his plan to destroy ' Mummy' (M.

) This moment had me on the very edge of my seat, eyes wide, wondering what would happen next, if Bond would truly give in. But this is not the case, of course, and the good guy once again prevails, though not without loss of course. One interesting thing to mention is the connection between Silva and Bond when the villain so blatantly flirts with him. Silva placing his hand on Bond's collar bone, tracing the skin and remarking, ' oh, you're trying to remember your training now.

.. what's the regulation for this? Ah well...

first time for everything... ' and then Bond replying ' what makes you think this is my first time? ' Many have protested against this homoerotic tension, tating that it was un-needed and that the implication that Bond had had relations with another man was ridiculous- they call them ' Bond girls' for a reason. I, however, think this connects with the real world perfectly.

In a world where being homosexual is not that different anymore, and where Bond usually seduces his target, it does not seem like that far of a stretch to

link the two. 007 may have been sent out on a mission where he had to seduce a male target- and succeeded. As for Silva seducing Bond- is it really that strange? 00-agents, past and present, are known for using sex as a weapon. Silva is simply dominating Bond and reversing roles in a way that Bond has previously done with other targets. This is one of the scenes where my first reaction was to widen my eyes and point, whispering ' oh my god, oh my god, oh my god,' over and over again to myself, but once realising what was happening, enjoyed the play on the usual roles immensely.

It might be silly, the extreme reaction I had to this movie. I can now quote whole scenes from Skyfall and am able to argue strongly on why I think it is one of the best Bond movies made so far. The best movies are the ones that provoke a strong reaction from the viewer. But I think every year 12 student, and indeed everyone else as well, should see this movie for themselves and create their own opinion.

The theme of old vs. new and whether new tech can prevail over the tried-and-trusted method keep everyone entertained while still sending out a message, and the links to the real world prove that while agents might seem like an old idea, the Bond franchise is very much developing with the times and keeping everyone interested.