

Compare two movies  
by the characters ,  
transporter 3 and  
death race



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History of Cinema Order No. 298418 No. of pages: 2 6530 Yvonne Tasker in the introduction of her book ' Action and Adventure Cinema' says that action movies constitute ' a lively component of popular US cinema" (pg 1) and in the past few years this genre has seen much scholarly work written about it. Action movies are generally deemed to be " usually big and often brainless and they are extraordinarily popular," according to James M. Welsh. (Tasker, pg 2) Arroyo, in the same work calls it " mass culture at its most crudely capitalistic" (Tasker, pg 2) The action film genre can be further divided into 1) crime and urban action 2) fantasy like science fiction or horror and 3) war or military movies. (Tasker, pg 4)

Characters form an integral part of a movie, but in action movies we find, that priority is given to ' action over dialogue, characterization or emotion." These movies are more of " visually exciting, conceptually shallow entertainment machines." (Tasker, pg 104) Characters, especially the hero, in such films are known for their physique than their psychology and " broad sentimentality replaces emotional complexity or depth.' (Tasker, pg 112)

In the two action movies, Death Race 2000 and Transporter, both revolving around cars and car chases, the hero features in almost all the scenes, but he provides no peek into his psyche nor the reasons which drive into the course of action he is in. In Transporter, the hero is " a compromised man doing good" while in Death Race he is " a U. S. working man, doomed to wage the proletarian fight." (White, 2008) The hero is forced to take recourse to certain objectionable means in order to achieve his ends, which often deal with physical violence and races, where victory is achieved through death-defying stunts. Another very important attribute of the hero in an action movie is that he has a heart of gold and would go to any lengths to

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protect the poor and defenseless.

In the movie *Death Race*, the hero Jensen Ames “ a subtle, minimal character”

( White, 2008) is forced to don the mantle of Frankenstein, the victor of death races, broadcast to a depraved public, hungering all the time for action. Jensen has been arrested wrongfully, and is made to take part in the race, staged over three days, where the final goal is to remain the last person alive, in this modern-day gladiatorial spectacle. The prison becomes the arena and the warden is the circus master, who drives the whole contest. Jensen shows that he has a moral streak in him and is ready to do anything which would restore to him his honor and name. He is in prison because he is unemployed, and this futuristic take on the world we live in, is made scary when we see the impunity with which the inmates are made to perform this grisly race.

*Transporter*, another super hit from the same genre tells the story of Frank Martin, a man who served in the Special Forces, and now is the master of high risk deliveries, who is concerned only with his duty and goes about his job professionally, not asking uncomfortable questions. In the words of Jason Statham, who plays him, Martin is a “ sort of a bad guy but he does good things.” Much like all action movie heroes he “ has his own sort of moral code” who stays much to himself but finishes the job assigned to him. He is better equipped to handle things using his physicality, but only when he cant ‘ talk his way out of the situation.’ (HCC Interview - *Transporter 3s* Jason Statham, 2009)

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