Abstract: Sex, violence and women are cornerstones of James Bond films. The Bond girl villain encapsulates all these elements but is subject to changing depictions to suit the requirements of Bond’s character. With reference to film noir femmes fatales, Vesper Lynd is connected to the successful narrative restarting of the franchise.

Keywords: Bond girl, Casino Royale, femme fatale, film noir, James Bond, villain
Gratuitous scenes of James Bond’s sexual liaisons with beautiful women are the mainstay of over forty years of Bond films. Bond exemplifies a genuine enjoyment of sex that extends beyond mere manipulation and allows him to extract information from women, to establish an alibi, to convince women to help him, to help women move to the side of good, and to enrage the villain. Desire and duty are closely connected in the character of Bond. His ability to keep sex and violence separate and to take pleasure in sex but also to keep his mission objectives in perspective facilitate his consistent triumphs against repeated adversity. Christine Bold identifies the role of women in the novels of Ian Fleming (the original source for many Bond films including *Casino Royale* [2006], the recent narrative rebooting of the franchise) as a departure from contemporary spy fiction. For Bold, Fleming’s women are “the enabling mechanism of the spy’s fictional universe” (171). By enabling Bond’s mission, the seduction of women performs a narrative function that not only drives the plot but also re-inforces the expected conventions of a Bond film and asserts Bond’s role as an action hero—a character who lacks discernible change and who is “typically a flat character, a character who [is] only ever faced [with] one type of situation and could only respond to any situation in the same predictable way: through (usually violent) action” (Butt and Wohlmuth 81). Amid what Paul Rutherford considers “the extraordinary cult of the action hero” in late-twentieth-century film, Bond is distinctive because of the active role of sex in Bond movies as “erotic thrillers” (157). Sexual tension has been consistently used in Bond films to establish Bond’s character, progress the narrative, and create a vicarious sexual experience for a complicit audience in an exciting context.

Bond’s interest in sex suggests a humanity and vulnerability that endangers him. While Larry Niven humorously argues the physiological impossibility of Superman having sex, Superman’s status as an incorruptible symbol for truth and justice along with his superhuman powers preclude him from sexual intimacy, John Shelton Lawrence and Robert Jewett identify a “sexual segmentation” of the American superhero that establishes the cost of sex to be a loss of superpow-
ers (43). Bond is no Superman, and romantic attachment is important to the Bond films as erotic thrillers. The connection of sexual congress to narrative progression in the films and the role of the vicarious experience of dangerous sexual encounters to the viewing pleasure means sex must be dangerous and Bond must be susceptible to seduction, even if he is never ultimately defeated. But, in Casino Royale, Daniel Craig’s Bond is not vulnerable to sexual seduction and does not indulge in any short-term sexual relationships. Bond’s only sexual encounter is with Vesper Lynd (Eva Green), the female lead, after the main plot has been resolved and Bond has recovered from debilitating torture. In part, this attitude is consistent with Fleming’s conception of Bond in the novel Casino Royale. After first meeting Vesper, Bond “wanted to sleep with her but only when the job was done” (Fleming 40). With Craig’s Bond, that sentiment is exaggerated to the proportions of emotional detachment that indicates an absence of desire and enjoyment and reduces a relationship with Solange, the mistress of a villain, to an exploitative seduction devoid of genuine enjoyment.

Changing Bond’s character has not been an obstacle to critical and commercial success. Casino Royale received high praise and is currently among the top-fifty highest grossing films. The success of the narrative restart of the franchise is as much because of the continuation of the Bond formula as it is because of its alteration. Vesper’s role as a Bond girl villain re-creates Bond as a character who is consistent with the previous twenty-one films. Vesper is the most complete and successful Bond girl villain in a franchise that quickly established a self-referential format. Within the franchise, films were “reflexively imitated to the verge of self-parody” (O’Donnell 59). The perception of Bond narratives as formulaic originates with Umberto Eco’s early structuralist evaluation of Fleming’s novels. Eco identifies a “prearranged pattern” consisting of a number of binary oppositions and a set of consistently present “play situations” within Bond texts (155, 166). As a consequence of Eco’s analysis, Bond texts, whether novels or films, are often understood as a number of constituent parts or as “a machine that functions basically on a set of precise units governed by rigorous combinational rules” (Eco 146). Dennis W. Allen interprets the formulaic quality of Bond films as a compulsive repetition asserting a reassuring underlying logic. With particular focus on Diamonds are Forever (1971), Allen explains that the characteristic naming system in Bond films creates a literal and fixed understanding of the world; if a character is named Shady Tree, he will, in fact, be “shady.” Although Vesper’s name is not as explicit as Honey Rider, Pussy Galore, or Miss Goodnight, as a Bond girl villain she reassuringly embodies everything immediately associated with Bond: sex, danger, precarious living, and risk. Her inevitable demise even encapsulates the predictable and exciting outcome of the movie.

The Bond girl villain’s combination of sex and violence is part of the cultural expectations for a Bond film and central to the culturally understood criteria for Bond. Eco does not consider the sequence of “play situations” immediately relevant, but, as the self-referential structure of Bond films advanced into the 1970s, reassurance created through compulsive repetition highlighted deviation, particularly in the case of the Bond girl villain’s effect on Bond. Steven Woodward identifies Bond’s relationship with Vesper and her relationship with Bond. Bond film, shares a historical proximity with the final noir films and addresses concerns of sexual vulnerability, but it galvanizes a cultural fortitude through Bond’s relationship with the femme fatale character, Miss Taro. The male protagonists of film noir suffer from a “mood of despondency and loss” (Har-
vey 40) that they attempt to fill with the excitement over a woman whose “fundamentally and irredeemable sexual” nature reflects their own “internal fears of sexuality” and underlying vulnerability (Place 53). Bond’s “hyperheterosexuality,” as Tricia Jenkins terms it, precludes any vulnerability because he is “more masculine, more sexually desirable, more heterosexual than the others around him” (314, Jenkins’s emphasis). Miss Taro, an enemy operative, uses an enticing invitation to lure Bond into a trap. When Bond escapes death, she allows herself to be seduced to delay him until a henchman arrives. Taro’s sexual distraction is undermined by Bond’s ability to perceive her duplicity, arrest her, and kill the henchman. The conscious objectives of Bond, as dictated by the course of his investigations, allow him to find sexual fulfillment with a dangerous woman who facilitates rather than disrupts his objectives. Bond’s defeat of Miss Taro attests to his ability to recognize and resist sexual enticement as well as his ability to be a seductive force.

By the fourth Bond film, *Thunderball* (1965), the dangerous woman who does not directly attack him, but attempts to distract Bond with fabricated sexual interest, has evolved into an increasingly potent femme fatale. The attempts of Taro in *Dr. No* and a seductive dancer in the precredits sequence of *Goldfinger* (1964) to disguise their duplicity while another villain attacks Bond makes them easily thwarted. The genuine sexual interest and enhanced duplicity of Fiona Volpe (Luciana Paluzzi) in *Thunderball* has fatal consequences for her, despite Bond’s increased difficulty to comprehend the full extent of her danger. Slavoj Žižek identifies an “inherent transgression” within the character of the femme fatale that originates from “her strategy [that] is one of deceiving him by openly telling the truth” (12). When Bond first meets Volpe, she drives at dangerous speeds along dark, narrow roads and wears a ring emblazed with the SPEC-TRE logo. Volpe is a bolder Bond girl villain whose candid threat and sexuality deceives Bond as to his potential success of advancing his mission through her. Bond acknowledges Volpe’s threat by keeping a loaded gun under his pillow during sex, but is surprised when she pulls a gun on him. Volpe taunts Bond with the failure of his objective to use her to advance his mission:

*Mr. Bond. James Bond who only has to make love to a woman and she hears heavenly choirs singing. She repents and immediately returns to the side of right and virtue. But not this one. What a blow it must have been, you having a failure.*

Miss Taro could not anticipate Bond’s objectives and attempted to hide her own. Volpe foresees Bond’s interests and uses her own villainous and deviant objectives to bait and gain an advantage over Bond. Having used sex to place Bond in an immediately perilous situation, Volpe cannot help but taunt him because she wishes not merely to defeat him as her enemy, but also to express her desire to sexually possess him and humiliate him. Her open deception makes Volpe a formidable opponent but ultimately leads to her death because, as the totality of her character, her duplicity produces an inherent contradiction between her mission and her desire.
Volpe identifies a difference between her mission objective and her personal desire but cannot keep them separate. In a conversation with her immediate superior, Volpe initially reprimands him for potentially jeopardizing the mission but then reveals her personal aspiration:

If Bond died last night as a result of your hastiness his government would have know for certain the bombs were here. When the time is right he will be killed. I shall kill him.

In a psychoanalytic reading, Volpe’s role as an assassin can be understood to involve a death drive as she attempts to return SPECTRE to a time before it faced opposition by killing Bond. The death drive of the film noir femme fatale highlights an inevitable futility of action but is connected to a conscious recognition of a tragic status. The femme fatale’s unwillingness to relinquish her status as “intelligent and powerful” (Place 47) coincides with a recognition of “her desire for freedom as attainable only in death” (Bronfen 106). Volpe’s death drive is sanctified by her criminal organization, but her Eros or desire for sexual consummation with and personal conquest of Bond supersedes her objective of killing or subduing him and results in her death. Volpe wants to sleep with Bond and then dramatically kill him, rather than just kill him. Motivated by her desire to defeat Bond and participate in his death, Volpe puts herself in harm’s way and literally gets too close to Bond: while slow dancing with him, she is moved into the path of a bullet meant for Bond. Bond does not use direct violence against early Bond girl villains, but the duplicity of these women results in their inevitable defeat or destruction. For Volpe, her inability to resolve the opposition of the death drive with Eros kills her and establishes her as an ideological contrast to Bond, who is able to distinguish between his mission and his desire.4

After You Only Live Twice (1967), the Bond girl villain fades into relative insignificance for thirty years before reemerging in Pierce Brosnan’s first Bond film, Goldeneye (1995). In the intervening years, it is the Bond girl and her changed status that dominates the role of the Bond girl villain. Although the Bond girl villain does not always advance Bond’s mission, the enhanced threat of Volpe serves the narrative function of justifying Bond’s suitability to replace the villain in Domino’s (the Bond girl) affections. In the 1960s, Bond quickly became the epitome of hyperheterosexuality. Sex with Volpe makes Bond vulnerable and provides a necessary “curtailment of phallic power” (Bennett and Woolacott 227) to add feasibility to a romantic connection between Bond and Domino. Hence, it is no coincidence that Bond and Domino’s first sex scene takes place only one scene away from Volpe’s death. The system of meaning created in the early Bond films is altered by the arrival of the 1970s and Tracy di Vicenzo in On Her Majesty’s Secret Service (1969). The death of Tracy immediately after her marriage to Bond establishes an emotional vulnerability similar to the loss and despondency experienced by noir protagonists. Bond’s vulnerability generates an inability to perceive the duplicitous intentions of Bond girl villains unless he is warned. In Live and Let Die (1973), a tarot card warns Bond of the dangers of Rosie Carver, the double agent whose sexuality is used to lure Bond into Mr. Big’s jungle of scarecrows armed with guns. In other instances, the duplicity of the Bond girl villain goes unchecked or is acknowledged too late: Bond shows no acknowledgement of the Russian allegiance of the girl on a bearskin rug in the precredits sequence of The Spy Who Loved Me (1977), and it is only once the villainous flight attendant pulls a gun on Bond in Moonraker (1979) that he realizes her sexual attentions were only to lull him into a false sense of security. After Tracy, the Bond girl villain becomes too much of a threat and so is subordinated to a relatively minor, usually precendent role.

The omission of the Bond girl villain is balanced by enhanced sexual tension between Bond and the Bond girl, which is achieved by the Bond girl supplementing what Eco refers to as the “ambiguous representative” (150). Eco employs the term to describe male characters with whom Bond “stands in a kind of competitive alliance: he likes them and hates them at the same time, he uses them and admires them, he dominates them and is their slave” (150). To achieve such a spirited but collaborative companionship while also being subordinated by the inevitable sexual consummation at the end of the film, the Bond girl adopts the Bond girl villain’s confrontational function with a pronounced innocence, resistance, or both. In On Her Majesty’s Secret Service, the angels of death, Blofeld’s collection of allergy sufferers, are completely oblivious to their role in the destruction of the global economy. Whereas Tracy is deliberately antagonistic toward Bond, even after he saves her life and rescues her from disgrace in a casino, the angels are not infected. Bond’s sex with the Bond girl villain is a symptom of tension, whereas sex with the Bond girl is the culmination of tension in a grand re-

Sex with Volpe makes Bond vulnerable and provides a necessary “curtailment of phallic power”…

assertion of masculinity and femininity at the film’s climax. In this respect, the Bond girl functions as a desexualized femme fatale with the inherent transgression that inevitably subordinates her to sexual consummation with Bond as a representative of the patriarchal system.
As the franchise progresses into the late 1980s and Timothy Dalton’s Bond, endorsing and perpetuating monogamous relationships becomes the focus of the films. Dalton’s Bond neglects short-term relationships in favor of his mission, but he will jeopardize the mission and even renounce M and the secret service for a monogamous relationship. The emphasis on monogamy diminishes the tension between Bond and the Bond girl, reduces her status as an “ambiguous representative,” and makes the Bond girl villain further irrelevant.

Xenia Onatopp’s (Famke Janssen) startling entrance in a red Ferrari in Goldeneye heralds the reintroduction of the Bond girl villain, a restructuring of sexual tension, and a reenvisioned approach to Bond’s relationship with women. The scene is reminiscent of Volpe’s dangerously fast driving in Thunderball, but the film makes deviations in the Bond girl villain’s relationship with Bond immediately apparent by adding a contrasting female authority figure. Bond’s friendly pursuit of Xenia’s Ferrari in his Aston Martin DB5—which, as Patrick O’Donnell reminds us, is the classic extension of Bond both sexually and professionally—ends abruptly when a woman conducting Bond’s professional appraisal commands him to stop the car. Essentially thwarted in his pursuit of Xenia and subordinated to a female figure, Bond’s interest quickly shifts to the woman most urgently demanding his attention, and he promptly produces chilled champagne to seduce his supervisor. Bond is not monogamous but, by devoting himself to the most immediate woman, he combines genuine commitment with a pleasure-seeking attitude. The absence of conflict between female characters changes sexual tension by removing the female substitution system of the early films. Defeating the Bond girl villain is no longer a requirement for Bond’s consummation with the Bond girl. Instead, as Dean A. Kowalski suggests, “the notorious ‘Bond girl’ character has all but disappeared from the movies” and has been replaced by “high-ranking British intelligence supervisors, fellow agents, and villains worthy of Bond” (225). Sexual tension is not created by conflicting characters but by increasingly complex female roles as equals, superiors, and enemies. The female M, played by Judi Dench, makes her disapproval of Bond clear as she condemns him as “a sexist, misogynist dinosaur.” Woodward identifies the presence of a female M as “unsettling the Oedipal dynamics of the narratives” causing Bond “trouble orienting himself” (184). Bond’s difficulty is not just the more demanding and diverse female roles in the Brosnan films, but also the complexity of those roles. M combines condemnation that extends beyond the criticism of a senior

Vesper Lynd (Eva Green) in Casino Royale has more in common with the status of a film noir’s femme fatale than a Bond girl villain. Photo courtesy of Celebrity 8x10’s.
manager with an almost maternal concern: after telling Bond she has no compunction to send him to his death, she tells him to come back alive.

The ambiguity of superior, equal, and enemy roles is exaggerated by Bond’s difficulty distinguishing between female allies and Bond girl villains. Bond’s meeting with Xenia in a casino is reminiscent of many scenes in the early films such as those with Sylvia Trench in Dr. No, Domino in Thunderball, and Tracy in On Her Majesty’s Secret Service: after each game of baccarat, Bond has a drink and either has sex with the woman or moves closer to doing so. Against the self-referential system of Bond films, Xenia’s rejection of Bond for a short, balding admiral is unexpected, but she could have easily been mistaken for the Bond girl, who, like Tatiana, Pussy, Domino, Solitaire, Octopussy, and Kara Milovy before her, is involved with the villain. However, Xenia’s extreme combination of eroticism and death as she later strangles the admiral during sex identifies her as an exaggerated reincarnation of the Bond girl villain of the early Bond films. Xenia’s sexual and violent behavior toward the admiral signals the release of the Bond girl villain from a personal and focused desire to defeat and humiliate Bond. However, her inability to separate sex and death results in her demise. Xenia opts to squeeze Bond to death with her thighs rather than execute him literally disarm him and render him vulnerable. The Bond girl villain’s inability to detach death from sex results in a predictable punishment and provides a greater threat than the early Bond girl villain because of Bond’s vulnerability originating from his inability to distinguish her from the Bond girl.

As erotic thrillers, the emotional and sexual tension in Bond films requires Bond to be vulnerable but also ultimately invincible. The expression of tension has evolved over the forty-year franchise into the most recent depiction of Bond. After Bond’s initial ability to resist the sexual distraction of characters like Taro, the phallic curtailment provided by Volpe establishes sufficient vulnerability to facilitate sexual consumption with the Bond girl. The Bond girl villain. In film noir, the protagonist’s loss and despondency that facilitates his susceptibility to the femme fatale is embodied within “the fatalist sensibility with which the protagonists tell [of] the determinist world their respective films depict” (Bould 54–55). Against the predetermined vulnerability of film noir protagonists, Bond’s loss and despondency is expressed in relation to Bond, rather than by Bond, and initially involves references to Tracy, such as a visit to her grave at the beginning of For Your Eyes Only (1981). With an ex-girlfriend asking, in Tomorrow Never Dies (1997), “Did I get too close for comfort?” to which Bond replies, “Yes,” the Brosnan films remove references to Tracy but increase the emotional vulnerability of Bond. Revealing Elektra King to be a villain after Bond falls in love with her facilitates an expression of Bond’s emotional vulnerability in tandem with his inevitable success: after executing her on her bed, Bond tenderly strokes her face. The emotional damage caused by a Bond girl villain’s combination of sex and death sanctifies her criminal status and consequently Bond’s violence against women; of the three women Bond has killed in twenty-three movies, two appear in Brosnan films. The death of Vesper in Casino Royale endorses Bond’s character with a justified misogyny, creates Bond’s desire for monogamy, asserts character-
serts Bond’s expected characteristics, but Vesper has more in common with the status of a film noir’s femme fatale than a Bond girl villain. Working for the British Treasury and controlling the progress of Bond’s mission, becoming Bond’s love interest after his literal and psychological phallic reduction during a torture scene, and being blackmailed to betray secrets by the criminal organization represented by Mr. White, Vesper combines the roles of superior, equal, and enemy. The absence of conflict between Vesper’s status as Bond’s love interest and his enemy creates a duality common to film noir’s femme fatale. Bronfen describes the femme fatale as “a symptom within a male fantasy, as well as . . . a subject beyond male fantasy,” resulting in Vesper emerging as “a figure of tragic sensibility” (107). Unlike Elektra, who first appears to be a Bond girl and is then revealed to be a Bond girl villain, Vesper is both a Bond girl and a Bond girl villain. Unfortunately for Vesper, the inevitable outcome of a villain overwhelms the inevitable outcome of a Bond girl.

As a Bond girl, and despite the presence of Leiter and Mathis, Vesper adopts the role of ambiguous representative with a spirited but collaborative companionship and a combination of sexual interest in and active resistance to Bond. The elements of Bond girl tension are apparent in Vesper’s obvious resistance to Bond’s charms as well as her innocence in matters of espionage that results in an emotional breakdown after she helps Bond kill two freedom fighters. However, Vesper also challenges Bond, apparent from her comment that she will keep her eyes on the money and off Bond’s “perfectly formed arse.” Vesper’s comment and her entire first meeting with Bond provide a clear instance of “deceiving him by openly telling the truth”: she displays interest and appreciation of him but also a resistance and tension that is not merely a coy or defensive act but, rather, an accurate portrayal of her withholding information and elements of her personality.7

The “prearranged pattern” identified by Eco becomes a culmination of elements to reproduce the reassuring underlying logic of a Bond film. In Vesper, pre-existing elements of the Bond girl villain are reconfigured to maintain expected elements of Bond films, re-create Bond characteristics, and increase the complexity of Bond and his relationships.

The lack of reaction of Craig’s Bond to Solange’s death indicates an emotional detachment emphasized by Vesper when she suggests he views women as “disposal pleasures rather than meaningful pursuits” and could be considered a “cold-hearted bastard.” Bond’s exaggerated neglect of short-term relationships for his mission indicates the absence of genuine desire for “disposal pleasures” and precludes his emotional vulnerability. Bond’s desire for and pleasure in sex alongside a dedication to the assignment is instigated by Vesper’s duplicitous combination of...
betrayal and concern in her relationship with Bond.

Bond’s betrayal and rescue by Vesper establishes the necessary susceptibility and invincibility of Bond through the creation of a danger and attraction, similar to a femme fatale even with the absence of sexual threat. Vesper feeds information to White’s criminal organization and steals the money Bond risks his life to win, but she also saves Bond’s life by reconnecting a wire on a defibrillator when technology fails him and makes a deal with White to exchange $100 million for Bond’s life. Vesper’s second betrayal is fused with her second rescue of Bond in a self-sacrificing action that establishes her as a tragic character. Acting as Bond’s conscience, M identifies the self-sacrifice inherent in Vesper’s betrayal: “She must have known she was going to her death.” Bond’s reaction to Vesper’s betrayal is initially professional. A threatened villain shouts, “I’ll kill her,” to which Bond replies, “Allow me.” The following scene takes the form of Bond’s attack to gain access to Vesper, who is protected and imprisoned in a lift cage. Having defeated the would-be defenders, Bond attempts to rescue Vesper but, unlike in every other Bond film, where he rescues the Bond girl, he fails. Bond’s automatic complicity when rescued by Vesper establishes her superior status as a consequence of her concern, despite her betrayal. Bond’s inability to rescue Vesper, because of her decision not to be saved, signals the failure of his desire and success of his mission. Early Bond girl villains, such as Volpe, successfully achieve their sexual desire for Bond but fail in their missions because of their desire. Vesper teaches Bond the importance of both by succeeding in her mission to save Bond and her desire for him. The distinction between Vesper and the early Bond girl villain is Vesper’s acceptance of death.

Vesper’s acceptance of death (she makes no attempts to aid Bond in her rescue) aligns her with film noir’s femmes fatales, recognizes her desire to love and be loved by Bond as achievable only in death. Vesper’s return of the money combines her desire for Bond, mission to save him, and conquest of him. She successfully completes her criminal and personal objectives, albeit requiring her death to deny Bond the opportunity of saving or defeating her. Vesper achieves success where Bond girl villains could not but becomes tragic because the price of success is death. Similarly, Vesper’s death signals the success of Bond’s mission to uncover double agents but also the failure of his desire for Vesper. Bond’s failure reunites him with the job he was willing to leave for Vesper and asserts the presence of both desire and mission objectives in him, while also reinforcing a separation between the two. Bond’s desire for Vesper is connected to his mission to defeat the villain, but he cannot achieve his desire by defeating the villain. His experience with Vesper teaches Bond the importance of his mission over his desire but also facilitates the creation of desire and emotional involvement that was noticeably absent in the initial stages of the film. For the audience, Bond’s relationship with Vesper reenvisages expected elements of the Bond film to produce a recognizable narrative of increased complexity. The danger of sex with Vesper is an emotional involvement that makes Bond vulnerable and monogamous but also endorses Bond with a humanity that makes the romantic culmination of a Bond film feasible, even if Vesper’s role as villain means she must inevitably die.

Mutability has been identified as central to the continued success of the Bond films. The Bond girl villain is one of the most flexible and complete cultural signifiers of Bond. In recent films, the Bond girl villain, as an almost entirely cinematic construction, has become increasingly important to the film’s ideological system of meaning. Bond has changed but stayed the same. Each successive film contains a variety of constituent parts that renders every film a complete and independent narrative within a larger fictional context. The Bond girl villain has been reconstituted to support the expectations of Bond films. Her inevitable death, inherent duplicity, and physical and sexual conflict with Bond create a justifiable position for Bond to operate and elevate her to a position of narrative significance. Tracy’s death changes the arrangement of Bond film components and renders the Bond girl villain a narrative liability, at least for a decade or two. Despite Bond’s increased vulnerability to the Bond girl villain, his ability to distinguish between his desire and his mission keeps sex and violence separate and provides consistent triumphs. The reintroduction of the Bond girl villain in the 1990s provides a tangible opportunity to represent Bond’s emotional vulnerability. The incorporation of duplicity, conflict between desire and mission, inevitable death, Bond’s vulnerability, and narrative progression in Bond’s relationship with Vesper facilitate the narrative restarting of the Bond franchise and contribute to the film’s success. Vesper’s death certainly changes Bond’s character, as well as re-establishes it, but where next? Female double agents with continued conflicts between their desire and their mission and intricate motivations for action contrary to Bond’s expectations seem likely. A professional and sexual partner for Bond who appears in more than one film and conflicts with the Bond girl villain remains a possibility, especially after the increased continuity heralded by the ending of Casino Royale and the lack of consummation between Bond and Camille Montes in Quantum of Solace (2008). With Vesper, the Bond girl villain’s ideological structure becomes reminiscent of film noir’s femme fatales but also deviates to facilitate the expectation of a Bond film as an erotic thriller with a redemptive ending, for Bond at least. Amid the changes, continuity persists. Bond will always be the hero, the villain will always be defeated, and although the Bond girl villain will always die, she will offer a challenge truly suited to Bond.

NOTES

1. In Die Another Day (2002), Pierce Brosnan’s James Bond describes sex as “the coldest weapon of all” when the villain reveals Miranda Frost to be the double agent whose betrayal of Bond results in him being disarmed and captured.
2. The aggregated review websites Meta-
critic and Rotten Tomatoes both gave Casino
Royale high scores. Casino Royale achieved
“Universal Acclaim” on Metacritic and a
score of 94 percent on Rotten Tomatoes (see
“Casino Royale” for both sources). With
a worldwide gross of $594 million, Casino
Royale is currently the forty-second highest
grossing film of all time (“All Time World
Box Office Grosses”).

3. SPECTRE, an acronym for Special
Executive for Counter-Intelligence,
Terrorism, Revenge, and Extortion, is the enemy or-
ganization that is holding the world for
ransom with two stolen nuclear bombs.

4. Bond ironically refers to sex with Volpe
as an act for “king and country,” a statement
he later repeats for Helga Brandt in the next
film, You Only Live Twice (1967).

5. In Licence to Kill (1989), Bond exacts
retribution on a wife-murdering villain to
avenge the end of a marriage, to which he
lent his support as best man.

6. O’Donnell comments, “[W]hat Q
makes for Bond are technological extensions
of Bond, . . . The infamous Aston Martin
designed in Goldfinger, for example, is
clearly just a prosthesis for Bond himself”
(62).

7. Fleming’s Casino Royale makes an
explicit statement of Bond’s attraction to
Vesper because she withholds a part of her-
self: “He found her companionship easy and
unexacting. There was something enigmatic
about her which was a constant stimulus. She
gave little of her real personality away and
he felt that however long they were together
there would always be a private room inside
her which he could never invade” (166–67).

8. Allen states that “Bond’s longevity de-
rivies in part precisely from such mutability,
his use over time to signal changing cultural
and ideological values” (24).

9. Barbara Broccoli, producer of the Bond
franchise, stated that Olga Kurylenko, the
actor who played the Bond girl in Quantum
of Solace (2008), could return for a second
film (“Daniel to Do Third Bond”). Sebastian
Faulks, in his Devil May Care, a continua-
tion of the Fleming novels, introduces Scar-
lett Papava as a female British secret agent,
whose character is based on the bond girl
with her intentions are exploited. Should further
Bond novels be written, Papava could be
utilized as a partner agent similar to that of
the John Gardner character Fredericka von
Grüsse, who provides a tension between
mission and desire.

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