# Live and Let Evolve
## The James Bond Titles

EDWARD BIDDULPH[1]

In recent years, the unveiling of the title of a James Bond film has garnered a great deal of interest among journalists and James Bond fans alike. Before the title of the 25th film, *No Time To Die*, was announced by Eon (the production company responsible for producing the Bond films), media outlets joined in with the speculation about potential titles. An opinion piece in *The Times* by Ben Macintyre (2018), for example, considered the merits of the remaining unused titles by Ian Fleming, while *Empire Magazine* announced that the working title of the film was *Shatterhand* (Travis 2019). Media interest in the titles, however, continues long after the frenzied coverage of the film production has died down and the film's cinematic run comes to an end, with the titles typically re-emerging as, or inspiring, newspaper headlines. For instance, in March 2018, *Metro* splashed the following headline on its front page in response to the poisoning of Sergei Skripal in Salisbury: "From Russia…With Hate" (Radnedge 2018). Remarkably, the headline came 55 years after *From Russia With Love* (1963) was released and 61 years after the book from which the film derived was published (1957), attesting to the traction that the title has in popular culture.

1 I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer for the helpful suggestions and advice. Any errors that remain are, of course, entirely my responsibility.

**Edward Biddulph** is an independent researcher and the author of several papers and book chapters on James Bond. He is also the author of *Licence to Cook*, a James Bond cookbook.

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It is not only newspapers that have turned to the titles of the James Bond books and films for inspiration. Authors have adapted the Bond titles for their own books; company directors have imbued their businesses with Bondian excitement by naming them after the books and films; and television programmes, too – children's cartoons and mystery dramas among them – have given their episodes Bond-influenced titles. Evidently the titles have a life beyond the medium of the books and films. While Bond titles are a conspicuous example of James Bond's currency in contemporary culture, the phenomenon is by no means restricted to them; other phrases deriving from the books and films, such as "shaken, not stirred", "Bond, James Bond", and "Bond girls", have also seen wider expression.

This article will consider the use of Bond titles, and to a lesser extent other Bond-related phrases, in the media, in books, in business, and in television, analysing and comparing the pattern of use to answer several questions: why have the titles been used? How have they been adapted? Which titles are selected most often and why? Does the use of the titles vary depending on medium? That such questions evoke the language – selection, adaptation, variation – of biological evolution is deliberate, as the principles of evolution offer a robust model to explain the mechanism of cultural selection and change. After all, what makes the building-blocks of biology (genes) successful in the natural environment (Dawkins 2006, 17) – fecundity (they replicate often); fidelity (they replicate accurately); and longevity (they survive over multiple generations) – is similar to what makes the building-blocks of culture successful in what might be termed the "cultural environment". Additionally, the preconditions of evolution in nature are applicable to evolution in culture (Dennett 1995, 343; Coyne 2010, 12; Mesoudi 2011, 27-34). There is variation (multiple versions of cultural entities); competition or differential fitness (cultural entities that are better suited, or adapted, than others to their environments being preferentially selected – think of the classic competition between videotape formats in the 1970s and 1980s, with VHS winning over Betamax); and inheritance (transmission of ideas, for example, through learning from parents and teachers or through peer groups, internet "influencers", or television).

Let us examine the term "Bond girl". It emerged as journalistic shorthand – used typically in headlines – and in cultural studies in the mid-1960s (Snelling 1965, 105; Amis 1965) to describes James Bond's companions in both the books and the nascent film series, and has remained in use ever since (Biddulph 2017). It fulfils the three criteria of genetic success, being replicated often (for example in the press, especially when a Bond film is being released), as well as accurately

(in form as well as meaning) and over a long period of time (some 55 years at the time of writing). There has been both variation and competition, but alternatives, such as "James Bond's girlfriend", in use in newspaper articles of the 1970s, and the more modern "Bond woman", which has emerged more recently (ibid.), have not fulfilled these criteria, consequently failing to become as well established in the cultural environment and lowering their chances of being inherited. In other words, they have either not caught on ("Bond woman") or are now virtually culturally extinct ("James Bond's girlfriend"). What is more, like biological evolution, these results have happened gradually, almost imperceptibly, and in an undirected way.

Quite how the building-blocks of culture are defined, and at what scale, is subject to much debate. Richard Dawkins, one of the earliest proponents of the culture-biology analogy, proposed the concept of "memes", or pieces of information/ideas that come together to be expressed as objects, paintings, or other vehicles. Memes act as units of cultural selection analogous to the gene and are subject to selection pressures (Dawkins 2006, 189-201). Such cultural information is transmitted through communication or other media, and spreads by being copied or imitated. While the concept has not been universally accepted,[2] we can recognise that distinct elements of culture that may be part of larger entities have a certain amount of independence and are themselves subject to selection, variation, replication, and so on. For example, the concept of the Bond villain survives outside the film series, with elements (or memes) that contribute to the concept – physical flaws and other markers of difference (such as ethnicity); the technologically advanced lair; the white cat; the over-elaborate schemes – being appropriated or replicated without reference to Bond in, for instance, non-Bond films, television programmes, and advertising. Indeed, some of these elements were themselves inherited by the Bond books and films, having earlier origins, for example in classic literature such as Sapper's Bulldog Drummond series (1920-1937) and earlier still in Jules Verne's 1904 novel, *Master of the World*.

Many other elements of the Bond universe have been similarly appropriated, not least Bond titles, on which the remaining discussion will largely focus. My research questions can now be recast in more suitable terms: What gives certain Bond titles a greater selective advantage than others? What selection pressures are the use and variation of titles responding to? Why are some Bond titles

2 Ben Cullen (2000) has argued that culture acts more like viruses than genes; although, ironically, the term "meme" has demonstrated evolutionary success and cultural fitness by adapting and coming to mean an image or text, usually humorous, that is spread with variation via the internet.

more successful than others? Are Bond titles evolving? A word may be said of the means of analysis. In assembling examples of Bond titles being used in non-Bond-related contexts, I have built up reasonably large datasets that are amenable to statistical and multivariate analytical methods routinely applied to social sciences, such as archaeology (Shennan 1997). One such technique is correspondence analysis, using the PAST program (Hammer, Harper, and Ryan 2001). This multivariate technique allows comparison between datasets of varying size and composition, drawing out similarities and differences that might otherwise be masked (Shennan 1997, 308-341). The end-product of analysis is the scattergram. Datasets that are similar in terms of their composition should be clustered. The point at which the axes intersect represents the average profile across the dataset.

## "NEVER ON THE FIRM'S TIME": COMPANY NAMES

Based in the city of Oxford, UK, "Shaken & Stirred" is a mobile bar and cocktail company specialising in providing fully staffed and stocked cocktail bars for functions and events. It provides ice, glass hire, and bar equipment, and at one point even had on its staff a Daniel-Craig-as-James-Bond lookalike, who was available to don the dinner suit and arrive at events in style in an Aston Martin; although at the time of writing, this last service appears to have been discontinued. It seems inevitable that a cocktails company would look to the world of James Bond for a memorable business name. Though the phrase "shaken, not stirred" was introduced in the 1958 novel *Dr. No* – "I would like a medium Vodka Martini – with a slice of lemon peel. Shaken, and not stirred, please" (Fleming 1977, 128) – it was the film series, beginning with the film of *Dr. No* (1962; dir. Terence Young), that elevated it into a catchphrase and gave it wider currency. I note that among the phrase's more recent expressions is the title of a collection of essays which examines cocktail culture: *The Shaken and the Stirred* (Schneider and Owens 2020). Despite the title of the book, none of the contributions are explicitly about cocktail culture in the James Bond novels or films. Such is the impact of the phrase that it merited a place in the *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* (1998, 286). Returning to the Oxford cocktail company, its name at once conjures up images of cocktails, evoking qualities with which a cocktail company might wish to be associated: sophistication, high-living, adventure, sexual intrigue, and so on. The co-opting of an already popular concept (in this case a phrase) to one's business is a good way of getting noticed in the marketplace, ensuring that the business is memorable. Indeed, "Shaken & Stirred" is far from the only business that has looked to James Bond for inspiration for its names.

Searching Companies House (the government agency with which all limited companies in the UK are registered) for all of the company names derived from the titles of Bond films and books brings up well over 400 results. Judging whether a company name is inspired by James Bond or merely coincidentally similar to a Bond title is not straightforward. The owners of "Live and Let Dye Parlour", a hairdressing establishment in Staffordshire, clearly made a pun of the title *Live and Let Die*. On the other hand, "Thunderball Developments", the name of a letting and property agency in Salford, may or may not be related to the Bond title of *Thunderball*. Without interviewing the business owners about the thought processes behind their company names, it is impossible to discriminate, and so for the sake of argument, this study will take a broad view and include all business that share their names with Bond titles, even if they were not in fact named after them. At the very least, the names would for many people bring to mind the Bond titles and therefore create an association with James Bond, whether intentional or not.

Apart from the hairdressing parlour, there are many other companies, including: a "Diamonds Are Forever" internet retail company based in Manchester; a medical company in Buckinghamshire called "Doctor Now"; a clothing retail business in Oxfordshire called "From Oxford With Love"; "For Your Ears Only", a retail business in London; an information technology business in London called "Quantum of Storage"; an educational business in Dorset called "A View To A Skill"; a restaurant in Essex called "Licence to Grill"; "Octopussy Services", a design company in London; and a medical practice in London called "Die Another Day". Categorising the company names by Bond title (Table 1), we find that *Spectre* (*SP*) is used most frequently, accounting for 22% of company names by count with over 90 uses, closely followed by *Moonraker* (*MR*) with 20% and *Skyfall* (*SF*) with 19%. *GoldenEye* (*GE*) is also relatively well represented, taking a 10% share of the dataset, as is *Goldfinger* (*GF*) with a value of 9%. These values are considerably higher than those recorded for the other titles; *Licence to Kill* (*LTK*) has the next highest proportion at 5% by count, with the remaining titles ranging from less than 1% – *You Only Live Twice* (*YOLT*), with only one use – to 3%: *From Russia With Love* (*FRWL*) with 12 uses.

The values enjoyed by *Moonraker*, *Skyfall,* and *Spectre*, and to a lesser extent *GoldenEye* and *Goldfinger*, seem disproportionately high, and it is possible that the dataset has been inflated with examples not named after the Bond films. We may note that, for example, "Skyfall Ltd", an information technology consultancy based in Yorkshire, was incorporated in November 2011, a year before the film

*Skyfall* was released in the UK, and that "Spectre Consulting Ltd", a Surrey-based consultancy, was founded in 1997, 18 years before the film *Spectre* was released in 2015, indicating that such company names are very likely to have been created without reference to James Bond. Moreover, the words "moonraker" and "spectre" existed before Bond and have multiple cultural connotations, each with the potential for inspiring company names. However, it may be considered that one-word, somewhat enigmatic titles that are fairly meaningless have greater selective advantage than, say, *Live and Let Die*, which, while amenable to wordplay,[3] is more restrictive in the context of business names: there are only so many words that rhyme with "die". It is the very brevity and non-descriptive yet memorable qualities of the titles *Goldfinger*, *GoldenEye, Moonraker*, *Skyfall* and *Spectre* that make them attractive and more widely applicable as company names. Curiously, *Octopussy* (*OP*) and *Thunderball* (*TB*) have not enjoyed the same success, being used just six and nine times, respectively. It can be speculated that the *risqué* quality of the name *Octopussy* and the use of the word "Thunderball" as a National Lottery game, with its attendant legal restrictions (the name is a registered trademark), makes these names less attractive.

Turning to the remaining company names, the most popular titles are those that can be changed to suit the nature of the business, alluding to its purpose in the form of a pun or other adaptation. In addition to *Live and Let Die*, the titles *For Your Eyes Only* (*FYEO*), *Licence to Kill*, and *From Russia with Love* have proved relatively popular. Examples include: "For Your Nails Only", a beauty treatment business; "For Your Eyes Only", a glamour photography business; "For Your Paws Only", a company specialising in pet care; "Licence to Thrill", a retail business; "Licence to Seal", a building completion firm; "From Babies With Love", a toys and games retailer; and "From Cumbria With Love", a manufacturer of baked goods. Many of the names are humorous, which helps (along with the allusion to the James Bond franchise) to make the name memorable. The names derived from *From Russia with Love*, however, tend not to be so humorous, but instead typically associate the business with a place (for example Oxford, Paris, Cumbria, and London), which itself can be a selling-point and have positive connotations, conveying a company's sense of care and passion about its products and attitude towards its customers.

What of the titles that have failed to be selected as the basis of company names: *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* (*OHMSS*), *The Spy Who Loved Me* (*TSWLM*),

3 We may also note, for example, a food takeaway business called "Live and Let Pie"; a nutrition company called "Live and Let Diet"; and a design business called "Live and Let Draw".

*The Living Daylights* (*TLD*), *Tomorrow Never Dies* (*TND*), *The World Is Not Enough* (*TWINE*), and *Casino Royale* (*CR*)? It is difficult to determine why these titles have not proved successful, but poor adaptability and length may be factors. It may be no coincidence that three of the titles are among the longest in the series. While the longest title, *The Man With The Golden Gun* (*TMWTGG*), has proved inspirational ("The Girl With The Golden Cup", a business of undisclosed purpose in Yorkshire), this is a single example and the exception that proves the rule.

## "THEY'LL PRINT ANYTHING THESE DAYS": MEDIA HEADLINES

In dramatic style, the assassination of Russian journalist Arkady Babchenko on 29 May 2018 was revealed to have been staged by the Ukrainian authorities (apparently with the involvement of the Security Service of Ukraine) after Mr. Babchenko emerged live and well at a press conference the day after his death had been announced in the press. It was revealed that the fake assassination was designed to expose Russian agents and foil a real attempt on Babchenko's life. For many people familiar with the James Bond films, the events would have had something of a life-imitating-art quality about them. In the film of *You Only Live Twice* (1967, dir. Lewis Gilbert), the British Secret Service pretends to kill Bond, whose "death" is subsequently announced in the press, in order to trick his enemies into thinking that he is dead. Then, in *The Living Daylights* (1987, dir. John Glen), James Bond stages the fake death of KGB spy chief General Leonid Pushkin, shooting him with blanks in an auditorium. The plan is to make arms dealer Brad Whitaker and Russian traitor General Georgi Koskov think that Pushkin is dead and allow Bond to get to the bottom of their plot. And, in apparently shooting him, Bond also saves Pushkin's life, as Pushkin was about to be assassinated for real by Whitaker and Koskov's henchman Necros. Judging by the newspaper headlines the next day (30 May 2018), the UK press also made the link between the Babchenko affair and James Bond. The story was front-page news in *The Sun*, which featured the headline, "You only live twice" (Parker, Dun, and Pisa 2018). The *Daily Star* used the same headline on its front page, and in a short column beside the headline, described the events as "Bond-style" (Walker 2018). There was a second Bond-inspired headline inside the paper: "I think I'll die another day". These and other Bond-related headlines appealed to the BBC News website, which highlighted them in its daily newspaper roundup ("Newspaper headlines: 'You only live twice'" 2018)

Almost exactly three years before that event, newspaper editors were generating James Bond-inspired headlines in response to a story about dramatic

weight loss. A man from Bicester in Oxfordshire had lost 24 stones in just over a year following weight loss surgery and a strict diet. A remarkable achievement for the individual concerned and of public interest, certainly, but one might wonder why the story hit the national headlines. The reason was the man's name – James Bond. Naturally, the newspapers made much of it. The *Bicester Advertiser*, where the story originated, ran with the headline: "It's 00-Heaven for Mr Bond as he sheds 24 stone in 12 months" (Rivers 2015). The feature was subsequently picked up by national tabloids, which raided Bond film titles for punning headlines. The *Daily Mail* looked to the 1977 film *The Spy Who Loved Me* (dir. Lewis Gilbert) for its headline: "The pie who loved me!" (Elliot 2015). The *Daily Mirror* referenced *Skyfall* (2012, dir. Sam Mendes) with its headline, "Piefall: Man called James Bond in 00-heaven after shedding 24 stone in less than a year" (Livesey 2015). The *Daily Star* made use of another film title: "Live and Let Diet. James Bond loses 24 stone in a year" (Riley 2015).

These are far from the only stories from the UK's press that have been accompanied by Bond-inspired headlines. Between 2015 and 2020 the current writer noted some 75 examples from casual and unsystematic reference in various UK newspapers, particularly the *Metro*, and the BBC News's daily newspaper headline blog (Table 2). The title *From Russia with Love* appears to be most popular with newspaper editors and headline writers, with seventeen headlines – among them "From flusher with love" in *The Sun* (Ridley 2019); "From Russia with luck" (Moyes 2018), also in *The Sun*; and "The laundromat: From Russia with a love of anonymity" (Harding, Hopkins, and Barr 2017) in *The Guardian*. The title *Licence to Kill* has proved almost as popular with headline writers, who have tended to focus on the end part of the phrase, with the word "kill", having many rhymes, being typically replaced. A thumbnail link to a story, for example, about the removal of free TV licences in the UK for the over 75s carried the headline "Licence to bill" ("Newspaper Headlines, 10 July 2020"). Other variations include "Licence to cull", "Licence to ill", "Licence to trill", "Licence to thrill", and "Licence to refill" ("Newspaper Headlines, 'Licence to'").

Of course, the survey is by no means comprehensive, but it does constitute a random sample and, in that respect, provides a reasonably representative snapshot of Bond title usage. However, to examine Bond-inspired headlines in a more systematic way, I carried out a search of the UKPressOnline newspaper archive. Limiting the search of headlines and image captions to a four-year period, between 1 January 2016 and 31 December 2019 (after the release of *Spectre* (2015) and before the release of *No Time To Die* (2021)), and in *The Daily Star* and *Sunday Star* newspapers alone, a dataset of 69 examples was produced (Table 2). In broad

terms, the results are similar to those of the more random sample, with the titles *From Russia with Love* and *Licence to Kill* being the most popular titles for headline writers, but there are differences. In the systematic sample, *From Russia with Love* is favoured in sports-related stories, being used largely without changes in reference to Russian sportspeople (e.g. "Khachanov – from Russia with love") or to describe the return or arrival of soccer teams from Russia. In the random sample, the title is adapted in several ways, the word "Russia" being replaced by a similar sounding word to create a pun (for example, "rasher" and "flusher") or by another place name. The word "love" is replaced to add information about the Russian subject of the story (for example, "luck", "hate", "excuses", or "borscht"), and occasionally the headline reproduces the Bond title with no changes. With Russia seemingly to be constantly in the news,[4] it is not difficult to determine why *From Russia with Love* has a selective advantage over other Bond titles. The "with love" part of the title is itself attractive, allowing editors to convey in the headline a sense of emotion, motivation, or purpose on the part of the subject.

The use of *Licence to Kill* in the systematic sample mirrors that of the random sample, with the title being used unchanged or the word "kill" being replaced by, for example, "thrill", "chill", and "sell". It would be disingenuous to suggest that the success of *Licence to Kill* as a newspaper title is entirely owing to the 1989 film of that name (directed by John Glen); after all, the phrase has been used in virtually every James Bond film since *Dr. No*. The repetition of the phrase – and the repetition of the films themselves, for example on television – has helped to reintroduce the phrase to successive generations of film-watchers, to reinforce the association of the phrase with James Bond, and to elevate it to general, idiomatic use in the cultural environment. The word "licence" itself is also useful, as it conveys the idea of permission being given to a body or group of people to do something, though not necessarily with the approval of wider public opinion.

Other titles are used less frequently within both the random and systematic samples, but among the titles that have seen more than just a few uses, following *From Russia with Love* and *Licence to Kill* in popularity, are *A View To A Kill* (*AVTAK*), *For Your Eyes Only*, and *Live and Let Die*. All three have been used unchanged but have also been modified, typically to incorporate a pun or some other wordplay. For *A View To A Kill*, as with *Licence to Kill*, headline writers have

4 In recent years, for example, we have seen the Salisbury poisonings, in which former Russia military officer Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia were allegedly poisoned by Russian intelligence agents, as well as Russian interference in national elections.

focused on the word "kill", often replacing it with "will", "skill", and "thrill". In the title *For Your Eyes Only*, the word "eyes" is usually replaced, for example with "pies" and "spires", but other words can be changed too, for example the "your" being replaced by "his". In *Live and Let Die*, the word "die" is the operative element, being replaced by rhyming words, such as "pie" and "spy", or words that look similar, such as "diet" and "drive". These are versatile titles that can be modified to suit a variety of story types and contexts. It is interesting to note that when the *Daily Express* began its serialisation of the stories published in the *For Your Eyes Only* collection in September 1959, it proclaimed: "Begins today: For the Eyes of Express Readers Only" (qtd. in Gilbert 2012, 268). This demonstrates that even before the publication of the book, the title "For Your Eyes Only" had started to take life as an expression in its own right, with newspaper editors very quickly recognising its potential to be adapted for headlines.

Single-word titles have a relatively low level of use, being adaptable but to a limited extent. Elements of the word have been changed to "Thunderbrawl" (used for a report in the *Daily Star* on an alleged argument between Daniel Craig and Cary Joji Fukunaga on the set of *No Time To Die* (Anon. 2019, 7)); "Skyfail" (headlining a story in *The Sun* about the loss of MI6 data (Sullivan 2019, 1)) and "Mineraker" (on the front page of the *Metro* (Anon. 2015)). As with company names, the longest titles generally have not been attractive to headline writers, being among the least frequently used, probably for reasons of length and poor adaptability. Some of the titles can be used in other ways, however. For example, *The Man with the Golden Gun* has been used as a phrase within the body of the text, rather than as a headline: a story about Olympic skeet shooter Amber Hill began: "[s]he's the girl with the golden gun" (Moore 2016, 19). There are also cases of *From Russia with Love* being used as a phrase within the text. For example, in a report of a soccer match between England and Kosovo, journalist Jeremy Cross wrote that "Kyle Walker, Jesse Lingard and Dele Alli might have thought they had returned from Russia with love, but their romance with Southgate soon hit the rocks" (2019, 2).

### "YOU CAN WATCH IT ALL ON TV": CHILDREN'S TELEVISION

Though not specifically intended for children, the James Bond films and novels have provided inspiration for the writers of children's stories. A prime example of this is the Alex Rider series of novels by Anthony Horowitz. The first book, *Stormbreaker* (2000) is packed with Bondian tropes. Like Bond, Alex Rider is an orphan. The plot – in which Alex Rider is persuaded to join MI6 and observe the activities of Herod Sayle, a Middle Eastern multi-millionaire who becomes the

toast of the nation with his plan to donate state-of-the-art computers ("Stormbreakers") to every school in Britain – borrows heavily from Fleming's 1955 novel of *Moonraker*. Alex is equipped by a gadget master called Smithers (a name shared by Q's long-suffering assistant in two Bond films), and battles knife-scarred Mr. Grin, a nasty piece of work from the Jaws school of henchmen. Indeed, it could be argued that Alex Rider would not have existed without James Bond. Author Anthony Horowitz conceived the character of Alex Rider as a teenage James Bond and Alex is named after Honeychile Rider, the heroine in *Dr. No*, the film of which introduced the teenaged Anthony Horowitz to James Bond. Thanks in part to his love letter to James Bond, Horowitz was commissioned by the Ian Fleming Estate to pen new James Bond adventures. His first novel, *Trigger Mortis*, was published by Orion in 2015 and, like his Alex Rider novels, contained allusions to Fleming's novels and the film series, as well as incorporating unpublished material by Fleming. The Alex Rider novels are written for teenagers, but Bond references can also be found in books for younger readers. For the 3-5 year age range, there is, for example, *006 and a Bit* by Kes Gray and Nick Sharratt, which features Daisy, a mischievous girl who gets into trouble through no fault of her own, or so she claims. Apart from the title, which clearly references Bond's code number, the book has a cover which brings to mind the white dot on the black screen that starts the gunbarrel sequence, and inside the cover are images of Daisy in silhouette which recall images of Maurice Binder's famous Bond film title sequences. Entries in Simon & Schuster's *Spy Mice* series of books by Heather Vogel Frederick include *Goldwhiskers* (2006) and *For Your Paws Only* (2006).

Writers of children's television programmes have also looked to James Bond for inspiration. Let us focus on two examples, *Special Agent Oso* and *Danger Mouse*. *Special Agent Oso* is a pre-school series about a bear who, in each episode, helps a child to complete a certain task, such as flying a kite or setting the table. The series was originally broadcast on the Disney Channel in 2009. Series 1 was broadcast between 2009 and 2010; the second from 2010 to 2012. In total, 116 episodes were shown, each one with a title that plays on the names of the Bond films or, in two cases, the titles of Bond songs. There is, for example, "From Grandma With Love" (*From Russia with Love*); "A Zoo To A Thrill" (*A View to a Kill*); "The Chairs Are Not Enough" (*The World is Not Enough*); and "Dr Snow" (*Dr. No*). Some of the titles are unintentionally ironic. "License to Cheer Up" is obviously based on *Licence to Kill*, which, until the Daniel Craig era, had been the most serious and humourless Bond film of the Eon series. "Drink Another Day"

(*Die Another Day*), meanwhile, could be the very words Bond lives by. Cataloging all of these titles (Table 3), we can see that the most common film name is *Goldfinger* with 11 occurrences, and *Casino Royale* and *For Your Eyes Only* are not far behind, with 9 occurrences each. Other titles with a relatively high level of use, having 7 or 8 occurrences each, comprise *A View To A Kill*, *Diamonds Are Forever* (*DAF*), Licence *to Kill*, *Live and Let Die*, *Thunderball*, and *The Man with the Golden Gun*. Other titles fall within the 2 to 6 range of occurrences, while *Octopussy*, *Tomorrow Never Dies*, *Moonraker*, and *Never Say Never Again (NSNA)* are the least frequently used film names, with one occurrence each. Unlike newspaper headlines and company names, it is difficult to see a clear pattern of title use and to determine why certain titles have been favoured over others. The range between the highest and lowest values (expressed as percentage of count) is narrower than it is for newspaper headlines and company names. In other words, a relatively large number of titles are more or less equally represented, contrasting with newspaper headlines and company names, where the distribution is skewed heavily in favour of just a few titles.

An explanation for the use in *Special Agent Oso* of a wider selection of Bond titles is suggested by the way in which the titles themselves have been adapted. Let us take, for example, *From Russia with Love*. Of the five episode titles derived from *From Russia with Love*, just one "From China With Love") follows the "rules" of use evident in company names or newspaper headlines; in this case one placename being replaced by another. In the other examples, not only can the nouns "Russia" and "love" be replaced, but also the preposition "from". For example, "To Grandma With Love" and "For Angels With Snow". Nevertheless, the basic structure of the original title remains (preposition and noun being placed alternately), and the word "with" is common to all, thus retaining the connection to *From Russia with Love*. Similarly, for titles derived from *Die Another Day*, both the first and third word can be replaced ("Connect Another Dot"), leaving just one word and the basic structure (verb, pronoun, noun) to preserve the link with the original title. Looking at *Casino Royale*, which is commonly used as an episode title, but rarely used by companies or newspapers, the word "Royale" appears in all nine examples, providing the link with the original Fleming title, but there is considerable variation in the words or words that replace "casino". Among the examples are "sandcastle", "sock puppet", "hopscotch", and "potty". Just two titles, "Carousel Royale" and "Colors Royale", match the original title relatively closely, both having the same initials, with "carousel" equalling "casino" in syllables. By comparison with newspaper headlines and company names, then, the *Special Agent Oso* titles are more varied in choice and modifications. While they adhere to the basic

structure of the Bond titles, they are looser adaptations and not so reliant on puns or other rhymes, thus permitting a far wider choice of words to be used and allowing Bond titles not favoured in other contexts (e.g. newspapers) to be selected.

Another animated series that looked to James Bond for inspiration for its episode titles is *Danger Mouse*. The adventures of this secret agent mouse were created by Brian Cosgrove and first broadcast on ITV in the UK 1981. A rebooted series was produced by Fremantle Media and Boulder Media and aired by the BBC in 2015, and it is this incarnation that is discussed here. Episodes titles have tended to reference film titles or other aspects of popular culture, and in the two series that, at the time of writing, have been broadcast (a total of 99 episodes), the names of 14 episodes reference Bond titles (Table 4). While the dataset is too small for analytical purposes, some observations can be made. Like newspaper headlines, these titles allude to the Bond titles' use of word play, typically puns and rhymes. Among the episodes are "Never Say Clever Again" (*Never Say Never Again*); "Danger is Forever" (*Diamonds are Forever*); "For Your Insides Only" (*FYEO*); and "A Loo to a Kill" (*A View To A Kill*). Only two Bond titles are used more than once. *Goldfinger* inspired the titles "Greenfinger" and "Gold Flinger", while *The World is Not Enough* becomes "Half the World is Enough" and "The World is Full of Stuff"' (the latter may be derived from the 1979 film *The World is Full of Married Men*, but a case can also be made for *The World is Not Enough*, given that "stuff" and "enough" rhyme.) Unlike *Special Agent Oso*, the episode titles adhere more strictly to their source titles, generally replacing a noun, verb, or syllable invariably to humorous effect – and in the case of "Yule Only Watch Twice", the pronoun, as well as the verb of *You Only Live Twice*. By comparison, the *Special Agent Oso* titles do not appear to have been intentionally funny or overly humorous, a product of the titles being less reliant on puns, their being looser adaptations of the original Bond titles, and because of the educational purpose of the episodes.

### "I CAN READ YOUR EVERY MOVE": BOOK TITLES

Literary works are another area in which the Bond titles have had life beyond Ian Fleming's novels and the Bond films. The volume of books using titles derived in some way from the Bond titles is too vast to obtain a manageable dataset or even a robust, representative sample, but a search of Google Books is instructive, providing something of a flavour of how the Bond titles are used. Let us look first at *From Russia with Love*. There are dozens of variations: *From Greece with Love*

(James 2019); *From Manhattan with Love* (Morgan 2018); *From Baghdad with Love* (Kopelman 2006); *From Russia with Tough Love* (Tsatsouline 2002); *From London with Love* (Quincy 2017); *From Somalia With Love* (Robert 2008). The list goes on, and is potentially endless, thanks to Fleming's use of the word "Russia", which can be replaced with any other place name, making the title highly adaptable, usually in this case for romantic fiction, travel books, or accounts of journeys. *The Spy Who Loved Me* appears to be just as popular. In this case, the word "spy" has generally given the title variability. There is, for example, *The Viscount Who Loved Me* (Quinn 2009); *The Dragon Who Loved Me* (Aiken 2011); *The Wolf Who Loved Me* (Dare 2011); *The Vampire Who Loved Me* (Medeiros 2013); and *The Nerd Who Loved Me* (Thompson 2006), among many others. Most of these books are novels, and it may have amused Ian Fleming to know that a good proportion of those fall under the category of erotic fiction.

Authors of erotic fiction have also looked, perhaps inevitably, to *For Your Eyes Only* for inspiration. *For His Eyes Only* (Blake 2017) and *For Her Eyes Only* (Sala 2014) are two examples. But the title, which itself derives from a phrase used in intelligence circles, has been used less salaciously for non-fiction, such as *For the President's Eyes Only* (Andrews 1996), which is an account of US Intelligence through successive presidents. In a similar vein, the title *In the President's Secret Service* (Kessler 2009), a history of the US Secret Service, may have derived from *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*. If this is arguable, then there is surely less dispute about *At Her Majesty's Secret Service* (West 2016), *On Her Majesty's Frightfully Secret Service* (Bowen 2017), or *In His Majesty's Secret Service* (Murphy 2019).

Ian Fleming turned to a well-worn phrase, "live and let live", when naming his second novel, and it is to Fleming's adaptation that other authors have turned: *Spy Goddess: Live and Let Shop* (Spradlin 2005); *Spy Girls: Live and Let Spy* (Cage 2014); and *Live and Let Pie* (Alexander 2019). Fleming also thought of a common expression for the title of his penultimate full-length novel: "you only live once" becoming *You Only Live Twice*. Subsequent authors have been inspired by Fleming, as is clear by the use the word "twice" in, for example, *You Only Die Twice* (Smith 2015) and *You Only Love Twice* (Thornton 2011). When Fleming arrived at the title *The Man with the Golden Gun*, published in 1965, he may have been inspired by *The Man With The Golden Arm*, a 1955 film directed by Otto Preminger and starring Frank Sinatra. With regard to the dozens of books that begin their titles "The Man with the Golden…", it is not clear whether the authors were inspired by the 1955 film or by Fleming's novel. However, there is no doubt about the allusions to Fleming in *The Man with the Golden Handshake* (Peattie and Taylor 1991), a collection of cartoon strips featuring the character Alex, which references

the gunbarrel sequence on its cover, and *The Man with the Golden Touch* (McKay 2010), which is specifically about Ian Fleming and his creation.

Finally, it is worth drawing attention to the "Secret History" series of novels written by Simon R. Green and published in the UK by Gollancz. The series follows the adventures of Edwin Drood, also known as Shaman Bond, who, with others in his family, protects the world from supernatural and magical threats. The main character's name is not the only allusion to James Bond, though. The first novel, published in 2007, was *The Man with the Golden Torc*, and the titles of subsequent novels have also played on the titles of Fleming's novels or short stories. *Daemons Are Forever* was published in 2008, followed by *The Spy Who Haunted Me* (2009), which in turn was followed by *From Hell with Love* (2010). Then there was *For Heaven's Eyes Only* (2011), *Live and Let Drood* (2012), and *Casino Infernale* (2013). The next two in the series, *Property of a Lady Faire* (2014) and *From a Drood to a Kill* (2015), indicate that the allusions are not necessarily to the Bond film series, but to Fleming's work itself; "The Property of a Lady" (published in 1966 in the *Octopussy* collection) has not yet been used as a film title, while "From a View to a Kill" (published in 1962 in *For Your Eyes Only*) was shortened for the 1985 film to *A View To A Kill*. The final three novels in the series (at the time of writing) are *Dr. DOA* (2016), *Moonbreaker* (2017) and *Night Fall* (2018), the last being unusual in that it is based on a film title (*Skyfall*) rather than Fleming's work.

## "HAVE Q DO AN ANALYSIS OF THIS": SOME MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS

Correspondence analysis can be employed to illustrate the trends described above. The counts of Bond titles by category – company names, *Daily Star*/*Sunday Star* headlines, and *Special Agent Oso* episode titles – were plotted by site on a symmetric space defined by two axes (Fig. 1). The data is taken from Tables 1 to 3, except that the titles *Skyfall* and *Spectre* have been excluded since *Special Agent Oso* dates up to 2012 and does not incorporate those titles. It is worth noting that the two axes account for 100% of the total inertia, meaning that all the patterning to derive from the dataset is visible on the plot. We can see in Figure 1 that none of the three categories is plotted within the same quadrant of the scattergram, indicating that each category profile (i.e. distribution of titles within a category) is sufficiently distinct, thus separating the categories on the plot. In the left-hand side of the plot, company names lie closest to one-word titles – *Moonraker*, *GoldenEye*, *Octopussy*, and *Goldfinger* – and are therefore strongly associated with them. In the bottom right quadrant, *The Star* plots closest to *From Russia with*

*Love* and *Licence to Kill*. *Special Agent Oso* is strongly associated with a wider selection of titles, with *Casino Royale*, *Diamonds Are Forever*, *Dr. No*, *The Man with the Golden Gun*, *The World is Not Enough,* and *You Only Live Twice* forming a loose cluster around the category. The titles *A View to a Kill*, *Die Another Day*, *Never Say Never Again*, and *The Spy Who Loved Me* – as well represented in the newspaper data as the *Oso* data – bridge the space between the two categories. The titles *Goldfinger*, *For Your Eyes Only*, *Live and Let Die*, and *Thunderball* are pulled towards the centre of the scattergram. Remembering that the axial intersection represents the average profile across the whole dataset, these titles are closely associated with all three categories. Thus it can be seen that the scattergram is a good representation of earlier observations: company names are derived from a wide selection of Bond titles but are weighted towards single-word titles; newspaper editors turn to a limited selection of titles for their headlines; while *Special Agent Oso* episode titles use almost all Bond titles – up to and including *Quantum of Solace* (*QOS*) – and those not commonly incorporated for us by the other categories.

## NAMES AREN'T JUST FOR TOMBSTONES, BABY: AN OVERVIEW

There can be little doubt that the titles of the James Bond books and films have cultural currency beyond the world of James Bond, with newspaper headlines, company names, and book titles frequently being derived from them.[5] Analysing the distribution of Bond titles among these categories, it can be seen that the use of the titles varies by category. There is a very strong preference among company names for one-word titles (such as *GoldenEye*, *Moonraker*, and *Skyfall*); newspaper headline-writers turn most frequently to just two titles – *Licence to Kill* and *From Russia with Love* – but a few others, notably *A View To A Kill*, *For Your Eyes Only*, and *Live and Let Die*, are not far behind; while the adoption of Bond titles in *Special Agent Oso* is more evenly distributed, as the adaptations are generally looser, allowing titles that do not lend themselves so easily to wordplay or puns to be used. The study has also shown that long Bond titles are generally not favoured by company names and headline writers, their length making them awkward to adapt. There is something of an overlap here with the theme songs used in the Eon film series. It is perhaps no coincidence that two of films with the

5 The alternative use of Bond titles even extends to more modern forms of communication: social media. In December 2020, the phrase "From Russia with Love" (#fromrussiawithlove) trended on Twitter, not because of a sudden interest among users of the platform for the book or film, but in response to a story that the Republican party in the US had allegedly received funds from sources in Russia.

longest titles are accompanied by theme songs that are either instrumental (*On Her Majesty's Secret Service*) or do not use the Bond title as the song title (*The spy Who Loved Me*, the title song for which was "Nobody Does it Better", by Carly Simon). The titles of other films that are not shared with those of the song – Casino *Royale* (Chris Cornell's "You Know My Name"); *Octopussy* (Rita Coolidge's "All Time High"); *Quantum of Solace* (Alicia Keys and Jack White's "Another Way to Die"); and Spectre (Sam Smith's "Writing on the Wall") – also have a low take-up among newspaper headlines (and book titles), suggesting that these titles are less amenable for adaptation.

As to the question why the titles have been used – or, to employ the language of evolutionary studies, what gives the titles their selective advantage – the data has shown that almost all Bond titles have been used at least once as newspaper headlines or company names. In theory, all Bond titles are in the pool and available for selection following the release of the films and assimilation into popular culture; in practice, however, just a few titles have been selected repeatedly, having a selective advantage over others. What gives them a selective advantage in one context or cultural environment may not give them an advantage in different environment. The preference for one-word titles for company names is a case in point. What makes a good company name is by no means an exact science, but branding experts might point to relevance, simplicity, and memorability as essential qualities, and they also stress the importance of how the name sounds when spoken (Silver 2012; "How to Choose a Great Name for Your New Business" 2015). Relevance to the business cannot be assessed here, but business names using one-word Bond titles are undoubtedly simple. They are memorable too; by appropriating a Bond title, the company also inherits a high level of familiarity. Other factors cited by branding experts include humour (Silver 2012), and we have seen that company names using titles of more than one word are often given a humorous slant, enhancing the memorability and relevance of the business and/or product. It could also be suggested that Bond titles make companies sound exciting and dynamic. For newspaper headlines, the titles that are more likely to be selected are those which can be adapted to humorous effect, typically by means of replacing a word with another that rhymes. There is an inherent attraction to wordplay; one only has to log into Twitter to see how we love to have fun with words, showing our ingenuity and playfulness through language and making connections via shared cultural touchstones. A title may also be preferentially selected if it includes a word that is relevant to the

story, (e.g. "Russia") making that title a favourite with editors for any story about that particular cultural or geographical context.

The conventional use of wordplay and puns in newspaper headlines and the cultural or political events behind the stories act as selection pressures within the cultural environment. In biology, natural selection acts on variation between individuals. In other words, individuals whose characteristics are better suited, even slightly, to the environment than others of their species have a better chance of surviving to reproduce and pass on their favourable characteristics to their offspring. Selection pressures are forces that determine which characteristics are important within the prevailing environment, such as a selection pressure on drabness which allows the individual to avoid predators, or a selection pressure on ostentatious display that allows the individual to attract a mate (Dawkins 2006, 36, 162; Dennett 1995, 338-9). In a similar way, fashions, cultural trends, and political events act as selection pressures in the cultural environment, exerting forces on the expressions of cultural elements and traits. Thus, Russia looming large in current world affairs provides a strong selection pressure for phrases or forms of words that include "Russia". Titles that are amenable for humorous adaptation respond best to the selection pressure for funny newspaper headlines. For company names, the principles of naming a business also act as a selection pressure. Among the pool of Bond titles, long titles and those which have little or no relevance to the purpose of the company respond poorly to this pressure and are generally not selected. Each time Bond titles or derivations of Bond titles are used as company names or in newspaper headlines, they have reproduced. The more the titles are reproduced, the more important they become in the cultural environment – the titles are often seen in the media and are familiar to the general public – in time becoming dominant within the pool of Bond titles and further increasing their chances of being selected. Conversely, Bond titles which are not used or are used rarely are poor reproducers, consequently further reducing their chances of being selected; they are rarely seen in the media and would not so easily be brought to people's minds. Some Bond titles, such as "Property of a Lady", which appeared in the *Octopussy* collection of short stories, and "The Hildebrand Rarity", which was published within the volume *For Your Eyes Only*, have not been used as film titles and consequently have not been brought to wider public attention. In turn, they have not become familiar as phrases or been selected for use in other cultural spheres. The lack of success of these short story titles suggests that it is the film titles, rather than Fleming's book or short story titles, that are generally being replicated. Further evidence of this is to be found in the use of original film titles that do not derive

from Fleming's literary material, such as *Licence to Kill* and *Skyfall*, and the fact that the film title *A View To A Kill*, is used in headlines, company names, and *Special Agent Oso* episodes rather than "From a View to a Kill", the name of the short story from which the film title derived.

We have seen how the Bond titles are successful to lesser or greater extents in the cultural environment, as measured by the criteria of fecundity, fidelity, and longevity, but (how) do they evolve? In biological evolution, if a genetic mutation increases an individual's fitness within its natural environment and its ability to survive and reproduce – thus passing that mutation to the next generation – then, potentially, over time that species will evolve (Coyne 2010, 12). Similarly, in cultural evolution, if there is a mutation of a trait or an aspect of information (for instance, by being incorrectly copied or deliberately altered), the mutation can be transmitted and reproduced, potentially resulting in a cultural revolution. As has been demonstrated, the Bond titles have clear potential for mutation. Their meanings and connotations are altered when used in contexts unrelated to the Bond films and books, and titles themselves are changed when words are replaced. This alone, however, does not mean that the titles have evolved; this can only be claimed if it can be shown that the variants resulting from mutation enjoy fecundity, fidelity, and longevity. Examining the dataset, it could be argued that "licence to thrill" represents a new species, having been replicated relatively frequently among the *Daily Star*/*Sunday Star* headlines (12 of the 24 occurrences of headlines based on *Licence to Kill*). Following the phrase over a longer period of time would allow us to assess whether the phrase has longevity and exists as a separate entity. Another contender may be *From Russia with Love*, which, with its common use as a newspaper headline, is becoming increasingly associated with the current affairs and politics of Russia. One test to determine whether the variants – "licence to thrill" and so on – have become new species would be to measure their degree of independence from Bond. Do people use the phrase without knowing that it derives from James Bond? If so, then the claim that these phrases and their variants are new species becomes a much stronger one.

The aim of this article has been to go beyond the simple listing of Bond title adaptations and to show that the titles, like all aspects of culture, function according to the principles of evolution. The titles' adaptations have themselves been adapted, further extending and expanding the original phrases' lines of descent. Crucially, though, like many other aspects of culture, not all titles have equal chance of success. Their fitness within the prevailing cultural environment – their length or suitability to a particular context, for example – is critical to

their chances of being selected and replicated. When Fleming settled on the titles for his Bond novels, he devised those which were memorable, not least because some of them derived from existing, well-known phrases that were already familiar to the public. Over time, with the huge success of the books and especially the subsequent Eon film series – the Bond titles have themselves become separate entities or phrases that are frequently adopted and adapted in cultural contexts away from the Bond franchise. Far from diluting the brand, this alternative use of the titles aids the survival of the character. Even between the release of films, when James Bond films are out of the media glare, the use of the titles in newspapers, television, business, publishing, and other spheres keeps the world of James Bond in the public eye, thus maintaining the predominance of Ian Fleming's creation within popular culture.

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Table 1: *James Bond book or film titles used in UK company names*

| Bond title | Count of companies | % count |
|---|---|---|
| *SP* | 93 | 22.04% |
| *MR* | 86 | 20.38% |
| *SF* | 82 | 19.43% |
| *GE* | 42 | 9.95% |
| *GF* | 37 | 8.77% |
| *LTK* | 19 | 4.50% |
| *FRWL* | 12 | 2.84% |
| *FYEO* | 11 | 2.61% |
| *LALD* | 10 | 2.37% |
| *TB* | 9 | 2.13% |
| *OP* | 6 | 1.42% |
| *QOS* | 6 | 1.42% |
| *DAD* | 2 | 0.47% |
| *DAF* | 2 | 0.47% |
| *DN* | 2 | 0.47% |
| *AVTAK* | 1 | 0.24% |
| *TMWTGG* | 1 | 0.24% |
| *YOLT* | 1 | 0.24% |
| Total | 422 | 100.00% |

Table 2: *James Bond book or film titles used in sample of UK newspapers (random) and in* The Star *and* Sunday Star *between 1 January 2016 and 31 December 2019 (systematic).*

| Bond title | Count of head-lines (random) | % count | Count of head-lines (systematic) | % count |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *LTK* | 15 | 20.27% | 24 | 34.78% |
| *FRWL* | 17 | 22.97% | 12 | 17.39% |
| *AVTAK* | 3 | 4.05% | 7 | 10.14% |
| *DAD* | 1 | 1.35% | 4 | 5.80% |
| *LALD* | 4 | 5.41% | 4 | 5.80% |
| *FYEO* | 5 | 6.76% | 3 | 4.35% |
| *GF* | - | - | 3 | 4.35% |
| *TB* | - | - | 2 | 2.90% |
| *TLD* | - | - | 2 | 2.90% |
| *TMWTGG* | 1 | 1.35% | 2 | 2.90% |
| *TSWLM* | 2 | 2.70% | 2 | 2.90% |
| *CR* | - | - | 1 | 1.45% |
| *DAF* | 1 | 1.35% | 1 | 1.45% |
| *NSNA* | - | - | 1 | 1.45% |
| *TWINE* | - | - | 1 | 1.45% |
| *DN* | 4 | 5.41% | - | - |
| *MR* | 1 | 1.35% | - | - |
| *NTTD* | 5 | 6.76% | - | - |
| *OHMSS* | 2 | 2.70% | - | - |
| *QOS* | 1 | 1.35% | - | - |
| *SF* | 5 | 6.76% | - | - |
| *SP* | 4 | 5.41% | - | - |
| *YOLT* | 3 | 4.05% | - | - |
| Total | 74 | 100.00% | 69 | 100.00% |

Table 3: *James Bond book or film titles used in* Special Agent Oso *episode titles.*

| Film title | Count of episode titles | % count |
|---|---|---|
| *GF* | 11 | 9.48% |
| *CR* | 9 | 7.76% |
| *FYEO* | 9 | 7.76% |
| *AVTAK* | 8 | 6.90% |
| *DAF* | 8 | 6.90% |
| *LTK* | 8 | 6.90% |
| *LALD* | 7 | 6.03% |
| *TB* | 7 | 6.03% |
| *TMWTGG* | 7 | 6.03% |
| *DAD* | 6 | 5.17% |
| *DN* | 5 | 4.31% |
| *FRWL* | 5 | 4.31% |
| *QOS* | 4 | 3.45% |
| *TWINE* | 4 | 3.45% |
| *GE* | 3 | 2.59% |
| *Theme song* | 3 | 2.59% |
| *OHMSS* | 2 | 1.72% |
| *TLD* | 2 | 1.72% |
| *TSWLM* | 2 | 1.72% |
| *YOLT* | 2 | 1.72% |
| *MR* | 1 | 0.86% |
| *NSNA* | 1 | 0.86% |
| *OP* | 1 | 0.86% |
| *TND* | 1 | 0.86% |
| Total | 116 | 100.00% |

Table 4: *James Bond book or film titles used in* Danger Mouse *(2015) episode titles.*

| Film titles | Count of episode titles | % count |
|---|---|---|
| *GF* | 2 | 14.29% |
| *TWINE* | 2 | 14.29% |
| *AVTAK* | 1 | 7.14% |
| *DAF* | 1 | 7.14% |
| *FYEO* | 1 | 7.14% |
| *LALD* | 1 | 7.14% |
| *LTK* | 1 | 7.14% |
| *NSNA* | 1 | 7.14% |
| *QOS* | 1 | 7.14% |
| *SF* | 1 | 7.14% |
| *TND* | 1 | 7.14% |
| *YOLT* | 1 | 7.14% |
| Grand Total | 14 | 100.00% |

Figure 1: *Correspondence analysis scattergram showing the relationship between Bond titles and the categories of company names,* Star *headlines and* Special Agent Oso *episode titles. Axis 1: 75.35%; axis 2: 27.65%.*