Fashioning James Bond: Costume, Gender and Identity in the World of 007, by Llewella Chapman (Bloomsbury, 2021, pp. 320)

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Fashioning James Bond provides an in-depth examination of the wardrobe and costumes of the Bond franchise to two distinct ends. In the first respect, Chapman provides a very detailed breakdown of the costuming of the Bond actors as well as those of other significant characters across the films. The Book also offers fascinating insights into the impact of the social, political, and economic contexts which the wardrobe, costume, and tailoring of the Bond franchise demonstrates. Chapman uses this discussion in order to help the reader understand the importance of fashion and tailoring in Bond's brand identity at large. For example, Chapman identifies that the casino scene in *Dr. No* (1962) would come to represent "20 percent of the final wardrobe cost" of the film, making it "emblematic of what viewers would come to expect" from the Bond universe *in toto* – a "lavish spectacle of the highest quality dress" (1).

Chapman's analysis of the films appears in chronological order, starting with the Connery era of the 1960s. Within the first two chapters, she argues that costume and wardrobe were, from the very outset of the franchise, aspects "intrinsic to the [Bond] character" and which would become part of "the unmistakable James Bond hallmark" (8). In the case of *Dr. No*, this extended to the director,

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Terence Young, who "assist[ed]" Sean Connery and "trained him in style and etiquette" (9). An element of function was necessary for Bond's costume, however, in that Bond's suits needed to be cut in such a way that allowed for the carrying of a gun – meaning that the suits had to be "just that little bit fuller" (11). Costume also led to the establishment of certain themes that would persist throughout the franchise – *Dr. No,* for example, uses the "visual signifier" of "the influence of Asian dress" to "represent the cultural politics of Bond villainy" (25). Chapman also highlights the fact that deliberate concern was taken to ensure that the clothing and costuming of the films were not a "self-serving device", and that they should – as *From Russia with Love* (1963) costume designer Jocelyn Rickards states – "carry with them a number of messages, like what kind of school the character went to, what newspapers he or she reads, what political affiliation he has, [and] what his sexual inclinations are" (33).

The Connery era also established several "semantic codes" (44) for the franchise as a whole, including "the reoccurring theme of 'fashionable' weapons" (35) and the role of sexuality and fashion in Bond's ideological conversion of "bad" women (53). This is discussed in the third chapter on "Lifestyle, Fashion and Marketing in the 1960s", and references the British *zeitgeist* created by the Bond films at that time, which were "omnipresent in advertising and commodity design" (63). Chapman notes that several "Bond-branded products" were marketed commercially outside of Great Britain (73). The fourth chapter focuses on the interregnum provided by George Lazenby's portrayal of Bond in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* (1969). Lazenby's outing is notable due his range of costume changes – the most "of any actor to play Bond in one film" (84) – the significance of a floral theme within the film (91), and a marketing campaign that was unusually "aimed at the female market" (93). The fifth chapter then discusses Connery's return to the role in *Diamonds Are Forever* (1971); and Chapman notes interesting disparities in British and American press discussions of the assassins Wint and Kidd and their homosexuality.

The following three chapters offer an extensive analysis of the Roger Moore era. Chapman's discussion of *Live and Let Die* (1973) notes firstly the continuing trend of modelling the villain's costume after Bond's. Yaphet Kotto, who payed Moore's first nemesis, Dr. Kananga, recalled of his first meeting with Moore

> I walked over to [Roger] and I said: "How do you like this new suit Julie [Harris, the costume designer] just made for me?" He looked at the suit and

> looked at me and said, "Marvellous sense of humour she has, doesn't she?" (128)

In terms of Harris's visual humour, the suits had been deliberately cut to accentuate the flamboyance of Kananga's villainous character, which is particularly emphasised in the purple and white two piece suits, as well as Mr. Big's "American gangster" trench coat (ibid.). *Live and Let Die* also provides a point of interest in terms of the ideological repositioning of its female characters, wherein the costumes worn by Solitaire begin to change "following sexual intercourse with Bond, becoming plainer and more Westernized in cut and style" (132), thus signalling her move away from Kananga. By contrast, *The Man with the Golden Gun* (1974) provides examples of costuming that "would later become synonymous with the dated look of Moore's Bond films" (135) – something that Chapman notes in the following chapter is perhaps "a slightly unfair argument" (146) in hindsight, given the changing circumstances of fashion and the contemporary reception of the costume choices.

The eighth chapter opens with an insight into the life and work of the tailor Douglas Hayward, before moving on to discuss the pressures felt by those that provided tailoring for the Bond films. Del Smith, who worked for Hayward, noted

> that tailors would instantly recognize where a suit had been sourced from and who tailored it, and thus it was really important to the tailor that the quality of the suit was "perfect" owing to concerns that other members of the tailoring community would be critically assessing it. (168)

This chapter also identifies the ways in which films such as *A View to a Kill* (1985) evidence cultural differences from previous films, most notably in the desire for that film "to reach a wider audience by involving more pop and rock". According to Grace Jones, who played the villainess May Day, "[the producers] definitely wanted [*A View to a Kill*] to be a rock'n'roll MTV Bond" (185). Jones's May Day also provides Chapman with further opportunities to analyse the concept of ideological realignment in relation to Bond's sexuality (188): where in previous Bond films an encounter with Bond would lead to a realignment of the "bad" woman, this is notably not the case with May Day.

The ninth chapter follows the evolution of the franchise into the Dalton era, beginning with the desire of the star to consciously move away from the sar-

torial choices of the Moore decades – although Chapman does note that critics made little mention of this in reviews of *The Living Daylights* (1987) (198). A tension between the producers and Jodie Tillen, the costume designer for *Licence to Kill* (1989), would later become an issue, as Chapman notes, when the wardrobing edged closer towards that of the television series *Miami Vice* (1984-1989), much to the film's partial detriment (202; 206). Ideas of nationalism and the "tailoring wars" form the focus of the tenth chapter, which takes as its focus the films of the Brosnan era and the franchise's partnership with Brioni suits. This move sparked what Chapman identifies as "a consistent complaint made by the press" (211) about the use of non-British tailors to costume Bond, although the decision to partner with Brioni was, in part, pragmatic, due to the demands of the production. Chapman gives evidence for the extensive condemnation of non-British fashion choices and tailoring in the media; films such as *The World Is Not Enough* (1999) highlighted the issue of out-of-context costume referencing, with the attire of Denise Richards (as Dr. Christmas Jones) being thematically resonant of Lara Croft, the titular character of the *Tomb Raider* (1996-) video game franchise.

By the Craig era, however, tensions between Eon Productions and Brioni would represent "the most significant 'tailoring war' in the franchise to date" (251), leading to the adoption of Tom Ford suits – something that, Chapman drily notes, creates a significant continuity error between the end of *Casino Royale* (2006) and the beginning of *Quantum of Solace* (2008), which supposedly take place in direct succession, but in which "Bond is not dressed in his three-piece Brioni suit worn at the end of *Casino Royale,* but rather in a two-piece Tom Ford suit" (ibid.). It is also noted that by the time of the production of *Skyfall* (2012) that "Daniel Craig significantly developed his agency over the way Bond was dressed" (259).

Having covered all of the films in the franchise – aside from the Covid-delayed *No Time To Die* (2021) – Chapman then concludes the text by bringing together ideas of ideology, agency, and socio-economic factors that have formed the key topic points of *Fashioning James Bond*. In doing so, Chapman notes, the aim of her book has also been to offer "a methodology with which to approach future analysis and research into the costuming of film, including the agency, process and labour behind how costumes are produced from script to screen" (289). *Fashioning James Bond* is thus successful in uniting a series of themes and focal points to create a text that becomes fundamentally more than an analysis of tailoring and fashion, and one which combines a sartorial "rock of eye" for detail with a strong commitment to exploring the wider implications of the costume and wardrobe of the Bond films.