

Loaded Magazines: James Bond and British men's mags in the Brosnan era

Claire Hines and Stephanie Jones

Abstract

As Bond scholarship has shown, men's magazines played a crucial role in shaping images of masculinity that circulated around James Bond from the 1960s onwards (Hines, 2018). More generally, critics have charged both the Bond film franchise and men's magazines with perpetuating sexist imagery that upholds patriarchal values or erodes the gains of feminism. Yet close readings of men's magazines and Bond films can produce a more complex picture of masculinity and gender relations, especially since the mid-1990s saw not only the return of James Bond to the screen following a six year production break, but also scholarly and media attention to masculinity and significant growth in the men's magazine market, including the rise of lad mags. This research will analyse magazine content relating to Bond in British men's magazines during the Pierce Brosnan era, beginning with the launch of the 1995 film *GoldenEye*, to examine the interrelationship between James Bond as a longstanding male icon, and contemporary models of masculinity characterised by this publishing phenomenon. It will argue that these men's magazines become an important site for (re)negotiating James Bond's culturally loaded masculinity throughout the Brosnan years.

When the Bond films returned in the mid-1990s following a six year production break, Pierce Brosnan was cast as the new James Bond. The future of the Bond films had been in doubt since the late-eighties when the box-office fell, Timothy Dalton received mixed reviews for his dark interpretation of the Bond character, and a legal dispute also stalled the franchise (Chapman, 2007, pp.210-212). To keep up with the times, James Bond needed to be (re)located in the present of the nineties, taking into account changes that had happened in society, culture and politics, without losing touch with past Bond moments. The beginning of the Brosnan era saw Bond restored and reinvented in *GoldenEye* (1995) in order to regain a balance between the right kind of contemporary appeal but still remain familiar enough. This can be recognised as part of a longer-term process of negotiation used by the franchise, and James Bond's currency as a popular hero is well discussed in Bond scholarship. *Bond and Beyond* (1987) is a foundational study of the Bond phenomenon, in which Tony Bennett and Janet Woollacott analyse the shifting intertextual significations of James Bond, and his function as a changing site of meaning. Importantly, Bennett and Woollacott look beyond the Bond novels and films

to consider how other media also call on and mobilise specific significations. It is especially relevant that Bennett and Woollacott identify the part played by men's magazines in the construction of Bond's masculinity, and in particular they discuss how magazine features on the 'Bond girls' "have been complicit with the general currency of Bond, underwriting its effects rather than opposing them" (1987, p.244). It must be acknowledged that Bennett and Woollacott's study pre-dates the new generation of British men's magazines that provide a focus for this chapter, but the statement might nonetheless be tested in this new context.

More generally, this chapter will use a selection of popular British men's magazines - *FHM*, *Loaded*, *Maxim*, *GQ*, *Arena* and *Esquire* - from the time of the release of *GoldenEye*, *Tomorrow Never Dies* (1997) and *The World is Not Enough* (1999) up to Brosnan's fourth and final Bond film *Die Another Day* (2002), to examine the interrelationship between James Bond as a male icon, and contemporary gender representation in the wider media. Much like James Bond, men's magazines can be understood as "both [a] representative site and mobilising force of crucial cultural shifts in masculinity" (Benwell, 2003, p.7). Like Bond studies, the study of men's magazines "is able to illuminate aspects of the condition of modern masculinity and recent discursive shifts associated with gender politics" (Ibid.). The chapter will argue that men's magazines and Bond are similarly 'loaded' sites of meaning, and function variously as social and cultural constructions. We will examine three key aspects to unpack this function: how men's magazines consciously frame James Bond's return as a negotiation between the past and present, how the latest Bond girls are presented as objects for consumption, and how interviews with Pierce Brosnan negotiate different male types that are important to men's magazine culture.

In many ways, the interregnum between 1989's *Licence to Kill* and 1995's *GoldenEye* looked more like a clear break than a pause. But, in contrast to the controlled 'reboot' signalled by Daniel Craig's Bond in *Casino Royale* (2006), the changes that occurred in 1995 seemed like a response to the march of progress since the end of the eighties. In the time between *Licence to Kill* and *GoldenEye*, production contexts, casting, geopolitics, and indeed gender politics had radically transformed. Nothing in the world of Bond seems as much like an enforced discontinuity as the break that encompassed the start of Barbara Broccoli and Michael G. Wilson's tenure as Eon producers, the fall of the Soviet Union, and Stella Rimington's appointment as Director General of MI5. In the world of Bond, these developments were signified by changes such as the arrival of Brosnan and the casting of Judi Dench as M. As Jim Leach notes, in 1985 Lois Maxwell suggested to producers that she play M instead of Miss Money Penny, now that she was "too old to make Miss Money Penny's flirtations with Bond convincing" (2015, p.30). This idea was rejected at the time, but a decade later, following Rimington's appointment, things had changed enough for Dench to take the role as M. Amid changes concerning women in the traditionally male workplace, masculinities had also changed considerably. Since the mid-1980s, new male types emerged as men increasingly became the target of consumer-led products and media. As Frank Mort observes, men started to become "addressed through their gender as a community" (1988, p.212). The stylish and sensitive new man, referenced by Dalton's Bond (somewhat unsuccessfully), was joined by the new lad and other types of masculinity.

In the magazine market there were also developments during the 1990s. The 1980s had previously given rise to a number of more upmarket men's lifestyle magazines, which continued into the next decade. New magazines launched, such as *Arena* in 1986, *British GQ* in 1989, and *British Esquire* in 1991. *British GQ* and *Esquire* built up circulations of around

100,000 during the early 1990s (Crewe, 2003 pp.42-43). Sociologist, Sean Nixon notes that these sorts of magazines shared an interest in style best characterised as “the expression of a distinct sense of masculine individuality through dress and appearance” (1996, p.164). Correspondingly, the magazines delivered to advertisers a somewhat elusive niche market of professionalised men with disposable cash (ibid, p.140). They did this largely through the figure of the new man. The new man was “sensitive, emotionally aware, respectful of women, and egalitarian in outlook”, whereas the new lad was “hedonistic, post (if not anti) feminist, and pre-eminently concerned with beer, football and ‘shagging’ women” (Gill, 2003, p.37). Aimed at the new lad in the 1990s the new magazines *Loaded*, *FHM* and *Maxim* brought with them a near moral panic about the potent mixture of “boobs, football, cars, explosions and exciting stuff like guns and fighting” (Gamp, 2015). In keeping with magazines in general, we can think of lad mags as “frameworks of interaction” that include letters, interviews, advertising, information-features, and fictional or true story narratives (Talbot, 1998, p.177). Such magazines are multi-voiced. They encompass diverse genres and discourses and are contributed to by multiple authors (ibid.). Lad mags’ competing discourses include economics, journalism, fashion, relationships and even gender politics. The 1990s marked a certain high watermark for the role of magazines in cultural life, particularly in Britain. In the first half of 1998, the best-selling issue of *FHM* had a circulation of 700,000 copies (Mooney, 2015, p.204). Between 1991 and 1997, the men’s lifestyle magazine market increased by an astounding 400% (Stevenson, Jackson and Brooks, 2001, p.118). The popularity of British men’s magazines at this time later gave rise to a fierce debate about their meanings and effects.

In the academic sphere, towards the end of the 2010s, a dust up worthy of James Bond and Red Grant took place over how to read and make sense of these magazines. Feminist media scholar Rosalind Gill contends that lad mags marked an attack on feminism as well as “a refusal to

acknowledge the changes in gender relations” (2007, p.211). By contrast, media theorist David Gauntlett argues that lad mags are not anti-feminist. According to Gauntlett, the “intended laugh” in lad mags is at sexism itself (2008, p.178). This dispute points to the problems of interpreting materials where irony is at play. Typically, men’s magazines use varying degrees of irony as well as differing ironic modes (from literary irony to tongue-in-cheek provocations) (Benwell, 2004). This makes it hard to guess at what the intended tone of the material is, or indeed to guess at what the target reader might make of what they have read (Ibid.). Nevertheless, to paraphrase Robert C. Allen and Douglas Gomery on film reviews, magazines may not tell readers what to think as much as what to think about (1985, p. 90). Men’s magazines, no matter what their tone, play an important role in framing a discussion about James Bond and gender. This is especially the case in the 1990s when men’s magazines emerged in Britain as a powerful force and indicator of contemporary masculinities.

Framing Bond for the mid-nineties: the “sexist, misogynist dinosaur” meets men’s mags

In 1995 men’s magazines’ response to *GoldenEye*, and to Brosnan, set an agenda: how does Bond fit into our current world after such a long time away? The established, upmarket and literary-focused men’s magazine *Esquire* considers Bond fitting into the mid-1990s via a satirical story called “Licence to Hug”, written by journalist and author Will Self. Self’s story chimes with many of what literary scholar M. Hunter Hayes characterises as the author’s principle themes: drugs and psychiatry, as well as anxieties around gender roles, class, sexuality and ideas of selfhood (2007, pp.5-12). Typically, for Self’s writing, it is both mischievous and serious at the same time (Hayes, 2007, p.5). The themes and observations in “Licence to Hug” depict James Bond as a dinosaur-ish figure, lamenting times gone by, struggling to keep up with changes to the intelligence service and further afield. As such, the story illustrates the more widespread concerns about reconciling Bond’s past with the present

that were also being negotiated by the films for a mainstream audience. The plot of *Self's* story concerns an Irish Republican dissident Bond villain called Big Billy who is selling skunk through a criminal network in the Netherlands. Bond is dispatched to capture Big Billy and detain him. Predictably, Bond is unable to take the order to detain rather than kill seriously. Indeed, the story sees Bond kill Big Billy and be sent to therapy by his superior.

In "Licence to Hug" Bond reflects on the many recent changes to workplace politics, global affairs, and intelligence policy. Frequently, Bond is baffled by the changes. He is especially bewildered by the fact that M, forced to retire, has now been replaced by S - a woman. As with *GoldenEye's* casting of Dench as M, S's femaleness is used to mark change. S being a woman is used to unite many things that Bond is finding it difficult to adjust to. The 00 division is under threat because it is "not politic ... to employ killing as a tool of statecraft". Moneypenny reacts angrily at an "attempt at seduction" by Bond and lectures him on sexual harassment following a new workplace policy put in place by S. The intelligence service has replaced memorandums on exciting and aggressive topics such as "How to Kill an Armed Assailant with a Carpet Tack" with more conciliatory directives such as "Affirmative Action: Promoting Ethnic Diversity in Espionage". This shift is exaggerated even further when Bond visits Q branch. As referenced in the title of the story, Q hugs and strokes Bond as part of another new policy instituted by S. At the end of the story, when it comes to seducing love interest Blanche, Bond is impotent. Blanche carefully deconstructs Bond's hard drinking, heavy smoking lifestyle and his age as she holds his limp penis in her hands. In this story James Bond is unable to keep with demands of the Bond girl, his mission, or indeed contemporary drug cultures. His preferred habits of smoking and drinking are marked as old fashioned and out of step with the late-twentieth century.

By the same token, an *Arena* foreword “Is 007’s Number Finally Up?” written by Pat Kane, offers a playful, analytical, but highly nostalgic take on the Bond phenomenon’s place in popular culture. The foreword’s stance indicates that James Bond’s return in 1995 poses a challenge because the past magic of Sean Connery’s Bond is an uneasy fit with the contemporary world. This creates a frame that celebrates the past and problematises the present. The foreword emphasises a nostalgic environment where the ritual of watching Bond films on television is an institutionalised part of British family life. The piece also connects watching Connery’s Bond seduce a Bond girl, with heterosexual awakening. Accordingly, Bond’s masculinity is heavily bound up with themes of nostalgia. Kane credits Connery with squaring the circle of Bond’s dual role as imperial saviour and permissive swinger. Connery’s attractiveness is identified as key to his success in reconciling contradiction. The *Arena* foreword suggests that Brosnan possibly can succeed in keeping Bond relevant as a sign of the times, but the challenges are these: Britain’s diminished role on the world stage, the end of the Cold War, and increased oversight in real-world intelligence services. The foreword remarks that the fantasy of Bond’s world is now *too* ludicrous compared to recent revelations about real-world intelligence gathering: “The unfathomable depths of the Cold War may have allowed us imaginative space to let James do his thing ... but now ... Bond’s covert life seems more and more like the sheerest fantasy”. Fantasy, and indeed the nostalgia associated with it, is assumed to be under threat from a changed world. This move within the foreword, which resists a changed world and retreats into nostalgia, resembles a refusal to grow up. More worryingly, it results in criticisms of governments publicly overseeing decisions by intelligence services as if it spoils the fun. These concerns coalesce around what Kane calls “the feminisation of the workplace”. The workplace is led by Dench’s M who, by implication, becomes the figurehead for the ways in which the modern world impedes on the male fantasy of Bond.

Licence to leer: men's mags and Bond girls

Apart from M and also Money Penny, the latest women of Bond in the Brosnan era are a fit for the men's magazines of the time, including the new lad mags. This is not unexpected, given that sexualised images of women play similar, and integral, roles in the construction and expression of heterosexual masculinity within both men's magazines and the Bond franchise (Hines, 2011a). In the run up to the film's release, the two female leads of *GoldenEye*, Izabella Scorupco and Famke Janssen, appear in *Loaded* magazine and *FHM* respectively. In November 1995 Janssen is pictured in *FHM* under the obligatory Bond girl label, and the same month there is a pull-out "double 00-er" gatefold poster of Scorupco in *Loaded*. Two months earlier, in September, *Maxim* contains an eight page "Bond girls" feature that also introduces them as the two latest Bond girls. However, it is actually celebrated sixties Bond girl Ursula Andress who makes it onto the magazine cover, pictured in the iconic white bikini as Honey Ryder in *Dr No* (1962). Inside the issue, the accompanying story approaches the Bond girls nostalgically as a reassuring symbol of continuity and tradition in relation to Bond, since "Despite feminism and political correctness, they have stayed relatively the same for a quarter of a century". Having visually catalogued and rated over twenty Bond girls of the past three decades, the possibility that *GoldenEye* might have in some way updated its representation of women to reflect changing attitudes towards gender stereotypes and roles in the nineties is treated by *Maxim* as less than welcome. Director Martin Campbell is quoted: "There will be no bikinis, no hanging curvaceously off chandeliers, no hanging on Bond's coat tails. They will be equal partners in the adventure". Of course, in actual fact this is far from a new discourse, as many similar statements had been made about the women in Bond films since at least the late 1970s (Chapman, 2007, p.219). Nevertheless, *Maxim* is unimpressed by the prospect: "Sounds, er... riveting" it remarked coolly.

Even if *Maxim*'s response to the publicised change to the representation of Bond girls for *GoldenEye* was delivered with the usual lack of seriousness of a lad mag, there is a clear sense across the men's magazines sampled that the latest women in the Bond films should be judged and measured against those who went before them. This is also characteristic of the Bond publicity machine, and the wider discourse circulating in the media. When examining promotional campaigns based around the women in Bond, Jeremy Packer and Sarah Sharma analyse the prevalent discourse and identify that the "evolutionary treatment" of the Bond girl has been used to put positive emphasis on progression, and broaden a female audience for the films, meaning "each new unveiling of the Bond Girl, a highly mediated and spectacular affair, is always also an unveiling of a more "evolved" feminist role model" (2009, p. 92). Applied to the different context of magazines aimed at particular male audiences, the tensions of this publicity discourse are especially evident. Like the lad mags, the October 1995 issue of *GQ* photographed Janssen and Scorupco as *GoldenEye*'s new Bond girls. Part of the article acknowledges the "evolutionary scale" of independent women in Bond over the years, but when Scorupco explains her character's break from the past by mentioning that she wouldn't be in swimwear in the film, the tone *GQ* adopts is laddish: "What, no bikinis, no wet-suits, no skimpy buttock-bearing watersports? Ian Fleming will be turning in his urn".

That the men's magazines already mentioned consistently use the 'Bond girl' label to describe and objectify the women both past and present also illustrates well other tensions between the gender representations in the Bond films and the publicity and media discourses around them. As Bond scholarship has discussed, the Bond girl label is highly problematic at a number of levels. Bennett and Woollacott (1987) call attention to the sexist connotations of the label in ideological terms. They make the point that "any discussion which accepts the terms of reference suggested by the phrase 'the Bond girls' is committed to constructing female gender

identities and forms of sexuality in relation to the norms of masculinity supplied by the figure of Bond” (Bennett and Woollacott, 1987, p.241). In other words, to refer to a female character or actor using this label is to preserve this dominant power relationship. Furthermore, according to Lisa Funnell, the term specifically “refers to a particular female character type of the Bond film. She is a non-recurring character and lead female protagonist, central to the plot of the film and instrumental to the mission of James Bond” (2008, p.63). However, in publicity material, men’s magazines or other media, the Bond girl label is normally applied to the women no matter the type of character or role they might actually play in the Bond film. This is illustrated by *GQ* in January 1998, which promotes on the cover that the issue contains a “Bond girl naked”. The Bond girl inside the issue is not Michelle Yeoh or Teri Hatcher, whose characters Wai Lin and Paris Carver both spend essential screen time with Bond in *Tomorrow Never Dies*, but Cecilia Thomson who is on screen fleetingly in an early bedroom scene in the minor role of Oxford Professor of Danish Inga Bergstrom. Similarly, Catherine McQueen, who was cast in *Die Another Day* as a Russian model in the Ice Palace scene, posed for a nude photospread in *Loaded* December 2002. In the accompanying interview she acknowledges that her part is small, but is very keen to label herself a Bond girl, saying excitedly “I’ve wanted to be a Bond girl since I was five years old, so just being part of it was an amazing experience”.

The commentaries made by both Gill (2007) and Gauntlett (2008) are particularly relevant to how we might understand the visual content as well as the dominant tone and approach of much of the Bond girl coverage in both types of men’s magazine. After all, the sexism is blatant, it is easy to pick out examples, and the provocative presentation of women is certainly an opportunity to gaze at, and fetishise, an idealised and highly stereotypical version of feminine beauty. The Bond girl photospreads provide obvious visual spectacle, but this objectification is also recognisable in the knowing, laddish humour used in the text, as already quoted.

However, as mentioned above, it is important to recognise that this humour is open to interpretation and can operate in different ways. Indeed, Bethan Benwell argues that although in men's magazine humour is undoubtedly important, "Attributing irony to men's magazines is not a straightforward matter" (2004, p.16). While it is outside the scope of this chapter to deal comprehensively with this subject, something of this is apparent throughout the magazines' dealings with the women in Bond. A distinctive case in point is found in *GQ* December 1999. The issue includes a sultry, non-nude photoshoot and accompanying interview with new *The World is Not Enough* Bond girl, Sophie Marceau. The article's approval of Marceau based on physical appearance, communicated through the images and text, causes a disjunction with an attitude of disapproval that takes place only in the writing: "As you listen to her pontificate on subjects as diverse as foie gras, fur and sexual politics you cannot help but marvel at her soft-toffee eyes, her gorgeously engorged lips and impressive décolletage". On the one hand, might it be possible to locate irony here for a reader who actually appreciates a woman, a Bond girl no less, with something to say about pressing issues? On the other hand, these follow-up sentences may read as less open to ironic interpretation: "She is, without any fear of contradiction, a beautiful woman. She is also, and this dawns slowly as the day plods on, just a little bit boring". This text does not necessarily convey one single message or meaning, and if irony is operating, the object could be male objectification, or alternatively the Bond girl image of eye candy.

To return to consider the September 1995 issue of *Maxim*, the approach the magazine takes to framing the women in its Bond girls feature is further representative. Rather than emphasising the dominant publicity discourse of linear evolution to chart the progress of change to the representation of women in the Bond films, the *Maxim* compilation of Bond girls assesses each one in relationship to James Bond. This includes a short summary detailing factors such as the

character's love scene with Bond, and the time taken by Bond to seduce her after she first appears on screen, finally awarding an overall "Babe factor". Of the over twenty Bond girls represented in *Maxim*, the characters rated most highly are Honey Ryder (obviously) and *Goldfinger's* (1964) Pussy Galore, who both score full marks out of ten. Unsurprisingly, the qualities being assessed are strongly related to the women's physical appearance, sexual attractiveness, and Bond's success at seduction. This aspect of the men's magazine approach to the women of Bond is closely related to the signification of the Bond character. As Bennett and Woollacott rightly observe, the figure of the Bond girl is "tailored to suit Bond's needs", which means that she is defined according to the requirements of male sexuality, no matter the era (1987, p.35). Similarly, the function of women in men's magazines is to affirm and protect the reader's heterosexuality.

Buying into Bond: negotiating consumer masculinity

Women are not the only element from the Bond films being offered up for consumption. Besides the Bond girls, the consumer appeal of the Bond lifestyle and Brosnan as the current Bond are negotiated by the men's magazines in multiple ways that frame and construct their versions of masculinity. *Loaded's* arrival in 1994 is widely acknowledged to have "radically reshaped" British men's magazine journalism leading to, among other things, a shift in upscale men's magazines such as *GQ* downward, and towards the use of humour and irony (Jackson, Stevenson and Brooks, 2003, p. 77). However, there still remains a marked difference between the two titles and the representations of masculinity. Following its launch in 1988, British *GQ* was known for appealing to narcissistic masculine consumerism by filling its pages with high quality fashion and accessories, and has since been closely associated with the promotion of style and image-conscious 'metrosexuality' (Simpson, 1994). The *GQ* December 1997 cover advertises "The definitive guide to 007's lifestyle" under the heading "The name's Bond. Yours

can be too". Inside, the point of reference is again nostalgic since Connery is claimed as the definitive Bond. The "Live and let buy" feature guides the reader "How to buy the Bond lifestyle" through items of clothing, including designer suits, accessories like a watch or car, and brand names such as Dom Perignon champagne. The idea is that in order to be James Bond, the magazine reader might purchase symbolic elements of his wardrobe, goods or experiences, fashioning himself according to the iconic Bond lifestyle by actively engaging in consumption. By contrast, it almost goes without saying that the glamour and sophistication of Champagne, casinos and luxury brands associated with Bond are not a particularly good fit for the high-end-fashion-resistant but no less consumer-orientated masculinity of the lad mag. Instead, *Loaded* acknowledges Bond as a style icon in an article that is pitched as a "guide to the right unnecessary accessories" in January 1998. James Bond past and present is mentioned as a role model for expensive ties, lighters and watches, but the magazine's attitude toward gadgetry and accessories is generally humorous and undoubtedly ironic. High end best buy recommendations and advice on men's ties is, for example, prefaced by the rather irreverent introduction: "A tie is only as nice as the money you spend on it, and how much can you honestly spend on a fucking tie?"

Interviews with Pierce Brosnan also reflect both the consumerist, style-conscious new man and latterly the foul-mouthed, beer-swilling new lad type. *GQ*'s December 1995 interview with Brosnan to promote *GoldenEye* provides a particularly new man-ish take on the latest Bond. There is a sincere tone to the writing, as contributing editor Neil McCormick probes Brosnan's feelings and his identity, evoking the "self-conscious, emotionally expressive [and] domesticated" new man (Crewe, 2003, p.30). Brosnan is presented as a family man, marked by tragedy and grief, who is prepared to make an unconventional family, adopting children and continuing to raise them after the death of his first wife Cassandra Harris. Harris's role in *For*

Your Eyes Only (1981), along with the interviewer's own Irish connection, allows for a deeper examination of Brosnan's feelings and identity than would otherwise seem natural and relevant to promoting the film. McCormick's voice is distinctive in the mix of magazine coverage: "Bond is back. Not deaf wheezing or arthritic, but sensitive, artistic, poetic. A family man. An Irishman". The interview thereby traces two connected threads of Brosnan's identity: his Irish and family man credentials. McCormick does not detect Irishness in Brosnan's accent but in the actor's loquaciousness, the poetic means by which he punctuates his conversation with repetition, and the descriptive nature of his digression with speech. The observation has the effect of embracing feelings and expression into the interview in a way that is tied to notions of masculinity. Brosnan muses on how being Irish made him choose more creative career ambitions that led him to the Bond role: "I just knew I didn't want to end up being a plumber or an electrician. The guys I was with were from solid homes. But they were English. I was Irish. I was different". In this context, Irishness functions to construct Brosnan as a creative outsider who is able to express his emotions.

The second thread of Brosnan's new man identity that the *GQ* interview engages with is his family relationships; these are bound up in trauma. The interview first considers Brosnan's troubled relationship with his parents, including his physically abusive schooling by the Christian Brothers in County Meath, his father abandoning the family when Brosnan was an infant, his mother moving away to work, and finally his father's death. It goes on to discuss Brosnan's children and his late wife. This effectively frames Brosnan in terms of "emotionality, intimacy, nurturing and caring", all traits associated with the male-female relationships of the new man (Gill, 2003, p.42). Brosnan's locates the hardships of his upbringing in "the pettiness of small towns". The interview presents this in contrast to the modern and reconstructed family he went on to make with Casandra Harris. This distinction has the effect of framing the

cosmopolitan, urban life as an escape from older, less reconstructed male types. Also it presents Brosnan as a family man through modern ideas of domestic life that are very different from the Bond character.

At the release of *Die Another Day* Brosnan's *Esquire* interview in 2002 sees him being considerably more guarded in his comments compared with early promotional interviews in the upmarket men's magazines. Yet, this is still a new man's Bond despite mentioning drinking lots (of Guinness, whisky, and Champagne). The interview covers the usual topics of tough production schedules, product tie ins, the history of Brosnan's casting, and his family life, but without a lot of reflection or digging. The new man is still the key reference but on this occasion through consumerism rather than domesticity or sensitivity. As Gill notes, with the new man "masculinity goes to the mall" (2003, p.44). This is most visible in the *Esquire* interview's visual content. The article's photographs are accompanied by a listing of designer clothes modeled by Brosnan, along with what they cost and how to buy them. However, what is notable about interviews of this type is that the strict heterosexual script of the men's magazines at this time protects Brosnan from being objectified in the way, for example, Sophie Marceau is. Interviews never trail off about his dreamy blue eyes. Consequently, the Bond actor is afforded a level of selfhood missing from the men's magazines' treatment of the women in Bond.

The *GQ* interview contrasts sharply with the Brosnan persona presented in lad mag *Maxim* a few years earlier. The January 2000 *Maxim* interview is illustrated with an ironic photograph of Brosnan in loosened evening wear while spit-taking a Vodka Martini, with no sign of any consumer tie-ins. The interview takes an easy-to-read format, where questions are bold with answers underneath. Discussions of family, career, or complex feelings such as grief are conspicuous by their absence. Instead, the questions being put to Brosnan focus around sex,

looking at girls, and drinking beer. Brosnan joins in with the interview's laddish tone and peppers his answers with expletives. He is asked two questions that essentially frame Bond girls as objects: "Do you get a hand in picking the Bond girls? ... What is the greatest asset a Bond girl can have?" Brosnan's responses go with the grain: "Soon as you see her, you just want to be madly in the sack with her, fucking her brains out". There is a lengthy discussion about booze, including a quiz which, by inventing fake brand names, sends up Brosnan's preferred tippie Scotch whisky (Scotch perhaps signifies maturity and expense rather too keenly for *Maxim's* target audience). This prompts Brosnan to further play up his laddish credentials by criticising American beer "It's like piss water. No body. No kick". The interview culminates in an exchange about sex where Brosnan makes the startling claim that James Bond doesn't wear condoms: "He doesn't have time for that. Shit, he's going to get his nuts shot off in about two seconds". Overall, the tone and format of this interview is markedly different to those in the more upmarket men's magazines. The questions target all the usual concerns of lad mags with Brosnan playing along in order to market the new Bond film. Brosnan mimics opinions on beer, objectifying Bond girls, and having responsibility-free sex, but with an ironic tone that suggests he does not really mean it.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined a number of ways that different British men's magazines articles, features, photospreads and interviews engage with and respond to the return of Bond in the 1990s onwards by negotiating the films' familiar "continuity with change" approaches (Chapman, 2007, p.197). The Brosnan era guarded the legacy of past Bond traditions but also updated some aspects to fit the current climate. Looking back at the specific interrelationships between Bond in the Bronsna era, and the new lad mags and the quality men's magazines demonstrates how the figure or franchise can be (re)negotiated within a specific cultural

context. That Brosnan's Bond is, to a certain extent, discursively constructed according to the new man or new lad types illustrates how Bond can function a "mobile signifier", both adaptable and multiple in his meanings (Bennett and Woollacott, 1987, p.42). The men's magazine approach to Bond girls in the 1990s is comparatively unified. The Bond girl discourse is not without tensions, but in the magazine features the women in Bond are primarily there to be looked at. The use of humour as a negotiating strategy in men's magazines at this time is complicated, but it can function as a disclaimer, not unlike the much-quoted "sexist, misogynist dinosaur" comment delivered by the new female M to Bond in *GoldenEye*. This provides the franchise with an opportunity to engage with contemporary gender politics without change to the Bond character (Chapman, 2007, p.219). Nostalgia also plays an important part in the relationship between men's magazines and Bond in the Brosnan era. The men's magazines look back warmly at the past and express anxieties about current and future lifestyle changes. Further into the new millennium, when Daniel Craig replaced Brosnan in the *Casino Royale* reboot, British men's magazines have continued to (re)construct Bond for contemporary masculinities (Hines, 2011b). However, James Bond has outlived the heyday of the print lad mags, which have now been overtaken by digital media (Conlan, 2015). As it turned out the lad mags were a temporary phenomenon, and Bond survives as a culturally loaded character.

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