

English

The Name is Lynd, Vesper Lynd: a mirror in Casino Royale

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Abstract

This paper provides a comprehensive analysis of Vesper Lynd in Fleming's *Casino Royale*, comparing her portrayal in both the novel and its film adaptation. Through an exploration of gender representations, heroism, morality, and interpersonal dynamics, the discussion delves into the complexities of Lynd as a mirror to James Bond. It examines how she challenges traditional gender norms and notions of heroism, while also prompting moral dilemmas for Bond. By analysing the differences between the media, it reveals the nuances of her characterization as a multifaceted character who transcends the archetype of the Bond girl, offering a profound reflection on human nature.

Keywords: Vesper Lynd; Gender representation; Heroism.

Português

O Nome é Lynd, Vesper Lynd: um espelho em *Casino Royale*

Resumo

Este artigo fornece uma análise abrangente da personagem Vesper Lynd em *Casino Royale*, de Ian Fleming, comparando sua representação tanto no romance original quanto em sua adaptação cinematográfica. Através da exploração das representações de gênero, do heroísmo, da moralidade e da dinâmica interpessoal, a discussão investiga as complexidades da personagem de Vesper Lynd como um espelho de James Bond. O texto examina como sua personagem desafia as normas tradicionais de gênero e as noções de heroísmo, ao mesmo tempo que suscita dilemas morais para Bond. Ao analisar as diferenças entre o livro e o filme, revela as nuances de sua caracterização como uma personagem multifacetada que transcende o arquétipo da *Bond girl*, oferecendo uma reflexão profunda sobre a natureza humana.

Palavras-chave: Vesper Lynd; Representação de gênero; Heroísmo.

Français

Le Nom est Lynd, Vesper Lynd : un miroir dans *Casino Royale*

Résumé

Cet article fournit une analyse complète du personnage de Vesper Lynd dans *Casino Royale* de Ian Fleming, en comparant son portrait à la fois dans le roman original et dans son adaptation cinématographique. À travers une exploration des représentations de genre, de l'héroïsme, de la moralité et des dynamiques interpersonnelles, la discussion plonge dans les complexités du personnage de Vesper Lynd en tant que miroir de James Bond. Le texte examine comment son personnage remet en question les normes de genre traditionnelles et les notions d'héroïsme, tout en suscitant des dilemmes moraux pour Bond. En analysant les différences entre le livre et le film, il révèle les nuances de sa caractérisation comme un personnage aux multiples facettes qui transcende l'archétype de la *Bond girl*, offrant une réflexion profonde sur la nature humaine.

Mots-clés: Vesper Lynd; Représentation des genres; Héroïsme.

Español

El Nombre es Lynd, Vesper Lynd: un espejo en *Casino Royale*

Resumen

Este artículo proporciona un análisis exhaustivo del personaje Vesper Lynd en *Casino Royale* de Ian Fleming, comparando su interpretación tanto en la novela original como en su adaptación cinematográfica. A través de una exploración de las representaciones de género, el heroísmo, la moralidad y las dinámicas interpersonales, la discusión profundiza en las complejidades del personaje de Vesper Lynd como espejo de James Bond. El texto examina cómo su personaje desafía las normas tradicionales de género y las nociones de heroísmo, al tiempo que genera dilemas morales para Bond. Al analizar las diferencias entre el libro y la película, se revelan los matices de su caracterización como un personaje multifacético que trasciende el arquetipo de la chica *Bond*, ofreciendo una profunda reflexión sobre la naturaleza humana.

Palabras-clave: Vesper Lynd; Representación de género; Heroísmo.

Introdução

The demands for creation and recreation in media, which benefited from new technologies, had direct and indirect influences on literary creation and the way literature began to be adapted. Increasingly, we are faced with the evolution of media consumption and all the elements that go into its creation processes.

The James Bond franchise is a cultural phenomenon that has undergone several transformations over time. Initially disdained by academia, the Bond franchise gradually gained recognition for its cultural and thematic importance (cf. Chapman, 2000). The evolution of media consumption and technologies has had a significant impact on the film adaptation of James Bond. Taking advantage of this, the franchise managed to adapt to cultural and social changes, attracting new generations, while maintaining its central identity. Bond's enduring success lies in his ability to resonate with a wide range of psychological dispositions and universal fantasies while offering insights into the complexities of popular culture and the appeal of the iconic British spy. The character continues to captivate audiences by demonstrating his ability to reinvent himself and remain relevant in an ever-changing world.

So, since childhood, we know about the fascinating world of James Bond and his stories through cinema (famous actors, extravagant productions, great landscapes, etc.), but we don't always know what was written by Ian Fleming. Many of its viewers do not know that the character James Bond was not born on screen.

While many know Bond primarily through the films, Fleming's original books offer a deeper, more complex look at the character and his universe. Watching the films, the viewer does not perceive the character's transformations as they do in the books. The idea that he is the best-prepared spy and that he will always do well, no matter the occasion, is a projection from the films, which are based on the latest books. Thus, the current spectator only remains in anticipation when the actor who was playing James Bond is replaced by another - which opens the door to thinking about whether James Bond is nothing more than a title to be occupied by different individuals throughout history and in the imagination. However, there is a process of evolution and transformations that can be deciphered when, already familiar with the plot and character, we read the first of the James Bond books, *Casino Royale*.

In *Casino Royale*, whose first edition was published in 1953 and had only four thousand seven hundred and fifty copies, Bond is not the man we are used to seeing in films. In fact, the text is far from being just a spy novel, as it contains the origin narrative, a foundation myth (cf. Eliade, 1972). In this foundation, creation, and origin, we have a character who needs to assert himself in a newly conquered position of 007, that is, that of an agent with permission to kill. However, his journey does not occur like that of the fantasy

hero, as the fantasy hero embarks on a journey of discovery of the unconscious, of his deep personal identity which, at times, can conflict with his social identity. Therefore, for the fantasy hero, it is a journey that is primarily internal and then establishes a new order, and every man would embark on this path from childhood to adulthood in search of acceptance and his identity, his self (cf. Campbell, 1988); Bond's journey is external to his own existence. It is triggered by the figure of his romantic interest, Vesper Lynd. Lynd resembles the agent but differs by being more mature than him, more experienced, and powerful. She represents to Bond what he wants to be, at the same time he wants to have her. It is through the reflection of himself that he projects onto her, that he fundamentally evolves into the agent he should be and transforms into the figure of a sophisticated man, skilled in combat and seductive, who travels the world on missions to fight crime and defeat dangerous villains with cunning, charm and technical skills.

In this sense, the Bond girl in *Casino Royale* does not resemble the stereotype and standard Bond girl that the viewer is used to seeing in the cinema. She doesn't qualify because of her differences, but because of her similarities to Bond. In this text, we intend to briefly discuss the first Bond girl, Vesper Lynd and how the transition occurs between Fleming's narrative and director Martin Campbell's film, with the backdrop of morality.

This study employs a qualitative research design to explore Vesper Lynd's character in *Casino Royale* through textual and film analysis. Primary sources include Ian Fleming's novel and the film adaptation (2006). Data collection involved a close reading of the novel and multiple viewings of the film, identifying key passages and scenes that highlight Lynd's characteristics, interactions with James Bond, and themes of gender, heroism, and morality. The analysis used theoretical frameworks from gender studies, narrative theory, and moral philosophy to understand how Lynd challenges traditional gender norms and her role in the narrative.

The analysis compared Vesper Lynd's portrayals in the novel and film, noting differences and similarities and their impact on character interpretation. Contextualization within the historical and cultural backgrounds of the 1950s and 2000s provided insights into how contemporary issues influenced the character's adaptation.

To ensure validity, multiple data sources and theoretical perspectives were used, and findings were reviewed by experts in literary and film studies. Continuous reflection on the researcher's biases was maintained to minimize subjective influence. While focused on one novel and its film adaptation, the study provides a detailed analysis of Lynd, contributing to the understanding of her as a mirror to James Bond and challenging traditional gender roles in espionage narratives.

1. Analysis

The analysis of gender representations in literary and cinematographic works offers valuable insights into the complex dynamics of the construction of female characters. In the context of *Casino Royale*, both the original text by Ian Fleming and its film adaptation directed by Martin Campbell present an important approach to the character of Vesper Lynd. Below, we will examine how this figure is portrayed to explore some subtle shifts and nuances in representations of heroism, autonomy, and female agency, as well as gender stereotypes that may emerge throughout the narrative. This discussion highlights not only the creative choices of authors and filmmakers, but also sheds light on the cultural and social perceptions that shape our understanding of women in espionage and adventure narratives.

1.1. The book

Here is a small summary that will serve as a reference for those who cannot immediately refer to the text. The initial loop of the plot is given by M, head of the Secret Service, who gives James Bond a particular mission: to kill Le Chiffre, the treasurer of the terrorist organization SMERSH, in a game of baccarat at the Royale-les-Eaux Casino, northern France. M raises the plot points as it titles Vesper Lynd to assist 007.

When in France, the game becomes a vigorous “Baccarat war” between Le Chiffre and Bond. Ian Fleming, momentarily, transforms the book into a compendium of technical explanations about the card game. Le Chiffre wins the first round, bankrupting Bond, however Felix Leiter, from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), who was also hunting the terrorist, gives the English agent an envelope, “with compliments from the USA”, containing thirty-two million francs. Thus, the “Baccarat war” continues, even though, during a break between rounds, Bond suffers an assassination attempt and falls in love with Vesper.

Ultimately, 007 emerges victorious and wins eighty million francs from Le Chiffre who, eager to recover SMERSH's money, kidnaps Vesper Lynd. Or so Fleming would have us believe, since the narrator he created privileges the thoughts of an English agent. When trying to save his beloved, Bond is subjected to atrocious torture, but is saved by a member of SMERSH who kills Le Chiffre for having lost the terrorist organization's money gambling. The lack of action scenes at this point in the story is a good example because here we say that Fleming's first book is not exactly a spy novel. The scene is only said by the narrator, who doesn't care about describing the events.

Because he did not have orders from the terrorist organization to kill James Bond, since the English agent was still little known, the SMERSH member spared his life. Thus, Bond undergoes a long period of recovery in the hospital. Vesper is dedicated to 007's recovery and, seeing his beloved's

dedication and suffering, he considers leaving the British Secret Service to establish a life with her. For a while, stabilization happens, but one day Lynd commits suicide and, from a letter, Bond discovers that Vesper Lynd was a double agent and worked for SMERSH.

By naming her Vesper, Ian Fleming gives us a good clue as to who she really is:

"He turned to his companion.

'Have you decided?'

'I would love a glass of vodka,' she said simply, and went back to her study of the menu.

'A small carafe of vodka, very cold,' ordered Bond. He said to her abruptly: 'I can't drink the health of your new frock without knowing your Christian name.'

'Vesper,' she said. 'Vesper Lynd.' Bond gave her a look of inquiry. 'It's rather a bore always having to explain, but I was born in the evening, on a very stormy evening according to my parents. Apparently they wanted to remember it.' She smiled. 'Some people like it, others don't. I'm just used to it.'

'I think it's a fine name,' said Bond." (Fleming, 2002, p. 35)

The name is doubly ambiguous and yet metaphorically has the same meaning. The first meaning of Vesper comes from the Latin, *vesper*. It is the time of the post-meridian that comes between day and night. Per Vikstrand remembers that "the name Vesper clearly associates her character with the evening. At the same time, the evening star is actually the planet Venus, that is, the planet that carries the name of the Roman goddess of love. The name Vesper thus also has an erotic dimension" (Vikstrand, 2006, p. 704). The second meaning, supported by countless fans on blogs and websites, is that "Vesper Lynd" would be a pun on West Berlin. Thus, we have a character that presents itself as a dual character, with a large amount of night and daylight, and which is divided in half, like the city of Berlin, which was divided into East Berlin and West Berlin. For Vikstrand (2006), however, the character's surname "Lynd" would not carry any meaning alone or alongside the name, being just a sound solution to the name Vesper.

Here, we will turn our attention specifically to the meaning of the word in Latin. The author made an expressive choice, opting for the masculine Latin word (*vesper*) instead of its feminine version (*vespera*), demonstrating the approach of a female character in the masculine field. When reading we realized that the character Lynd is actually much more similar to Bond than the other Bond girls. Vesper Lynd is a mirror of James Bond.

Jacques Lacan (2001) defines "identification" as the first moment in which a child contemplates his or her own reflection in the mirror. According to him, the child is transformed through this interaction and assumes an "imago", the image of himself. This awareness of the embodied self that is reflected back plays into your growing sense of subjectivity and constructs and influences

your interactions with the world. This is the same process that James Bond goes through when meeting Vesper Lynd and sees in her a reflection of himself.

Mirrors in literature mean and act beyond being surfaces that reflect light. They present symbols that dialogue with the narrative labyrinths, provoking and exposing emotions and conveying the characters' meanings and understandings. Often associated with presumption, narcissism and vanity – as in *Snow White* –, mirrors have also highlighted the fragility and transformations of characters – as in *Jane Eyre*. The authors employ mirrors as a storytelling device to investigate the consequences of being, seeing, and understanding oneself. So, mirrors have an irresistible fascination that becomes a potent force, drawing characters to their authentic and oscillating selves.

In fact, the mirror itself is a recurring element in the text, as there are sixteen appearances of the word in the narrative. The first three are the most important. The first time the element appears, Bond is contemplating the light illuminating the object; the second time, Bond contemplates his own figure in the mirror; and the third time the mirror directly precedes Lynd's first appearance:

“He verified in the mirror that there was absolutely no sign of the flat gun under his left arm, gave a final pull at his narrow tie and walked out of the door and locked it. When he turned at the foot of the short stairs towards the bar he heard the lift door open behind him and a cool voice call ' Good evening '. It was the girl. She stood and waited for him to come up to her. He had remembered her beauty exactly.” (Fleming, 2002, p. 34)

She has the characteristics of a competitive hero, with masculine aspects equal to his and others superior to those of James Bond. Even so, due to the privileged look that the narrator gives to 007, she only presents herself to the reader as a subject through the realization of traces of specificity, except when she reformulates the burden of her existence and the universe to which she belongs. On the issue of the mirror for human beings, Ogilvie (1991) remembers that the moment we see ourselves in the mirror for the first time marks the beginning of a journey of self-knowledge that, forever, will be linked to our interactions with others. This moment is not just an initial phase to be left behind, but rather a crucial moment that defines our relationship with ourselves and others. It is a fundamental stage that influences our entire personal development, always remaining an essential reference, difficult to surpass.

Body image plays a vital role in the construction of the subject. In his reading, Wallon (2007) highlights that a mirror is an object that is distinguished as meaning the exterior mirage of the body. In this way, when we observe a child observing himself in the mirror, we see the difficulties he goes through

until the stage of recognizing the image as his own and what his relationship is with it.

Therefore, Vesper is not a simple reproduction of Bond's reflection on her, but a mirror that refracts him. In *Casino Royale*, Bond's desire for Lynd reflects a narcissistic dance, where the fascination of his own and what she could become is established. The mirror encapsulates the seductive power of conceit and leads the protagonist to bad choices and terrible repercussions.

Their relationship exposes themes of self-reflection, truth, and identity, inviting readers to explore deeper layers of meaning within the text. Lynd serves as a portal into the inner workings of the protagonist's mind, reflecting not only her physical appearance, but also her inner turmoil and moral decay. In the same way, pleasure refracts torture and, consequently, Bond's look at his moments of sex with Vesper is a look of possession. This woman is so much the symbol of power that he desires in himself that he sees her as if she were his own *ego*. However, we know nothing about Lynd's thoughts, and we don't know her reproduction/opinion on the events.

1.2. The film

Gender representation in film and popular culture has been a rich and complex field of study explored by Sarah Gilligan, Imelda Whelehan, and Francis Smith. Gilligan (2011) argues that gender representation in films often perpetuates traditional stereotypes, reinforcing male domination and female subordination. Whelehan (2014), on the other hand, highlights how popular culture can be an arena of resistance, offering space to reconfigure notions of masculinity and femininity. Smith (Lilienfeld *et al.*, 2018) adds to this debate by examining how contemporary films are challenging and reconstructing gender representations in innovative ways, reflecting broader social changes.

Casino Royale (2006) is the twenty-first in the James Bond film franchise. Here we will briefly recap the plot of the film. The film shows us, like the book, the beginning of Bond's career as Agent 007 when he gets his license (00) to kill. After opposing a rebel attack on Miami International Airport, Bond goes to *Casino Royale* in Montenegro to thwart Le Chiffre's plans by beating him in a game of poker. There, he meets René Mathis, his ally, and Vesper Lynd. Before James Bond attempts to kill the terrorist, CIA agent Felix Leiter, who was also playing in the tournament, intervenes and offers to finance Bond in exchange for custody of Le Chiffre. 007 wins the tournament. Later, Le Chiffre kidnaps Vesper and uses her to lure Bond into a near-fatal car race that ends in his capture. Le Chiffre tortures Bond to obtain the codes for the tournament winners and says he will kill 007. At this point, Mr. White enters the room and kills the terrorist, apparently after hearing that Le Chiffre has admitted to betraying White and his organization. Bond and Vesper survive.

James wakes up in a hospital and admits that he has fallen in love with Lynd and decides to resign from the Secret Service. So he and Vesper go to Venice, where Bond discovers that his poker winnings have not been deposited into the account of the National Treasury, the government organization for which Vesper supposedly worked. Realizing that Vesper had stolen the money, he follows her to a building under construction. The chase ends with Lynd's death. M is responsible for telling James Bond the whole truth about Vesper. Bond, then, decides to go after Mr. White, for whom Lynd was a double agent. When Mr. White receives a phone call and asks the man on the other end of the line for his identification, Bond appears with a gun in one hand and a mobile phone in the other, and responds: "My name is Bond, James Bond"¹.

The film intuits the reinvention of the Bond girl as a figure for a post-feminist world. In *Double O Agencies: Femininity, post-feminism and the Female Spy in Casino Royale*, Tincknell (2010) explains the long literary and cinematic tradition in the thriller genre of the woman as a sexually threatening and untrustworthy double agent and how these themes were used to reinvent and update Vesper Lynd for the 21st century since the film chose to take its plot in the present day. Tincknell argues that the film explores the cultural history of the female agent figure, and considers the threat this female figure poses to the security of masculinity both as a subject position and masculinity as an agent in its social senses. Lynd occupies the same place of desire, of the image of someone you want to be or have romantically.

Even with this recreation of Lynd, the character does not lose her characteristic as a mirror, as the cinematographic Bond itself presents itself as a hyperbole of what exists in the books. However, in the film, there are changes in what resembles the characters and what separates them. For them to be attracted to each other, Vesper must be fundamentally different from Bond, as the rapprochement between the masculine and feminine fields produces more than a dialogue of intolerance, more rivalry than desire (Kehl, 1996, p. 14). Thus, in the film, unlike what happens in the book, while they act similarly, they do not tolerate coexistence with each other. The rapprochement only happens when Vesper surrenders to her femininity and pretends to be more fragile than she really is. Thus, she rediscovers herself by enacting the values imposed on women. This is clearly reflected in her attire. At first, she is wearing a suit and her hair is tied up. At the end of the film, however, she wears a red dress, little makeup, and no jewellery.

¹ The catchphrase "Bond. James Bond", created by the film industry, was first said by Sean Connery in the film *Dr. No* (1962).



Vesper Lynd's transformation

Thus, the film adaptation chooses to gradually reduce Lynd's heroism to make room for Bond's. Thus, even though the film endeavoured to build a character with the characteristics of bravery and greatness, throughout the narrative, she falls back on the fact that, as Terri Frontgia (1991, p. 16) points out, heroism is implicitly denied to women. Therefore, the cinematic character falls back to the representation of a feminine that oscillates between being the guide to the sublime or the manifestation of evil and sexual desire, always due to a masculine starting point (cf. Nicholson, 2011). Vesper Lynd is inevitably reconfigured as a counterpoint to the male figure, since her sexual sign, in a patriarchal context and hostilely concerned with maintaining her social ranking position, threatens male authority (Edwards, 1984, p. 4-5).

2. Discussion

As a media product inscribed in a time and space, both the book and the film refer to social issues, including international policies, gender, race, and identity, among others, at the same time that they propose a unique way of conceiving reality from its fictional plot.

In this text, we seek to approach, through moral discussion, the passage of the character Vesper Lynd from book to film focusing on her characteristics as a mirror of James Bond. Once the film was made, the adaptation not only provided an appropriation of the existing text, but also the embodiment of the other. Thus, we can say that the figure of Vesper Lynd, as a mirror of James Bond, undergoes her transition to cinema, reverting some of her characteristics, but without losing her original matrix. However, we dare to say that the refraction process between Bond and Lynd suffers – in the book or the film, Vesper Lynd is the least Bond girl of all. Even though her heroism

suffers degradation in the film, she does not expect to be saved or protected, she acts independently of Bond's wishes.

Vesper Lynd's analysis reveals a complex web of moral, social and identity issues. In both the book and the film, she is presented as a figure who challenges and reflects the contradictions inherent in Bond's world of espionage, while also shedding light on broader issues of gender, power and morality. Lynd emerges as a multifaceted and tragic character, whose presence in literary and cinematic narratives provokes reflection on morality and ethics. In the novel, her trajectory is marked by deep moral dilemmas. She is a double agent, working secretly for the Soviet Union's Ministry of the Interior (MVD), pressured to betray Bond due to emotional blackmail and the threat to a former lover's life. Her duplicity and subsequent suicide reveal the intensity of her internal struggle and the complexity of her motivations. However, even in her betrayal, Vesper maintains an aura of degraded heroism, demonstrating an independence and resilience that sets her apart from other "Bond girls".

The film adaptation reinforces and, at times, alters the characteristics of its literary counterpart. In the film, the character is portrayed as a mirror of James Bond, reflecting and challenging his beliefs and actions. Vesper's transition to cinema reverts some of her original characteristics, but without losing the essential matrix that defines her. The figure of Vesper in the film does not wait to be saved or protected, acting independently of Bond's wishes, which underlines her autonomy and moral strength. However, the film adaptation also implies a certain degradation of her heroism, while still maintaining the integrity of her original character.

The dynamics of power and control within Lynd's narrative are intrinsically linked to the social and patriarchal structures that permeate both the book and the film. The character is confined by the same structures that will subjugate other Bond girls in future narratives, reflecting the ability to fulfil traditional gender roles. Her romantic interactions with Bond illustrate how women can be complicit in perpetuating patriarchal norms even as they navigate the constraints of their own oppression. However, Vesper challenges Bond's *status quo* as her protector, manipulating him into believing that she is a being to be protected.

Gender issues are central to the representation of Vesper Lynd. Her appearance and behaviour are marked by a duality: on the one hand, she fears not being taken seriously by her male colleagues and, therefore, adopts a slightly masculine stance; on the other, she enjoys her femininity through the use of evening dresses and makeup. This duality reflects the complexity of Vesper's identity, which navigates between gender stereotypes and her own perception of self-sufficiency and intelligence. The character is sociable and sensitive, able to create bonds easily, even after tense exchanges, but she is also averse to violence, which deeply traumatizes her after witnessing a murder in which she was involved.

The relationship between Bond and Vesper also addresses otherness and identity. The construction of otherness, as discussed by Janet Paterson (2007), involves the attribution of semantic characteristics to differences, reflecting the ideology and desire for power of a dominant group. Vesper, as a double agent and a woman, represents an otherness that challenges Bond and his convictions, forcing him to reconsider his own beliefs and morality. The process of constructing otherness is arbitrary and reflects disparities in power and control, both in the romantic and professional contexts, where Vesper works.

Vesper Lynd remains the villain of her story, in both media. She does not present most of the “essential” and “expected” characteristics of passivity and weakness to remain with Bond. Therefore, her only destiny is death.

In literature, Lynd is a fusion of complexities, just as 007's mind is. In fact, as we read the next books, we realize that James Bond will increasingly resemble her. As time passes, he stops being the foolish and romantic agent of *Casino Royale* and only his sexual drive remains. In *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*, the trauma caused by this first mission becomes clear. In the book, we learn that Bond returns once a year to visit Vesper's grave, in Royale-les-Eaux. This fact suggests that his traumatic experience with Lynd actually cast a mark on all his relationships with other women (Vikstrand, 2006, p. 703). The mark left by the double agent on his soul is so strong that Bond will never fall in love again. In this way, all the other women he gets involved with qualify precisely because they are not Lynd, they are not like her in the entire work.

Concerning morality, it can be characterized, briefly, as the sharing, by individuals, of the judgment of what is beautiful and fair (cf. Durkheim, 2007; Hitlin, 2015; Weiss, 2013). The interesting thing is that what is beautiful and fair is linked to the transcendent, which is the sacred, which the human hand (Latour, 2008) tries to get closer to.

To the extent that Vesper Lynd resembles the male hero, she questions conventional associations of gender and behaviour. This character is essential to the formation of James Bond as a 007 spy. Lynd combats the presumption that women are innately altruistic and weak, denying the link between heroism and gender. However, essentially in film media, when faced with “loving and nurturing relationship”, the heroic woman degrades. “The woman disappears as an acting character and is replaced by the symbol because she is not fully allowed her subjectivity, being positioned as the purely “phylogenetic (mature and passive flesh)” source of material that silently allows the “dazzling exploits of the ontogenic male” (Nicholson, 2011, p.190).

In the franchise, morality manifests itself in two intriguing ways. Firstly, in the selection of plot elements: the fastest cars, the most stunning women, and Bond's mastery in the art of espionage. On the other hand, there is special

attention to morality when it comes to characters like Vesper. The agent critically evaluates the choices that shape Lynd's identity, deciding whether or not they fit the profile of James Bond himself.

Bond, as a British secret service agent, often finds himself confronting complex moral questions in his work, where he must balance the ideals of justice, beauty and duty with the brutal realities of the world of espionage. Your view of what is beautiful and just may be influenced by your commitment to serving and protecting your nation, but also by your own personal convictions about what is right.

Vesper Lynd, on the other hand, is a character who challenges Bond morally. It represents the complexity of interpersonal relationships and the ethical dilemmas that arise when people's motivations are unclear. His presence in the plot raises questions about trust, loyalty and sacrifice, forcing Bond to question his own beliefs about what is right and fair.

Bond's search for truth and justice often leads him to confront what is sacred to him: his loyalty to his country, his commitment to the mission, and even his own moral integrity. In his interaction with Vesper Lynd and other characters, he is challenged to approach the transcendent, both in terms of morality and understanding the world around him. This is where the metaphors of complementarity and the mirror come in, symbolizing transformation based on the aspiration for something greater (Lopes, 2024).

Final words

In this article, we addressed the character Vesper Lynd in *Casino Royale* by analysing the representations of the character in both the book and the film. The discussion addressed issues of gender, heroism, morality and the complexity of interpersonal relationships. Throughout the text, we highlight Vesper's duality proposing Lynd as a mirror to James Bond, reflecting not only his own complexities, but also challenging his views on morality and justice. In both the book and the film, the character is presented as a multifaceted figure, who transcends the traditional expectations of a Bond girl. We chose not to make a parallel with other films and books because the character did not occur, and Bond was already developed in what living with her taught him.

The analysis of the differences between the book and the film revealed nuances in Vesper's characterization of Lynd and the dynamics of her relationship with Bond. While in the book she is portrayed as a fusion of complexities and a challenging figure for the protagonist, in the film her trajectory is reconfigured and pasteurized, but without losing her villainous essence.

In both media, Vesper Lynd remains a character who questions the conventions of gender and heroism, challenging the traditional association

between femininity and fragility. Her presence in the plot raises deep questions about trust, loyalty and sacrifice, forcing Bond to confront his own beliefs and moral convictions.

Ultimately, Vesper Lynd's story in *Casino Royale* transcends the spy genre, offering a profound reflection on human nature and the search for the transcendent. Her moral complexity and her interaction with James Bond highlights the nuances of morality and ethics in a world full of intrigue and danger. Thus, the character becomes not just a piece of the plot, but a catalyst for the protagonist's development and a representation of the complexities of the world around him.

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