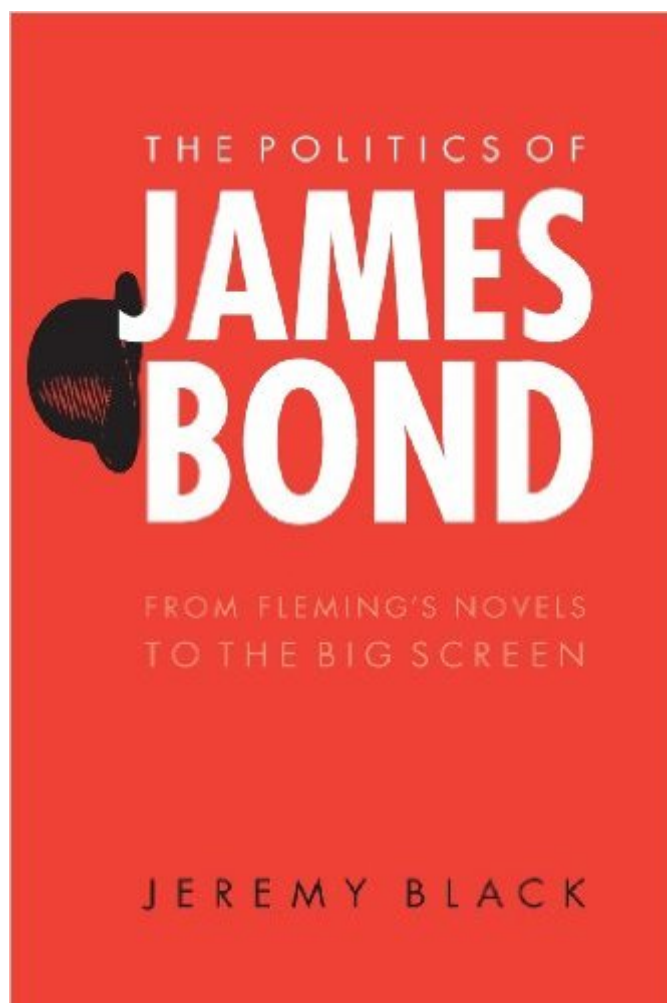


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The Politics Of James Bond: From Fleming's Novels To The Big Screen



Synopsis

The adventures and antics of James Bond have provided the world with many of the most gripping story lines of the last half-century. Fleming's novels were bestsellers in their day, and the Bond films have been even more popular, becoming the most enduring and successful film franchise in history. By some estimates, half of the world's population has seen a James Bond movie. A fascinating and accessible account of this global phenomenon, *The Politics of James Bond* uses the plots and characterizations in the novels and the blockbuster films to place Bond in a historical, cultural, and political context.Â Jeremy Black charts and explores how the settings and the dynamics of the Bond adventures have changed over time in response to shifts in the real-world environment in which the fictional Bond operates. Sex, race, class, and violence are each important factors, as Agent 007 evolves from Cold War warrior to foe of SPECTRE and eventually to world defender pitted against megalomaniacal foes. The development of Bond, his leading ladies, and the major plots all shed light on world political attitudes and reflect elements of the real espionage history of the period. This analysis of Bond's world and his lasting legacy offers an insightful look at both cultural history and popular entertainment.

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Customer Reviews

Did you ever wonder whether the world of James Bond was more Manichean or Weberian in its outlook? Did it ever bother you that 007 represents a sort of dying totem for the imperialistic, chauvinistic British empire? Do you look at one of Q's gadgets and ponder the limits of technology,

or see Barbara Bach in a silken nightie and wonder about the gender politics of the Bond corpus? If so, Jeremy Black has written the book for you. "The Politics of James Bond" takes on the political as well as social constructs underlying both the original novels by Ian Fleming, as well as the subsequent films. Given the enormous impact of Bond on world culture for half a century, this seems a worthy enterprise. Black certainly knows his Bond, able to deftly move from plot point to plot point in particular stories and explain what was going on at that moment in the Grand Scheme of Things, either a Cuban missile crisis or a spy ring scandal or the advent of the Pill, to draw appropriate connections. Black is especially on target, and amusing, when he notes the various ways Bond has been modernized over the years, as when the films, with Timothy Dalton by then playing Bond, took on a Jesuitical strain: "It was acceptable to have an agent who blew up and shot people at will (and without the concerns of Fleming's Bond), but he was no longer allowed to smoke or have sex, a contrast that reveals much about the nature and impact of modern political correctness." He takes a similar critical approach to Fleming's novels. It's clear Black admires Fleming's writing, and though he echoes the criticisms of Fleming's Old World snobbery, he is also careful not to attach modern sensibilities to Fleming's often-badly-dated views of racial and sexual differences.

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