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“I should think what politics he has are just a little bit left of center”:

An analysis of James Bond’s personal ideology

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Abstract

Ian Fleming's debut novel *Casino Royale* (2015) introduces the iconic character James Bond. The savvy British spy who must save the world from Soviet villain is a cultural icon the world over. Yet not much is known of his personal political leanings. Fleming once claimed that James Bond's politics lies just left of center. In this essay I analyze where James Bond lies on the left-right political scale by using Cichoka & Dhont's (2018) "Big-five personality model".

Research has been made about the contextual, historical and political settings of the Bond novels such as Jeremy Black's (2001) "*The politics of James Bond: from Fleming's novels to the big screen*" which serves as a complement to this research. Black's (2001) claims suggest that Britain struggled for dominance after The Second World War as they were financially in ruin and although Britain lost some of its colonies, they still had many territories under their control. However, with the rising power of the Soviet Union, the nationalistic feeling in Britain grew as their reputation as a powerful empire needed to be upheld. Therefore, a need for a strong British symbol grew, which also acted as a reason for why Fleming created James Bond.

The essay concludes that James Bond represents a specific part of Great Britain. The analysis has shown James Bond is a product of his time by symbolizing the longing for the return of the great British empire. This is supported by the fact of him scoring low on categories such as *Agreeableness* and *Openness* combined with the fact that he harbors anti-Communist beliefs. The analysis show that he acts in a manner that would highlight the colonial days of Britain where their strength had not yet diminished as opposed to the times after the Second World War. As such, the actions of James Bond, together with his explicit views suggest that he lies slightly more towards the right on the political scale and thus, disputes the claim of Ian Fleming.

Keywords: *007, Big-five personality model, James Bond, Ian Fleming, Casino Royale, Dr. No, Live and Let Die, Goldfinger, Cold War, Politics*

The now massively popular and iconic spy character of James Bond, also known as agent 007 is the literary creation of British author Ian Fleming. The author first introduced James Bond in 1953 with the publication of his first novel *Casino Royale*. The series later spawned twelve novels and two collections of short stories under his name. The popularity of the spy-based novels inspired the creation of at least twenty-four feature films, as well as multiple games, literature and academic studies.

There has been a great deal of research about Bond, such as Jeremy Black's *Fictional Figures and the Historian: The Politics of James Bond* (2003), where he puts the stories of Bond in a political, historical and cultural context such as claiming, "The novels and early films charted a period when Britain was making adjustments to her world status in uneasy alliance with the United States against Communism" (Black 2001; 15). This is of interest mainly, as it suggests that Bond does not lean towards the far-left as he views them as the enemy and as such, is of interest to this essay. Yet no in-depth research has been made on Bond's personal ideology and where he leans on the left-right ideological scale. Therefore, this essay's main goal is to investigate where James Bond would lie on the left-right political scale. Bond seems to be a complex character with multiple layers to his personality and his actions do not always align with what one would think about his ideology. In recent times Bond has been claimed and unclaimed by the right-wing and left-wing alike. Notably, the left leaning *Vice Magazine* where the author Aiden James claims that James Bond has "*become a mascot for the UK's right-wing*" (James 2014). The notion that James Bond is closer aligned with conservatism is thus, the most widespread view. Yet, that was not the intent of Fleming

according to Berberich (2012; 14-15) as she claims in her essay that Fleming's writings, and especially Bond were "apolitical" and "written merely for amusement". Fleming (1959) made this claim several times, for instance, in the article *If I were prime minister* for The Spectator where he claims that Bond "...certainly got little in the way of politics, but I should think what politics he has are just a little bit left of center" (Fleming 1958).

The issue of where Bond would lie on the ideological scale seems to be unexplored as the available research focuses mainly on the geopolitical issues such as the Cold War and its influence on the James Bond series as Jeremy Black claims in his book *The politics of James Bond: from Fleming's novels to the big screen* (2001) "Indeed, Bond can be seen, at least initially, as a central figure in the paranoid culture of the Cold War." (Black 2001; 15). Black then continues by adding that the rising threat of Communism increased the sensitivity in Britain as the fear of Communist influence grew. Black makes a notable claim as he writes, "(...) the Conservatives under Churchill had fought the 1950 election by urging the electors to "make Britain great again." (Black 2001; 15). Furthermore, mainstream popular opinion goes against the claims of the author. Therefore, this essay's aim is to try and understand why the popular opinion have become that Bond is right-wing or conservative, and why Fleming thought of Bond as more liberal. The main thesis is to therefore to explain where James Bond the character lies on the scale of left and right, by examining the actions and attitude of James Bond in the novels *Casino Royale*, *Dr. No*, *Live and Let Die*, *Goldfinger* and the short story *IT IS BETTER TO TRAVEL HOPEFULLY...* These novels and stories are included in *The James Bond Anthology* (Fleming 2015), and as such, not all novels in the Bond series will be covered in the essay. The novels will be examined with the help of complementary scientific papers and other methods based on psychology and behaviorism.

There are a few reasons why Bond's political meaning are of importance. Mainly, it is for this research to further elaborate on the research done by Jeremy Black (2001) and see if there is a possibility to find out the personal ideology of James Bond, as the research made by Black (2001) focuses mainly on the historical political context of the novels. Thus, Black's (2001) research is limited and can be expanded on by the results of this essay. Furthermore, the essay will expand on the research done by Cichoka & Dhont (2018) and Schoen (2007) as their method has not been used to analyze a fictional character and this essay will therefore expand on their research. A minor reason is to help further expand on analysis about the character of James Bond. The novels of Ian Fleming have been transformed into a symbol of Great Britain and therefore also gives an image of Britain as a country. Yet Britain is not

homogenous as the population have different classes, backgrounds and views. Therefore, it is important to try and understand what parts of Britain James Bond symbolizes to make it apparent for the readers, that the image of Britain is complex. The James Bond novels seem to influence certain people as certain aspects of Bond's life seem attractive and thus, fans of the character can adopt some parts of his life. Such behavior can be observed when the luxury watch company OMEGA releases a limited-edition watch in celebration of a new Bond film (Heaton 2019). The releases appeal to the hardcore fans of Bond as it is another way to come closer to the lifestyle of James Bond by spending a large amount of money. The adoption of the James Bond persona can become dangerous as there is a risk of not fully understanding the character and thus, one can act on out the characters bad traits, such as questionable language usage, without the realization of how such actions can be perceived by today's standard. Therefore, by making the character more transparent and put him in the correct context, it can act as deterrent to questionable behavior as the readers and fans understand the context behind the James Bond novels and can therefore perceive the novels in a nuanced manner.

This essay's main goals will therefore be, as previously stated, to try to prove where he most likely would lie on the ideological scale but also to analyze Ian Fleming's claim that Bond is just left of center and if this claim holds any merit. Some issues arise concerning the methodology. It will be used in an unorthodox way, as it has not been previously used to describe fictional characters. This can cause slight problems such as a need to interpret his actions rather than receive clear answers that can be categorized. Another problem with analyzing such a claim and attributing ideological beliefs onto the character is that the political scale can shift with time. The political lines are prone to change. What this means is that someone who historically identifies as a liberal, or on the left side on the political scale, may today identify closer to a conservative today despite inheriting the same beliefs. But mainly the terms of left and right has developed a tendency to be described and used quite loosely. Meaning the terms and definitions need to be grounded in something empirical. To combat this problem, I will consider both historical and contemporary discourse on the political spectrum. Furthermore, the changes will be reviewed and compared to how they would have looked like during the release of the first Bond novel, and how they would look today. Meaning Bond's ideology will be attributed by the definitions of two different time periods.

Social class has always been a big issue that dictates where one tends to lean politically, this is true also for the UK. In modern times right-wing conservatives, and to a lesser extent center liberal-democrats have come to be representatives for UK's upper- and middle class, while the left-wing Labour Party represent the lower class (Hancock & White 2015; 12). The right-wing policy traditionally represents the view of that social orders, hierarchies, and different inequalities are in fact inevitable and only natural. Furthermore, it is to a certain extent seen as desirable since it means that the playing field most likely is equal. Basically, meaning that equality in opportunity but not in equity, as that would typically involve treating people and things different to achieve the desired outcome. Conservatism has generally come to mean social conservative as opposed to meaning economically conservative as the right-wing have taken a liberal approach to both economy and to certain types of legislation. The right-wing claim is that their position is based on the natural way of the world where hierarchies are the natural way of life generally (Carlisle 2005). In recent times the position right-wing politics has taken is that of free market and free competition (Gidron & Ziblatt 2019), a trait one would assume is of the liberal school of thought (Smith 2003; 30). The right-wing word was only adopted by the British right during the 20th century, the term was never used by the right to describe themselves before then (Watson 1973; 94). The term was historically applied to those who follow traditional conservative views, monarchists or sympathizers of the monarch system and to a certain extent extreme right-winger, fascists, believers of the Nazi ideology and those who held racist views (Fisher 2009). However, there is a small portion of right-wingers that tend to be anti-capitalist. Arguing that their reason for opposing the capitalist system is because selfishness and materialism is a capitalist trait. However, in general the right is known for being liberal concerning economics but conservative concerning other aspects in law and life, such as religion (Kaplan 2012; 7-8), nationalism and immigration (Kahan 2010; 184).

The politics of the left-wing tend to stand on the other side of issues compared to the right. The left tends to generally oppose the viewpoints of the right. In general, the left has come adopt the view of egalitarianism, arguing that social hierarchies should be broken down in order to achieve equality (Ball & Bellamy 2003; 614). Traditionally the left and the politics of the left-wing has been the side of those with lesser resources and people of lower status. In recent times a bigger emphasis has been put on supporting people with disabilities and minorities rather than just people of lower economic status, therefore also arguing that the system in many ways are broken and should be remade or completely abolished (Smith 2003;

30). Though the left started out as a republican movement in 18th century France (Maass 2010; 164) it has evolved, especially during the 19th and 20th century to encompass movements such as, anarchism, labor movement, civil-rights movement, feminist movement, anti-war movement, environmental movement (Neumayer 2004; 51) and LGBTQ movement (Schmidt 2009; 128).

Multiple studies have been conducted concerning the attitude and behaviors of people and how it affects their leanings on the political spectrum. A major work in this field is the research done by Aleksandra Cichocka and Kristof Dhont called *The Personality bases of political ideology and behavior* where the claim is that modern psychology can to a notable extent predict where a person may lie on the political spectrum based on various personality traits as “Cichoka & Dhont (2018; 327-328) argues “people should be more attracted by political ideologies, parties, and candidates that convey messages and values congruent with their own personality traits” followed by “Findings from a number of Western countries—including Canada, the United States, and New Zealand – confirm this idea.” (Cichoka & Dhont 2018; 327-328). Their claim is backed by Schoen (2007) who suggests “(...) the analysis of personality effects on partisan attitudes exhibits considerable support for the notion that the Big five personality factors shape feelings towards political parties.” (Schoen 2007; 485). The study of personality traits and ideological biases has a longer history in philosophical and political discourse, as Niccoló Machiavelli supposedly made the claim “Men are so simple of mind, and so much dominated by their immediate needs, that a deceitful man will always find plenty who are ready to be deceived’ (Cichocka & Dhont 2018; 323). His argument being that people will trust their leader not based on pure logic but also because of personal biases. Yet, the modern approach to these studies have their basis in the research conducted by members of the so-called Frankfurt School, mainly Theodor W. Adorno’s *The Authoritarian Personality* (1950), commonly recognized as the first study of the links between political behavior and personality traits. (Cichocka & Dhont 2018; 323). The so-called big-five personality model is the major theory of interest (Cichocka & Dhont 2018; 327) as it will serve as the basis for the analytical methods used in this study. Schoen (2007; 473) takes a different approach by calling the model “The Five Factor of Personality”, they are nonetheless in agreement regarding the definition of the model. The five-factor model is explained by both Cichocka & Dhont and Schoen as being constructed to understand the fundamental psychology of a human being. As a result, psychologists understood that there are five main traits in a human defines him. The model identifies

Agreeableness/Friendliness, followed by *Conscientiousness*, *Extraversion*, *Neuroticism* and *Openness* (Schoen 2007; 474).

Agreeableness is explained by Schoen (2007) as altruism, modesty and straightforwardness. People with high scores in this category tend to be soft-hearted, generous and sympathetic, whilst low scorers are explained as being difficult and rude (Schoen 2007;474). Cichocka & Dhont explains it as being warm and compassionate, as opposed to being rude or antagonistic. *Conscientiousness* measures impulse control. Meaning that people with high scores are explained as being organized, ambitious and industrious. Low scorers in this category are defined as being lazy (Schoen 2007;474), sloppy and careless (Cichocka & Dhont 2018; 327). *Extraversion* measures positive emotions, assertiveness and warmth, therefore people who score high in *Extraversion* tend to have higher energy and are talkative and upbeat (Schoen 2007; 474). The opposite being that introverted people are shy or reserved (Cichocka & Dhont 2018; 327). *Neuroticism* refers to the person's ability to handle negative emotions. People with high scores in *Neuroticism* usually have problems with depression, anxiety, anger and irritation (Schoen 2007; 474). Low scores in *Neuroticism* usually sees a person being in a relaxed state and patient (Cichocka & Dhont 2018; 327). Lastly, *Openness* refers to a person's tolerance of diverse culture, people and having an interest of novelty. Therefore, people scoring high in this category tend to be curious and explorative. As a result, people on the other side of the spectrum therefore tend to be conservative and cautious of the unknown (Schoen 2007; 474). Cichocka & Dhont explains low scorers of *Openness* as close-minded (Cichocka & Dhont 2018; 327).

The two categories most likely to predict a person's political leanings are *Conscientiousness* and *Openness* as the results yielded from these two categories proved to be the strongest (Cichocka & Dhont 2018;327). The other three categories gave enough clear results to at least be discussed and used in this study, though they were not as conclusive, according to Schoen (2007; 482) *Openness* was a big indicator of an individual's political leanings, as individuals scoring highly on *Openness* were strongly sympathetic towards left-leaning parties, while people scoring lowly were somewhat sympathetic towards right-leaning parties, though not with any largely significant amount. Results also show that people scoring highly on *Conscientiousness* were very sympathetic towards right-wing parties and very negative towards left-wing parties (Schoen 2007; 482). Similar results are presented by Cichocka & Dhont (2018; 328) where being high in *Openness* tends to correspond to being sympathetic towards liberal and left-wing policies. Similarly, to Schoen's (2007) results,

Cichocka & Dhont (2018) show that being high in *Conscientiousness* is a strong indicator of a bias towards conservative and right-wing policies. Regarding *Agreeableness*, high scorers of this category show a bias towards left-wing parties and show a negative attitude towards right-wing parties. However, when it comes to economic policy, such as welfare, the views are largely mixed and does not seem to conform to one specific side (Schoen 2007; 482). Evidence show strong links between *Neuroticism* and attitude towards political parties. Evidence shows that those scoring high in *Neuroticism* are more devoted to a certain party. However, it does not mean that those people tend to lean towards a certain side, it shows only that they tend to be more inclined to be a believer of that policy or ideology (Schoen 2007; 482). The evidence regarding *Extraversion* is quite clear. Most studies are in unison concerning the evidence being too thin to suggest that scoring high or low in *Extraversion* can predict where a person's political views may lie (Schoen 2007; 482). Rather the evidence suggest that it does not matter if an individual is introverted or extroverted. In conclusion the studies and research presented agree that the categories being most accurate in predicting a person's political leanings are *Openness*, *Agreeableness* and *Conscientiousness* while the rest of the categories show minimal effect (Cichocka & Dhont 2018; 329). Therefore, these are the three categories that will be focused on when analyzing the personality of the character James Bond in the Ian Fleming novels.

Ian Fleming used his own life and life experiences when he created the character of James Bond. Himself being of a wealthy, privileged Scottish background, just like Bond (Weiner 2010; 230). Having been involved in the Second World War as the assistant to the director of the Naval Intelligence Division, John Godfrey (Lycett 1996; 103). Fleming subsequently reached the rank of commander by taking over the 30th Assault Unit, a special operations unit where Fleming's role was to act as a planner (Rankin 2011; 136). Fleming did not shy away from putting his own traits into the characters in his novels. Bond frequently uses products that Fleming was known for using. Like Fleming, Bond is known for his love of golf, gambling and scrambled eggs (Macintyre 2008; 50), as is shown in *Casino Royale*: "After a cold shower, he sat at the writing-table in front of the window. He looked out at the beautiful day and consumed half a pint of iced orange juice, three scrambled eggs and bacon and a double portion of coffee without sugar. He lit his first cigarette, a Balkan and Turkish mixture made for him by Morlands of Grosvenor Street" (Fleming 2015; 24). Bond uses the same brand of cigarettes as Fleming, even going so far as to add three gold stripes that Fleming would have used as a symbol of his rank as a commander (Chancellor 2005; 70).

Fleming would usually smoke around 80 cigarettes a day (Burns 2008), a trait which he also gave to Bond who smokes at most around 60 cigarettes a day (Benson 1988; 70). The behavioral similarities between the character and the author are many and suggests that James Bond's actions are like how Fleming would act. Fleming have been described by friends as having good looks and "powerful sexual magnetism." (Weiner 2010; 230), arguing that Fleming had to use his sexual conquests to prove his manliness. Outside of military context Fleming would often do some free-lance spying in addition to his job a journalist. In fact, his articles concerning the Soviet Union potentially serving as an ally, but warning that they are not to be trusted, is what got him noticed by the Naval Intelligence Division (Weiner 2010; 230). Having served in the Naval Intelligence Division Fleming soon found himself getting handed larger and more complex operations to rule within the division. The type of work which he found amusing and looked forward to doing. Fleming then was put in charge of organizing several operations against the Nazi enemies. Operations as trying to capture Nazi intelligence (Weiner 2010; 231). Before Americas entry into the Second World War Fleming accompanying General Godfrey paid a visit to the United States, meeting the United States' government and military on behalf of the British military divisions in hope of cooperation and intelligence sharing (Weiner 2010; 231- 232). Where the similarities furthermore become apparent is also when Bond have a conversation in *You Only Live Twice* when his colleague suddenly changes the conversation into something political whereby Bond responds with "For God's sake, Dikko! How in hell did we get on to politics? Let's go and get some food." (Fleming 2015; 2010). Bond does not show much interest in talking about politics despite working against a communist enemy. Fleming defends this by claiming "I don't think that he is necessarily a good guy or a bad guy. Who is? He's got his vices and very few perceptible virtues except patriotism and courage" (Playboy Enterprises 2012: 47). This statement is in line with the actions of James Bond as he shows little to no true interest regarding politics as whole. He is solely focused on his duty as an agent of her majesty and as an agent of Britain. Which further strengthens the argument of James Bond being a dedicated worker and high in *Conscientiousness*.

Chapman makes the claim that "Fleming's Bond was a product of the historical and ideological conditions of the Cold War [. . .] in which the enemy was the Soviet-dominated Eastern bloc; an enemy which was no longer just a country (Russia) but an ideology (Communism) which presented a very real threat to the 'free' West." (Chapman 2007; 30). This claim is made by historian and James Bond reader, James Chapman in which he suggests

that in the wake of Britain's decline in power after the Second World War, Britain found itself dealing with a new enemy from the East and thus, the start of the Cold War set the cultural and political tone for Ian Fleming's popular spy novel according to both Black (2001) and Chapman (2007). Though Britain stood victorious by the end of the war, Britain was in a decline due to the Blitz where they suffered heavy damage and the economy was almost non-existent. Having gone into the war in 1939 as a major power in world politics, their position after the war was weakened. The British Empire took a tumble and Britain came to lose some of its territories such as India. As the 1950's began, the Soviet Union and the communist ideology had solidified its control over the eastern bloc causing the West to begin fearing over its increased power and influence. These developments caused friction between the Western and Eastern powers, and the former allies started spying on each other, trying to gain scientific intelligence during a time of nuclear invention. The atomic weapon caused a big scare, as the consequences of a nuclear war was both devastating and very realistic. The scare of a nuclear war was further heightened in the US and Britain by the trials of nuclear tech agents The Rosenberg's and Klaus Fuchs (Lewis 2018; 2). Price claimed the situation: "gnawed at the sense of security the victors of World War [Two] should have felt...[warning] that communism was a world-wide threat." (Price 1992; 26). Britain suffered furthermore in world politics and internally as they were struck by news that members of the Cambridge Spy Ring Guy Burges and Donald MacLean had defected, causing internal criticism of the British intelligence services (Lewis 2018; 3), with Berberich claiming: "Their betrayal and defection showed the underlying problems of the post-war British society that still trusted too much and unquestioningly in the old boys' network." (Berberich 2012; 23). In 1956 Britain came to suffer one of its biggest blows to its international power with the Suez Crisis. The political impact was decisive on British politics and ultimately decimated much of Britain's power and influence in world politics, forcing them to act in a lesser role behind the Americans during the Cold War events with the Soviet Union (Judt 2005; 278-323).

What Black notes is that the Bond villains were created by Fleming as having characteristics that Fleming thought as being deeply rooted in Communism (Black 2003; 30). Though the villains appear to act as individuals the truth turns out to be that the villains in fact are part of a shadow organization called SMERSH, plotting behind the scenes to try and take over the world. The organization name SMERSH in the novel is based on the real-life intelligence service in the Soviet Union during the Second World War. SMERSH was often being described as a being higher ranked and superior to the KGB's predecessor N.K.V.D

(Price 1992; 25). The introduction of the organization came in the Fleming's first James Bond novel in 1953, titled *Casino Royale* (Fleming 2015). "The elimination of all forms of treachery and back-sliding within the various branches of the Soviet Secret Service and Secret Police at home and abroad, and was rapidly expanded to cope with treachery and double agents during the retreat of the Soviet forces in 1941" (Fleming 2015). Therefore, James' first enemy came to be the Soviets and the Communist ideology. Showing that Bond at the very least does not sympathize with the Communist ideology nor the very far-left movements. Bond even goes so far as to criticize various moderately socialist ideas such as welfare in the short story titled *IT IS BETTER TO TRAVEL HOPEFULLY ...*, as he claims that: "Let me tell you this, my fine friend. England may have been bled pretty thin by a couple of World Wars, our Welfare State politics may have made us expect too much for free, and the liberation of our Colonies may have gone too fast(...)" (Fleming 2015; 2045). By claiming that the Welfare State has made the English expect too much for free, Bond is directly criticizing left-wing politics and saying it with a negative tone by claiming that it has made people soft and lazy. Furthermore, Bond's criticism shows much more than just critique towards socialist ideas. By using the big-five personality factor-model Bond exhibits signs of being a low scorer of *Agreeableness*, as one of the main indicators of being high in this category includes being sympathetic (Schoen 2007; 474), which Bond does not seem to show signs of. He then makes the comment in the short story *IT IS BETTER TO TRAVEL HOPEFULLY ...* "(...) but we still climb Everest and beat plenty of the world at plenty of sports and win Nobel Prizes. Our politicians may be a feather-pated bunch, and I expect yours are too. All politicians are. But there's nothing wrong with the British people – although there are only fifty million of them." (Fleming 2015; 2045). Bond clearly shows the nationalistic and patriotic attitude that Bond has been known for in popular media (James 2014). He boasts about the achievements of the British in multiple ways, arguing their superiority. Furthermore, he also showed discontent at Britain losing their colonies. Showing a longing for the sentiment of the old Great British empire which once was. This was the intention of Fleming as he created Bond not only as a heroic symbol for the West, rather he was created as someone for the British middle class to feel joy about as well as a sense of pride for their country as Bond stood as symbol of all that is marvelous about the British empire. Especially after the wars when Britain was badly hurt financially and saw their influence decline rapidly. Bond stood as a symbol for what Britain did and ought to represent (Lewis 2018; 4). By analyzing that passage, it is suggested that Bond holds right-wing views as nationalism usually corresponds with the right side of the political spectrum.

In *Casino Royale* (Fleming 2015) Fleming introduces the character of Vesper Lynd who acts as the partner, colleague, lover and enemy of James Bond in the novel. With her introduction into Bond's life there is also repeated sexism being shown towards her throughout the novel by Bond. Vesper debuts as an assistant to Bond in his mission to take down prominent SMERSH-member Le Chiffre. After having succeeded in their mission, Vesper is abducted by Le Chiffre and his men, causing Bond to chase after them and try to bring back Vesper (Fleming 2015; 90-91). The whole situation prompts Bond to make the comment: "These blithering women who thought they could do a man's work. Why the hell couldn't they stay at home and mind their pots and pans and stick to their frocks and gossip and leave men's work to the men" (Fleming 2015; 91). He follows up by then calling her "The silly bitch" (Fleming 2015;91). What the quotes show are examples of explicit sexism throughout the novel. Bond certainly seem to have low regard of social justice movements and furthermore does seem to have quite strong biases towards women. Further proved by the quote: "He sighed. Women were for recreation." (Fleming 2015; 35). Bond therefore shows a higher tendency of being prejudiced towards females. This type of behavior indicates that Bond does not rank highly in the *Agreeableness* category shown in the big-five personality model as in this case he shows no signs of typical *Agreeableness* behavior such as altruism, compassion or empathy (Schoen 2007; 474) suggesting that Bond therefore does not lie towards the left-wing mainly because of the low score of *Agreeableness* but also due to him not rejecting some feminist views. Acting for the rights of minorities is historically associated with the left as explained by Neuemeyer (2004; 51). Yet despite the explicit sexism shown in the novels there are signs of Bond being scoring somewhat higher in *Agreeableness*. His actions suggest that despite his disapproval of females working with him, he has a sexually liberal mind. What this suggests is that he does not seem to hold any strong socially conservative feelings regarding sexual intercourse as is proven by his various sexual exploits. This is also noted by Berberich concerning Fleming as she claims, "the liberation of women, for example, which he welcomes on a purely sexual level..." (Berberich 2012; 18). This further becomes apparent in later novels such as *Live and Let Die* where Fleming has a chapter titled *NIGGER HEAVEN* (Fleming 2015; 193) as he exclaims "Opposite him, leaning forward with concern on her pretty face, was a sexy little negress with a touch of white blood in her" (Fleming 2015;194). This shows that Bond does not seem to have a problem with minorities and engaging with them, nor does he show discontent at the thought of engaging in sexual relations with minorities. However, he mixes this with a prejudiced language which

serves to reduce the worth of the one he speaks of therefore showing him scoring low on *Agreeableness*.

Throughout the novel Bond uses derogatory words towards people of African descent. However, Bond does seem to score moderately on the category *Openness* as explained by the big-five personality model. What this means is that James Bond seems to have no problems with experiencing new things that are previously unknown to him such as visiting different countries and interacting with the locals. As proven by him visiting and exploring a mainly black neighborhood in the novel *Live and Let Die* (Fleming 2015; 194). Furthermore, his use of derogatory language can be attributed towards it being more common of during those times. But where this fails is that he sometimes shows a tendency to look down on other ethnicities as shown when he describes them in the novel *Casino Royale* “(...) stupid, but obedient. The Russians use them for simple killings” (Fleming 2015; 35). The nationalistic traits in Bond are nonetheless still there and have in some cases been explicitly racist. In Fleming’s novel *Goldfinger* Bond makes the claim that Korean’s are dumber than apes: “Bond intended to stay alive on his own terms. Those terms included putting Oddjob and any other Korean firmly in his place, which, in Bond’s estimation, was rather lower than apes in the mammalian hierarchy” (Fleming 2015; 1318) The prejudiced views which are explained by Berberich (2012; 27) as having roots in the strong nationalistic British ideas are apparent and prevalent throughout the novels. There is no doubt that the views that are shown have a very Anglocentric selflove as most of the victims of the racist language tend to be non-western ethnicities. Further proved by Bond’s view on Asian ethnicities, as well as the previously mentioned minorities. “He said, don’t think I’ve ever heard of a great negro criminal before,’ said Bond, ‘Chinamen, of course, the men behind the opium trade. There’ve been some big-time Japs, mostly in pearls and drugs. Plenty of negroes mixed up in diamonds and gold in Africa” (Fleming 2015; 173). Berberich notices the very same fact as she argues that Fleming ignored the fact that his novels contained racist views. She argues that Fleming often would compare Brits with native Jamaicans while describing the Brits as superior to Jamaicans and other minorities. She argues that the basis of the writings lies in Britain’s reduced power after the Second World War, in addition to the waves of migrations into the British Isles (Berberich 2012; 27). She claims that this caused a beginning of a new thought where some became protective of their British heritage and thus, putting bigger emphasis on the importance of being “true blood” (Berberich 2012; 27).

Bond seemingly having both conservative views in some instances and liberal views in others further strengthens Fleming's argument that Bond was never meant to be a political symbol for the left or the right and if he were to be placed somewhere it most likely would be "somewhere around center or just left of center." (Fleming 1959). This is further highlighted by the fact that Fleming considered himself as "apolitical" but mostly liberal (Fleming 1959). Though where Fleming's argument for Bond being just left of center is somewhat unwarranted as Bond's actions indicate, according to the big-five personality model, that he leans somewhat to the right. Bond seems to be scoring highly in *Conscientiousness*. As a secret agent his role is to be highly accurate in his work. He has minimal room for mistakes as that could cost him his life along with many others. *Conscientiousness* is described as meticulous, someone who takes his duties seriously and is not someone who is reckless but is rather orderly. Bond shows all those characteristics. In beginning of *Casino Royale* Bond lays notice to two men under a tree. He thought they looked suspicious, he therefore acted with caution and tried to take in as much detail about them as he could, both in terms of action and appearance. "He was reflecting on the ranges of various types of weapon and the possibilities of cover" (Fleming 2015; 42). Even when being confronted in the novel *Dr. No* by his higher up M, Bond has no problem in admitting the wrong made by him during the mission he had done previously in *Casino Royale* by saying "'No, sir. It was a mess. I blame myself for letting that woman get me. Shouldn't have happened'" (Fleming 2015; 979). Another evidence of James Bond's professionalism comes in the novel *Goldfinger* where James says: "It was part of his profession to kill people. He had never liked doing it and when he had to kill he did it as well as he knew how and forgot about it. As a secret agent who held the rare double-O prefix—the license to kill in the Secret Service—it was his duty to be as cool about death as a surgeon. If it happened, it happened. Regret was unprofessional—worse, it was a death-watch beetle in the soul." (Fleming 2015; 1165). James shows regret over the fact that he must kill. Claiming that this is not something that he particularly enjoys, yet he feels he must do it as part of his duty. This shows two things. Firstly, it shows that Bond scores highly in *Conscientiousness*, as James puts his duty above all else as he claims it is unprofessional if he were to show regret. Also claiming that his duty is to be calm while doing it. As previously stated, one of the traits is efficiency and acting professionally. However, it also shows that James shows some form of empathy towards his victims. This is especially obvious when he later says "(...) and, from the look of him, he had been an instrument of pain and misery all his life." (Fleming 2015; 1165). What this quote means is that Bond once again shows signs of being emphatic and thus scoring high on the category *Agreeableness*.

In conclusion, the evidence suggests that Bond in many ways is a character who seems to hold many different viewpoints. It is quite clear that Ian Fleming created Bond with himself as inspiration, which Fleming claimed in the Spectator article *If I were prime minister* (Fleming 1959) that he saw himself as a “non-political animal” and that he relates mostly with the Liberal Party and that he would much rather vote conservative than Labour. What this suggests is that he himself is somewhere around the middle in the political spectrum. Fleming reiterates his own views when describing Bond in his interview with Playboy Magazine by claiming “He’s certainly got little in the way of politics, but I should think what politics he has are just a little bit left of center” (Playboy Enterprises 2012; 46). The similarities between Bond and Fleming are further strengthened by the anti-Soviet rhetoric shown in the novels such as, making the Soviets act as the villains with the inspiration coming from Fleming’s own life.

James shows no signs of scoring low in the category *Conscientiousness*. Thus, he is according to the big-five personality model, Bond is someone who would lean more towards the right on the political spectrum. The argument is further strengthened by the fact of him being a patriotic, nationalistic and anti-communist. When it comes to the category of *Agreeableness*, Bond’s actions are slightly more diverse and somewhat harder to interpret. His actions show him scoring moderately but more towards the lower side. The reason being his general lack of compassion and empathy. Bond multiple times seems to have no real care towards strangers and foes. His actions do not suggest that he thinks twice about his duties and its morality but rather, he does what his superior demand of him. Where he does show some sign of remorse was in *Goldfinger* as he tried to make sense of the kill he had just made. Though, he argues that having regret over the kill would be unprofessional. Therefore, according to the big-five personality model, Bond would be leaning more towards to right-wing. When it comes to *Openness* the big-five personality model claims that those scoring highly in this category are those who are open to new experiences, cultures and people. James does shows interest in diverse culture. Therefore, there is a case for Fleming’s statement that Bond is somewhat just left of center as he is liberal enough to interact and experience different cultures. However, when he does engage with other cultures, he does look down on them and claims that the British people and culture are a step above. Furthermore, Bond has a very colonial language with racist undertones. Sometimes with full on racist language. Some of it can be explained away by it being more common during that time, however social justice movements were prevalent during that era as argued by Berberich (2012) who claims that this

was during a time where the emancipation of women was in full force and that Fleming seems to have a troubled relation to women's rights even for that time by Berberich (2012; 14). In those instances, Bond does not seem to show any aggression towards the minorities he is speaking of or interacting with. However, it is common occurrence that he does speak down of people and cultures that are not of British background. This is further highlighted by (Neumayer 2004; 51) who makes the claim that movements such as minority and women right grew out of left-leaning liberal ideas, therefore suggesting that Bond does not sympathize fully with such thoughts. Although historically conservatives would have been against such movements, it is not clear in this instance that Bond being against those movements would make him conservative, rather it would just have him not identify with the liberal ideas. What is shown by the evidence suggest that Bond is somewhere right of center. Therefore, Fleming was not completely wrong in his assessment. The difference lies in Fleming suggesting that Bond is center but closer to the left. But what this research shows that he seems to hold more right-wing leanings, especially by today's standard.

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