

Some thoughts on watching films

Stories are the stuff of life. They allow us to reflect on all sorts of issues at a safe distance as we engage with the characters, cry with them, laugh with them, get cross with them and generally share their experience. How they deal with the issues they come across may frustrate us, or give us new insights; cause us to laugh or cry; result in us hurling abuse at the screen or willing there to be a happy ending. And through it all we can encounter God in all sorts of unexpected places if we only take time to look.

So here are some questions you can apply to any film. Sometimes, you may feel that there is nothing much to say—but that itself can be its own message. Other films can be truly life changing! But whatever film you are watching, enjoy the experience!

Questions to ask yourself

What did you think of the film? What do you like most? Least?

Which incidents made you *think* or *feel* most strongly? How well did you think the film treated those incidents?

What issues did the film raise for you? What has the Bible have to say about such issues?

Some facts about the film

Despite certain claims, injecting adrenaline into the heart will not save someone suffering from a heroin overdose. The proper antidote is Narcan, an opioid antagonist, injected intravenously, intramuscularly, or sprayed intranasally.

In the final diner scene, Jules explains that he recites a Biblical passage, Ezekiel 25:17, each time he kills someone. This is, in fact, not an actual passage from the Bible, but a collage of several passages.

The book that Vincent reads is "Modesty Blaise", by 'Peter O'Donnell (I)' . In that book, a killer indulges in a Biblical rant very similar to that of Jules.

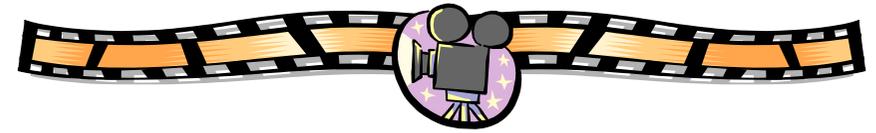
The Big Kahuna burger was also eaten in the movie "From Dusk Till Dawn" (1996) and first appeared in "Reservoir Dogs" (1992).

Many of the clocks in the film are set to 4:20, which is slang for smoking marijuana.

Every time Vincent goes to the bathroom, something "bad" happens.

What's in the briefcase? No one knows. According to Tarantino: "Whatever the viewer wants to be." For filming purposes, the briefcase contained an orange light bulb, silver foil, and a battery. Despite Tarantino's explanation, many theories have been proposed for the contents of the briefcase, for instance that it contains Marcellus' soul.

The correct chronological order of the film is: Vince and Jules, The Bonnie Situation, The Diner (both parts), Jackrabbit Slims, and The Gold Watch.



**A chance to watch films together.
An opportunity to discuss the issues raised.
A time of friendship, food and fun.**

5th Nov	The Man Who Sued God
3rd Dec	Cool Hand Luke
7th Jan	Harry Potter
	& the Prisoner of Azkaban
4th Feb	<u>Pulp Fiction</u>
4th Mar	Pleasantville
1st Apr	Man dancin'

**Films start at 5:30pm
Followed by food, coffee and conversation**

**10 Bletchingdon Road
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**Further details from Jonathan (Ox 842214)
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Pulp Fiction

Like much of Quentin Tarantino's work, Pulp Fiction takes a number of seemingly unrelated stories and interweaves them together in a non-linear fashion. Pumpkin and Honey Bunny are two thieves who, while dining at a coffee shop, decide that the best thing to do is to rob it. Vincent and Jules, two hit men working for mob kingpin Marcellus Wallace, are sent to retrieve a very special and very mysterious briefcase for their boss. Vincent later must also show Mrs Wallace a good time while her husband is out. Butch Coolidge is an aging prizefighter who has taken a large sum of money from Marcellus to "take a dive" in his next fight. Bruce, though, double-crosses Marcellus, beats his opponent and then tries to flee town, but not before trying to retrieve his dead father's lucky golden watch which Fabienne, his girlfriend, has accidentally left behind.

The film's title refers to the pulp magazines popular during the mid-20th century, known for their strongly graphic nature. Much of the film's dialogue and many of its scenes are based on other works of "pulp" fiction, that is to say bits of other, less acclaimed, works and the movie itself has been described as a pastiche of "popular culture since 1950." In a suitable twist, *Pulp Fiction* has itself become something of a pop culture icon. Several films, TV shows, and video games have referenced the movie, most memorably an episode of *The Simpsons* entitled "22 Short Films About Springfield", which in one of the stories is an almost dead on parody of Pulp Fiction from the "Royal with cheese" scene to the "dungeon scene". The film won an Oscar for "Best Original Screenplay" in 1994.

Grace, redemption and forgiveness

Painted on the side of the motorcycle on which Butch and Fabienne ride to the airport is the word "Grace". Despite its violent nature, the film has this theme of grace, redemption and forgiveness running through it. Pulp's central story, The Gold Watch, sees Butch returning to save Marcellus, from two sado-masochistic rapists even after double-crossing him. The fact that half-an-hour previously each was ready to kill the other is temporarily set aside as Butch steps in to deliver his personal enemy from a common enemy. The result is that he not only receives forgiveness from Marcellus, who would have previously tracked him to the ends of the earth, but also finally earns the right to wear his father's gold watch. However, there is no suggestion he does it in order to earn his forgiveness. He does it because it is the right thing to do. *And Jesus said: "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy."*

Jules transformation comes through "a miracle", after which, as his first act of redemption, he pays the price to save another man's life—whereas previously he would have killed them, he convinces two robbers to take the cash and valuables in exchange for the case and their departure. The melodramatic quote from Ezekiel with which he accompanied his executions, with little other reason than it sounded cool, suddenly took a twist, as he became the shepherd instead of the vengeance. *"Blessed is he who shepherd the weak through the valley of darkness."*

The hand of God

Whether the miraculous shooting was "lucky" or an "act of God" is never revealed and it is up to the viewer to decide where they place their faith. It is perhaps interesting to note however, that Vincent, who shrugs off the incident, is killed when he decides to continue his job. Jules, who is "enlightened", quits, and perhaps saves himself from a similar fate. *And Jesus said: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear; he who has eye to see, let him see"*.

Memorable quotes

Jules: Whether or not what we experienced was an According to Hoyle miracle is insignificant. What is significant is that I felt the touch of God. God got involved.

[after Butch saves Marcellus from rapists]

Butch: You okay?

Marcellus: Naw man. I'm pretty fuckin' far from okay.

Butch: What now?

Marcellus: What now? Let me tell you what now. I'ma call a coupla hard, pipe-hittin' niggers, who'll go to work on the homes here with a pair of pliers and a blow torch. You hear me talkin', hillbilly boy? I ain't through with you by a damn sight. I'ma get medieval on your ass.

Butch: I meant what now between me and you?

Marcellus: Oh, that what now. I tell you what now between me and you. There is no me and you. Not no more.

[Ezekiel 25:17 among others]

Jules: The path of the righteous man is beset on all sides by the iniquities of the selfish and the tyranny of evil men. Blessed is he, who in the name of charity and good will, shepherds the weak through the valley of darkness, for he is truly his brother's keeper and the finder of lost children. And I will strike down upon thee with great vengeance and furious anger those who would attempt to poison and destroy my brothers. And you will know my name is the Lord when I lay my vengeance upon thee.

Mia: Don't you hate that?

Vincent: What?

Mia: Uncomfortable silences. Why do we feel it's necessary to yak about bullshit in order to be comfortable?

Vincent: I don't know. That's a good question.

Mia: That's when you know you've found somebody special. When you can just shut up for a minute and comfortably enjoy the silence.

Jules: Wanna know what I'm buyin' Ringo?

Pumpkin: What?

Jules: Your life. I'm givin' you that money so I don't hafta kill your ass. You read the Bible?

Pumpkin: Not regularly.

Jules: There's a passage I got memorized. Ezekiel 25:17. I been sayin' that shit for years. I never really questioned what it meant. I thought it was just a cold-blooded thing to say to a motherfucker before you popped a cap in his ass. But I saw some shit this mornin' made me think twice. Now I'm thinkin': it could be you're the righteous man and I'm the shepherd and it's the world that's evil and selfish. I'd like that. But that shit ain't the truth. The truth is you're the weak. And I'm the tyranny of evil men. But I'm tryin', Ringo. I'm tryin' real hard to be a shepherd.

Jules: This was Divine Intervention! You know what "divine intervention" is?

Vincent: Yeah, I think so. That means God came down from Heaven and stopped the bullets.

Jules: Yeah, man, that's what it means. That's exactly what it means! God came down from Heaven and stopped the bullets.

[last lines]

Vincent: I think we should be leaving now.

Jules: Yeah, that's probably a good idea.