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Film and Literature

4/21/22 - 4/23/22

Lit Log #2: Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid Review

Review Chosen: [Roger Ebert](#)

After reading this review, there's a lot to say about it. There are several points I agree with and very few I disagree with. The first point that stuck out would be the reviewer's statement of "the completed film is slow and disappointing." I highly agree with this because it felt like there wasn't a progressive storyline with proper character development. The film lacked any kind of conflict and if there was one, it wasn't very clear to the viewers. I also think that the film dragged out a lot of its events. For example, Butch and Sundance's time in America felt like it took up the majority of the movie while their time in Bolivia only lasted 20 minutes with the end of the film being very sudden. And even then when they were in America, tensions were rising and the audience got to meet their gang alongside the different bounty hunters and other enemies they faced. However, with the sudden change of setting, it felt as though all of those aspects were pushed away to the side. This is something I wished the reviewer also focused on and gave their opinion on. It makes me wonder if they agree or disagree with my point of view.

Furthermore, in the article, the reviewer begins talking about the two major problems with the film, stating, "First, the investment in superstar [Paul Newman](#) apparently inspired a bloated production that destroys the pacing. Second, William Goldman's script is constantly too

cute and never gets up the nerve, by God, to admit it's a Western." This first issue makes me beg the question, would people watch the film if Paul Newman didn't play the main character? And I wish the reviewer touched on this because I would love to know what they would have thought. Although I know nothing about Paul Newman and his acting skills, I feel as though anyone would fill Butch's role. However, I want to question, why did they pick him knowing it would take up the majority of the film's budget? Was this a desperate attempt to try and make westerns popular again? If so, why take it to this extent? I feel as though these questions could have engaged the reader's into the reviewer a lot more than they already are. The second issue is another thing I highly agree with. This film does have the true aspects of a western including the stereotypes of one, however, it doesn't execute them properly to feel like a film that's really part of the western genre. For instance, the film has the stereotypical white and black hats, traveling by horse, one on one duels, etc. However, it just feels like the requirements are there but it still felt lackluster. Moving on, I believe that if the reviewer were to touch on this sentence more, one, it would help the readers understand what they meant and two, give the readers a reason to side with their point of view instead of making them assume one.

The final point that this article sadly didn't touch on was the fact that every character, regardless of what their relationship was, didn't seem to show it on screen. For instance, we know that, in context, Butch and Sundance are very close friends but on screen, they seem as though they've just met and this bare connection lasts throughout the entire film. Along with this, the relationship between Sundance and his girlfriend seems very forced and plain due to her sudden appearance. This main aspect makes this film unbearable to watch. Along with this, I couldn't connect with any of the characters because of these reasons. This is more of a personal

preference, but I feel as though having some personal connection with the audience can make the movie better than it actually is. Personally, I would want to know the reviewer's take on this point because I was wondering if that is something I've only noticed when watching the film. And if I wasn't, how would they write about it? What are their opinions on this? And would that be an important factor for a film like this to focus on?

Bibliography

Ebert, R. (1969, October 13). *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* Movie Review (1969): Roger Ebert. movie review (1969) | Roger Ebert. Retrieved April 23, 2022, from <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/butch-cassidy-and-the-sundance-kid-1969>