

Audrey Duke

Dr. Gingrich

AP Lang

22, March 2019

### Review of Baby Driver

The question of the best movie ever has been debated for generations. The existence of this infinite debate makes it clear that the answer to this question is subjective. The specific tastes, interest, and memories associated with a movie can change the way we think about the film and compare it to others. The best way to gauge the quality of a movie is to consider your own personal reactions to the movie. For me, Baby Driver was a movie that kept me interested, gave me an adrenaline rush and stuck with me even after it was over. This is why this movie is my favorite movie. If you are like me, I believe you will have a similar reaction to it and will enjoy this movie just as much. Baby Driver is a unique movie, it has a heavy focus on the soundtrack, weaving the sounds and songs into the very fabric and plot of the movie. Anyone who watches it will find themselves tapping their feet to the beat of this movie. The film follows the story of a quiet escape driver who owes a debt to a criminal mastermind. He spends most of his time with earbuds in and occasionally will record the sounds around him on a case tape player. Using this he mixes these sounds into songs which become the soundtrack of the movie. The events of the movie seem to follow the beat of the soundtrack adding to a satisfying flow for the viewer. To add to this, the movie involves exciting action and car scenes that keep the watcher on the edge of their seat. But what stays with the viewer for much longer is the underlying love story that occurs throughout all the action.

It is hard to beat the rhythm of this movie. The mixture of synchronization of events and the soundtrack is unlike any movie I've seen. While watching the movie it becomes obvious that moments in the scene line up with the sounds that you hear. For example, someone will put down a cup, slide something across a table or close a car door all to the beat of the mix that Baby, the main character, has created. This creates a movie experience unlike anything before, but it also adds to the overall quality of the movie. The importance of the sounds and these tapes act as plot devices as they continue to occur throughout the movie. They allow for the more interesting introduction of characters, add to the drama of the action scene as they are very valuable to the main character but they also connect to the backstory of the main character. In the movie, we see that Baby lives with and takes care of an old man who is deaf. This adds to the theme of sound as Baby has learned sign language and is able to communicate with this man. This is possibly an explanation for Baby's relationship with sound and music. Another time we see music show up is when he begins talking to a waitress named Deborah. It is a running conversation that they have as they list out songs that involve their names. As they list out these songs they begin to plan out their lives together. This becomes a problem when Baby gets in trouble with both his boss and the law. The final explanation for Baby's relationship for sound and music is the fact that his hearing is partially impaired and is relieved of the ringing sound when he has music in his ear.

The movie not only has interesting effects but also has a unique and emotional underlying love story. This romance keeps the viewers attached and involved with the characters and their tragic moments pull at the audience's heart. The contrast between Baby's love interest, Deborah and baby himself is stark. Deborah appears to be innocent and light while Baby is good but involved in some troubling situations. When Baby thinks he has escaped the

evil world he was stuck in, he thinks he can live a beautiful life with Deborah, the darkness pulls him back. This is when the life he imagined crumbles away as things become more violent and he starts to get in trouble with the law. Deborah's presence in the story is mandatory as she contrasts the doom and gloom of the action and gives not only Baby but the audience something to care and fight for. This romantic storyline was just involved enough to keep the viewer emotionally invested but not so much that it overpowers the gangster plot. It also helped the movie appeal to not only the action movie lovers but also some of the romance lovers. This is why I would recommend this movie to anyone who can stomach a little bit of action and is looking for a unique and interesting movie. The movie is good for a mature audience as it includes some cursing and quite a bit of action. That being said, the action and gore is mild and won't make the casual movie watcher overwhelmed or dizzy. In my experience, this movie appeals to many backgrounds. I saw as my father who is a die-hard James Bond, action movie fan enjoyed the movie just as much as my mother whose taste is more in the hallmark, Christmas movie realm.

Initially, I wasn't pleased with the actor choice of Ansel Elgort as I had previously seen him in romance and dramas such as the Divergent movies and The Fault in Our Stars. In my opinion, the acting in these movies was cheesy and a little too immature for my taste. That being said, Ansel Elgort surprised me in Baby Driver. Playing a completely different character, he was more convincing and connected well with the audience. He played more of an aloof, yet cool guy role that contrasted my expectations of him. While I was pleased with the choice of actors in terms of the lead role, I still have criticisms of some supporting characters. I wasn't the biggest fan of Buddy and Darlings characters. Personally, I found their characters and story cheesy. The other problem is that I thought the escalation of Buddy's storyline was choppy and

not gradual enough. It appeared that they were normal characters one second and the next second Buddy was a deranged psycho dead set on killing Baby. While the story does offer an explanation of this behavior, I still found the escalation too rapid and the transitions could have been smoother.

Overall, the greatest value this movie has is its balance and the uniqueness of its concept. The film can be enjoyed by a variety of mature audiences and would be especially appreciated by music lovers. The underlying theme of the film surrounds music. The interesting sounds and songs are woven into the movie to create a very satisfying experience. The viewer will initially enjoy a very quality, apparent soundtrack but will also be captivated by the hidden syncopations of the movie as a whole. A very interesting way to watch the movie is to focus less on the dialogue and characters and take a moment to concentrate on the sounds and beats. Doing this will expose much of the interesting details and the movie and the film will become much more impressive with every watch. In my opinion, this is a movie that can be watched over and over again. This is why, although I cannot argue that Baby Driver is the BEST MOVIE EVER, as that statement is subjective, I am sure that Baby Driver is my favorite movie and could be yours too.

<https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/casino-royale-2007>

Review of Casino Royale by Roger Ebert

The author of this review has a knowledge of the movie and the legacy of the previous movies and the culture surrounding them that allows them to give an insightful and complex review. The initial element of this review that stood out to me was the comparison that the author used to the previous Bond movies. This is especially important to address considering the popularity and half a century-long legacy of the franchise. The author starts out by stating that Casino Royale is different from a lot of the previous movies and takes on an attitude that gives the reader the impression that he enjoyed the changes and the movie. One rule that should be included in a review is to make the reader clear on whether or not the author enjoys and recommends the movie. To make my opinion very clear in my essay, I added a section of explicit enjoyment and review in the first paragraph of my essay. I also reviewed the movie very positively throughout the review. Another element that the author uses in this review is a decision over the actor choice. This is also specific to this movie considering the number of previous movies and also the heavily debated question, "Who is the best bond?". While I couldn't exactly emulate this rule in my own essay, I did include a paragraph discussing the actor choice and the criticism quality of two of the characters. The author also includes a summary of the film that only gives the reader enough information for context. Maybe one of the most important rule when writing story reviews is to never include spoilers. Those who are reading the review may be doing so to decide whether or not to watch the movie. If the summary of the movie is so in-depth that it exposes critical parts of the story, the review is working counteractive and is no longer a useful review. In my review, I inserted just enough context so that a reader who had never seen Baby Driver can understand my review but could also still see the movie without previously knowing the outcome.

<https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/skyscraper-2018>

Review of Skyscraper by Christy Lemire

Much like the previous review, this review of the movie Skyscraper covers all the bases. It gives an even more in-depth summary than the Casino Royale review giving the reader an even better image of what the movie is like. It also discusses actors and directors, mainly complementing their work. Also with these discussions also comes a reference to the legacy of the movie and what came before. The review brings up previous movies from Dwayne Johnson and movies with a similar style such as Die Hard. The main factor that made this review much different than the previous one was that the majority of the review was a criticism while the Casino Royale review was more of a praise. That being said, both review covered all the bases, offering praise and criticisms of films. This review criticized the overused actions scenes and the exaggerated stunts. A rule to follow when writing a review is to address factors of the film that contradict the readers initial opinion of the film. For example a positive review should also include a criticism. My review of *Baby Driver* was over all positive, but to follow this rule, I made sure to criticize the characters and storyline of Darling and Buddy. Another rule that is very similar to this one is to address whether the other believes their readers would enjoy the film. In this review, the other brings up an important point that the excess violence and death may make the movie inappropriate for some viewers. The author even notes that maybe the rating of PG 13 was generous and parents should be cautioned.