Twitter Thread by Noah Berlatsky



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one thing in Swordfish that bothered me was the scene where Jackman is forced at gunpoint to let a woman give him oral sex while he tries to hack into the defense department. 1

the oral sex is presented as distracting; it's a kind of sexy joke. but it's actually rape, is the thing. nonconsensual sex at gunpoint is rape.

which, the film doesn't realize at all because guys are supposed to always be willing to get oral sex from a sexy woman. even if he keeps saying no. even if he has to be forced into it at gunpoint.

there are plenty of really dicey things about the film (you're supposed to cheer at the end because the bad guy is using his billions to kill POC who you're told are terrorists.)

I feel like there's at least some limited awareness that there is some moral ambiguity in a lot of those instances. but there's absolutely no sense that Jackman has been raped or might be traumatized by being raped.

it really struck me wrong.

it's also part and parcel of the film's gratuitous and insistent misogyny (women used almost solely as decoration or victims.) the idea that sexual humiliation is funny or fine makes it hard to recognize rape, whether the victim is a woman or a man.

are there *any* movies that deal somewhat sensitively with a lead male character being raped?

in fact in Swordfish, after he's raped, like, a day later, another women without getting consent grabs his crotch, and he's okay with it which...seems like it strains credulity.

Shawshank Redemption has male rape scenes but I don't know that they're exactly thoughtful, and there's no mention of possible lingering trauma (at least not that I remember)