

## 'Bourne Legacy' lacks what made previous three films special

Posted on Aug 10, Posted by [Patrick Hall](#) Category [At the Movies - Patrick Hall](#)

By **PATRICK HALL**  
*The Wilson Post*

It's never easy making a sequel, a storyline has to move forward and balance enough of what worked in the previous installment while delivering something new, but unfortunately, 'Bourne Legacy' does neither.

Directed and co-written by **Tony Gilroy** and starring **Jeremy Renner** as government super-agent Aaron Cross, 'Legacy' intertwines with events in 2007's 'Bourne Ultimatum,' during which Jason Bourne ( **Mat Da mon** ) finds closure and escapes his government tormentors.

Since the operations "Treadstone" and "Blackbriar" that spawned Bourne have been exposed, the Central Intelligence Agency is trying to cover its tracks by dispensing of other agents, including Cross. When they try to kill him, he goes on the run and action-movie stuff ensues.

Pulling the strings is Eric Byer played by **Edward Norton**, who we never really learn anything about, but is just like all the other baddies in the previous three films. He spouts platitudes about protecting America and the usual "spy" lingo.

Running with Cross is genetic scientist Dr. Marta Shearing (**Rachel Weisz**) who is the film's

most unique character and its most interesting.

She is clearly not capable of avoiding spies and bad guys with guns, but she may or may not be equally responsible for the questionable CIA programs as Byer. The consequences of her genetic work and the implications of what she contributed to the programs aren't really developed.

'Legacy' dispenses with anything that made 'Bourne Identity,' 'Bourne Supremacy' and 'Ultimatum' so successful. Of course it's filled with fight scenes, interesting improvisation from Cross, car chases and global jet setting, but the human qualities that made Bourne so fascinating and sympathetic are missing.

Bourne began his plight at an extreme disadvantage against his pursuers, he had no memory of who he was and all he wanted to do was regain that memory. When he learned more and discovered he was a government agent designed to kill, he was able to make the conscious choice to be someone else.

Cross is rarely at a disadvantage and is only motivated by the fact that people tried to kill him. He never really voices any moral opposition to what he was designed to do and we never really get a good idea of the immoral things he may have done in the past.

Without a motivation as clear and interesting as Bourne, Cross is just another spy capable of awesome physical deeds. He may be a lab rat, and some flashbacks point to his past, but nothing is revealed to make you sympathize with him.

It's impossible not to look at 'Legacy' without comparing it to the other three films because it tries so hard to remind you that this continues Bourne's story. But it really doesn't.

Minor cameos and news footage of events in 'Ultimatum' come across as a desperate attempt to remind the audience this is supposed to continue that story. But when there's nothing interesting and sympathetic at the center, such as Bourne's plight, it's just another spy vs. spy action circus.

Everything about 'Legacy' made me feel bad for Renner, who is a genuinely good actor. His performance in 'The Hurt Locker' in 2008 was phenomenal and showed what he is capable of doing.

He is able to carry an action series such as the Bourne trilogy, as its lead role, but since 'Locker' he's been relegated to second fiddle ('Avengers' and 'Mission Impossible IV') or inheriting someone else's dirty laundry in 'Legacy'.

The title implies what Jason Bourne accomplished by exposing and getting out of the government programs affects the actions of Cross. But all that we see is the CIA covering its tracks, finding out they have even worse programs and that nothing was actually resolved in 'Ultimatum.'

That film ended with the indication that those responsible for Treadstone and Blackbriar were being brought to justice by Pamela Landy (**Joan Allen**) and Bourne's actions. But then in 'Legacy' it is indicated that none of that is true and the bad guys are just moving along and everyone else is falling for the "nothing to see here" routine.

Bourne's story was so well done and successfully ended, they should have left it alone. But in Hollywood, successful movie franchises demand more movies and I'm sure 'Legacy' will make enough money to warrant another film.

It's just a shame 'Legacy' nor it's impending sequel don't and can't actually live up to Jason Bourne's real legacy: a unique and interesting story centered on a deep and fascinating character.

Jeremy Renner deserves better.

***'Bourne Legacy' is now playing and is rated PG-13 with a runtime of 2 hours and 15 minutes. For show times, visit [www.roxy10.com](http://www.roxy10.com)***

***Staff Writer Patrick Hall may be contacted at [This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it](#)***

Tags: Untagged