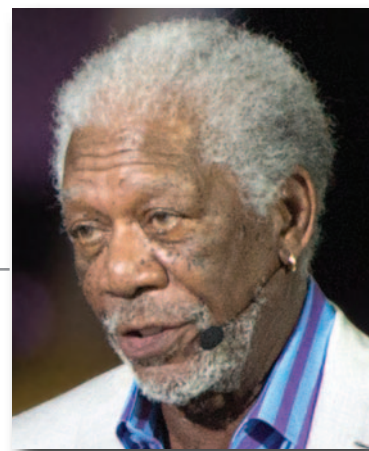


5 Minutes with...

Morgan Freeman



Dept. of Defense

You started in movies really late. Do you think it was good in a way for you?

Absolutely. I was 20 years on the stage in New York prior to getting the movie career, as such, though I did do television work, I did some movies. I think the training—both in the profession and in life—was to my benefit. When I was working in the '70s and '80s, the drug culture was booming and a lot of people didn't make it through it. I was very peripatetic when I was young, back-and-forth cross-country, to New York to Los Angeles to San Francisco, trying to find the doorway, where to be able to get in. It's just being in the right place at the right time.

Which is better, to be the President, to be God, or to be a movie star?

Movie star.

Why?

It pays. None of the rest of them pays. Not nearly as well.

What are the cons of being a movie star?

Well, first, it's what I wanted from a very young age, I wanted to be in the movies. But as you start to watch your career go on, you realize that you *didn't* want to be "star." If you are a character actor, you don't want to be a star, because you can't be a character. A star very rarely gets roles like Quasimodo. Bob De Niro could walk down the streets unrecognized after he had done *Bang the Drum Slowly*, *Godfather II* and *Raging Bull*. He had done all these well-received movies, but he could walk down the street unrecognized. That's character acting, when you hide, when you become the character, that's the essential difference to me.

When you were a kid, did you ever dream about being the President?

No, I only dreamed about being an actor. When I was a kid, I went to the movies every day I could find enough money. President? CEO of something? No. Later on, I thought it might have been interesting to have been a racecar driver.

Is that on your bucket list?

I've done it!

Is there anything left on your bucket list?

I wanted to be a jet pilot. I wanted to be a sailor, a water sailor. I wanted to be a cowboy—I'm a good horseman, I love horses and live with them. And the rest of it is just to be here, to enjoy life.

When you play the President, do you take pleasure in it?

The pleasure is in *working*. Believing that you are the President or God or the devil or whatever, the only joy in that is bringing the character to life. I don't get any personal sense of the power of God or the power of the President. Make believe is make believe. I hate for people to somehow gloss over that and say, "Oh my God! God just walked in the room!" Don't do that. **EDGE**

Editor's Note: Morgan Freeman played the President in his most recent film, *Angel Has Fallen*, co-starring with Gerard Butler. He is due to star in four films in 2020, including the action comedy *The Hitman's Wife's Bodyguard*, with Ryan Reynolds, Salma Hayek and Samuel L. Jackson. This Q&A was conducted by Sarah Williams of The Interview People.