



Super Bitches and Action Babes: The Female Hero in Popular Cinema, 1970-2006

Rikke Schubart

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With actress Pam Grier's breakthrough in *Coffy* and *Foxy Brown*, women entered action, science fiction, war, westerns and martial arts films--genres that had previously been considered the domain of male protagonists. This ground-breaking cinema, however, was--and still is--viewed with ambivalence. While women were cast in new and exciting roles, they did not always arrive with their femininity intact, often functioning both as a sexualized spectacle and as a new female hero rather than female character. This volume contains an in-depth critical analysis and study of the female hero in popular film from 1970 to 2006. It examines five female archetypes: the dominatrix, the Amazon, the daughter, the mother and the rape-avenger. The entrance of the female hero into films written by, produced by and made for men is viewed through the lens of feminism and post-feminism arguments. Analyzed works include films with actors Michelle Yeoh and Meiko Kaji, the *Alien* films, the *Lara Croft* franchise, *Charlie's Angels*, and television productions such as *Xena: Warrior Princess* and *Alias*.

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