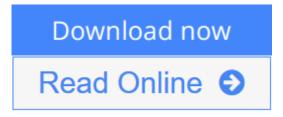


Super Bitches and Action Babes: The Female Hero in Popular Cinema, 1970-2006

By 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 groundbreaking 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 indepth critical analysis and study of the female hero in popular film from 1970 to 2005. 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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Rikke Schubart is director of studies and associate professor of literature, media and cultural studies at the University of Southern Denmark.

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