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WOMEN-LED FILMS: DIFFERENT FEMALE REPRESENTATIONS IN POPULAR CINEMAS.

Abstract:

This is a comparative study to look into cinematic feminism between English-speaking blockbuster and non-blockbuster films that screening from 2012 to 2015. This study will choose films that led by female character(s) and to explore, compare, and justify the feminism qualities that reflected through the female characters and storylines. In this study, six female-led films are selected: The Hunger Games, Mad Max: The Fury Road, Cinderella, Gone Girl, Brooklyn, and Carol. This study assumes that modern high budget productions are portraying feminism conventionally through unrealistic characters and masculine domination stories; while the non-blockbuster productions are portraying feminism progressively through reflective characters and self-determination stories. Blockbuster films' actresses are commonly created as recognisable female superheroes with strong masculine traits but living in a men-ruled world, or princesses that living in fairy tales. The cinematic feminism is superficial and ambiguous in blockbuster commercial films. Hence, non-blockbuster films' actresses are characterised with conservative and realistic images but given more chances to deal with alternatives, decisions, and progressions throughout the development of the story. Non-blockbuster films' characters and stories are less emphasizing on masculine feminism but more focusing on subtle yet significant feminism expressions. To achieve the objectives and hypotheses, this paper uses two methods – quantitative method with a designed coding sheet in content analysis; and a qualitative method with film reviews for textual analysis. These two methods are expected to test out and evaluate the cinematic feminism through on-screen characters' gender representations and the storyline's interpretations in selected films.

Keywords:

films, feminism, cinema, blockbuster, storyline, gender, portrayals.