

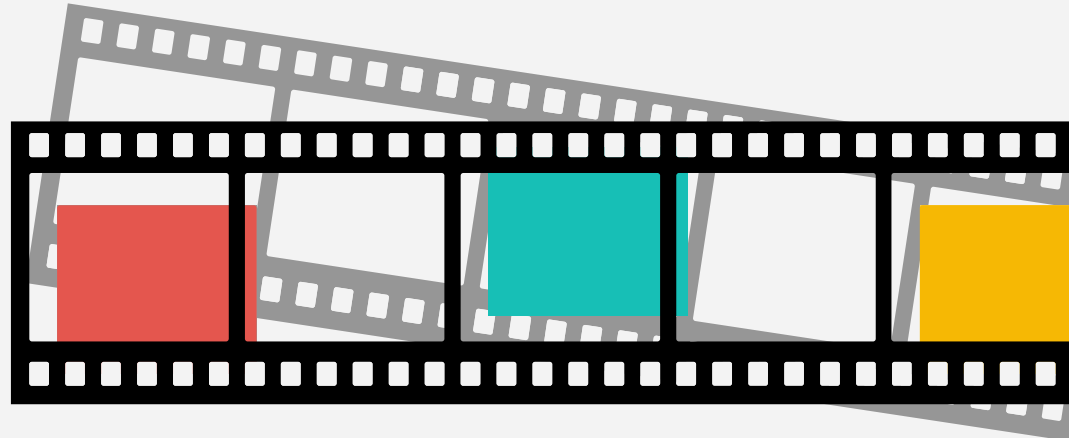
OBJECTIFICATION OF WOMEN IN MOVIES

Group 2



VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN DRAMATIC FILMS

It is typical to see movies portray in a negative light in dramatic films. Women can be seen as overdramatic, overly sexualized, or as a pawn for to contribute for the movie's success. In the following slides I will be comparing two movies found in the drama genre: *Enough* and *Hidden Figures*. Both movies have a different interpretation of women and the different types of violence and abuse portrayed against them. Even still, there are comparisons that can be found with the effect that these two movies had on women and the film industry.



In the dramatic film titled *Enough*, viewers are taken on a journey focused on the life of a woman named Slim. Slim is a working class woman who has her life changed when she meets a wealthy man by the name of Mitch. They build a family together, move into a nice neighborhood and everything seems ideal and perfect. However, Slim begins to become victimized by Mitch, as he becomes abusive and obsessive towards her. Suffering from physical and mental abuse, Slim runs away in attempt to escape her abuser. Yet, it seems that Mitch was always one step ahead and seems to always find her and threaten Slim and their daughter. Having enough of the abuse, stalking, and threats, Slim begins to train and box in order to once and for all stand against Mitch. The movie ends with Slim standing up to Mitch, physically fighting him and in the end killing him in self-defense. Liberated and freed from the torment of abuse, Slim is able to enjoy a new life with her daughter.



ENOUGH

HIDDEN FIGURES



In the historical drama *Hidden Figures*, the story of three African American women who worked for NASA during the Space Race. However, due to their gender and race they were undermined, ridiculed and looked down upon. These were three brilliantly intelligent women, but because they were women they were not accepted within the very same circle of their colleges; and because of their race, both men and women treated them with derogatory words and attitudes. Even still, it was through the efforts and hard work of these three women that NASA was able to successfully send out their astronauts to space.

HOW BOTH MOVIES RELATE TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

It can be said that both films had an impact on the female community, and in its own way represented the tough reality of violence perpetrated against women. In the film *Enough*, we see a woman facing abuse from her spouse with words and actions. Unlike most films, we see for once the woman standing up against her abuser. It is typical to see women degraded and sexualized and the glorification of the man or abuser. However, director Michael Apted decided to use the movie platform to send a different message. It sent the message of strength and resilience, showing that women do not have to tolerate their abuser. Through Mitch's character, the movie also exposed viewers to the toxic actions that are not normal but rather abusive- manipulation, threats, physical altercation and a controlling attitude. This is a film in where the woman fights back for once, destroying the generalized stereotypes of women who must fall under the submission and obedience of dominate, controlling and abusive men.

With the film *Hidden Figures*, viewers are exposed to the tough reality that women faced in 1960s and in some ways still face today. We see the three pioneering African American women going face to face with a more subtle, yet just as harmful, form of violence. Rather than a direct physical abuse like in the movie *Enough*, these three women are discriminated and degraded with words and subliminal actions. Because they are black women, they are seen as less than- they cannot be independent, they cannot be educated, and it would be outrageous to even dare to step foot into a "man's world." Still, these women persevered and fought back a system that was rigged against them. Many years has gone by and we still live in a society in where hidden ways there are certain rules and expectations rigged against women, especially women of color. This is a form of violence because it hinders women from achieving in the fullest potential what they set their mind to; but in the film we do not see women who succumb to these corrupt expectations, but instead use the exact thing what was meant to hurt them to change the system. This can inspire women today to be who they want to be, no matter who or what may stand against them.

In both movies, you see women fighting back- whether that may be a socially constructed mindset, gender roles and expectations, or actual abuse. In an industry in where its movies holds a lot influence on how the world perceives women, we can finally see two movies that celebrate female empowerment. This can spark a moving conversation on the role of women within our society, how they should be treated and respected, as well as ignite a powerful spirit within each women who watches the film.

Slide by: Rachel Araujo

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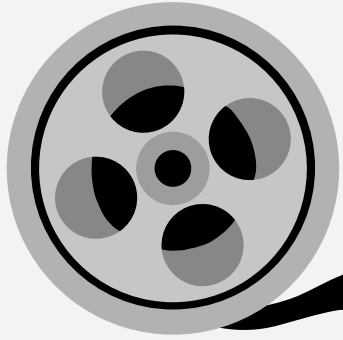
WHAT IS SO FUNNY ABOUT THE OBJECTIFICATION OF WOMEN?



Slide by
Shelby
Eikel

Comedic movies do not shy away from portraying women in a sexualizing light. According to IMBD.com, a few of the top rated movies/ TV shows are about the objectification of women are filmed through a comedic view. So why do we find this so funny? Similar to the previous book we read, we learned that we focus more on how the movie or tv show makes us feel rather than digging deep and thinking about how it actually makes us feels. So if we watch a comedy movie , for example , Baywatch , even though the women in the movie are in small bathing suits and it is the typical lifeguard body and all the women are super fit and skinny. Instead of being upset that women are being portrayed like that, we end up wanting to look like them and wishing our bodies resembled theirs. I recall multiple scenes in Baywatch where the male characters were zoned in on staring at their female characters in the breast area. Or the scene where the women are running in slow motion along the beach with the camera souley focused on their breasts.





THE HANGOVER

Slide by
Shelby Eikel

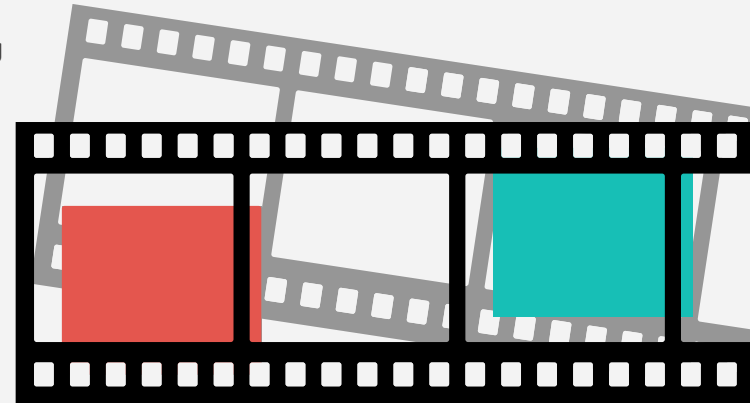
Another important movie that has made it's significant appearance in the area of comedy films, is The Hangover (2009). The film in a short sense is about a bachelor party that takes place in Las Vegas, full of drugs, sex, and alchohal. The women who are theoretically representing the wives or girlfriends of the male characters, are being portrayed more as disposable objects who can be tossed around and thrown out. If the female character is portrayed as opinionated, she then is also see as crazy and psychotic. Therefor, any female figure in this film is not seen in a promising light and may give younger viewers the impression that this is how you can treat your wife or girlfriend.



THE BIG IDEA OF COMEDY

It seems to be very apparent that majority of the lead roles in comedic films are indeed male figures and barely ever female figures. Although a study from 2017 shows that comedy is the second most amount of female employees which may sound amazing, but that still was only 23% of women. The objectification of women in the genre of comedy and has been very much normalized, with the same common idea of the female is a supporting role to the male protagonist and that the male is the main purpose of the film. Comedy films have began to introduce more female dominating films such as Pitch Perfect, Bridesmaids, etc. However still in some female dominating films, the women are still characterized as psychotic or crazy or “trashy”. So why can’t women just be portrayed as strong as men are portrayed in male dominated comedy films. Critics express we should celebrate the small victories we have accomplished of getting women on the comedy screen more than they previously have been and to never give up trying to end the objectification on women in comedy settings. Hopefully eventually women will stop being seen for how much more naked they are on camera compared to men and more about how comedic they can be on the big screen, because after all, isn’t that what comedy is supposed to be?

Slide by Shelby
Eikel



ACTRESSES SEXUALIZED IN ACTION MOVIES

Actresses have recently begun to address how they are mistreated in the Hollywood industry and in movies. For example, Megan Fox, who starred in the Transformers series recently spoke out on how she was constantly sexualized during her career. Michael Bay, the director of the movie, was heavily criticized for his sexist content which included women in skimpy outfits and constantly showing off their bodies. In 2007, Bay allegedly had Fox audition for the role by washing his car in a bikini. Michael Bay had Fox, at age 15, as an extra in Bad Boys 2. She was dressed in a bikini and 6 inch heels. In the Transformers movies, Megan Fox is always seen in tight clothing, the shots always focusing on her body, and it seems as if she is always a damsel in distress.



THE RED SPARROW

The Red Sparrow is a movie about a ballerina that suffers an injury that ends her career, she then ends up at a school where they learn to use their bodies as weapons. Jennifer Lawrence in this film is overly sexualized as well as the other actresses. A scene in the movie shows nude women being raped and it is fully shown, but when there is a scene of the men being tortured, it is not shown directly on screen. In a scene where the main character is being interrogated, her clothes are ripped off and she is shown in a BDSM-style position, bounded and being waterboarded. The issue with this is that the camera focuses on her body and not on the horror of being tortured, music covering her screams, but shows her breasts and buttocks.



SUICIDE SQUAD

In the action thriller, Suicide Squad, the most dangerous criminals are assembled into a task force. The sexualization starts with all the men having actual evil ways, like burning people, eating people, etc. The two women in this film are known as being possessed and “just being crazy” referring to Harley Quinn. Harley Quinn is known as one of the most sexualized characters from the comics to the TV show and now in her live action debut. She is seen in tight boy shorts as pants, wearing fishnets and a torn white shirt (that is often made wet) that says Daddy’s Little Monster. The other character, the Enchantress is seen in a bikini, with a fishnet long sleeve over it. Her breasts are accentuated. If we take a look at the men’s costumes, they are often armored enough to protect themselves from the potentially dangerous situation they are presented with. The women, however are placed in the most skimpy and non tactical outfits for what they are doing. The director David Ayer has been called out for his hypersexualization of these actresses and has since realized his mistake and apologized.

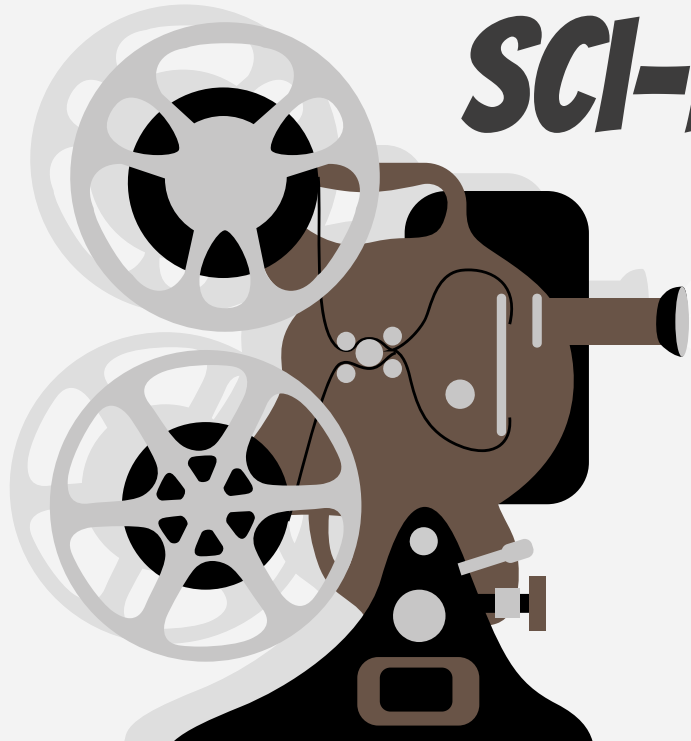


HOW THESE MOVIES RELATE TO OUR CLASS

These three movies teach young women that they are only useful for their bodies. That they always need to be in distress, and even in they are the “hero” they must promote their bodies in a way that they are showing everything. Harley Quinn in Suicide Squad is in a very obviously abusive relationship, and by making her into someone who takes it, and flaunts her sexuality, and does nothing to fight back can be a very bad example of young girls who are supposed to have these actresses as role models. In Red Sparrow, the women are all nude and taken advantage of, meanwhile the girls watching this movie may think it is normal for a man to rip off her clothing. The fact that Hollywood normalizes rape, abusive relationships and more can be a slap in the face to women who have actually been victimized because of how romanticized and downplayed these horrifying situations really are. Hollywood also strongly promotes victim blaming, for example, Harley Quinn often says that the Joker is her master and she belongs to him and often is shown apologizing and taking the blame for things he is responsible for.



WOMEN IN SCI-FI

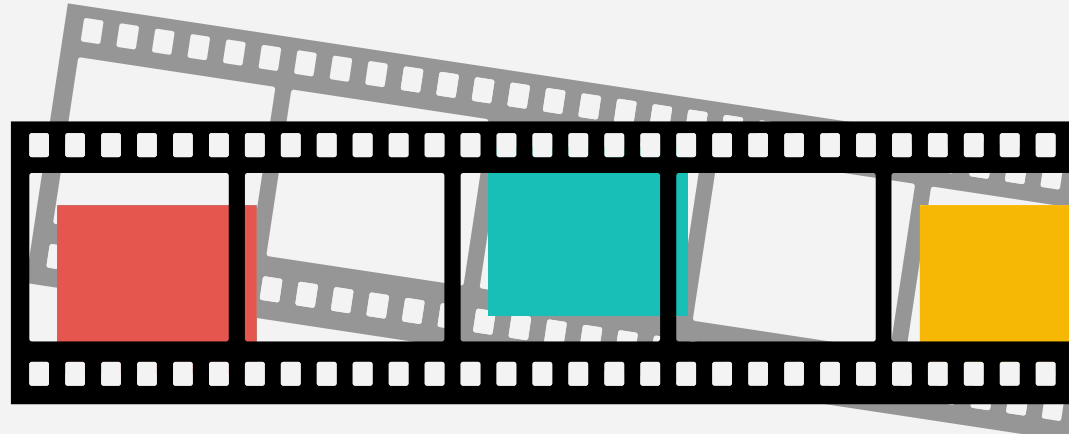


WOMEN IN SCI-FI

In science fiction, women are not only underrepresented, but are significantly less likely to be the main character or to represent a strong female role.

The women in this genre more often than not assume a caring or passive role and are less likely to be played as 'experts' in their careers than male characters.

These factors therefore not only are based around gender stereotypes that exists in society but actually emphasise them, and when repeatedly exposed to these gender stereotypes through media, can lead to ingraining of these expectations in the way women see themselves.



MOVIE EXAMPLE

A prime example of the minimization of women in science fiction is in the film *Star Trek Into Darkness*. Alice Eve played Dr Carol Marcus, a molecular biologist. Although her position in the film is rare and a powerful tool of representation for women in STEM careers, her integrity as a character is downplayed by the scene where he is shown in her underwear. The scene trivialises her abilities as a scientists and emphasises the importance of her physical appearance over her abilities as a strong female character as well as a women in STEM.





In RoboCop, Ann Lewis is first shown in mid-combat, high-kicking and punching a criminal to the ground, watched admiringly by the male protagonist. The scene displays her physical strength while simultaneously downplaying her gender. Since she is in uniform and wears a helmet it only becomes clear that she is a woman when she removes her helmet, topped by her proud and sensual head movement. Despite onlookers initial gaze and praising comments, She is desexualised once realizing she is a woman..

WOMEN IN ROMANCE MOVIES

A woman in a romance movie

Typically she is
fragile

A woman in a romance movie

Typically she is
looking or waiting
for a man to come
into her life

A woman in a romance movie

Typically she is
portrayed as less
successful than the
male in the movie

A woman in a romance movie

Typically the
woman is also
portrayed as not
being smart enough
compared to the
male

A woman in a romance movie

Typically she also is
portrayed as having
the stereotypical
body of a small
waist and big bust
or being fairly thin

A FEMALE IN A ROMANCE GENRE: TWILIGHT

In the movie Twilight the main character is that of a teen girl named Bella, who although the storyline focuses on her point of view and her life experiences, it is the two main male characters who save her each time. Hollywood may have given us a female leading character but even then it is the typical “guy has to save the girl.” The females stereotypical role in many romantic genres in the media is to be the damsel in distress who needs the man to come along and save her from the world or even herself. As if a woman is incapable of helping herself or saving herself from danger, even if the female lead does need saving why not have another female save her instead of it always being the knight and shining male character who does the rescuing. Such as in Twilight the character Bella all throughout the series of movies, is either being saved and protected by Edward or Jacob the two male characters who are utterly in love with her that they will risk everything for her. In the movies she is constantly treated as a fragile being who needs decisions made for her by these two males. Then when she tries to voice her opinion and what she wants she is deemed as being irrational as many women are today in our world. If a woman speaks out and speaks up for herself many times she is villainized and seen as irrational and causing drama and being problematic.

ROMANTIC FILMS AND WOMEN

A woman in a romantic film is not only shown as being fragile and needing a man to save her but she is also portrayed as being desperately in need and search of a man and for love. For example In the movie “He’s Just Not That Into You” one of the main characters ultimate and final goal is to find a man and find love and get the whole fairytale- a husband with a big wedding the house and the kids. Hollywood seems to have programmed women into thinking that that is what a woman’s future should be that those should be her goals- to find a man. That the idea that finding a man and falling in love equality success. Another example is the movie “Pretty Woman” where a female escort and the rich male protagonist fall in love and she no longer has to be an escort because she is now “his” woman. The movie not only portrays how now that a woman has found a man and found love that she has reached her goal she has become successful and not only that but is shown as a trophy an object for a man to conquer and claim as his. These movies from decades ago to today have not changed, sure the names and faces have changed but the messages they give the audience in regards to woman are all the same. They have instilled a cliché of a woman being fragile, inferior, an object whose use is to display her thin figure, and as needing a man in order to be successful and happy in life. And we as a society feed into it. There are more romantic films again women then there are films advocating for female empowerment and independence in these romantic toles.

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PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN HORROR FILMS

Horror films are seen as successful due to the intense notion of fear in everyday life, and pertain to those who could get easily affected by this type of genre. Even though horror movies are typically not aimed towards a female base, women are portrayed as cowardice and in need of saving. The demographic regarding scary movies are exposed to males since the exposure of this genre has begun. The “damsel in distress” stereotype is often seen and endorsed due to the patriarchal ideology that women tend to stupidly wander into situations that they do not need to be in. Yet, this view can be seen as women are preyed on more often due to sexualization and lack of abilities given to help themselves.



PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN HORROR MOVIES

Behind the Scenes

Actresses who have to play victims have spoken out on how they have been treated during and are being portrayed in the movie.

Sexualization

Women are hypersexualized in almost every horror film. The endorsement allocates towards men and attracts more male viewers

Maltreatment

Women overall get treated disrespectfully on/off set and the work that involves movies to be made have a distinct lack of feminine recognition,

Lack of representation

Women who direct horror films range from about 5.9% and often do not get recognized for their work

Statistics

In horror movies, there is a 60% chance that women will die first.

PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN HORROR MOVIES

Throughout film history, women have consistently portrayed as the background character that gets violently attacked in a gory manner, raped, or treated as the weakest link. Even today women are portrayed as hypersexuality and attracting negative energy causing the plot to thicken due to the enticing nature of how they “should be preyed on. However, we can look forward to exploring feminism in this genre. With proper direction and production, women are developing more and more as strong protagonists, with plans and intellectual characteristics to observe the nature of the mysteries. Such as, during the 1970’s “rape-revenge” films were starting to become a subgenre of horror flicks, allowing the disgust and realistic horror done to women striking a boost in feminism with also fitting the same greusome themes a horror film would have. This also enhanced feminism within the wide spectrum of films.

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Horror

Kallyani Prakash

Group 2

Dawn Rothe

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