

PAPER_008 Mulan: the beginning of Disney's journey in the reconstruction of gender roles

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Abstract

We will focus on the animated Disney movie *Mulan* (1998) and what it is that makes its female protagonist stand out from the Disney Princess group. We will begin by contextualizing how and why, in the 1990's, Disney female characters shifted from damsels-in-distress to braver and more independent heroes. We will also mention why the character Mulan, who has no relation with royalty, is merchandized and seen as a princess. Furthermore, we will compare Disney's *Mulan* with the original story, in order to clarify Disney's direction in the portrayal of love and gender roles. We analyse the moral function of the animated version and how people received the film on the date of its release and today. We will try to understand the different impacts, considering women's rights, transgenderism, the female role in military service and finally cultural appropriation. Also, we will refer to how *Mulan* prioritize other types of love, like the love for family, and how its female protagonist influences princesses from the recent era, making way for more empowering stories for women.