

The brought home a
sword. if you ask



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The film *Mulan* was made to combat the stereotypical gender roles in the Chinese culture, however, the movie contains proof of the contrary. China, in *Mulan*, is shown as a male dominant society in which men and women's actions must comply with their cultural roles. In this setting, a man brings honor to his family by fighting in the war and becoming a high ranked soldier. A woman fulfills her honorable role to the family by marrying a man with status and wealth.

Towards the beginning of the movie, when *Mulan* is grooming to go see a matchmaker all the women sing to her "Honour us all". It suggests that, "a girl can bring her family great honor in one way, by striking a good match. Men want girls with good taste, calm, obedient, who work fast-paced. With good breeding and a tiny waist" (*Mulan* 1988.) However, *Mulan* seems to successfully move away from these traditional roles when she saves all of China and as her achievement she is offered a seat in the council.

Instead of accepting this stereotype breaker role as a woman, she refuses and decides to go home like a passive daughter. This portrays that as 'a man' in the army she was able to work but once the roles are reversed, *Mulan* yearns to go home which is considered a norm for women. Also, when she returns her grandmother says, "Great, she brought home a sword. If you ask me she should have brought home a man" (*Mulan* 1998). This goes to show that despite her efforts, her family's ideology on culture honor and women roles have not changed.

They would still like to see her a bride. Like shown in the movie *Mulan*, a woman's role is to honour her family by becoming a bride and in this lie their

true happiness. The film although tries to show Mulan as a feminist princess it fails to do as it only reinforces the gender roles of both male and female.