

Fa mu lan: book vs. movie



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Fa Mu Lan: Book vs. Movie The book *The Woman Warrior*, by Maxine Hong Kingston, and the movie *Mulan* both tell the same story, but in very different ways. They have many similarities and differences in their plots. The main message "To thine own self be true," is shown a lot more in the movie compared to the book. They were the same in the overall story, but small details like how their family acts when they come home, their love life, and how they decided to go to war differ extravagantly. Some things, like the mention of dragons are common in both scenarios, but they have different roles in the story. One of the major differences between the book and the movie is how Mulan learns to fight. In the book, she goes to a house way up in the mountains for a number of years, and gets trained to fight. In the movie, Mulan goes to training camp right before the war with no knowledge of how to fight, but she picks it up quickly. The movie probably doesn't go through the entire process of Mulan getting trained by monks because it would take too long of a time. The movie's focus is to teach a lesson and to portray a message, so if it would've gone too much in detail, there wouldn't be enough time to teach the lesson. In the book, the story is not meant to teach a lesson, it is just explaining another story that a mother told her daughter. Another thing that is different is the family's reaction when Mulan returns home. In the movie, it is a very sentimental scene, while in the book it is barely mentioned. The movie is more puffed up with a happy ending because it is a children's movie, but the book's version mainly just states the facts. While reading the book, there were a multitude of things that made me think of specific parts in the movie. Dragons were mentioned in the movie and the book. The dragons are seen as spiritual beings in both, and they signify certain things in the Chinese culture. They both mean somewhat of the same

thing, but in the movie, since it has to be appealing, the dragon is more of a comedic relief. Mulan's story is only a small part of the book, so there is no need for it to be funny. Another thing that was featured in both mediums is reflection. Mulan sees her reflection in the gourd in the book, and she sees it in another form of water in the movie. She is always being reflected in natural substances, and I think it shows her natural beauty and her connection with nature. She also mentions having chickens in the book, and she has them in the movie as well. These could be a common source of income and food in China.