

Blue steel theoretical analysis essay

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Blue Steel The successful 1990 action thriller film Blue Steel tells the tale of female rookie cop Megan Turner who is portrayed by actress Jamie Lee Curtis. On her first few days on the job, Turner gets involved in a store robbery and ends up gunning down the perpetrator, killing him. The suspect's gun though, falls in the hands of a psychopath named Eugene Hunt, played by Ron Silver, and proceeds to use the gun in the subsequent brutal murders of young women. The gun not being found in the initial crime scene where Hunt picked it up, Turner was accused of gunning down and killing an unarmed suspect, which causes her a lot of problems, leading into her tracking down the gun's current possessor. Meanwhile, Hunt, out of his well-kept psychosis, befriends and courts Turner, who is already suspicious of Hunt with regards to the case of the missing gun. The film as directed by Kathryn Bigelow is a story that seeks to empower women in the same level that man is particularly in the field of filmmaking more than in the story's premise of a female rookie cop although it maintains a certain level of symbolism for women in general being able to perform the duties of men on the same level, if not better.

It also ties directly with Laura Mulvey's theory of " Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (Mulvey 1975) as the depiction of a strong woman in the lead role not only breaks a lot of stereotypes in film world but also in that it shows how these stereotypes and patterns have formed from the basic views of man and woman from the zenith of patriarchal society. As stated by Mulvey in her theory, " Psychoanalytic theory is thus applied here as a political weapon, demonstrating the way the unconscious of patriarchal society has structured film form." (Mulvey 1975 Attacking the way

mainstream film has subconsciously embedded the dominance of patriarchal society into the, the film Blue Steel successfully showcased a gripping portrayal of a strong woman who despite the way her antagonist Hunt sees her, manages to throw off the conceptions of the female persona in films as just an object of sexual desire. In her article, Mulvey made mention that the analysis of pleasure or beauty in turn destroys it as “the satisfaction and reinforcement of the ego that represent the high point of film history” is an axiom in filmmaking that is in need of criticism (Mulvey 1975). Of course this considers Mulvey’s views on viewing a film as a somewhat voyeuristic act, as the audience is distanced and takes pleasure in passively observing what is being shown on film or on the screen. Where it is the film’s feminist lead character Megan Turner this time who provides the focal point of the story, with the romantic aspect taken out of the way of the major plot. No longer is the female a passive character that serves a reward to the typical male protagonist.

Although this is how the character Hunt sees things, the audience is treated to a perspective other than his and that of traditional films. Another article of note is Judith Mayne’s work “Paradoxes of Spectatorship” where the voyeuristic characteristics of film are explained and expounded on by means of a psychoanalytical point of view on feminism and film. In her article, Mayne spoke of the extent in which “different types of cinema and varied contexts articulate spectatorship in different ways”. (Mayne 2001) It is in this analysis that the lead role of Megan Turner provides a different aspect of films most especially in modern filmmaking as the implications of the patriarchal society are somewhat less imposing as they were before.

Works Cited
Mulvey, Laura. Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema Issues in Feminist Film Criticism. Indiana University Press. 1990. Print
Mayne, Judith. Paradoxes of Spectatorship The Film Cultures Reader Routledge. 2001. Print.