



Warrior Women: Gender, Race, and the Transnational Chinese Action Star

Lisa Funnell

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Considers the significance of female Chinese action stars in national and transnational contexts.

Warrior Women considers the significance of Chinese female action stars in martial arts films produced across a range of national and transnational contexts. Lisa Funnell examines the impact of the 1997 transfer of Hong Kong from British to Chinese rule on the representation of Chinese identities—Hong Kong Chinese, mainland Chinese, Chinese American, Chinese Canadian—in action films produced domestically in Hong Kong and, increasingly, in cooperation with mainland China and Hollywood. Hong Kong cinema has offered space for the development of transnational Chinese screen identities that challenge the racial stereotypes historically associated with the Asian female body in the West. The ethnic/national differentiation of transnational Chinese female stars—such as Pei Pei Cheng, Charlene Choi, Gong Li, Lucy Liu, Shu Qi, Michelle Yeoh, and Zhang Ziyi—is considered part of the ongoing negotiation of social, cultural, and geopolitical identities in the Chinese-speaking world.

“Funnell has compiled an impressive filmography in her astute analysis of Chinese warrior women, including many films that would otherwise not garner much critical attention.” — *H-Net Reviews (H-Asia)*

Lisa Funnell is Assistant Professor in the Women’s and Gender Studies Program at the University of Oklahoma, where she is also an affiliated faculty member of the Film and Media Studies Program and the Center for Social Justice. She is the coeditor (with Philippa Gates) of *Transnational Asian Identities in Pan-Pacific Cinemas: The Reel Asian Exchange*.

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