

**FEMALE ACTION HERO'S SUPERPOWER REPRESENTATION: AUDIENCE
RECEPTION ON TWITTER IN DISNEY'S *MULAN* (2020)**

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ABSTRACT

The live-action adaptation of the Movie *Mulan* produced by Walt Disney in 2020 sparked heated discussion from the audience after Disney tries to represent a strong female action hero by giving Mulan, the female protagonist, a superpower attribute called 'chi'. In the era of new media, audience expressed their opinion through Twitter. Thus, the tweet responses and reviews on several websites were consecutively taken as primary and secondary data as it is an audience analysis research, applying feminist theory to examine the audience responses to the representation of female action heroes with a superpower. The research found that the majority of the audience, approximately 80%, falls into the opposition audience. They do not like the representation of Mulan with a superpower. On the other hand, less than 20% of audience fall into the dominant and negotiate audience. The high percentage of the oppositional audience indicates that the audience of the live-action Mulan would rather choose the representation of Mulan who came from a humble background instead of someone who was born great.

Keywords: *audience analysis; female action hero; Mulan; superpower; Twitter*

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INTRODUCTION

The emergence of feminism makes many young girls seek personal empowerment from popular culture. Many young girls in third-wave feminism put emphasis on individual choices, sexual freedom, personal empowerment, consumerism, and cultural diversity (Stuller, 2010; Adhitya & Lasari, 2019, p. 35). Therefore, girls get satisfaction from consuming women's empowerment messages in popular culture.

Movies can be a medium for young girls to fantasize about being powerful and capable. They love to see Buffy from *Buffy, the Vampire Slayer*, Katniss Everdeen from *The Hunger Games*, or Wonder Woman use their power and kick some asses. Marlina (2015) argues that strong female characters allow the female audience to see a reflection of themselves in fiction. The Hollywood industry finds this growing market of the female audience and commercializes off of their fantasy. In recent years, there is a rise in strong female-centered blockbusters produced by Hollywood production companies. Modern female action heroes are often depicted as physically and mentally strong and in control of their own narrative (Brown, 2011). However, The portrayal of women in popular culture also has a problem of often being stereotyped. Cocca (2016) argues they are often represented as white, heterosexual, cisgender, and non-disabled. Another problem is that women are often sexualized and suffer from the male gaze.

Several studies have been conducted to find how audience resonate with the representation of female characters they see

in media. The audience tend to find more sense of connection from a character who shares the same social attributes as theirs, whether it be gender, race, ethnicity, etc. Hall (2020) finds that when audience are presented with two male and female characters who are equally appealing, there is more probability they would identify with the character of the same gender. Hoffner and Buchanan (2009) as well as McClearen (2015) find that female audience identify with female characters who are smart, successful, resourceful, competent, attractive, and admired by others. Having a positive representation of someone who looks like them in the media can also help marginalized groups feel validated for who they are (Rudy & Adhitya, 2022, p. 336). Collier, Lumadue, and Wooten (2014) observe that the portrayal of same-sex relationships in *Buffy, the Vampire Slayer*, and *Xena: Warrior Princess* helps the lesbian audience feel confident in their identity. It helps them feel empowered and safe to explore their sexuality.

Another previous research finds that audience do not always like the representation of female action heroes they see. Fimbianti (2020) examined that the representation of Captain Marvel received some backlash from the audience. The portrayal of Captain Marvel being dirty, difficult, and temperamental are hardly acceptable to the audience. Captain Marvel is represented to be anti-patriarchy yet her characteristics resemble another male character Marvel has released, Tony Starks. Moreover, Budirská (2021) argues that the man-hating tone of the movie implies "women are better than men," and "all men are evil" further stereotypes feminists to be

man-hating individuals. There is still a lot of room to explore in audience studies, thus, this research is trying to fill in the gap on how the relationship between female action heroes' strength and superpower in the live-action movie of *Mulan* is being accepted by the audience.

The live-action version of *Mulan* which was released in 2020 is another attempt from the Hollywood industry to produce a strong female action hero. The live-action of *Mulan* (2020) is not an original story, it is a tale that has gone through so many adaptations from different perspectives and even cross-cultural interpretations that makes *Mulan* have so many layers of representations. For instance, Kingston rewrites *Mulan* from the perspective of a Chinese American. In *The Woman Warrior*, *Mulan* is breaking the accustomed pattern of women's life, she refuses traditional femininity and pursues women's personal values instead (Yang, 2018). On the other hand, San Souci tries a more adaptive approach toward *Mulan*. He created a free adaptation of *Mulan* instead of being faithful to the classic tale (Hsieh & Matoush, 2012, p. 217). "San Souci saw *Mulan* as a model of 'courage and filial piety' but places emphasis on her ambition to become a 'woman warrior.'" (Hsieh & Matoush, 2012, p. 218). San Souci's picture book later became the blueprint for the Disney animated version of *Mulan*. *Mulan* (1998) borrows the oriental narratives and repackages them to be globally acceptable (Wang & Yueh, 2005). The Disney animated version of *Mulan* puts aside filial piety and emphasis on individual freedom and finding oneself. These are Western values that conflicted with East Asian nature (Hsieh & Matoush, 2012, p. 219).

The live-action of *Mulan* (2020) is influenced by the emergence of superhero films from Marvel and DC. Over the past decade, superhero films have successfully dominated the Hollywood market and they do not have plans to slow down anytime soon. Disney takes note of the success of superhero films and implements superpowers into *Mulan*'s narrative. *Mulan* was born as a prodigious warrior instead of learning from scratch (Lailawati et. al., 2020). The live-action of *Mulan* (2020) started with the protagonist, *Mulan*, who was born with a special superpower called *chi*. In this movie, *chi* is explained as a power that is only possessed by warriors, or precisely men. As quoted by *Mulan*'s father in the movie "chi is for warriors, not daughters". *Mulan* is struggling to conceal her power because women are not supposed to have such power. As a woman, *Mulan* should bring honor to the family by marrying a reputable man. Niki Caro, the director of the film describes *Mulan* to be a powerful girl, but being too powerful can be taboo for girls (Flint, 2020). It can be reflected in *Mulan*'s father's reaction when young *Mulan* secretly used her power. Her father told *Mulan* to conceal her power because she is a girl, not a warrior. Through her persistence, *Mulan* slowly realized that a girl could also be powerful and unleash her true potential. The movie thus tries to deliver a women's empowerment message of how girls should embrace their power.

Mulan is a popular character that has become a global role model for many girls after its animated adaptation by Disney in 1998. Many audience who have watched *Mulan* resonate with *Mulan*'s character because of her hard work and perseverance to gain her power and achieve her success.

Therefore, adding a superpower to the live-action of *Mulan* is such a risky move. It can be a make or break for the movie as *Mulan* no longer starts from zero, she is already at a hundred. Her struggle is that she does not know how to utilize her power. Many of them notice this change and express their opinions in so many different ways, including writing reviews on websites such as IMDb or rotten tomatoes, posting videos on Youtube, or sharing it on their personal social media accounts. With the growing technology, these comments and criticisms can be easily accessed with the help of the internet. One of these platforms includes Twitter, a microblog that allows its users to post 280 characters short messages. Twitter lets researchers observe the audience's experiences and conduct content analysis without personally being involved. Twitter provides a space for new audience studies that are cheap and easy to access (Bilandzic et al., 2014). Thus, this research aims to analyze whether a superpower can be a template to answer young girls' desire for empowerment in today's era and find out what type of representation they would like to see in *Mulan* as a strong female character. This research is also intended to explore new audience research, especially using the social media platform Twitter.

This research was conducted by using qualitative content analysis. This research also used the audience's opinions from the tweets they posted on Twitter as primary data and reviews on several blogs as secondary data. The data was taken using Twitter's advanced search by entering the main keyword "Mulan" with secondary keywords such as "power," "superpower," and "chi".

The data were limited to the tweets sent from 7 to 27 September 2020. A total of 204 tweets were retrieved from the search. After the data were retrieved, they were analyzed through a few steps. The first step was condensing the tweets without changing their meaning. Then, the data were labeled based on the code that represents their position. The next step was to organize them into categories and their positions, the dominant, the negotiation, and the oppositional. Lastly, the data were analyzed with audience reception theory and feminism theory.

Hall's audience reception theory offers a theoretical approach for researchers to how media messages produced by the producer are being interpreted by the audience (Hall, 1973). He argues that audience decode media products differently based on their individual experiences, cultural background, or even economic status. He classifies the audience into three types: the dominant audience, negotiated audience, and the oppositional audience. This paper then uses feminist theories to explain the background of the responses.

DISCUSSION

The result of using Twitter's advanced search from 7 to 27 September 2020 is a total of 204 tweets. From table 1, 9.3% of audience fall into the dominant audience, 3.9% of audience fall into the negotiated audience while the majority of audience, accounting for 86.8%, fall into the oppositional audience. The audience expressed their reason for liking or disliking the movie for various reasons which can be concluded into 8 categories as seen in table 1.

Table 1. The distribution of *Mulan*'s audience

Position	Category	Number of Audience
Dominant Audience	The movie promotes women's empowerment	11
	The movie teaches women that they should also be able to live in their power	8
Negotiated Audience	They get the women's empowerment message the producer tried to express but the execution is a little forced	8
Oppositional Audience	comparing Mulan to other characters/movies with similar power	20
	giving Mulan a superpower undermined the message of the original story	8
	Mulan is inferior to men without her superpower	6
	Mulan is supposed to be a regular young woman with a smart brain who trained and worked hard to become strong instead of the chosen one who is born with superpower	108
	Mulan lacks character development	9
	they could not accept the existence and/or concept of chi, it felt forced and weird	27

The dominant audience celebrates Mulan as a character because they can feel the women's empowerment message reflected in the movie. They use empowering words such as "female spirit," "women's independence," "the awakening of female power," "on fleek," "empowering," and "strong women rock" to describe Mulan. They also expressed their love for the fact that Mulan is powerful whether it is from her wit or her inner strength. Mulan's strength and badass personality draw audience into watching the movie. Mulan is breaking gender stereotypes as her strength is able to be on par with her male peers in the army. In expressing this point, the audience use words like "great power," "an amazing person," "magical," "cool," and "capable."

The negotiated audience takes on this movie can be summarized into one point, the superpower addition is a little bit forced. The audience does not strongly reject the movie. They are able to appreciate the movie, but

they expect the producer to have done it better. The words used by the negotiated audience are "a little forced," "suppress," "too much expectation," "could do better," "able to appreciate the message," and "concealed." Some audience find Mulan's strength to be concealed. Although she has a strong chi that is probably stronger than her male counterpart, Mulan is struggling with having to hide her true power because she is a woman.

The oppositional audience express their rejection of Mulan's superpower for several reasons. They perceive superpower as a foreign concept as it was never mentioned in any of the previous adaptations. "Stupid," "weird," "unnecessary," "annoying," and "random" are used to describe how they feel towards the live-action of *Mulan*. They also argue that Mulan lacks in character development. They did not see Mulan grow as a character in this movie as she was already born special from the very beginning.

Their ideal portrayal of Mulan is determined,” “strong,” “smart,” “witty,” “courageous,” and “hard worker.” Another thing the audience pointed out is the chosen one and the Mary Sue trope that is prominent in the story. Following that, they also compare Mulan with other characters with similar tropes such as Harry Potter and Rey from *Star Wars*.

Audience responses on *Mulan's* superpower

The live-action of *Mulan's* cinematographer, Mandy Walker described Mulan as “a character who comes from a normal family and realizes how to use and harness her inner power and strength [...] everybody has that potential to find what they're good at, to find their passion” (Weiss, 2020). Hence, the live-action of *Mulan* (2020) focuses on how Mulan finally utilizes her superpower to its fullest potential after she embraces it as her strength. Since childhood, she has been suppressed because she lives in a patriarchal society where it is not acceptable for women to have it. Mulan owning her superpower becomes a part of her journey to figuring out her true self. Mulan is finally able to slowly accept her chi as a gift when she takes her father's position in the army. However, Mulan does not get the freedom to utilize her power in one go. She still has to disguise herself as a man because it is not acceptable for women to become a warrior. Although Mulan is a capable warrior, her achievements are all credited to Hua Jun, her male name, instead of Hua Mulan. Therefore, by adding a superpower the producer tries to convey a message that girls and women do not have to hide their power away, they can also have fierce strength and be feminine. Mulan learns

that she can never be powerful unless she loses that disguise (Caro as cited in Potter, 2020). Other girls should also be able to do the same and just be themselves.

Based upon these encoding messages from the producers, the audience are split into three positions. The first position is the dominant audience. Dominant audience are the ones who accepted the intended meaning shared by the producer (Hall, 1973). In this regard, they accepted Mulan as a strong and powerful woman from a normal family background who utilizes her superpower for good and finally finds her true self. Mulan has a women's empowerment theme.



Figure 1. tweet from the dominant audience



Figure 2. tweet from the dominant audience

The audience in figure 1 celebrates the movie because it shows them what a great power a woman can possess. They love to see Mulan as a woman who is powerful, strong, and confident. This shows that women in the position of power have a place in the audience's hearts. Many girls in the twenty-first century grow up consuming women's empowerment media. Young women love to consume women's empowerment media where the narrative revolves around a strong woman who can do anything (Timson, 2005; Wentz, 2004; Wilson, 2004 as cited in Doull & Sethna, 2011).

User @kjt_loveCC in figure 2 pointed out that *Mulan* is breaking the gender stereotype. They acknowledge *Mulan* as a character who does not conform to traditional femininity but she is a choice-making agent, she fights her own battle without fear. She shows the audience that she can also be as powerful as men. She empowers the audience that women are not inferior to men.

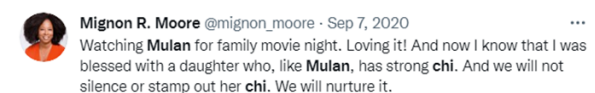


Figure 3. tweet from the dominant audience



Figure 4. tweet from the dominant audience



Figure 5. tweet from the dominant audience

Many young girls seek a representation of someone whom they can resonate with from popular culture. As a response in figure 3 shows, *Mulan* can resonate with her because she has a daughter, a strong daughter who will fight for herself. People can find a source of connection with a fictional character for so many reasons, and one of them is when they find a sort of similarity in the character's identity. The live-action of *Mulan* was able to poke the audience's heart because her story is relatable to how girls are being underestimated and set aside because of her strength. Yet, *Mulan* shows them that girls can also stand up for themselves. Figure 4 shows that *Mulan* can inspire women. They find *Mulan*'s strength admirable, they wish

to have the same strength as her. The audience in figure 5 also finds that the live-action of *Mulan* can be watched by young kids because it tells a story about bringing honors and the producers are able to portray women in a respectful manner.

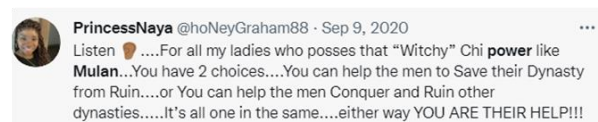


Figure 6. tweet from the dominant audience

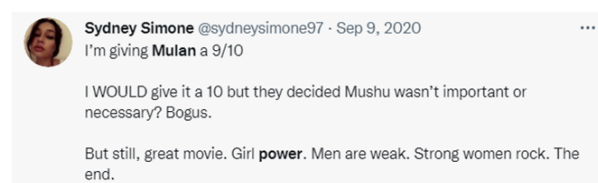


Figure 7. tweet from the dominant audience

On the flip side, some audiences like the live-action of *Mulan* because *Mulan* portrays a woman who is superior to her male counterparts. The audiences in Figures 6 and 7 emphasizes "men are weak," "strong women rock," and "you are their help," which similar to one of the slogans of girl power is "GIRL KICK ASS!" For women who have been suppressed by the patriarchal society and lack of power, it is easier for them to feel empowered when they can fantasize about a world where women can overpower men. This form of escapism gives women a false sense of security and empowerment that we have achieved gender equality. However, this representation oversaw the problem where women still experience gender oppression in real life.

The second position is the negotiated audience. Negotiated audience agree with some of the values and messages that the producer tries to express but they disagree with the other messages due to several

reasons including but not limited to their cultural and economic background (Hall, 1973). The negotiated audience of *Mulan* feel that the overall movie was okay, they can accept *Mulan*'s empowerment messages. They also appreciate the fact that the producers make one of the villains to be a woman. Thus, they not only have one representation of a powerful woman, but they also show the possibility of having a great superpower but using it the wrong way. However, the way the producer unfolded the chi as *Mulan*'s source of power and strength failed to grab the audience's heart.



Figure 8. tweet from the negotiated audience



Figure 9. tweet from the negotiated audience

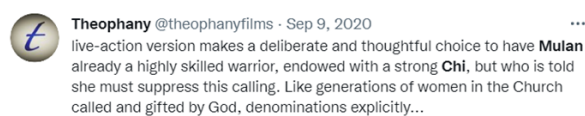


Figure 10. tweet from the negotiated audience

Some audiences find themselves appreciating *Mulan* for her strength and power. User @bleesedreylo mentioned that *Mulan* is a “powerful and strong woman on her own”. User @deachachai in figure 8 expresses her take on the movie, “I love the idea of the witch.” The audience appreciates Disney's choice for creating a villain who is also a woman. It gives the audience a variety of representations of women in movies. The portrayal of women does not always have to be a protagonist with a good moral compass.

A villain with an in-depth story and character development can also draw the audience to love a movie. In spite of these aspects that they like, negotiated audience could not value *Mulan*'s superpower the way the producer expected. The producer failed to integrate *Mulan*'s superpower in a way that makes sense within the story. “I expected to see more than a superpower girl with a sword“ as user @deachachai expressed. *Mulan*'s storyline falls flat because the audience expects the story of an empowerment journey, yet the producer failed to deliver. Another reason the audience pointed out is that they do not like the way *Mulan* has to conceal her superpower. User @theophanyfilms expressed, “who is told she must suppress this calling.” Women should not have been ashamed of their superpower. They should be able to utilize it just like everyone else.

The last position is the oppositional audience. The oppositional audience is the group of audience who disagree with the intended message given by the producer and decode the message differently. In this category, the live-action of *Mulan*'s audience hardly accept superpower as a part of *Mulan*'s journey. They disagree with the way the producer tries to explain her superpower as empowering when she hardly does anything to earn it. Additionally, *Mulan*'s superpower is portrayed as magical, which also goes against the traditional concept of chi where the power needs to be cultivated.



Figure 11. tweet from the oppositional audience



Figure 12. tweet from the oppositional audience

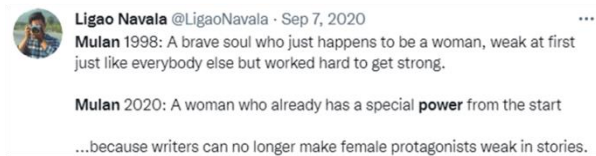


Figure 13. tweet from the oppositional audience

The animated version of *Mulan* released by Disney in 1998 has inspired a lot of women to work hard and achieve their dreams. *Mulan* resonates with a lot of women who start from a normal humble background but have the determination to find their true selves. The spirit of *Mulan* can be seen anywhere, *Mulan* can be anyone of us. The story of *Mulan* successfully captured the audience's heart with her hard work, determination, bravery, courage, and wit. Therefore, giving *Mulan* a superpower without letting her experience the hardship of training and set back makes the audience feel like the producer oversimplified the message of *Mulan's* journey. It is unavoidable that the success of *Mulan* (1998) left the audience comparing it to the new adaptation. The producer failed to meet the high expectations of the audience.



Figure 14. tweet from the oppositional audience

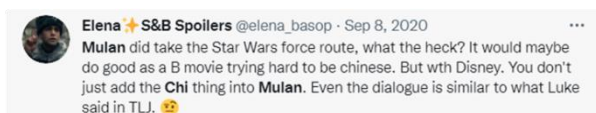


Figure 15. tweet from the oppositional audience

The statement of user @LigaoNavala in figure 13 that “writers can no longer make

female protagonists weak,” reveals the problem in the representation of female action heroes. Many production companies want to push out women’s empowerment movies with strong female characters yet they end up using similar tropes over and over again. *Mulan*, for instance, is being compared with other movies including Rey Skywalker from *Star Wars*, Elsa from *Frozen*, Wonder Woman, and Captain Marvel. These characters have strong abilities that are above human reach. They also share similar tropes which are the chosen one and/or Mary Sue. The chosen one is a trope where someone is chosen to do the mission. The Mary Sue trope, on the other hand, is when a female protagonist is already perfect and does not have any flaws. *Mulan* is the chosen one, she is born with a special superpower that makes her stronger than anyone else without training. She is chosen to be the one saving the emperor with the help of the witch. *Mulan* is already perfect from the beginning, and thus, makes her a Mary Sue. These character traits are well-liked by many people and it has proven to have worked in some other movies. Movies with the chosen one trope and the Mary Sue trope are among the most-grossing movies of all time. Audience love to fantasize about being the only person who is able to save the world or having a perfect ability. Yet these tropes do not work well with *Mulan's* audience.

Audience could not relate to *Mulan* because she is basically a superhero. *Mulan* falls into the Type II superhero proposed by Northrop Frye. A type II superhero is someone who has an ability that is unachievable and greater than normal people, but they are still human and have some relatable human virtue (Worcester et al.,

2013). Superheroes type II can be found in many Marvel superhero franchises. Marvel stories are another example of the successful chosen one trope. Stan Lee was able to shift a common trope with a realistic approach. Marvel superheroes have characteristics that can resonate with the audience. For instance, They live a normal mundane life when they do not do crazy stunts saving the world. They struggle with failing, breaking up, bullying, or even having disabilities (Mills, 2013, p. 106). They show the characters experiencing some setbacks and learning from them. They show how even a superhero can have a vulnerable moment. This is the part where *Mulan* lacks. *Mulan* does not seem to experience major character development. *Mulan*'s character development appears to be superficial and one-dimensional. Audience simplify *Mulan*'s struggle as "she has to hide her superpower." *Mulan*'s superpower is already unattainable for many audience, and they can not find any other characteristics that they can connect with.

Female Action Heroes' Representation in the live-action of *Mulan*

As previously mentioned, women in the 21st century grew up watching women's empowerment messages in the media as feminism has become prevalent in popular culture. Many women find themselves engaged in strong female-centered movies because it lets them fantasize about being in a position of power in contrast to how powerless they are in reality (Stuller, 2010, p. ix). Seeing someone who shares the same identity as us can lift our self-esteem (Cocca, 2016, p. 3). We can feel appreciated and validated as a part of something. For young girls, popular culture media texts that they consume can also affect how they construct

their identity. Thus, an inclusive representation of women is extremely important for the development of the female heroes genre. The stereotyped portrayal of women in movies is to be more supportive, more interested in romance, and more sexualized (Cocca, 2016, p. 4). Many times, women are often portrayed in skin-tight costumes to appeal to the male gaze.

The representation of *Mulan* in the new live-action adaptation does not live up to the audience's expectation of what type of strong female character she is supposed to be. *Mulan*, who has a superpower, becomes out of reach for many audience. The audience prefer *Mulan* to be someone who comes from a humble background. The audience want *Mulan* to be a regular girl who achieves her goal through determination and hard work. Many young girls may not be gifted with special talents when they were born. They have to climb up step by step. The audience expected *Mulan*'s character development to be a girl who was terrible at fighting to a strong warrior who can be in the same position as her male peers through practice. Johnson (2020) expressed, "where the movie misses the mark is that it doesn't allow *Mulan* the opportunity for character growth. She's not quite a struggling Jedi, nor is she your everyday girl like she was in the animated film."



Figure 16. tweet from the audience

Mulan is strong, she can fight, and she is as capable as her male peers. She is physically and mentally capable, which is a textbook definition of a female action hero. Stuller (2010) describes a female action hero

as someone who has strong capabilities that are achieved through innate abilities, intense training, or a combination of both. The previous strong female action heroes in Hollywood films can be seen in *The Hunger Games*, *Wonder Woman*, *Captain Marvel*, *Black Widow*, and *The Bird of Prey*. The live-action of *Mulan*'s audience identify with some of these action heroes as something foreign. User @mudidaya mentioned, "Captain Marvel is an alien, and Wonder Woman is a goddess." Gramuglia (2020) wrote a review on CBR.com, "If *Mulan* is a super-soldier who is practically unbeatable and earns the respect of the army regardless of years of ingrained sexism, then her actions carry no weight." *Mulan*, *Captain Marvel*, and *Wonder Woman* are similar in the way their superpower is unattainable for humans and better than men. The danger of the overly strong better than men's movies is that they will make women engrossed in their fantasy and think that women have achieved equality with men and can do anything (Brown, 2011, p. 155). Fudge noted, "Girl Power tricks us all into believing that girls are naturally powerful and therefore ignores the many ways their power is contingent on adhering to cultural expectations of female behavior" (2006, p. 160 as cited in Brown, 2011, p. 155). This makes women's empowerment and feminism become commodifications that can be taken on and off.



Figure 17. tweet from the audience

The live-action of *Mulan* could have been a breath of fresh air in the oversaturated female action heroes market. women's

empowerment is not only limited to being physically strong by possessing innate power. Power can also come from perseverance, empathy, sisterhood, families, and love (Cocca, 2016, p. 215). *Mulan*'s story could have been better written with an in-depth character development about overcoming human restraint as @NickJennings2k9 mentioned. It is okay for *Mulan* to show some vulnerability and grow from it. Moreover, in recent years, many female action heroes are portrayed by white women, and women of color are still underrepresented in the Hollywood industry. *Mulan* could have been a successful blockbuster that can resonate with Asian American or Asian women who still explore their identity and seek a role model who looks like them in popular culture. Diverse representation is especially needed since the U.S. has a diverse demographic, there are so many groups of minorities that wish to see someone with whom they can identify with on the big screen.

CONCLUSION

This study answers how *Mulan*'s audience on Twitter react to the superpower addition in the live-action movie *Mulan* (2020). The results show that *Mulan* audience can be categorized into dominant, negotiated, and oppositional audience. Dominant audience agree with the encoded message of *Mulan* having a superpower because *Mulan* embodies women's empowerment spirit. They love it when *Mulan* is seen kicking asses and is better than men. Negotiated audience can also see the women's empowerment message in the story, however, they are disappointed with how the plotline develops. On the other hand, the oppositional audience of *Mulan*'s audience

do not like the idea of having a superpower in the movie. Oppositional Audience do not like the idea of turning Mulan from a regular woman into the chosen Mary Sue. Mulan's strength should come from determination and hard work. The representation of Mulan who is born great also undermines the idea of women being able to be equal to men through hard work. The oppositional audience account for the majority audience with more than 80% percentage. This high percentage indicates that as women's empowerment movies have become a popular genre, the majority of the audience feels that the live-action movie Mulan is merely a show-off for strong women kicking men's asses. It fails to deliver a strong women's empowerment message. The audience can not resonate with a female action hero with a superpower. They prefer to watch female action heroes who are regular women achieving their dream with perseverance, wit, patience, and hard work.

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