

# features

**MARVEL**

# CAPTAIN MARVEL

## A review of the latest Marvel movie

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I must admit, I do not normally watch this movie genre but I could not pass up the opportunity to discuss the portrayal of feminism within the new Captain Marvel.

With negatively pre-judged reviews, Marvel Studios' first female-led film undoubtedly sparked controversy. So much so that Rotten Tomatoes changed their policy on rating films prior to the release date.

The surge of disapproval for the movie stems from depiction of Captain Marvel being male in the comics. With the decision to make this character female, Marvel Studios risked criticism and backlash. However, it seems it was the right move.

According to Vox Media, Captain Marvel has brought in \$760 million worldwide in the two weeks it has been in the box office.

Despite 25 years without a female-led film from Marvel Studios, the story is empowering and well-developed.

Carol Danvers, commonly referred to as Vers, is a member of the Kree military unit known as Starforce.

Within the beginning of the film, she is captured by enemy alien shapeshifters, the Skrulls. Fighting for an escape, she lands herself free in Los Angeles.

With the help of agent Nick Fury, Vers is taken to the U.S. Air Force base and discovers that she was a pilot in her previous life. Throughout the film, loose ends of her past are tied together.

Like many women, Vers struggles with being told she is incapable of reaching her full potential. Nonetheless, she overcomes the obstacles around her and is able to defeat Starforce.

Vers eventually realizes that her abilities far surmounted the need to prove herself as a woman.

Although I felt that Captain Marvel successfully integrated feminism as a foundation for the movie,

I had trouble with Vers' rude and overly sassy attitude. It seemed to me that this film overcompensated what it means to be empowered.

A woman should not have to be hard-shelled and standoffish in order to be taken seriously. A woman can be kind and unguarded, while still being strong.

This being said, Vers' attitude plays into the false view that feminism involves being conceited and dominant over men. Her attitude also makes it hard for some female watchers to relate to her character, I being one of them.

I do not believe this cinematic decision was made deliberately, but I cannot help but think that some viewers are going to misinterpret the purpose of the feminism which is to yield gender equality.

One of the key themes to this film is the recurring notion that Vers is unable to control her emotions.

Starforce commander, Yon-Rogg, worked closely with Vers to help her push aside emotions and memories of the past. He explained that she must "master herself" in order to evoke all of her power.

Time and time again, women are seen as being too sensitive and melodramatic. Emotion is often seen as a weakness and many times, women are judged for being vulnerable.

The misconception that strength can be determined by one's ability to control their emotions is wrong and actually impossible. Feelings just are, and there is no need to be ashamed of sadness, anger, excitement, etc.

The relationship between Yon-Rogg and Vers illustrates the struggle women have against the demand for rejecting emotion. Ultimately, however, it is how she uses those feelings and past experiences that she prevails.

While being detained by the Kree in the final scenes, Vers is subjected to a memory probe that forces her to see all of the times she has been told she is inadequate. This then gives her the motivation to break free from their hold and through



Set photos of Brie Larson in-costume on the set of Captain Marvel.

finding her true self, she is able to unlock her full power.

This scene is very depictive of women conquering inferiority and recognizing the strength we have.

The most significant part of the vibrant flashback scene is Vers' unwavering determination and resilience.

She is reminded of the many times that she has fallen and gotten back up. Her memories as a child include playing baseball and getting into a go-karting accident,

both of which she is told she cannot do.

A memory of her falling off the rope at military training camp reveals the belief that she should not be there. Nevertheless, she climbs the rope again.

All of these hardships truly captivate the feminist movement. It is about defying the odds, trying again when you fail, and fighting to be treated as an equal. It is the belief that a woman can do anything a man can.

As a woman, I sometimes forget the barriers that stand before me. But this scene reminded me of the many ways women are underestimated.

As a feminist, I can really respect Vers' courage to do what she loved, despite being told it was not for her.

In the final battle scene between Yon-Rogg and Vers, there is an mental battle as well as a physical one. Yon-Rogg says, "Without us, you're weak, flawed, helpless."

He was getting inside Vers' head, making her feel that her powers were dependent on Starforce, rather than her own ability. This seems to be a representation of the sexism that faces society today.

Women are seen as being the weaker of the sexes, helpless in times of trouble, needing a man to save the day. However, Vers' eventual triumph proves the opposite to be true.

Before defeating Yon-Rogg, she proclaims that her name is Carol.

From this moment forward, she is set free from his control. This is a significant part of the film, as it shows the importance of self-assurance.

Vers demonstrates the message that when you remember who you are, you can overcome anything. Women, specifically, must believe they are strong enough in order to really be strong enough. Nothing anyone else says can limit a woman's potential.

Maria Rambeau, former pilot and friend of Vers, also helps her to defeat Starforce. The supportive friendship these women share is very significant of the importance of females empowering other females. All women must strive for equality and raise each other up when the moment presents itself.

Rambeau is depicted as a single mother to daughter Monica. The relationship they hold is very special and it is clear that Monica has been raised to live fearlessly.

She symbolizes feminism with her enthusiasm for female strength and the perspective that women are simply badass. Monica is a refreshing burst of energy with a loyal motivation to advance gender equality.

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Ryan Flack and Anna Boden, "Captain Marvel" co-directors, answer questions during a round table at the Pentagon, Arlington, Va., March 7, 2019.