

## The "Femme" Fatale in Brazilian Cinema: Challenging Hollywood Norms

Antônio Márcio da Silva



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The femme fatale has long been constructed and understood in popular culture and cinema as a beautiful heterosexual Caucasian woman that belongs to film noir and neo-noir. Here, da Silva shows the need to incorporate diverse ethnic groups and male homosexuals into the range of "femmes" fatales. He examines how the Brazilian representations cross genre, gender, race, and class and offer alternative instances (black, slave, homosexual, married, and teenage) to the dominant Hollywood Caucasian model. As with gender performativity, the danger the femme fatale represents to society is constructed rather than being an innate feature. This figure represents areas of cultural anxiety, particularly around issues of sexuality and gender, but da Silva seeks to reframe these issues in the context of Brazilian film.

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