

Women in Film

These feature films, cartoons and TV shows feature women in strong, prominent roles as heroines, role models or victims. Be aware that some contain female Hollywood stereotypes from decades ago.



African American Women:

The Devil's Daughter

59 min. Nina Mae McKinney runs afoul of voodoo in Jamaica.

Dirty Gertie from Harlem

(1946) 65 min. Francine Everett, Don Wilson. A sexy, enticing dancer from Harlem makes things happen in a sleepy Caribbean island resort.

The Duke Is Tops (aka Bronze Venus)

(1938) 63 min. Lena Horne plays a night club singer who gets a chance at Broadway.

Sepia Cinderella (1947) with Billy Daniels and Sheila Guyse. A struggling band leader's rise to fame after overcoming many obstacles, including a bad-girl vs. good-girl situation.

The Beulah Show (1950-1953)

Six episodes of the first television series to feature black actors. Beulah is a Negro domestic in a white family who pulls the weekly family situations together with more common sense than all of the others. The role of Beulah was played by 3 distinguished black women: Ethel Waters, Hattie McDaniel and Louise Beavers.

Get Christie Love

(1974) Teresa Graves. A black & sassy undercover operative uses street smarts, revealing outfits and Kung-Fu to penetrate the thriving drug dealing culture in Los Angeles.

Lady Cocoa

(1975) 93 min. Foxy Lady Cocoa (Lola Falana) is out to take down her mobster boyfriend.

TNT Jackson

(1974) Color. A young karate expert searches for her brother's killer in Hong Kong. Starring Jeannie Bell.

Velvet Smooth

(1976) 93 min. Johnnie Hill. The female head of a detective agency is hired by a crime lord to figure out who's taking his action.

Miss Betty Boop!

[48 public domain Cartoons!](#)



Adventure Serials & Westerns

The Perils of Pauline 1933 Evalyn Knapp 12 Chapters.

A famous scientist and his beautiful daughter travel to Indochina to find an ivory disc that has the formula for a deadly gas engraved on it. An evil doctor and his gang are also looking for it.

Zorro's Black Whip 1944 George J. Lewis 12 Chapters. Linda Stirling stars as a female Zorro.

Devil on Horseback (Lili Damita, 1936)

Western starring a woman, Lili Damita, rather than a male hero.

Water Rustlers (Dorothy Page, 1939) B-Western starring a woman, Dorothy Page. She is not just the heroine, she is the star above her male leading man.

The Singing Cowgirl (1938) 59m. Typical B-Western except Dorothy Page stars in it!

The Torch (1951) Paulette Godard is a fiery hispanic who opposes a rising rebel general who takes over her town.

Angel and the Badman (1947)

John Wayne western in which a Quaker girl played by Gail Russell makes him reform his badman ways.

[Annie Oakley TV](#)

(1954-1957) A fictionalized account of the life of legendary Wild West sharpshooter Annie Oakley. Set in the quiet western town of Diablo, Annie and her little brother Tagg made sure that outlaws who moseyed into town kept on going. Cast: Gail Davis, Brad Johnson, Jimmy Hawkins. 81 half-hour episodes.

Classic Television Series

[Sheena, Queen of the Jungle](#)

(1955) Jungle girl Sheena and a hunter guide Bob Rayburn fight to restore harmony in the jungle by opposing evil that invades their environment. 16 half-hour episodes.

[Decoy](#)

(1957) Beverly Garland plays an undercover police woman in this syndicated cop series that was filmed in New York City. 25 half-hour episodes.

[I Married Joan](#)

(1952-1955) The adventures of the scatterbrained wife of a respected city judge, starring Joan Davis and Jim Backus. 24 episodes.

[My Little Margie](#)

(1952-1955) "My Little Margie" is the story of vivacious Margie Albright (Gale Storm) and father (Charles Farrell), a widowed executive at the NYC firm of Honeywell & Todd. 36 shows.

[Private Secretary](#)

(1953-1957) Susie, played by Ann Sothern, is secretary to handsome talent agent Peter Sands (Don Porter) and keeps getting messed up in his private life. 16 shows.

[Loretta Young Show](#)

(1953-1961) Long-running, half-hour drama anthology series hosted by actress Loretta Young. In addition to hosting the series, she played the lead in various episodes. 30 shows.

[Meet Corliss Archer](#)

(1954) Pert blond teenager Corliss Archer (Ann Baker) must balance her life at school, her lovable but goofy boyfriend Dexter and her well-meaning but clueless parents. 36 episodes.

[The Lucy Show](#) (1962-1968) Lucille Ball slapstick classic with Gale Gordon, Vivian Vance and numerous Hollywood guest stars. 30 episodes are in the public domain.

[Betty White TV Shows](#)

Life With Elizabeth

(1952-1955) With Betty White, Del Moore and announcer Jack Narz. This domestic comedy did not have episode titles. Each show consisted of three separate episodes in the life of a married couple, with the emphasis placed on gentle comedy and more talk than action. 27 episodes.

Date With the Angels

(1957-1958) Domestic sitcom centered around young Los Angeles newlyweds Gus Angel (Bill Williams) and Vicki Angel (Betty White). Richard Deacon plays neighbor Roger Finley. 21 episodes.

Feature Films - Comedy, drama, mystery, crime, etc.

The Admiral Was a Lady (1950) 87m. Edmond O'Brien, Wanda Hendrix. Ex-WAVE encounters four fun-loving, work-hating men, all of whom want to marry her.

Algiers (1938) 99m. Hedy Lamarr and Charles Boyer have torrid romance in the Casbah.

The Animal Kingdom (1932) 85m. Leslie Howard, Myrna Loy and marital discord.

Back Page (1934) 65m Peggy Shannon plays a newspaper reporter who moves to small town.

The Bigamist (1953) 80m. Joan Fontaine, Ida Lupino, Edmund O'Brien marriage triangle! Directed by Ida Lupino.

Big Town After Dark (1947) 69m. Crime reporter Hillary Brooke opposes local crime boss.

Blonde Ice (1948) 73m. Leslie Brooks marries wealthy men who die mysteriously.

Brilliant Marriage (1936) 65m Daughter of rich socialites runs away from home and falls for the wrong man.

Carnival Story (1954) Color, 98m. High-diver Lyle Bettger takes young Anne Baxter on to teach her the ropes, but a romantic triangle develops.

Cause for Alarm (1951) 72m. Loretta Young. Invalid husband claims wife trying to kill him, then dies.

Christmas Without Snow 1980 100m. Color. Michael Learned, John Houseman. Divorced woman tries to build new life with child in new city.

City Without Men (1943) 75m. Linda Darnell, Edgar Buchanan. Stories of female residents in boarding house near prison.

Divorce His 1973 90m. Color. Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton. Breakup of a marriage told from perspectives of both the husband and wife.

Divorce Hers 1973 90m. Color. Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton. Part 2 from Liz' viewpoint.

Driver's Seat (1971) 102m. Color. Elizabeth Taylor. Italy. Mental spinster searches Rome for someone to kill her.

Eliza's Horoscope 1975 Canada 120m. Color. Elizabeth Moorman, Tommy Lee Jones. Young woman arrives in Montreal looking for love.

Esther and the King (1960, color, Italy) 109 min. Joan Collins stars in the biblical story about Esther, who must risk her life to save her people from the charmingly wicked prince Haman.

A Farewell to Arms (1932) 78m. Gary Cooper, Helen Hayes in Hemingway WW-I classic.

A Guest in the House (1944) 121m. Anne Baxter, Ralph Bellamy in gripping melodrama about neurotic young woman in household of her betrothed.

Heartbeat (1946) 102m. Pickpocket Ginger Rogers in Paris falls for Jean-Pierre Aumont.

Hell Harbor (1930) 84m Lupe Velez dreams of escaping her island home and abusive father.

Her Favorite Patient (1945) 72m. Aka. "Bedside Manner." Beautiful doctor Ruth Hussey meets handsome patient John Carroll.

The Hitch-Hiker (1953) 71m. Edmond O'Brien and Frank Lovejoy out for a hunting trip are taken over by a murderous fugitive. No women in cast, but directed by Ida Lupino.

His Girl Friday (1940) 92m. Editor Cary Grant vs. reporter Rosalind Russell out to capture big story!

Indiscreet (1931) Gloria Swanson jeopardizes the relationship with the man she loves when a no-account from her past shows up.

Indiscretion of an American Wife (1953) 63m. American Jennifer Jones meets her Italian lover, Montgomery Clift, one last time in Rome's railway station. Directed by Vittorio De Sica.

Jane Eyre (1970) Color, 110m. George C. Scott stars as the brooding Rochester in Bronte's classic English tale, with Susannah York as Jane Eyre.

Katherine 1975 97m. Color. Sissy Spacek, Art Carney, Jane Wyatt, Henry Winkler. Woman gets involved in fights of the 1960s-70s. TV movie.

Lady Behave (1937) 53m Sally Eilers in complicated COMEDY about posing as her sister to help annul a marriage.

The Lady Confesses (1949) 70m. Fiancee investigates mysterious death of her intended's first wife.

Lady Gangster (1942) 62m. Faye Emerson, Julie Bishop, Jackie Gleason. The title tells it all.

Lady in the Death House (1944) 55m. Story of woman on death row told by letter she wrote on day of her scheduled execution.

Lady of Burlesque (1943) 91m. Stripper Barbara Stanwyck traps killer in burlesque house.

The Lady Says No (1952) 83m David Niven writes article about a woman (Joan Caulfield) who writes a best-selling book for women warning them about the "dangers" of men.

The Last Time I Saw Paris (1954) Color, 115m. Elizabeth Taylor and Van Johnson play two struggling lovers in the reckless gaiety of post-World War-II Paris.

A Life at Stake (1954) 76m Out-of-work architect meets a married woman (Angela Lansbury) with a business proposition for him.

The Little Princess (1939) Color, 91m. Shirley Temple is orphan when her father goes to war during Victorian era.

Love Affair (1939) 87m. Irene Dunne and Charles Boyer meet on shipboard. Plans to continue the romance meet tragedy.

Lovers and Liars (1980, Italy) Color, 96m. Goldie Hawn comedy. American actress on vacation in Italy falls for her friend's married Italian lover.

Ma Barker's Killer Brood (1960) 89m. Lurene Tuttle, Tristram Coffin. Ma Barker and sons terrorize South with crime in 1930s.

Made for Each Other (1939) 93m. Jimmy Stewart and Carole Lombard are a young married couple struggling with jobs, illness and lack of money.

Miss Polly (1941) 45m Comedy. Zasu Pitts heads up the town's Purity League such that no one gets married.

My Dear Secretary (1948) Writer Kirk Douglas hires Laraine Day to help out. 95 min.

My Man Godfrey (1936) Carole Lombard, Alice Brady, Gail Patrick Director: Gregory La Cava. 95 min.

The Naked Kiss (1964) 92m. Constance Towers is a prostitute trying to start new in a small town. Directed by Sam Fuller.

Nancy Drew, Reporter (1939) 68m. Bonita Granville plays the famous teenage sleuth.

Nothing Sacred (1937) Color, 77m. Carole Lombard battles Fredric March!

No, No, Nanette (1940) 87m Comedy. Perky young Nanette (Anna Neagle) attempts to save the marriage of her uncle and aunt by untangling Uncle Jimmy from innocent but ensnaring flirtations.

Of Human Bondage (1934) 83m. The darker side of obsessive love finds Leslie Howard inexplicably pursuing an affair with vulgar waitress Bette Davis.

Penny Serenade (1941) 120 min. Classic tearjerker directed by George Stevens. Cary Grant and Irene Dunne, meet, love, marry and then drift apart when their unborn baby dies.

Please Murder Me (1956) 78m. Angela Lansbury, Raymond Burr in homicide yarn.

Rain (1932) 90m. Somerset Maugham's tawdry South Seas tale. Joan Crawford is trollop Sadie Thompson and the target of preacher Walter Huston's reform.

The Rage of Paris (1938) 78m. Douglas Fairbanks Jr. and Louis Hayward battle over Danielle Darrieux.

The Scarlet Letter (1934) 70m. Colleen Moore stars in Nathaniel Hawthorne classic.

Shriek in the Night (1933) 66m. Ginger Rogers and Lyle Talbot and murder.

The Sin of Lena Rivers (1932) 62m Young Lena Rivers, Charlotte Henry, who was born out of wedlock, goes to live with a rich uncle, but his family don't want her around.

Sin Takes a Holiday (1930) 81m. Married Constance Bennett falls in love with Basil Rathbone in Paris.

Smash-Up -- Story of a Woman (1947) 103m. Susan Hayward (Oscar nomination) is excellent as an insecure night club singer who weds a radio star, then sinks into alcoholism.

So's Your Aunt Emma! (1942) 61m. A dizzy old spinster (Zasu Pitts) gets involved in the boxing racket and gangland murders and is falsely accused of being notorious murderer "Ma Parker."

A Star is Born (1937) Color, 111 min. Star-struck Janet Gaynor gets a break in Hollywood thanks to movie star Fredric March. They fall in love and marry, but her star rises as his falls.

The Stork Club (1945) 98m. Night club singer Betty Hutton befriends rich patron Barry Fitzgerald.

Strange Love of Martha Ivers (1946) 117m. Gripping melodrama with Barbara Stanwyck bound to her husband by a crime she committed long ago. Kirk Douglas' film debut!

Sunset Murder Case (1938) 61m Fan dancer Sally Rand poses as stripper to infiltrate gangster club that may have killed her father.

Swamp Women (1956) Color, 67m. Marie Windsor, Beverly Garland. 3 female prisoners seek diamonds hidden in swamp.

Swing High, Swing Low (1937) 95m. Carole Lombard and Fred MacMurray fall in and out of love.

That Uncertain Feeling (1941) 84m. Ernst Lubitsch romp with married Merle Oberon getting mixed up with Melvyn Douglas and Burgess Meredith.

The Thirteenth Guest (1932) 69m. Ginger Rogers, Lyle Talbott involved in murder mystery.

Three Broadway Girls (1932) 79m. Joan Blondell, Ina Claire, Madge Evans are money hungry women who have sugar daddies who keep them in the lap of luxury.

Three Guys Named Mike (1951) 90m. Jane Wyman dates 3 men named Mike. With Van Johnson, Howard Keel.

Tulsa (1949) Color, 90m. Cattle woman Susan Hayward enters the wildcat oil business to avenge the death of her father, but loses her values along the way.

Woman on the Run (1950) 77m. Ann Sheridan, Dennis O'Keefe. Eyewitness to murder pursued around San Francisco.

Woman to Woman (1929) 77m. Betty Compson. Officer weds French ballerina, then gets amnesia.

Hollywood Exploits Women!

These vintage exploitation films do not showcase the finer side of womanhood! They are not offered as entertainment, but only to illustrate the seamy side of Hollywood for Study and Discussion.

Escort Girl (1941) 56m A pair of nightclub owners run a string of escort bureaus where men pay for the "companionship" of young women. The district attorney sends an undercover agent.

Flesh Merchant (1956) 60m. Aka. "The Wild and the Wicked." A girl visiting her sister in Hollywood hopes for a modeling career, but is tricked by pimps into working at a brothel.

Gambling Sex (1932) 59m Pre-code Hollywood film. Ruth Hall is a wealthy young socialite who gets the gambling bug, and soon an addiction. With Grant Withers.

Girls in Chains (1943) 70m When a teacher loses her job because her brother-in-law is a racketeer, she takes a position at a girls' reformatory.

Girl Gang (1954) 63m. A sleazy gangster has a gang of young girls commit robberies and prostitution for him by getting them hooked on drugs.

Too Hot To Handle (1950's) 63m. Documentary-like filming of an actual burlesque show with bad comics, six unattractive chorus girls and striptease speciality acts by Dixie Evans and Jean Carter.

A Virgin in Hollywood (1953) 63m. A young female newspaper reporter is assigned by her editor to investigate the seamier side of Hollywood.