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## Open lecture with NEAL KING

# Gendered violence by Hollywood superheroes

Time: *Wednesday 29th May 2019 at 14.15-16.00*

Venue: *2-1026, Thunbergsvägen 3H*



Comic-book superhero movies of the last few decades in Hollywood (1987-2019) have altered the profile of the female superhero, from sexual adjunct and relatively powerless sidekick of a male superhero, to a full protagonist independent of men. Still, feature films focused on such superwomen have only just begun to appear and succeed. This analysis of female superheroes tracks their developing roles in the protection rackets of (fictional) national governments, entangled in corruption and state violence, inflicting the large-scale destruction on the very communities for which they also provide protection. Where female heroes of older films protected only small circles of loved ones, newer heroes enter the terrain of state violence that once distinguished manhood. I conclude with a discussion of the feminist politics of such violence. Do such heroes become more or less feminist as they enter the halls of state power and do more violence as state agents? Does their increasing violence make them more or less useful to feminism?

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