



# The Monstrous-Feminine: Film, Feminism, Psychoanalysis (Popular Fictions Series)

*Barbara Creed*

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In almost all critical writings on the horror film, woman is conceptualised only as victim. In *The Monstrous-Feminine* Barbara Creed challenges this patriarchal view by arguing that the prototype of all definitions of the monstrous is the female reproductive body.

With close reference to a number of classic horror films including the *Alien* trilogy, *The Exorcist* and *Psycho*, Creed analyses the seven 'faces' of the monstrous-feminine: archaic mother, monstrous womb, vampire, witch, possessed body, monstrous mother and castrator. Her argument that man fears woman as *castrator*, rather than as *castrated*, questions not only Freudian theories of sexual difference but existing theories of spectatorship and fetishism, providing a provocative re-reading of classical and contemporary film and theoretical texts.

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