

Age before Beauty: A Comparative Study of Martyrs in American Disaster Movies and Their Medieval Predecessors.

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Abstract:

A study of a selection of American disaster movies from the past decades reveals the presence of a certain kind of martyr. These martyrs do not die for their religious or ideological faith but rather in order to save loved ones, sometimes at the cost of their own lives. These movie martyrs differ to a great extent from classical Christian martyrs as portrayed in medieval legends. Movie martyrs are usually old, and often social outcasts in different ways. Often they have failed as parents, are alcoholics, or have other personal flaws. Their death is their way of redeeming themselves.

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