



Defining the 'self' and the 'other' in Disney song lyrics

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Abstract

This paper addresses the way Disney identifies American culture as opposed to non Western cultures through the manipulation of song lyrics. Accounting for whether Disney lyrics in animation ease or hinder cross-cultural communication between the West and the East under globalization is crucial to our understanding of its impact on young audiences. Considering its inherently humoristic and amusing nature, Disney lyrics can be powerful and effective means to inform and familiarize children with other peoples and cultures. Yet, Disney's portrayal of other minorities or ethnic groups worldwide is often misleading and biased.

Keywords: Globalization; Disney; otherness; language; song lyrics

Introduction

Animation provides a powerful space that projects images that may work towards articulating cultural identities structured around and about notions of the 'self' and the 'other'. The way Disney uses lyrics of songs in animation to reflect the viewers' understanding of their own identities and to project their perception of the culture and identity of the "Other" is worth examining in the light of cross cultural communication. Considering Disney as a globalizing force, we examine its implications in defining the western culture while also attempting to define the non western 'other'.

Using discourse analysis, we analyze tropes for identity articulation in a select group of Disney animations which prevail in the global market. Considering Walt Disney as one of the leading purveyors of globally consumed media in the form of animation, this work points at instances where Disney products function as an apparatus that potentially prescribe 'subjugating' ideologies and perceptions beneficial to the US as a group in power over dominated and less powerful groups. In fact, while many critics argue that the fantasy world of animation recapitulates the Western anglo-phallogocentric construction of the "other," as is often encouraged by mainstream motion

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pictures; my analysis reveals more complex mechanisms that put Disney animation in a different light.

This paper identifies film viewers as been subjected to the animated text, while also acknowledging the possibility of viewers consciously involved to construct their own perceptions and identity through the viewing experience and assumes that this idea is universally applicable. Furthermore, based on the concept of Orientalism and the Lacanian notion of the imaginary (or misconception of) 'self' and 'other', hereafter I use 'Other'/ 'Self' to refer to the imaginary or symbolic entities that are conceptualized or stereotyped in the subject's mind, specific images with which the subject mistakenly yet firmly identifies the 'Other', in order to articulate its own subjectivity.

While the relationship between media representation and national/cultural/ethnic identity has been heavily studied with regards to live-action film, little has been done on this issue in the field of animation. Actually, most studies focus on the visual aspect of media representation while I consider the narrative text of the animation as equally important, according to Giroux, children's animated films 'combine an ideology of enchantment and aura of innocence in narrative stories that help children understand who they are, what societies are about' (1997:53-67). Despite its seemingly innocent nature, cartoons are a complex means where the visual/image combines the text/lyrics to articulate aspects of identity about the 'Self' as opposed to the 'Other' in rather global contexts.

1. Disney goes Global

Disney animations have been contributing to media-based ideology creation as early as 1930's. According to many critics, a better understanding of the different devices for identity articulation via media representation necessitates taking into consideration the context of globalization tendencies of the animation industry, as representations in the emerging medium of anime have become very significant since the 1980's and 1990's. Despite the fact that U.S animations prevail and dominate the Global market, the increasing rate of anime, which simply refers to Japanese animation, offers alternative narratives for cultural identity articulation. However, the present work is mainly concerned with Disney production due to its huge impact that dates back to the 1930's, Disney's first Golden Age.

Disney narratives and visual representations play a significant role in the process of conveying particular perceptions of the viewer's own identity, while recognizing or failing to recognize the "Other". Assuming the significance of authors' influence on the production of animated narratives and the impact of discourses and power relations that embody their view of the 'Other', we deeply

examine three major theatrically released animations mainly Disney's *Aladdin* (1992), *Pocahontas* (1995) and *Mulan* (1998). The critical review of each of these classics aims at explaining the potential relation between the identities articulated through Disney films' dialogues and lyrics and the political and historical elements underlying their production. The following table provides an overview of the three films selected for this study. The three Disney's folklores have achieved a wide popularity among audiences and have reached a high viewership rate worldwide.

Table 1: Overview of Disney's Classics included in this study

Movie Title	Lifetime Gross / Theaters	Opening/Theater	Release Date
Aladdin	\$217,350,219/ 2,331	\$196,664/ 2	11/13/1992
Pocahontas	\$141,579,773/ 2,757	\$2,689,714/ 6	6/16/1995
Mulan	\$120,620,254/ 2,953	\$22,745,143/2,888	6/19/1998

2. Arabian Nights: Classical View of the 'Other'

Since the end of the 19th century, the United States has wielded its hegemonic power over the Orient. Following all the Arab-Israeli wars since World War II, the Arab Muslim has become one of the major figures in American popular media, including Disney's *Aladdin*, often described as an enemy. Combining semiotic typology and socio-cultural 'facts' or rather called 'incidents', *Aladdin* provides in animated fantasy a narrative that articulates a classical extremely archetypal Western Orientalist view that dominated through paintings and literature. The lyrics in *Arabian Nights* are a clear articulation of the exoticization spectacle held throughout the animation. Actually, the film has aroused some controversies among Arab communities in the United States and elsewhere.

The significant influence of *Aladdin* can also be estimated based on its box office numbers. According to a report by The Los Angeles Times on April 21, 1993, *Aladdin* had grossed over \$200 million in North America by mid-April 1993 (after 22 weeks of release, while ticket sales were still relatively strong), and an estimated \$250 million in the international market, with a large portion of that drawn from Asia. The article stresses the significance of this number, stating that "a \$200-million-grossing film means that 50 million movie tickets have been sold, which is the equivalent of one fifth of the U.S. population." (Note that the ticket price for *Aladdin* was U.S. \$4.00.) *Aladdin* was Disney's top grossing animated feature ever up to that point.

In examining *Aladdin* and specifically its manipulation of lyrics, we should also take into account the socio political background events against which the film was produced. *Aladdin* was produced parallel to the first Gulf War in 1991. Macleod (2003: 179-192) mentions that the production of the animation echoes to certain extent Eisners approach to cultural globalization that parallels the

causes and unfolding of the Gulf War. Obviously, reinforced by war context, *Aladdin* further dramatizes stereotypes of the (Middle) East. The film builds on every degrading stereotype to emphasize the freedom and quality of life for US citizens in contrast to the inferior subjugated non-American 'Other'.

The opening song *Arabian Nights* emphasises the otherness of Arabs. It clearly states all the common stereotypes against them. The song reads:

'Oh I come from a land, from a faraway place
Where the caravan camels roam
Where it's flat and immense
And the heat is intense
It's barbaric, but hey, it's home
Original first verse (1992- 1993):
Oh I come from a land, from a faraway place
Where the caravan camels roam
Where they cut off your ear
If they don't like your face
It's barbaric, but hey, it's home'.

Reacting to this expository song, Shaheen (2001: 171-193) asked: "how could a producer with a modicum of intelligence just a modicum of sensitivity let a song such as that open up the film"? Because of this song, Disney came under hard attack and was sharply criticised. People called for the censorship of the movie but that was seen as too demanding. Consequently, the song was edited and the line 'where they cut off your ear if they don't like your face' was replaced by 'it's flat and immense and the heat is intense'. Yet, this modification remains insignificant compared to the number of stereotypes that one detects in every single line of the song.

Actually, *Arabian Nights* is a pertinent reminder of the popular tale the Arabian Nights Entertainment, upon which *Aladdin* is based and that represents an important text within Orientalist discourse. Despite the fact that the collected tales have their roots in the Middle East and India (referred to as the 'orient' by the nineteenth century Europeans), they were rather interpreted as 'accurate' depictions of the Orient. Edward Said, in *Orientalism* (1994), cites Richard Burton's translation of the Arabian Nights Entertainment as one of these 'western discoveries' of the 'orient' that contributed to the characterisation and creation of a 'fabled mystical Arabia'.

In fact, the lyrics of the song are coded with key concepts that serve the process of otherness in the animation. Utilising a selective yet abstract and broad vocabulary that lacks focus is significant as it

contributes more to the creation of the mythical environment prevailing in the film. *Arabian Nights* succeeds in its myth-making also because the origin of the Arabian Nights Entertainment is quite ambiguous and thus it can be modified to fit different oriental contexts.

In further analysis of the opening song of the film, we discover that the relation between both culture and geography can lead to reductive and negative connotations. In fact, geography can be used metaphorically to take on a personified quality that is transferred into attitudes and opinions about a given area and its inhabitants (Easterners). Hence, a region that is considered culturally backward is often perceived to be geographically as such. '...there is no doubt that imaginative geography and history help the mind to intensify its own sense of itself by dramatizing the distance and difference between what is close to it and what is far away'(Said 1994). The pejorative association between geography and cultural identity defines the westerner's perception and media representation of the East. The song starts with a description of the desert as a scary and mysterious place.

Disney's concept of 'imagined geography' of "Arabia" offers an iconic significations of the "mysterious," "savage" Oriental "other" as street vendors speaking in strong accents, Street performers demonstrating sword swallowing and fire eating. In one of the striking scenes, gangsters are shown chasing Aladdin to cut off his hand for stealing a loaf of bread, just as another peddler threatens Jasmine with the same "savage" punishment when she steals an apple to give it to a starving child. Images of the like feed Anglo-European stereotype of the inscrutable "other" as we discuss bellow with more specific examples.

After meeting Prince Ali (the disguised Aladdin), Jasmine is shown a spectacle of her own culture, as well as the "whole new world." Ali/Aladdin takes Jasmine "to show [her] the world" on the magic carpet. The song of "A Whole New World" in this scene reads:

[Aladdin] A whole new world
 A new fantastic point of view
 No one to tell us no
 Or where to go
 Or say we're only dreaming
 [Jasmine] A whole new world
 A dazzling place I never knew
 But when I'm way up here
 It's crystal clear
 That now I'm in a whole new world with you
 Now I'm in a whole new world with you"

As Ali/Aladdin assures Jasmine at the end of the first stanza above, their whirlwind tour of the world is not just a dream. This assurance is not only for her, but also to draw viewers into Disney's "illusion of life," encouraging them to believe that what is on the screen is at least partly true. As the second stanza demonstrates, Jasmine is shown the world, including her own culture, as "a dazzling place." What is important here is that she is not simply introduced to the world that she "never knew" by Ali/Aladdin (a brown male created by white Americans) but she is also fed the "fantastic point of view" framed by Disney. Guided by Ali/Aladdin, who is in a sense a missionary sent by the white American corporation, Jasmine "(re)discovers" her own culture, which supposedly liberates her from the constraints of her society. Differently put, the scene implies that Jasmine, an epitome of the Orient, shapes her world view through the eye, or guidance of the West, as she is incapable of defining herself and others.

For Disney viewers, the Middle East is defined as a land of cultural otherness, full of people who cannot be understood in Western terms and thus should not be thought of as human. Arabian Nights further emphasises the narrative convention that Arabs occupy a mystical land of harsh deserts, oasis, genies, magic carpets, snake charmers, and 'street rat' thieves.

3. History and the Recreation of the nation's 'other': *Pocahontas* (1995)

... 'It [*Pocahontas*] is a story that is fundamentally about racism and intolerance, and we hope that people will gain a greater understanding of themselves and the world around them. It's also about having respect for each other's culture' (Pinsky 2004:164).

Pocahontas is an outstanding example of Disney's take on the historical confrontation between European settlers and Native Americans, which relies heavily on the romance between a white male (John Smith) and a Native American female (Pocahontas). Examining this contentious text, as well as its production process reveals the mechanisms in which race and identity issues are intertwined. By analysing two songs in the film, we try to find answers as to how white people identify natives as 'Natives' / 'Other', as well as identifying themselves in relation to Natives. We explore the process of vision in the construction of 'otherness' that is displayed in *Pocahontas*' main lyrics. The sanitization of history to identify the 'self' and the 'other'

Disney's *Pocahontas* does not primarily aim for historical accuracy. The film, which is a fusion of fantastical fiction and facts, has raised some controversy. Actually, Western cultural critics tend to position the native as an object that is confronting but manageable through the manipulation of historical facts, the result of which Chow calls 'phantom history'. This critics' standpoint shows

how difference is tamed and overshadowed. Disney's *Pocahontas* fits within this formula, leading to the process of myth-making that creates a 'transparent' relationship between colonizers and natives, the general rule been Disney's sanitisation and appropriation of the tragic elements of history. The film is presented as a 'safe' territory where the viewer can 'safely' experience 'othernesses' within a fairly romantic atmosphere.

Nevertheless, the movie is a typical example projecting the white-centric formula of 'us' (white) and 'them' (Natives). Portraying the settlers in position of power and superiority compared to the subordinate native 'Other' is a dominant theme in the lyrics. The song *Savages* sung by Governor Ratcliffe obviously dramatises the notion of the Native as savage compared to the civilised white Man. The lyrics read:

'What can you expect
 From filthy little heathens?
 Their whole disgusting race is like a curse
 Their skin's a hellish red
 They're only good when dead
 They're vermin, as I said
 And worse (Ratcliffe)
 They're savages! Savages! (English Settlers)
 This is what we feared
 The paleface is a demon
 The only thing they feel at all is greed (Powhatan)[...]
 They're different from us
 which means they can't be trusted (Kekata)'

Not only does the song depict the way white settlers view the 'Other'/Native but also the way they are themselves viewed. *Savages* can be understood as a text that implies natives have the potential to become a menace as the identified 'Other' to white authority, through a strategy that Homi Bhabha calls 'mimicry', which allows the 'Other' to hybridize the authority's culture for its own empowerment. Along with whites' attempts to impose their own values and emphasize their 'superiority', the song demonstrates the natives' implied desire to emulate the colonizer and their fascination with the new war instruments brought by the colonizer. Consequently, while the Powhatan calls the settlers 'paleface demons' or 'white devils', they don't only have a sense of fear but also a feeling of awe towards the settlers as when they sing the line 'I wonder if they ever bleed'. The notion, of whites as 'civilized' and Native Americans as unsophisticated barbarians or as the object of laughter, is perpetuated visually and aurally, as we find in several specific scenes, including

natives' behaviour and conversation between Smith and native Pocahontas. An explicit example is the way Pocahontas moves, running and climbing trees like Tarzan. John Smith's remark on Native Americans during a conversation with Pocahontas underscores the native Other's savagery stereotyped by whites, or differently put, reflects Disney's take on white superiority:

'[you think your houses are fine] because you (Pocahontas) don't know any better, ...
There is so much that I can teach you. We can improve the life of savages all over the world.

Then Smith quickly adds:

Not that you [Pocahontas] are savage ...savage is just a term for people who are not civilized.

Pocahontas follows:

You mean, not like you ...'

This scene is a typical example projecting the white-centric formula of 'us' (white) and 'them' (natives). When Pocahontas gets upset at hearing Smith refer to natives as 'uncivilized', he tries to correct his comment to dissociate 'savagery' from Pocahontas herself. Undoubtedly, there is no way that his categorization of savage can exclude Pocahontas, since she is a member of the native tribe. Instead, his comment re-inscribes the double marginalization of Pocahontas: the female and native 'other' whose status is determined by white and red (native) males. In this way, Smith (and ultimately Disney) assures his identity as a rational white male who is in the position of educating the 'other'. His attitude manifests the trend of mainstream media representations, which cater to the dominant ideology, specifically the white community's needs, and which people tend to accept uncritically.

In fact, Pocahontas' feeling of humiliation is quickly undermined by the subsequent music of 'Colours of the Wind', sung by Pocahontas. The song reads:

You think I'm an ignorant savage
And you've been so many places
I guess it must be so
But still I cannot see
If the savage one is me
How can there be so much that you don't know?
You don't know...

While singing, Pocahontas takes Smith's hand and gently leads and shows him 'the wonders' of her world. On one hand, this can be interpreted as a scene that demonstrates the switch in roles of natives and whites, in that the native Pocahontas is the one who is educating the white Smith, on

the other hand, as Edgerton and Jackson argue (1996:2-93), one could describe Pocahontas in the scene as playing more like an adolescent seduction, rather than teaching Smith a lesson because he is ignorant and unsophisticated.

Racial stereotyping presented in this song needs to be problematised in light of the development of children's identities. In fact, the film targets audiences from different parts of the world, in short anyone who can have access to it. Children aged two to seven have perceptual boundness, which limits them to focusing on intuitive rather than logical aspects of media stimuli. Based on this approach, children are considered to be more susceptible than adults to stereotyped images that *Pocahontas* and *Aladdin* project, since they would not necessarily perceive what is shown to them in a dialogical manner. This also suggests that their perception of the 'Self' and the 'Other' may be heavily guided by those images. In the light of this, white ideologies can indirectly permeate into the establishment of an individual's perception of the 'Self' and the 'Other', based on manipulated facts and history that is introduced to them at a very early age.

4. *Mulan* the Asian Face of the Oriental 'Other' (1998):

Disney's exploration of other racial/ethnic groups finally reached East Asia in 1998, when the studio produced *Mulan*. This film brings a doubly marginalized character (an Asian woman) into the centre of the narrative as a female warrior. By analyzing Disney's *Mulan*, this brief section demonstrates the contemporary Western view of (East) Asia with reference to a classic Saidian Orientalist perspective, and more specifically discusses 'Yellowness'. Yellowness or Yellow Peril (sometimes Yellow Terror) was a [color metaphor for race](#) that originated in the late nineteenth century with [immigration](#) of [Chinese](#) laborers to various Western countries, notably the [United States](#), and later associated with the Japanese during the mid 20th century, due to Japanese military expansion. We also attempt to find answers as to how the formation of modern East Asian identities takes place through a process of 'Othering' by means of song lyrics.

4.1 Perception of "Yellowness"

Disney animation is often associated with advocating a view of 'Asia' as a 'cultural other', mainly inspired by Western Orientalist perspectives based on stereotypical and essentialized assumptions about 'the Orient'. Disney's *Mulan* is an example of these practices where the 'yellowness' of East Asia is re-inscribed. I use 'Yellowness' hereafter, to refer specifically to the ways in which East Asians are represented in American media. The concept of 'Yellowness' derives from the Anglo-European Nineteenth and early Twentieth century fear of invasion by Asians, mainly by Chinese

immigrants into the United States, and the terror of 'contamination' of Anglo-Saxons by East Asian blood, known as the 'yellow peril'. The aim is to shed light on the way Asians, mainly Chinese, are perceived and conceived in Disney's animated world through analyzing 'Honour to us all' the opening song in the film which reads:

'Men want girls with good taste
Calm, Obedient
Who work fast-paced
With good breeding
And a tiny waist
You'll bring honor to us all [...]
We all must serve our Emperor
Who guards us from the Huns
A man by bearing arms
A girl by bearing sons [...]'

I argue that Disney's representation of the Chinese legend of Fa Mulan once more reveals the dangers of Orientalism. While some may read the lyrics above as an anti-Orientalist speech, the text, ironically, reproduces some of the stereotypes, which Disney seeks to displace. This is partly because such texts, in spite of their objective of deconstructing cultural stereotypes, predictably resort to an Orientalist gaze that is both to refer specifically to and alienating. As a result, *Mulan* reproduces a series of Orientalist discourses, by racializing and gendering its characters to project East Asians as mysterious, irrational, seductive, and passive 'Others', as opposed to the rational, masculine, white 'West'. This represents the same pattern as described in Orientalism.

In fact, *Mulan* was originally rejected for screening in China, and when *Mulan* did finally hit Chinese theatres in 1999, it failed at the box office, partly because the story was said to be too Westernized. This suggests that Chinese viewers either had trouble relating to the characters, or could not accept Disney's redesigning of their traditional narrative. It raises suspicions that *Mulan* may not be so much about America's understanding of Chinese values as it is about trying to make American values appealing to Chinese viewers by imposing American values under the guise of a Chinese folktale. The modification of the 'Other' for the purpose of making 'Otherness' familiar to and consumable by the Western 'Self' is nothing new, but involves complex operations of the westerners' awareness. This is because it generates a sense of the uncanny other, which Gilman defines as 'in reality nothing new or alien, but something which is familiar and old-established in the mind and which has become alienated from it only through the process of repression' (1985:104).

This is the feeling one gets when encountering something familiar from an estranging distance. Through the experience of *Mulan*, white Western viewers encounter an 'East Asia' which is not entirely alien but is modified in such a way that they can keep a safe distance from the uncanny 'Other'— a version or an undesirable part that the West has to repress. Thus, the Orientalist fascination with the Orient as featured in *Mulan* probably does not simply derive from its difference but also from a suppressed feeling that arises from interactions between the unfamiliar and the familiar.

Furthermore, it must be pointed out that Oriental 'otherness' is not constructed solely by the creators of *Mulan* or *Aladdin* in the Walt Disney Studios (or the West), but also by (East) Arabs themselves. Arab governments and Arab individuals have also contributed to 're-Orientalization' through the consumption and support of projects similar to *Mulan* and *Aladdin*. As Said points out, Orientals (by which he means Middle Easterners) are in fact 'huge consumers of a vast range of United States products, material and ideological'. The consequences of their consumption raise concerns. Said goes on to state that:

‘...There is a vast standardization of taste in the region, symbolized not only by transistors, blue jeans, and Coca-Cola but also by cultural images of the Orient supplied by American mass media and consumed unthinkingly by the mass television audience. The paradox of an Arab regarding himself as an ‘Arab’ of the sort put out by Hollywood is but the simplest result of what I am referring to.... So if all told there is an intellectual acquiescence in the images and doctrines of Orientalism, there is also a very powerful reinforcement of this in economic, political, and social exchange: the modern Orient, in short, participates in its own Orientalising’ (1994:324-25).

Given the fact that media representation often contributes to fixing false identities of certain cultures, based on the dominant perspective, *Aladdin* can aid in projecting the Middle East—a region unfamiliar to America—with a binary view of good/bad, Self/Other, or Subject/Object. This corresponds to Nichols’ (1981) concept of ‘recognition’, which allows people (or viewers, in the context of viewing *Aladdin*) to build relationships with others and the world based on references from their own familiar encounters. It should be therefore acknowledged that the producers may have a hand in articulating Arab identity through representations in *Aladdin*, but only when their intended meanings are consistent with viewers’ pre-viewing knowledge (or referents).

5. Conclusion

The globalization of animation media is in its essence a tool with a one and unique function, which is the projection of the 'Self' - a worldview of a specific group and their conceited and erroneous view onto the 'Other' groups, those with different cultures and beliefs, with the explicit desire to convert and subjugate them. Some critics argue that even the popular science fiction anime that have circulated globally in recent years have, unfortunately, contributed to a new techno-orientalized view of Japan and China, which has helped in re-inventing a new, but still predictable and essential perception of 'Asia'. However, in absence of a highly productive Arab or Middle Eastern animation industry, globally released speaking to Arab values, cultures and identities, there is no rival for the existing Disney's Eurocentric depiction of Arabs and Muslims.

Analyzing lyrics of the songs in *Aladdin*, *Pocahontas* and *Mulan* animated movies, in particular, elucidates the way Disney imposes American values and an American-made, biased, and vilified identity of 'the East' - Oriental civilizations in general, that encompasses all Asian and Arab people, just as they did with Native Americans/ 'The Other' in their view. These lyrics, surprisingly enough, represent a powerful device that backs up the visual representation characterizing animation; knowing that children generally memorise most of the songs that come with animated cartoons. We have to stress the power of song lyrics linked to images; this sound-image association has an ever lasting impression on young audiences. In fact, the best way to learn something is to associate it to a certain sound or image. So much so, for Disney to convey any particular message, concept or idea or even a belief into a brain of any age, just present it in a form of a sound-image association, it will stick into your brain forever. Children's brains are literally subjugated with this technique, as they digest this information early on in their lives, it conditions their personality at a subconscious level when they grow up, and cause them a lower level of self-esteem and worthiness. Giroux (1995: 43-61) maintains that:

'The role that Disney plays in shaping individual identities and controlling fields of social meaning through which children negotiate the world is far too complex to be simply set aside as a form of reactionary politics. If educators and other cultural workers are to include the culture of children as an important site of contestation and struggle, then it becomes imperative to analyze how Disney's animated films powerfully influence the way America's cultural landscape is imagined'.

Throughout this paper, we attempted to play down the common belief regarding children's cartoons and Disney films in particular as inherently apolitical by the culture industry. In fact little attention was given to the political content of children's film not only on the part of the industry

overlords but also on the part of the film maker's themselves. Utilizing song lyrics and language in three of Disney's top grossing films that are globally diffused and released is obviously another way to disseminate messages and images about the way American Culture is portrayed by Americans themselves and also how they view and imagine the 'Other' around them. This paper also tried to reveal some of the frequent and recurrent ethnic and racial stereotypes that Disney representations swarm with. We have to clarify that this work does not accuse Disney, as a globalizing force, of purposefully seeking to demonise the 'Other' throughout its classics. Sexism and racial/ethnic discrimination is, to certain degree, no longer an issue in children's film, in the sense of representing contested terrain. Disney film, like American society as a whole, is officially opposed to gender and racial biased representation, yet the question that imposes itself is not whether to oppose gender bias but simply how successful a given film might be in proving its opposition to these controversial media attitudes.

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