THE CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS OF MEDIA

PORTRAYALS OF MINORITIES

IN THE U.S.

by

VICTORIA MUNOZ

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ABSTRACT

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Victoria Munoz, B.A. Communication

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Faculty Mentor: Karishma Chatterjee

Research suggests the media shapes the way children perceive the world. In addition, ethnic minorities are typically portrayed negatively in media. Disney Princess movies have become a widespread part of childhood experiences, as these movies often top box-office sales and generate copious merchandise sales. Disney Princess movies have the ability to produce, circulate, and exchange information, especially to kids. Therefore, it is important to understand how minority and ethnic people are portrayed. Using content analysis, this study analyzes a sample of eight popular Disney Princess movies utilizing a codebook to assess the demographics, types of interactions, and personal/appearance characteristics of gender and ethnic minority characters. When a minority character appears on screen, their characteristics and interactions are counted and added into the codebook to correlate with a number (e.g. blonde=1). Study findings are expected to provide an

understanding of the presence and portrayals of ethnic minorities in Disney Princess movies.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

People learn about cultures through popular culture including films, television, music, videos, books, and magazines (Martin & Nakayama, 2017). The use of media also influences how people view their social world. Mastro and Greenberg (2000) note, "...the nature of the portrayal of ethnic minorities has been conceptualized as a potential contributor to perpetuating or diminishing racial stereotypes" (p. 690). Disney Princess movies have become a widespread part of childhood experiences, as these movies often top box-office sales and generate copious merchandise sales (Robinson et al., 2020; Lacroix, 2004). Disney Princess movies have the ability to produce, circulate, and exchange information, especially to kids (Giroux & Pollock, 2018 as cited in Robinson et al.). Although scholars have examined gender roles in Disney Princess movies (e.g., Lacroix, 2004), very few studies have investigated how ethnic minorities are portrayed. Given the importance of the role of media portrayals (Mastro & Greenberg, 2000; Gerbner, 1998), and a call of action by scholars (Stamps, 2019), this study examines ethnic minority portrayals in Disney Princess movies.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Gerbner's (1998) Cultivation Theory argues Media is a key storyteller about our social world in that it cultivates the audience's social reality around social, political, and economic issues. Originally this theory focused on Television; over the last 20-30 years, scholars have extended this to other mass media. In addition, social cognitive theories present conceptual frameworks whereby Media serve as sources of learning about the social world. For example, Agenda-Setting Theory posits media tell people what to think (McCombs, & Shaw, 1972), whereas Framing theory (McCombs & Ghanem, 2001) argues media tell people what to think about by making particular issues salient to the audience. Given the theoretical foundations of this study, media portrayals of minorities in mass media will next be discussed.

Mastro and Greenberg (2000) reviewed portrayals of ethnic minorities in prime-time television. They note "Although images of Latinos on television have reportedly failed to transcend a few narrow and dominant stereotypes, depictions of African Americans on television have changed from earlier decades" (p. 691). Specifically, in the 1960s, African Americans were seen in low-status positions where they appeared as lazy, untrustworthy, and unintelligent. These portrayals improved in the 1970s and by the 1980s, criminal and deviant depictions seemed to disappear (p. 691).

In an analysis of racial minority portrayals on prime-time broadcast television (1996-1997), Mastro and Greenberg found African Americans present in 16% of the main

and minor roles whereas Latinos were few on an absolute and comparative basis (p. 699). Asian Americans were present in 1% of the TV population and Native Americans were absent.

In addition, Latino characters had the same income, intelligence, physical bulk, and cleanliness as their Anglo and African American counterparts. Latino characters were, on average, the most respected and least lazy of any group. Stereotypes were found in how the characters talked and dressed. They were least articulate, had the heaviest accent, and were less professional in their clothing and used accessories excessively (p. 700). African Americans seemed to be portrayed more negatively than the Caucasian or Latino characters. They are judged as the laziest and least respected, and as compared to their disproportionate criminal profiles in earlier years, they were the least aggressive of the groups (Mastro & Greenberg).

Media portrayals seem to affect the identity of minority groups and stereotypes around minority groups. Saleem et al. (2019) found negative media portrayals can have adverse effects on the national identification of some minority groups, and—crucially—that these effects may be stronger than those of personally experienced discrimination. Tan, Fujioka, and Tan (2000) examined television coverage of affirmative action and African Americans and found more negative coverage increases negative stereotypes about African American. However, as Martin and Nakayama report they also found "positive TV portrayals did not lead to positive stereotypes, nor did they influence opinions" (p. 370). In addition, Ahmed (2017) found Indian non-Muslim adolescents' Western news media use and exposure to Hollywood movies were significant predictors of anti-Muslim prejudice. However, frequent, enriched contact with Muslims reduced out-group prejudice. This

study highlights the importance of social contact, and, subsequently, media influence on prejudice, in the absence of social contact.

     To summarize, on U.S. television, ethnic minorities are typically portrayed negatively. Recently, Schemer (2014) reports ethnic minorities being portrayed as poor or violent, as well as being loud politicians, or criminals (Dixon & Linz, 2000; Entman & Rojecki as cited in Schemer, 2014, p. 531). Stamps (2019) asserts that, while the stereotypes against minorities in media are growing, research about minority characters is lacking. This is an area that needs more focus in research.

Jeffres (2003) dives into detail about the importance of media in the lives of individuals, as it gives us another way with which to identify. This is significant because it supports the notion that the media can influence the way we see ourselves; if someone who looks like me is often portrayed as a hero, I will feel heroic, whereas if a character who looks like me is often portrayed as the villain or victim, I will begin to feel negatively about myself.

As children are struggling to develop their self-identity, many turn to media to aid them in this journey. Children will pick their favorite characters in a television show or movie that most resonates with them; they listen to music that reflects the way they are feeling. Disney is a media that is specifically targeted towards children, and even more specifically, toward young girls. People in general need to see themselves being represented in a positive light to reinforce a positive opinion of people who look like them. As previously stated, if people who look like us play the hero, then we ourselves begin to feel heroic. Likewise, is true; if the character who looks like us is always the villain, how are we assumed we are viewed by the outside world?

Then this also begs the question, if we cannot find people that look like us in the media that we are consuming, how are we supposed to feel about ourselves then? The first Disney Princess movie, *Snow White*, was released in 1939 as stated in the Disney+ application. It took over half a century for Disney to release a movie with an ethnic princess, a woman of color. Aladdin was released in 1992, and though Jasmine is the princess in that movie, it is not titled after her. To reiterate, the first Disney Princess movie ever released to star, and even feature at all, an ethnic character, and the movie was named after the male character. Additionally, in 2019, Disney+ added a 'outdated cultural depictions' warning before resuming Aladdin, and some of their other older content, that states, "This program includes negative depictions and/or mistreatment of people or cultures. These stereotypes were wrong then and are wrong now. Rather than remove this content, we want to acknowledge its harmful impact, learn from it and spark conversation to create a more inclusive future together. Disney is committed to creating stories with inspirational and aspirational themes that reflect the rich diversity of the human experience around the globe." Then it has a link that the viewer may take to read more about "how stories have impacted society" and the movie proceeds. The movie was Disney's first shot at representation, and it was cliched.

With that being Disney's entrance into ethnic representation, there is also the issue of problematic gender representation. Higgs (2016) discusses the portrayal of women across the 80 years that Disney released its lines of Disney Princesses. Higgs (2016) categorizes the Disney Princesses into three eras: The Classical Princess with Snow White, Cinderella, and Aurora, the Renaissance Princess with Ariel, Belle, and Mulan, and the Revival Princess with Tiana, Rapunzel, and Merida. These eras define the kind of woman

each princess is able to portray. From the earliest princesses in the classical period, these women are supposed to be demure and helpless without a man, with their only goal being to find a husband. Snow White and Cinderella are skilled in domestic labor, able to take care of all chores quickly and on their own, as a woman of this time was expected to do.

As time passes and women gain more rights and freedoms in the real world, the media begins to reflect that, and the public gains a new era of the Disney Princess. The princesses in the revival period begin expressing rebellious desires, Ariel wanting to be at the surface rather than in the sea like the rest of her sisters and Mulan going to fight in the war in her father's place despite his rational wishes and the actual law. Despite other characters telling Ariel and Mulan that there are dire consequences for their desires, the women proceed anyway. However, their storyline falls back to a man in both movies. Ariel is saved like a damsel in distress from the evil witch by her father and then by the royal, high-class love interest. Up until this point, there still is no person of color (POC) representation in any of these movies - not as major roles, minor roles, or even as background characters. People of color are completely void from this universe until Jasmine in the movie *Aladdin* that came out in 1992, which was 55 years after the release of Disney's first Princess movie *Snow white*. That is over half a century lacking POC representation. Any young girl who grew up during those 55 years saw one type of princess: able-bodied, thin, and white. Jasmine is the first POC princess, and her name is not even the title of the movie.

Higgs (2016) continues onto discuss the most recent and current era of the revival princess. Tiana, Rapunzel, Merida, and even Elsa has goals outside of marriage, making them ambitious women. Though, as Higgs (2016) asserts, even some of these movies carry

6

the presence of a character with classical princess values. In the Princess and the Frog, it is Charlotte who is enamored with the idea of domesticity and romance. In Frozen, it is Princess Anna who, like the earlier movies, decides she wants to marry a man after having known him a day. In society's era of the 'chill girl' who is 'not like other girls' comes a woman with an attitude like Elsa, who throws shade at Anna who wants to be like other girls. What happens in the real world is reflected in the media. According to Higgs (2016), Disney was also trying to branch out to bigger audiences. Previously, their princess movies were targeted towards young girls, but they were trying to make movies that young boys could watch too.

However, Higgs (2016) asserts that there still exists disparity in the movies that are targeted for boys and the ones that are meant for girls. Even in this era, the princesses have obstacles in the way of getting what they want, in achieving their goals. This is not necessarily true for the masculine movies. In movies like Cars, Monsters Inc, and Toy Story, the main characters are already at the top of the social ladder, having been the best at what it is that they do. "The Revival Princess is hardworking and independent, but these qualities are weakened when they exist in a society where they are not the norm… Maybe, when these counterparts have changed their attitudes, we will meet a strong, rounded and fully independent Disney Princess" (Higgs 2016, p. 68). There is still gender inequality in the realm of Disney movies, as well as racial inequality, and Higgs' (2016) article supports this idea. Because of the circumstances the women are already in at the beginning of the movie and the other characters' responses to these circumstances, the women must fight twice as hard to be the hero in their own movie. Similar findings are reported in recent research (see Robinson et al. 2020 for a review.).

Past research suggests Disney princess movies may impact the way girls perceive themselves, especially in the presence of negative body image and unrealistic romantic relationships. It is also important to note Robinson et al. (2020) found preadolescent girls consume Disney princess movies for different reasons and view them as "instructional and empowering" (p. 523). Given the varied ways scholars view the impact of Disney Princess movies and how young girls consume these movies, it behooves us to examine ethnic and gender portrayals.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

I used content analysis to examine ethnic and gender portrayals in Disney Princess movies. A content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context (Krippendorf, 1980, p. 21). As a research technique, this analysis involves specialized procedures for processing scientific data. Its purpose is to provide knowledge, insights, representation of facts, and a practical guide to action (Krippendorf, 1980).

Sample

Although there are 13 Disney Princess movies, in the interest of time, I chose eight movies as a convenience sample: *Snow White; Cinderella; Little Mermaid; Beauty and the Beast; Aladdin; Mulan; Princess and the Frog;* and *Tangled.* These movies were released over the course of eight decades, with each falling in one of three eras: the classical, renaissance, and revival eras that represent the kind of woman that the princess in the film reflects (Higgs, 2016).

Coded Variables

On the basis of the literature, and Mastro and Greenberg (2000), the code book had the following variables:

Presence of Women and Ethnic Minorities: The presence and absence of women and ethnic minorities was recorded to reflect the occurrence of the two groups.

Demographics: When a woman and/or ethnic minority character appears on screen, their race, gender, class, age, and role (major, minor, or background character) are coded.

Types of interactions: Once the set of characters is determined, the types of interactions are documented. This aids in concluding how gender and ethnic minorities are treated, portrayed, and how interracial interactions are handled in Disney Princess movies.

Appearance characteristics: The manner in which these characters are presented visually is measured here such as the character being well-groomed, clean, or wearing makeup, or none of the above.

Personal characteristics: Traits, attributes, and other natural characteristics fall into this category. Whether they are, including but not limited to, tall and thin, short and stubby, smart or dumb, passive or aggressive, and ridiculed or respected is logged in this section.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The line of Disney Princess films was released from 1937 to 2016. Only three films out of the eight included in the sample (which were released from 1937 to 2010) had ethnic minority characters. Five of the eight films had only White characters, with the portrayal of White characters being in six. One movie, *Aladdin*, had only Middle Eastern characters. One movie, *Mulan*, had only Asian characters. *Princess and the Frog* was the only movie with more than one race represented - Black and White.

Because the first four movies in the sample did not have ethnic characters, the first four movies were only coded for women. All movies involve the presence of disparity in class. Oftentimes, the main conflict in the storyline was against a low-class person and someone high class. In most movies, the main protagonist is young, from a teenager to a young adult. As their opposition, the main antagonist is usually someone older, and therein usually someone of high status.

In all eight movies, aside from the *Princess and the Frog*, there are no interracial interactions. Characters in that movie only interact with people of their own race because most of these movies are monoracial. In *The Princess and the Frog*, 11 Black-to-White interactions, six Black-to-Black interactions, and two White-to-White interactions were coded. It is also worth noting that the main Black characters, Tiana and Naveen, lose a significant amount of screentime because they turn into frogs. Those interactions were not coded because the interactions were not between humans.

Both characters in *Snow White*, Snow White and the Evil Queen, had a lot of makeup. The only character who wore makeup in *Cinderella* was the evil Stepmother. None of the mermaids wore much makeup, while Ursula wore heavy makeup both in water and on land. Belle did not wear any makeup. In *Aladdin*, Jafar as the villain and a man, is the first person on screen to wear makeup, even as a man. Jasmine also wears some. No one in *Mulan* is portrayed to be wearing makeup, as she is trying to present as masculine as possible, and the movie takes place against the backdrop of a war. The women in *The Princess and the Frog* wear some makeup, and in *Tangled*, Mother Gothel wears heavy makeup whereas Rapunzel does not.

Accessories were sometimes, but not often, used to show differences in class. For example, the stepsisters in *Cinderella* had many accessories that the mice would later try to take for Cinderella because she had nothing. This seemed to be one way to portray wealth. Grooming was better if the character had wealth. For example, Jafar and Jasmine were well-groomed, while Aladdin was dirty and often equated to a street rat.

Out of 39 coded characters, 29 were thin, three were average, and seven were overweight. Height was often given to the man or to the villainous character. The protagonist, usually a young, thin girl is portrayed as short. Mother Gothel was often seen towering over Rapunzel, as well as the videography angling up in certain scenes to make Mother Gothel appear more powerful, while reducing power from Rapunzel. In terms of personality, the princess or princess-to-be is often soft-spoken and demure, while their villain is loud and abrasive.

The only movies that were coded for accent were movies that had ethnic representation. In those three movies, there were 21 characters in this category, with 13

coded for having non-US standardized accent and eight that did. *Aladdin* and *Mulan* had a mixture of characters who sounded ethnic and who sounded American. The characters in the Princess and the Frog all had Southern accents.

Work ethic as it was coded has to do with whether the character was doing the work or having the work being done for them whether they were giving orders or doing orders being given to them; and whether they are pampered or not. Respect seems to be given to older people and to people of upper class like it is expected, whereas anyone else must earn it.

The Princesses usually started out having to do the work and being told what to do, while their villain was typically the older, higher status person assigning them the tasks. Snow White was hard at work cleaning and did the same when she appeared at the Dwarves' house. Cinderella was worked like a servant under the rule of her stepmother. Ariel and Belle were not necessarily working as in labor, but they were under direct orders and/or supervision from the men around them. Ariel was constantly ordered to stay away from the land, and in *Beauty and the Beast,* Gaston tries to order Belle around, specifically to marry him. Then the Beast forces her to stay in the tower, and she must do as she is told. The storyline that follows Jasmine is that she must find a suitor, so her father attempts to arrange these marriages for her. She does as she is told. Jasmine argues against most of the men and prolongs the process, but she is still being ordered to go through the ordeal of finding a husband to rule the kingdom. Mulan's father tries to keep her in a little box rather than let her spirit roam free, and multiple comments are made about Mulan's expressive personality being the opposite of what a man would want. Then when meeting her team, she takes orders from Shang, who is not the villain but a man in charge, same as Jasmine's

situation. Tiana works many long hours to try to save up for the restaurant of her dreams, so she is taking orders there, then also held back even when she saved the money because the men do not believe in her. Mother Gothel serves as the oppressor, villain, and kidnapper to Rapunzel, ordering her to stay locked in the tower forever. As stated by Higgs (2016), the films targeted to girls involve the female protagonist having to climb from the bottom up to get where they desire.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Mulan seems to be the best portrayal of an ethnic minority character in this sample. Aladdin released the 'inaccurate cultural depictions" warning on that movie, in which they state that those portrayals were outdated even for that period. Additionally, the movie *The Princess and the Frog* is the first movie that has a Black princess, let alone the representation of any Black characters. Yet, most of the people in power are white, while the poor main character Tiana, her family, the love interest, and the villain are Black. It could be assumed that the only reason the love interest was Black was because Disney did not, and still has not, represented interracial relationships in their Disney Princess line. Nonetheless, the love interest had power, but was still poor. He was in danger of losing his money, and his way out was the white woman, Charlotte. The Princess and the Frog is the only movie with more than one race involved in the storyline, and the white people are the good characters with power, as opposed to the Shadow Man who was a Black character with power. But he was a villain.

Because of the above reasons, *Mulan* appears to have the best cultural and gender portrayal within the scope of this sample, not only for its time, but also compared to other films. It is also, generally speaking, a historically accurate movie in certain aspects. The culture is not mocked, and the gender disparity has a purpose - for Mulan to rise against it, as many girls in all cultures must do to assert their personhood. Not only does Mulan rise

15

against the insurmountable obstacles she is faced with, but she leads her unit to victory against the evil villain who is terrorizing all of China. She leads a group of men, a group of big, strong, combative men and faces Shan Yu by herself just after he took down her love interest and assigned leader.

In the eight movies, there is still the need to look at the overall gender portrayal and power dynamics. Even though the Disney Princess movies are targeted primarily toward young girls, when there are men present, the man is who has power. In *Snow White,* the prominent characters are Snow White and the Evil Queen. In their monarchical portrayal, there is no king, so she is reasonably left to rule the kingdom with no competition, aside from Snow White. In *Cinderella*, the evil stepmother runs the household because the husband died, and no other men are present. Therefore, she is the person in charge. That is, until the royal family gets screentime, who is above her status, and all men. From the king to his advisor, to his son, all those people in power are men. In *The Little Mermaid*, the sea is ruled by King Triton. Then on land, Prince Eric runs the show. Ariel has six sisters, but they are not given enough screentime to code anything about their characteristics. Though they are technically royalty in the sea, the girls (specifically rebellious Ariel) are told where they can and cannot go, what they can and cannot do. So much so that Ariel was assigned a 24/7 supervisor to keep her out of trouble. In instances like these, she has no power.

Beauty and the Beast and *Aladdin* only had one prominent female character. In the other six movies, the other women in the movie were family, antagonists, or both to the female main character. However, in Beauty and the Beast, Belle does not have a mom, sister, aunt, grandmother, female friend, cousin, or any other female presence in her life. There are townspeople, both men and women, but they are far background characters.

Same for *Aladdin*, Jasmine does not have anyone other than her father and Jafar the villain. It is no wonder she "falls" for the first man to treat her like a person.

In *The Princess and The Frog*, power is curiously distributed. Tiana, the Black woman, has no power. She is working class, trying to save up for a dream in which people are constantly discouraging her. Her friend Charlotte is White, wealthy, and has the mindset of the "Classical Era Princess" that Higgs (2016) described, in that her main goal is to find a husband. Specifically, Charlotte is seeking a prince, and the writing for her character could be considered shallow. Despite Tiana having this wealthy friend who she seems to be close with, it is never brought up whether Tiana has asked for help or if Charlotte might have offered. Nonetheless, Prince Naveen comes to town and Charlotte throws herself at him. He, as a man, is thought to be the answer to Charlotte's dreams, when it is really Charlotte who is the solution to Prince Naveen's problems. Since Naveen is trying to escape debt and feels Charlotte can help him get out of it, there is no logical reason why Disney could not have run with a girl power/friendship storyline and let Charlotte help Tiana with the down payment for her restaurant. Even so, the man thought to have power, when it is really the woman, but she is White while he is Black. The power appears to be mixed in between the lines. In Tangled, Rapunzel is portrayed as naive and ditzy, and Mother Gothel explicitly states this. She is forbidden from leaving the tower, and she obeys. However, Rapunzel miraculously gains a semblance of courage when Flynn Ryder shows up and agrees to help guide Rapunzel to see the lights. As the movie comes to a close, it is Flynn's actions that save Rapunzel and kill Mother Gothel just after Rapunzel had surrendered herself. Additionally, Flynn narrates the story.

This content analysis was meant to provide an updated understanding about the way Disney portrays its gender and ethnic minority characters. During coding and analysis, it became apparent that many of the conflicts may be viewed as "class wars". The innocuous young princess usually started out as lower class (Snow White, Cinderella, Belle, Mulan, and Tiana). Often, their rival is a wealthy counterpart (the Queen, the Stepmother, Gaston, the society that makes lower class men fight in the wars, the white men that tell Tiana that her dreams are too much for her). Class also plays a role in *Aladdin*, as he is extremely poor and basically homeless, and Jasmine is the heir to the throne. Though Jasmine and her family are upper class, they are not the antagonists in *Aladdin.* The villain is Jafar, who demonstrates economic greed by wanting more power and status, even willing to overthrow the royal family to get it. In the Little Mermaid, Ariel is in the upper class in the sea. However, she loses her status when she gets on land, and Eric is the one who has money, power, and status. Tangled also involves Rapunzel never having known she was royalty, so she thinks she is stuck in a dead-end life, until a man brings her out of the tower and shows her what she is missing. It is there that she finds who she truly is and is able to overcome Mother Gothel. Nonetheless, Eugene's act of cutting off Rapunzel's hair is what kills Mother Gothel.

As often as the antagonist has money and/or power, they are also significantly older than the protagonist. In *Snow White* and *Cinderella*, both girls are portrayed as innocent and even a bit ditzy, whereas their evil stepmothers are out to get them on an uncomfortably harsh level. Both stepmothers were put in a position of authority and trusted to watch over the girls but neglected them and forced them into cleaning like a servant. Ariel is also portrayed as not knowing very much and falling for Ursula's con despite everyone urging

18

her otherwise. In Aladdin, Jafar seems to be around the Sultan's age and is the one that threatens the safety and wellbeing of Jasmine and the kingdom. There is no way that a young person could be responsible for causing a war for the whole invasion of China and the war that resulted from that; Shan Yu had to be older. The way the Shadow Man had been around for so long and the way he takes advantage of Young Naveen suggest an older character. Lastly, Mother Gothel is centuries and centuries old, and she steals Rapunzel from birth. Mother Gothel takes advantage of Rapunzel's dependency on her, feeding on that and feeding into her naivety to cripple Rapunzel into never leaving her.

Disney offered limited options for interracial interactions, but when the *Princess and the Frog* was released, they finally had the opportunity to create a story with Black representation. However, as the only interracial film to date, the interactions between a white person and a black person were almost double than that of Black-to-Black interactions.

It appears makeup is one of the things that Disney uses to indicate that a character is a villain. Though, it is not a one-to-one ratio, as Snow White was supposed to be the fairest of them all, but she was wearing plenty of makeup. However, those with the heaviest makeup in the other movies within the sample were villains: the evil stepmothers; Mother Gothel; Ursula; and even Jafar, despite him being a man, wore makeup. While Gaston and Shan Yu did not wear makeup, they were both extremely well-groomed. Their facial hair was sharp and defined, used to sculpt their faces in the way that women typically use makeup.

Seventy-five percent of every single coded character in the sample of eight movies were thin characters regardless of the sex, ethnicity, and socioeconomic class. Male or

female, whichever race, whichever class, most of them were thin. Following that, only three characters were coded as medium build and seven were seen as overweight. The first overweight character shown was Ursula in the *Little Mermaid* and she was the villain. In *Aladdin*, Gazeem and the Sultan were overweight characters, though they were not particularly important characters regarding relevance and screentime. Shan Yu is the next bulky character, though he is meant to be overwhelmingly big and intimidating. The other overweight characters in *Mulan* were overweight to show that they were not meant for the war. Over half of the bodily representation comes from *Mulan*, and at that, it is only to show the character as scary and mean or unhealthy and lazy. It appears fat characters exist specifically for a negative purpose.

One of the limitations of this study is the small sample due to time constraints. Future studies should include all Disney Princess movies. In addition, a second coder should be useful for checking reliability of coding decisions.

In conclusion, only three movies had ethnic characters present. Only one movie showed interracial interactions. Class warfare seemed to be present in most of the films. In many movies the evil characters were older in age. Finally, thin body types were prevalent in the eight movies. This study found previously existing depictions and some new ones pertaining to class, power, and body image.

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Victoria Munoz will graduate from the University of Texas at Arlington in May 2022 with an Honors Bachelor of Communication Studies with an emphasis in Organizational Communication and hopes to continue at the University of Texas at Arlington for a master's degree in communication. In that program, Munoz would like to expand this study to include not only surveys and learn from others' experiences to add to this topic, but also the other four movies that were left out of this study due to time constraints.

Munoz transferred from Tarrant County College District in 2020 to the University of Texas at Arlington after she graduated with her Associate of Arts degree. Someday she hopes to attend the University of Texas in Austin for its Communication doctoral program.