

Mia Solano

Professor Kelsey

Comm 200

25 March 2022

Representation of Race in the Princess and the Frog

Lacroix, Celeste. "Images of Animated Others: The Orientalization of Disney's Cartoon Heroines From The Little Mermaid to The Hunchback of Notre Dame." *Popular Communication*, vol. 2, no. 4, Dec 2004, pp. 213-29.

In the article "Images of Animated Others: The Orientalization of Disney's Cartoon Heroines From The Little Mermaid to The Hunchback of Notre Dame" Lacroix and Celeste analyze the new animated Disney classics that were produced in the late 1980s. The classics that were being critiqued on specifically in this analysis were the films *The Little Mermaid*, *Aladdin*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Pocahontas*, and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. This analysis discusses two specific issues. The first one being how children who watch these films are repeatedly shown images and various forms of representations throughout the films that are tied into the concept of race and gender messages in emblematic environments. The second issue that this analysis focuses on would be the importance of examination of race in famous cultural texts. The children that watch these movies are at the age where they easily grasp what is in front of them. At that age they are taught to consume. When one is in their youth, they are imbricated into a practice of taking in these films and situations that are being displayed in front of them and believe that, that is the way that they should be experiencing them. These films discuss various messages about color and whiteness. This is seen through the construction of character and pictures of the films and can be viewed as modeling color and whiteness in different forms. The

analysis talks about how Disney films tend to maintain the invisibility of the arrangement of whiteness. If not noticed yet, every heroine in these films are white. The article analyzes the characterization and images of these white heroines which demonstrates what it is like to be a white woman in a Disney world which is a major topic that is displayed in the more recent film *The Princess And the Frog*.

We found this article in the Movies, Television, Books Academic Search Complete using the terms “Disney Princess” “race” and “gender”.

Derks, Jackielee. “Snow White Remixed: Confronting Aesthetic Obsession and Race in Helen Oyeyemi’s *Boy, Snow, Bird*.” *Journal of Contemporary Rhetoric*, vol. 7, no. 2/3, Apr. 2017, pp. 139–48.

In the article, “Snow White Remixed: Confronting Aesthetic Obsession and Race in Helen Oyeyemi’s *Boy, Snow Bird*.” Derks and Jackielee analyze race and gender in America by discussing the power of the white Eurocentric ideal. This article analyzes the beauty standard of Disney films and particularly the type of women that grace these films. Specifically in *Snow White* which is a White Euphoric American type of standard. The elements from the *Snow White* tale are remixed into this article with prior knowledge of the fairy tale narrative and our own involvement in considering the culture of twenty-first-century America. The act of appropriation depends on recombining a substance that obtains cultural value. This is shown through remixes in music, literature and music. Oyeyemi's novel borrows from the *Snow White* tale and takes the importance of redefining that material to analyze the topic of dominance in color in the Civil Rights era. It takes the *Snow White* advocate to question the racial theory in such forms of

femininity. The end factor of this would be a remix of a fairy tale that fronts the ideological themes of race that have morphed and continue to shape United States ideals and values today.

We found this article in the Movies, Television, Books Academic Search Complete using the terms “Disney Princess” “race” and “gender”.

Moffitt, Kimberly R. “Scripting the Way for the 21st-Century Disney Princess in *The Princess and the Frog*.” *Women’s Studies in Communication*, vol. 42, no. 4, Nov. 2019, pp. 471–89.

In article, “Scripting the way for the 21st-Century Disney Princess in *The Princess and the Frog*,” main character Tiana has dreams to eventually one day open up her own fine restaurant in New Orleans, where hardworking Tiana turns into a frog from Prince Naveen and she is on the quest to make it back to human form again before it’s too late. In *The Princess and the Frog* we are looking through a lens of main character Tiana’s life and the struggles she faces being a black girl and not getting equal treatment as her best friend and other white characters in the story. The battles she faces due to race differences and the dreams that she has and wants to achieve throughout the movie. Focusing on the lens of how race is represented in *The Princess and the Frog*, it is made clear that in certain scenes whiteness is portrayed as the superior race because of the “norm” it holds. According to the analysis when gender is coupled with race and we are looking at white females it's oftentimes that white females are constructed to be looked at as “perfect markers of beauty,” where this idea isn’t extended to women of color. That women of color represent the opposite of this idea (475). Author mentions how even on ebay it’s found that your typical princess with blue eyes and blonde hair, for example, Elsa from *Frozen* and *Cinderella* were the most bought dolls on the website, ranking Princess Tiana and Jasmine from *Aladdin* the least popular dolls bought. When looking at movies in animated form it's been

presented most of the time that black women have little to no value making their characters known most of the time as maids or poor hard-working citizens (475). Looking through the lens of Tiana's life we can see that this is true because of her constant drive and dedication to her restaurant job while still making little to no money and being able to save up in order to buy her dream restaurant. Even though Disney received credit and praise for Tiana being the first Black princess, she still was looked at as invisible, according to analysis. The reasoning behind this is because she ironically is a green frog throughout the film, actually hiding her skin color (477). Therefore, It's shown that even when race is being represented in films like Disney's *The Princess and the Frog*, there are still signs of inequality being represented.

We Found this article in the Communication Source Database using the terms "The Princess and the Frog" and "race."

All three articles are relevant to our artifact because each article dives into how race and gender are compared when looking through the lens of a disney princess. Each article expresses how the audience that watches these disney films is portrayed to kids where it's easy for kids to be consumed by what's on the screen and use that as their knowledge on the topic being presented. For example, in this case how race is represented in *The Princess and the Frog* along with other disney princess films. Although these films are trying to represent equality with characters in race and gender, the main idea is sometimes lost in the film. This can then make it harder for younger children to understand while watching these films. For example, in the first article in our paper, the article mentions how when one is in their youth, they are imbricated into a practice of taking in these films and situations that are being displayed in front of them and

believe that, that is the way that they should be experiencing them. For children to understand race and the lens they are looking through while watching these films it's important that what's being shown is portrayed in the correct way. While looking at the second article in our paper being explained we can see that Oyeyemi's novel borrows from the Snow White tale and takes the importance of redefining that material to analyze the topic of dominance in color in the Civil Rights era. Lastly, when examining the last article in our paper, we can see that along with how race is perceived in films it makes an impact in the real world as well, for example the Tiana and Jasmine dolls being the least bought dolls on ebay. It's so important that as Disney movies continue to be made, that what the film is presenting, whether it be racial, gender, or cultural differences from what the viewer has knowledge on, it's done in the right way so the age group involved is educated correctly.