

Key values of us culture in any disney movie

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Introduction

Movies speak volumes about a particular subject. It is even understood that most animated motion pictures even hammer the point much clearer than their non-animated counterparts. It has been a tradition that with every animated movie, a corresponding moral accompanies it to the end of the credits. The ability of animated films to send out messages within the confines of its story has been one of the hallmarks of animated American movies.

With *The Lion King*, the movie stresses the importance of family through the relationship of both Simba and Mufasa. It also clearly does the same with the movie *Finding Nemo* as the whole story is about a dad clown fish tries to find his lost son, Nemo. There are a lot of subtle undertones and values which are also placed in some animated movies—some even more poignant than the next. This paper aims to shed some light on that fact. Walt Disney's *Aladdin*, through the genie of the lamp, depicts equal opportunity and material comfort, which even solidifies the classic American dream.

The American Dream

The great “ American dream” is defined by James Adams as “ the dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for every man, with opportunity for each according to his ability or achievement” (Adams, 2001) It has been one of the most treasured features of the United States as the wealthiest nation on the face of this earth. It is in this particular country that “ dreams are made” and where one's past is quickly covered in prosperity upon reaching this particular land. As grandiose as this claim is, the different

testimonies of all sorts of people have given justice to it on more than one occasion. If one looks closely at the Walt Disney animated film, Aladdin, certain aspects of this dream are also embedded in it.

The Genie

The genie of the lamp in the animated film Aladdin can symbolize so many different things but more than anything, it is able to signify the American values of equal opportunity and material comfort. Gleaning from the genie's character, it is not as hard to associate material comfort with him. The genie of the lamp is required to fulfill absolutely any three wishes that his owner desires. With the exception of making people fall in love, killing someone or wishing for more wishes, the master of the genie is quite literally powerful beyond measure. One of the most memorable scenes in the movie is when Aladdin, who is now already Prince Ali, parades across the streets of Agrabah. During the latter part of the song, the lyrics of the song gives testament to how much has changed with Aladdin's situation:

" Prince Ali! Amorous he! Ali Ababwa Heard your princess was a sight lovely to see And that, good people, is why he got dolled up and dropped by With sixty elephants, llamas galore With his bears and lions A brass band and more With his forty fakirs, his cooks, his bakers His birds that warble on key Make way for prince Ali!" (Clements, 1992)

The former " street rat" has now become a prince because of the genie. This alludes to the fact that the genie is a very good provider of material comfort, should one choose to get that from him. In the same sense, the land of

America is also able to provide material comfort from those who ask and willingly strive to make it happen.

The last American value, which is equal opportunity, is much more subtly expressed in the character of the genie. Since the rules of the lamp is that whenever a person gains ownership of the lamp, the genie of the lamp is now bound to serve that person and that person only. All of the wishes of the owner of the lamp are satisfied by the genie. The “ equal opportunity” clause enters here by giving absolutely anyone a fair shot to being “ rich and powerful” The only negative thing about relating this particular equal opportunity clause with the genie is that no one is able to share that equal prosperity in such a way that the genie sort of has an exclusivity clause that does not allow him to grant two separate wishes of two different masters at the same time. (Clements, 1992) One person must be able to wield the lamp in order for the genie to grant their wish.

Conclusion

Looking deeper at the animated feature film Aladdin, one sees a much more poignant picture of how America essentially is as a superpower and a proverbial land flowing with milk and honey. As the film and as this paper suggests, America is a land where one can prosper materially in terms of wealth and it is also a land where equal opportunity is stressed. As long as someone works hard enough, they will simply have both within their lifetimes. Maybe, just maybe, you really don't need a magic lamp with a genie after all.

References

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