

2-1-2015

## Hegemony, Gender Stereotypes and Disney: A Content Analysis of Frozen and Snow White

Larisa Arnold

*Concordia University, Saint Paul*

McKenna Seidl

*Concordia University, Saint Paul*

Ariel Deloney

*Concordia University, Saint Paul*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.csp.edu/comjournal>

 Part of the [Broadcast and Video Studies Commons](#), and the [Gender, Race, Sexuality, and Ethnicity in Communication Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Arnold, Larisa; Seidl, McKenna; and Deloney, Ariel (2015) "Hegemony, Gender Stereotypes and Disney: A Content Analysis of Frozen and Snow White," *Concordia Journal of Communication Research*: Vol. 2 , Article 1.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.csp.edu/comjournal/vol2/iss1/1>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@CSP. It has been accepted for inclusion in Concordia Journal of Communication Research by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@CSP. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@csp.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@csp.edu).

# **Hegemony, Gender Stereotypes and Disney: A Content Analysis of Frozen and Snow White**

## **ABSTRACT**

*A content analysis was conducted and focused on the gender roles, gender expectations, and social norms in Disney films. The researchers studied one past Disney film, Snow White and compared it with the most recent Disney film, Frozen to draw distinctions and similarities between them. Through a chi square test of association comparing specific Disney roles of both men and women, minimum differences have been shown between past and recent films. Disney has made changes in their films by removing some overt gender stereotypes from the films; however, they continue to use many of these stereotypical gender expectations. The data suggests that hegemonic principles can be applied to the most recent Disney film Frozen. Disney has hidden traditional gender norms under the guise of being progressive while still utilizing the successful Disney formula of traditional gender roles and expectations.*

## **PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW OF CONTENT**

Disney films are very popular and have a great influence in America as well as around the world today. Although Disney films are often perceived as positive, there are many underlying messages in them. Many studies have been conducted on these topics. They analyzed the messages Disney sends to young children regarding their race, age, sexual orientation, and gender. Furthermore, with the advancement of technology of the 21st century, the messages being sent to children were more critical as the distribution of Disney films have expanded to mediums such as DVD's, video games, cell phones, and online gaming. Such mediums allowed Disney to reach children at a pace like never before.

The purpose of this study was to identify and analyze what recurring themes are shown in the oldest princess Disney film, *Snow White* and the newest princess Disney film, *Frozen*. This

study used previous research, such as one that was conducted by Lena Lee (2009) of young Korean immigrant girls who shared interpretations of Disney princesses, as a baseline to judge these gender messages and to support the focus of the gender roles, social norms, and gender expectations that were in both Disney films. There was also a focus on whether these messages have evolved over the years. One of the goals of this study was to determine the specific gender roles presented in both *Snow White* and *Frozen*, and then determine whether or not Disney has made progress regarding the gendered messages that their films send to both men and women in Disney films.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### *Gender Roles*

Gender roles are a set of behavioral and social norms that are generally understood to be what is appropriate for males and females in a social or interpersonal relationship. These roles vary greatly due to the influence of cultural, social, and psychological factors (Larson, 2013). For this reason, gender roles are never universal. It is important to understand that environmental conditions and socialization between genders and cultures can influence learning how to appropriately behave. Males are generally expected to be masculine, assertive, and competitive while females are expected to be passive, sensitive, and supportive. Each person's culture encompasses different behavioral expectations (Burgess, 1994). Not all women or men in society entered under the same circumstances. In the United States, our society has become diverse, so socialization will occur in many areas. The social positions assigned such as status, gender, and ethnicity will suggest different expectations of marital, family, and gender roles.

### *Disney Films and Gender Roles*

Disney films are one of America's most popular mass media institutions and they have a strong foundation in production and animated films. The target audience is children worldwide who are in developing stages of life and slowly understanding gender roles. Many of whom are accepting of the messages and come to find their first impression of how men and women are supposed to act from these various films. Children begin by categorizing themselves as male or female within Disney films, and then feel rewarded by behaving in gender consistent ways.

Children identify with the norms of a media dominated society. In fact, being exposed to media shows that "media consumption has a measurable influence on people's perceptions of the real world, and regardless of the accuracy of these perceptions, they are used to help guide subsequent attitudes, judgments, and actions," (Morawitz & Mastro, 2008, p. 131). Children adopt gender identity and gender role preferences very early in life, which is reinforced by gender roles that are portrayed to them through television and movies. Through mass media corporations such as Disney, children acquire gender information and understanding of themselves and how they should look and behave. There are many factors that influence their gender role activities and behaviors. Films such as *The Princess and the Frog*, send messages to children that women are weak and men are independent, and shows that women have to find a prince but also must be beautiful and thin (Towbin, et al., 2008). *Miss Representation*, a documentary made in 2011, discussed the issues with males predominantly creating and publicizing the images of females in these forms of media. As stated in this documentary, there are shockingly more men involved in the film industry, as well as a skewed men to women ratio on the board members of Walt Disney Company. This creates a problem when men are predominantly creating the images that young women see of what they should be.

In past Disney movies, there is a distinctive line to show what men and women were meant to do, how they are supposed to look, and what they should act like. Disney showed more of the “homemaker” role of women who were supposed to take orders from men (Towbin, et al., 2008). *Snow White* shows an example of how she is constantly cooking and cleaning, and is expected to listen to the dwarves even when they are no longer present. The men portrayed in past movies are shown to be more aggressive when handling and talking to women. In the movie, *Beauty and the Beast*, Chip does not take no for an answer when approaching Belle in the movie. There are scenes that show him grabbing her while trying to make Belle “his woman”. The Beast character also expresses hot-tempered and stereotypically aggressive male behaviors. When he finds Belle near the glowing rose, he becomes very angry, he repeatedly shouts and demands her to get out while violently breaking tables. Another instance is when he became furious that Belle refused to eat and banged on the door to force her to come out. This is a troublesome relationship to show young children. The message that you can change a violent person if you stay and are patient with them may not be the message most parents want to show their children. Most of Disney’s past movies presented a different social class of women compared to the men, such as in *Beauty and the Beast* and *Aladdin*. These are just two examples of the many movies that Disney has developed in order to show the portrayal of the different social classes between genders.

### *Social Norms and Roles*

There are many social norms in regards to gender. Many of these norms are being challenged today in the world, however many of these norms are also being reinforced. It is important to know what social norms about gender are being presented to children. In a study done by Towbin, Haddock, and Zimmerman (2008), they found numerous themes regarding

gender through the 26 Disney animated feature length films they analyzed. Disney movies portray the image that men do not show their emotions. This sends a message to young boys that men are supposed to express their emotions physically or violently instead of emotionally (Towbin, et al., 2008). Men must be macho, “compete in manly activities, use colognes with names like “Iron,” get involved in sports, talk tough, own guns, and drive SUVs. They never show their emotions, and they die with their boots on,” (Larson, 2013, p. 271). It presents the image of enjoying pain such as in the *Jungle Book* when Baloo gets a black eye and says “Beautiful, ain’t it?” A male who expresses less emotions will be seen as more masculine versus a male who will be viewed as “soft” or weak if he expresses more emotions. Larson (2013) also noted that being exposed to such norms can affect how men are valued or devalued in society through actions and representations of themselves. Sending messages, such as these, to boys of an impressionable age, can portray social norms to young men in a way that make them feel they cannot be true to their emotions (Towbin, et al., 2008).

One of the main social norms that is frequently portrayed for women in Disney films is that they are supposed to be domestic and will likely marry, or that they must marry to be happy (Towbin, et al., 2008). In only two of the 26 Disney films analyzed in the study done by Towbin et al. (2008), marriage was not the ultimate goal for the women. This study found that only three of the films portrayed women in both a domestic light and with marriage not being the main objective (2008). A study from the *Early Childhood Education Journal* concluded that young Korean girls who have emigrated perceive men to be free to accomplish their goals, or enter into marriages based on their own desires, versus women, who have many obstacles to cross to reach their goal (Lee, 2008). In contrast to Larson’s theory (2013) of the “man’s man”, he also describes the ideal woman’s woman as “soft spoken, kind, and nurturing, but also practical and

competent. She may work, but she is also the perfect wife and mother and is always immaculately groomed. However she may also be vain, rarely has meaningful thoughts,” (p. 271).

Another important norm in Disney films is that “overweight women are ugly, unpleasant and unmarried” and that overweight women’s “appearance is valued more than intellect” (Towbin, et al., 2008, p. 30). In 1991, Trites analyzed the original *The Little Seamaid* by Hans Christian and compared it to Disney’s *The Little Mermaid*. He found that though the messages were poor to begin with, they became even more prominent in Disney’s version of this story. The original story may be more gruesome, but Trites seems to think that the way Disney has changed this into a children’s movie is quite shocking as well. Love is being characterized by sexuality, and a woman ultimately makes a man fall in love with her without even saying a word.

### *Male Expectations*

Studies such as Larson’s *Cultural Premises in Persuasion* (2013) described how men are expected to be competitive, powerful, and smart. There is common knowledge that no man is seen as emotional, or pouring out feelings in any Disney films. As stated previously by Larson (2013) there is a real idea of a “man’s man” (p. 271). In *Tangled*, the male main character, Flynn Rider tries to avoid showing the person he really is: a person of lower socio-economic class. Throughout the movie, Flynn hides this from Rapunzel so he will not be judged or seen as a man who cannot be independent, reach the goals of providing for a family, and other qualifications necessary to be a “man’s man” (Larson, 2013, p. 271). He remains stoic and hides his affection from Rapunzel.

A number of male expectations are emphasized in Disney films and sends messages to men in the real world. “Men are twice as likely as women to be shown as competent and able to

solve problems,” (Towbin et al, 2008, p. 21). This comes with the expectations that men should be strong and brave at all times. *Hercules* and *Peter Pan* are Disney films that portray characters with strong and intelligent characteristics.

Muscular men are not only held to these high standards, but overweight men have certain expectations as well. Unfortunately, overweight men are viewed as incompetent, unsuccessful, and constantly hungry and messy. This point is proven through the Disney film, *Cinderella*. One of the mice in the film functions as droopy wearing an undersized shirt and is seen eating at all times. He does not think for himself and is always being trapped by the cat because he is mesmerized by a piece of cheese or another food item.

### *Female Expectations*

Women’s expectations seem greater than males because of the American culture and standards. Disney films teach young women how to behave and look a certain way, and if they do not meet these expectations then they are seen as unattractive. It appears that women in majority of the Disney films like *Snow White* and *Cinderella*, have beauty as their top priority. In both films, they are commented on their beauty by either a man and/or a woman. Women are “consistently placed in situations where looks count more than brains and helpless and incompetent behaviors are expected,” (Towbin et al., 2008, p. 21). Beauty is not the only expectation of women however, there are many including being delicate. In *Cinderella* her step-sisters (who are both portrayed as unattractive and obnoxious) try, unsuccessfully to fit into Cinderella’s glass slipper, however Cinderella is petite and her slipper is only the size of the finger of the man helping try it on. In past Disney films like *Mulan*, it appears that women struggle with being both independent and beautiful at once. Mulan had to strip her female identity and mask it with the male image in order to gain independence and train with men. As a

woman, she is expected to seek dependence and look to men to fight her battles. Women are expected to behave like males in order to be tough, which shows the dominance of males in these films, and the lack of diversity among what women can be.

Another study that was conducted by Lena Lee in 2009, specifically focused on a group of Korean immigrant girls who were interviewed about the perceptions of women in Disney films. The Korean girls, who were ages five to eight years old, noticed that it was difficult to adjust to the Disney expectations (Lee, 2009). The women in the films are depicted as pretty, white, and thin. *Snow White*, *The Little Mermaid*, and *Sleeping Beauty* are all examples of movies with princesses that match these criteria. Physical traits like these could make young women feel pressured to fit in and may develop insecurities about themselves. Not only that, but many of the Korean girls already have a difficult time with fitting into the American culture (Lee, 2009). With these biased representations of gender and expectations in Disney films, it makes it harder for women of a different culture to accept themselves.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS, HYPOTHESIS & JUSTIFICATION**

Many past studies conducted on messages that Disney films send to children do not focus on recent Disney movies. Leaving out the recent additions to the Disney family can be detrimental to the research. Doing a content analysis of both *Frozen* and *Snow White* while incorporating past research could provide an eye opening view of the strides Disney has, or has not made in changing the gendered messages. Disney has made changes in their films by removing some overt gender stereotypes from the films, however, they continue to use many, and furthermore under the guise of being progressive have hidden the hegemonic values used in the Disney formula. Studying the differences between the gender roles, expectations and social norms between both the old and new Disney films could reveal how the roles evolved over time.

Towbin et al. (2008) believed that delving into the more recent Disney films would provide more accurate and up to date information. They provide insight to determine whether the films children are watching today are instilling more appropriate messages about their gender. The research that was conducted will pick up here, where the past researchers have fallen short in their analysis.

*RQ1: Has Disney made any strides towards improving the gendered messages they are sending through their films?*

One study analyzed the messages Disney sent to children through 26 different full-length Disney films. They found that Disney has been using racial, gender, and cultural stereotypes in their films through the years (Towbin, et al., 2008). Along with this study, there are many others that confirm the hypotheses that Disney sends many historically patterned messages about gender, among other stereotypical messages. It is important to analyze gender messages because it not only affects how children may adopt gender characteristics, but influences the attitudes and beliefs of gender among the culture (Matyas, 2010). It was also noted by Matyas (2010) that gender roles could impact the perspectives of issues people may have and Disney could potentially give children an idea of how they fit in socially. It would be beneficial to study the gender roles in these films to both educate the public eye and gain a greater awareness of the messages behind Disney.

*RQ2: How have the gender roles and norms that Disney portrays changed?*

## **METHODOLOGY**

### *Content analysis*

This study conducted a content analysis of two feature length Disney animated films, *Snow White* and *Frozen*. The study took into account the studies from the literature review by using past research, such as Towbin et al.'s (2008) study of gender and sex images in Disney animated films, to create the coding sheet for data collection. The researchers then compared social and gender changes between the oldest Disney Princess film and the newest Disney Princess film. It focused on the gender issues discussed in past studies, as well as gender issues the researchers see in both films. Before viewing *Snow White* and *Frozen* the researchers watched another feature length Disney film (*Cinderella*) to create a coding sheet, which was used when watching the films for analysis (*Snow White* and *Frozen*).

### *Researchers*

There were three observers/researchers conducting this study. The research group consisted of all undergraduate communication majors, one male observer and two female observers. They first viewed another Disney film together to establish a baseline and coding sheet (see appendix A) for use in the content analysis and to protect against viewer biases. After viewing this film and establishing a baseline, all three observers watched both *Snow White* and *Frozen* individually.

The study was conducted to compare gender roles, expectations, and social norms of both males and females from the older Disney film to the newer aforementioned film. Researchers used the gender issue topics from past scholarly work on Disney feature length animated films to determine and compare the issues that remain in Disney films today. All researchers separately analyzed the films so data could be quantitatively as well as qualitatively analyzed. After completing coding sheets for both films using a tally system, researchers came together and

compared data using a chi square test of association. If there were any significant differences in the chi square test of association between researchers then together they would redefine what would fit in each category and subcategory and then re-watch the film and come together again to retest comparison. This test established inter-coder reliability to better prevent bias.

### *Results/Comparisons*

After concluding research, the researchers came together to discuss and make sense of the findings from the Disney animated films. Researchers compared results of frequent messages, norms, and behaviors from *Snow White*, using both previous studies input as well as their own observations. They then compared these findings through observation with the most recent Disney Princess movie *Frozen*. Once both films had been thoroughly analyzed using coding sheets, distinctions as well as connections between the two films were drawn together.

Distinctions and similarities between the films were then discussed.

## **RESULTS & DISCUSSION**

The researchers watched both Disney's *Snow White* and *Frozen* to determine whether or not Disney has truly changed the messages being portrayed in these films. The researchers wanted to discover whether any changes were made since the first Disney princess film (*Snow White*) and the most recent Disney princess movie (*Frozen*), or just changes under the guise of being progressive. After establishing intercoder reliability between the researchers, findings from a content analysis of these films were analyzed through a chi square test of association to determine if there were significant differences between the messages in *Snow White* and *Frozen*.

To test the hypothesis, the researchers watched both films separately, then came together to share results and discuss their significance. With these results the researchers conducted a chi square contingency (test of association). To compare the characteristics between males in *Snow*

*White* and *Frozen*, as well as females in *Snow White* and *Frozen*, and found that other comparisons would be useful as well. The researchers analyzed the social norms, gender roles, and gender expectations for both men and women. Each of the categories features specific characteristics. In the gender role category, the researchers found examples of males providing for family and acting as protector. For social norms, men taking initiative and involved in physical activity were selected. Finally, male characteristics of being physically and/or verbally aggressive, dominant, masculine, stoic, competitive, and charming describes the gender expectations. The findings of the test of association for the comparison between males in *Snow White* and *Frozen* shows that there has not been significant change in the messages regarding this topic (see figure 2). After conducting the chi square test of association given the p-value ( $P > .05$ ) at significance of .05 the researchers reject the null hypothesis, and thus the data suggests that there has not been a change between the portrayal of males between past Disney films and recent Disney films.

However, given the p-value ( $P < .05$ ) at significance of .05, the researchers found that there *is* a significant difference between the female roles between past and recent Disney films (see figure 1). Though statistically there is a difference, the concept of hegemony helps to explain how the underlying gender roles remain constant.

The Hegemonic concept was applied to the female roles of *Frozen* through oppositional ideology. *Hegemony, Feminist Criticism, and the Mary Tyler Moore Show*, written by Bonnie J. Dow in 1990, studied the hegemonic process in television. It explained how characters in films may be depicted as overcoming past issues. In reality those same issues still occur, but are masked and presented contrastively (Dow, 1990). The power of this oppositional ideology

through a hidden view has maintained the Disney's existing gender messages (Shin & Namkung, 2008).

Todd Gitlin, (1979) who also focused on hegemony in television, explained the simple process of hiring writers who will describe the “standardized, static characters than [the] characters who develop” (p. 254). *Frozen* fell under the standard criteria of men obtaining the most dominance in Disney films. The writers developed the characters of Anna and Elsa acquiring male characteristics and male dependency rather than constructing them to have their own independent personalities and roles. It reflects the inflexibility of social change and lack of transformation from past Disney films (Altheide, 1984). This could be due to “the dominance of a certain way of life” that shapes the “culture, values, and ideology” factors in society (Altheide, 1984, p. 477). In this context, dominance refers to strong male portrayals in past films, including *Snow White*, that are repeated and applied to *Frozen*.

Although the dominance of men overshadows women in Disney films, people are satisfied with the idea that there is an increasing number of female leads that have evolved since past Disney films. However, Dow (1990) goes on to say that “those who create the programming actually have made only cosmetic changes in the representation of the disputed group,” (p. 263). There has been a minimum amount of progress of differences between men and women's traits in the oldest and newest Disney films. Anna in *Frozen* depended on Prince Hans and Kristoff for happiness just as Snow White depended on her Prince to live “happily ever after.” Hegemony is applied to the film by twisting the plot. Although Anna essentially chooses her sister at the end of the film, she gets the man as well. There is this ongoing trend that women in Disney films are required to obtain a relationship to be fulfilled. Applying this lens to the findings that there is a

significant difference between the females in *Snow White* and *Frozen*, the data suggests that in ways, the messages being sent about females have changed for the worse.

*Frozen* has two strong female leads, Elsa and Anna, who were supposed to represent that gender roles, expectations, and social norms of a female Disney character have been modified in this most recent Disney princess film. It appears to be progressive at first glance, but the Disney formula of a male dominated film is still at work through the use of hegemony. No significant difference was found in the researchers chi square test of association between the male traditional traits and norms in past Disney films and Elsa when being observed using the same characteristically male traits ( $P > .05$ ) (see figure 3). Through the analysis of both *Snow White* and *Frozen*, the researchers recognized male traits developed in Elsa's role. Her stoic, aggressive, and dominant behaviors had a strong link to the dwarves' characteristics in *Snow White*. Since Elsa was a female lead, the researchers were not initially attentive to the male traits she portrayed in the film, and first focused on her as an independent and strong minded character. However, after discussing some of her actions as well as phrases she was prone to saying, the researchers realized that she may be the equivalent of a "prince charming". After further analysis of *Frozen*, the researchers noticed that Anna had to ask Elsa for approval regarding her desired marriage. Elsa also portrayed several physically and verbally aggressive traits, similarly to the male characters in *Snow White*. She acted as the key to Anna's "true love that ended the storm" at the end of the film, which relates to the Prince in *Snow White* who carried Snow White off after a "true love's kiss." Elsa's role is an example of oppositional ideology from which it emerged, and as an effect, it is the efforts by Disney to remain dominant, maintain control, and to legitimize itself. The same logic of domination that reinforces audiences about their own social and cultural affairs extends to an audience view of the world.

Furthermore, a recurring statement taught to Elsa by her father was found that reinforces these hegemonic portrayals: "conceal- don't feel". The researchers encountered this phrase at least five times throughout the film. It was first heard by Elsa's father when she was a child as he gave her gloves to protect and hide her powers. This statement reiterates the typically male characteristics: Disney shows young boys that men are supposed to express their emotions physically or violently instead of emotionally (Towbin, et al., 2008). Men and boys are not supposed to show their emotions and that is clearly what Elsa's father has taught her to do as well. As stated before: "[boys] never show their emotions, and they die with their boots on," (Larson, 2013, p. 271). Aside from Elsa portraying very stoic characteristics, she also acts violently in the film when she does show her emotions, which is characteristically a male trait, not female.

These examples strongly support hegemony. The first impression of Elsa was that she was this strong and independent female character, but even though Elsa is a female she is still taking on the characteristics of a male role. It is important to recognize that the concept of hegemony applied to *Frozen* represents expectations, perceptions, and "is a lived system of meaning and values," (Goldman, 1982, p. 364). The tradition of male dominance expressed in Disney films has such a strong value in the Disney culture that it is being perpetuated in disguise. "Hegemony is treated as an attribute and an effect... and is therefore very difficult to falsify," (Altheide, 1984, p. 479). It seems Disney cannot create a film without having these emphasized gender messages hidden in them.

### **Muted Group Theory**

The Muted Group Theory (MGT), further developed by Cheris Kramarae in 1981, proposes how groups of low power in society are overshadowed by dominant groups. Women

are particularly muted by men and have to “choose their words carefully in order to be successful in the male-dominated public arena,” (Griffin, 2012, p. 462). The term “muted” in this theory is not defined as an actual silence of speech, but rather expresses how women are unable to speak when and where they desire without being interrupted by men (Wall & Gannon-Leary, 1999, p. 22). Celia J. Wall and Pat Gannon-Leary (1999) who revisited and analyzed MGT, explained how women do not own their personal language in society since it is controlled and constructed by men. Gender differences and roles heavily influences language. Women are more prone to utilize different languages based on stereotypes they are exposed to and topics of conversations (Palomares, 2009). For example, tentative language will more likely be articulated by a woman if the conversation regarded stereotypical masculine topics (Palomares, 2009). However, if women decide to choose language that reflects masculine language then they may be perceived as “unfeminine” (Reed, Keerie & Palomares, 2003, p. 211). These languages can also determine how women should behave since they have been told to stay in their place when male topics are discussed (Mills, 2006). There seems to be no middle ground when it comes to women and the language they choose to express.

Disney provides a platform in which a lack of women’s voices may be problematic. Everything from the way women look in Disney films to the way they act and speak is being presented by a male dominated industry. According to the documentary *Miss Representation* (2011) “women comprise only 16% of all writers, directors, producers, cinematographers and editors” and only 4 of the 13 board members of The Walt Disney Company are women. Statistics like that seem to be troublesome when Disney comes out with films like *Frozen* under the guise of being progressive, when really it seems that they have done nothing but carry on with the same image of males in their films, and allow for more reinforcement of the same

gender expectations and social norms than there were in *Snow White*. Essentially everything that young girls are seeing in this film about what women should be has been tainted by the male idea of what women should look like, what they should do, and what they should be.

Another example from both Disney films is that both Snow White and Anna were shown to have “childish” characteristics. In *Snow White* when the dwarves were heading out to work for the day, they repeatedly warned Snow White to be careful and not let anyone in the house. While she is at home baking all day, however, an old woman comes by and Snow White let’s her in. She cannot even be trusted to follow simple directions, and is certainly not safe without someone there to protect her. In *Frozen* on the other hand while fleeing Elsa’s ice castle, Anna and Kristoff are being chased by a snow monster. Anna goes to throw a snowball at the monster and Kristoff stops her from doing it and tells her it’s a bad idea. She seems to listen and then as soon as he is out of the way she proceeds to throw it, which only angers the snow monster, causing more problems for the two of them. Once again, it seems as if the woman cannot be trusted to make good decisions on her own.

Both of these scenarios can be applied to MGT. They display how women are asked to be silenced by men and alter their behaviors to please them. This is similar to a child who is expected to behave and follow their parents’ directions. “Women’s silence in many places is so accepted that many do not notice it,” Marsha Houston and Cherish Kramarae stated (1991, p. 387). Even though women in today’s society has improved with expressing their voice, they still struggle with being heard (Wall & Gannon-Leary, 1999). Anna, specifically, was in a position of power by being able to express herself and attempt to fight the snow monster. Yet, Kristoff utilized language to dismiss her position of power when trying to prevent her from throwing the snowball. Anna’s attempted behaviors compares to the physically aggressive, acting as a

protector, and do first, think later male characteristics. “Women adopting male speech patterns are seen as more assertive, self-confident and believable,” (Wall & Gannon-Leary, 1999, p. 27). The data suggests that it is only correct for males to act upon these traits, which motivated Kristoff to silence Anna’s position of power and “keep her in her place” as a woman. Women like Anna may be perceived as “threatening the male social position” through initiating power (Reid, Keerie & Palomares, 2003). Houston and Kramarae (1991) goes on to describe how women are not allowed to have a bigger and common voice, and what they experience is discounted and inconsequential in society.

### **LIMITATIONS**

Reviewers bias is one limitation of this study. If the researchers had watched the movie previously, that could have affected the perception of the researcher going forward viewing the films. Another limitation of this study is that there is only so much hard data that can be gathered using the chi square test of comparison, and the rest of the results have been established by the researchers based on the content they have seen in the films. Next, there is a limitation on what was done during the research. There were times during the research when the researchers discovered several directions that the study could be taken, however the study could not be broadened too much, or it would not be complete.

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

The analysis of *Frozen* and *Snow White* provides other ideas that can be useful for further research. Studying mediums such as video games, printed books, and Disney television shows along with Disney products, such as toys, could provide insight into how they influence gender messages, expectations, and social norms of Disney. It is important to note that Disney films are not the only influencers that impact societal expectations and norms, or the messages that are

sent to children; Analyzing the previously mentioned mediums may pinpoint a different perspective of hidden messages Disney has developed in them. Another direction of research that could be taken in the future would link back to past studies, focusing more on race or other controversial issues with Disney's films. Future research could incorporate children to see what they take from these films. One on one interviews along with focus groups could provide insight into what these children are taking from these movies as far as gender messages goes. More data would be analyzed through the use of these strategies thus strengthening results of this research.

## REFERENCES

- Altheide, D. L. (1984). Media Hegemony: A failure of perspective. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 48(2), 476-490.
- Burgess, N. J. (1994). Gender roles revisited. *Journal Of Black Studies*, 24(4), 391.
- Dow, J. B. (1990). Hegemony, Feminist Criticism, and *The Mary Tyler Show*. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*. 7, 261-274.
- Frozen*. Dir. Chris Buck and Jennifer Lee. Walt Disney Pictures, 2013. Film.
- Gitlin, T., (1979). Prime Time Ideology: The Hegemonic Process in Television Entertainment. *Social Problems*, 26(3), 251-266.
- Goldman, R. (1982). Hegemony and Managed Critiques in prime-time Television: A Critical Reading of “Mork and Mindy”. *Theory and Society*. 11(3), 363-388.
- Griffin, E., (2012). *A First Look at Communication Theory* (5th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw Hill Companies.
- Houston, M., & Kramarae, C., (1991). Speaking from Silence: Methods of Silencing and of Resistance. *Discourse Society*. 2, 387-399.
- Larson, C. U. (2013). *Persuasion Reception and Responsibility*. Boston, MA. Wadsworth.
- Lee, L. (2008). Understanding gender through Disney’s marriages: A study of young Korean immigrant girls. *Early Childhood Education Journal*. 36, 11-18.
- Lee, L. (2009). Young American immigrant children’s interpretations of popular culture: a case study of Korean girls’ perspectives on royalty in Disney films. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*. 200-215.
- Mills, J. (2006). *Talking About Silence: Gender and the Construction of Multilingual Identities*.

*International Journal Bilingualism*. 10(1), 1-16.

Morawitz, E. B., Mastro, E. D. (2008). Mean Girls? The Influence of Gender Portrayals in Teen Movies on Emerging Adults' Gender-Based Attitudes and Beliefs. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*. 85(1), 131-146.

Palomares, N. A., (2009). Women Are Sort of More Tentative than Men, Aren't They? How Men and Women Use Tentative Language Differently, Similarly, and Counterstereotypically as a Function of Gender Salience. *Communication Research*. 36(4), 538-560.

Reid, S. A., Keerie, N., Palomares, N. A. (2003). Language, Gender Salience, and Social Influence. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*. 22(2), 210-233.

Shin, B., Namkung, G. (2008). Films and cultural hegemony: American hegemony "outside" and "inside" the "007" movie series. *Asian Perspective*. 32(2), 115-143.

Towbin, M.A., Haddock, S.A., Zimmerman T.S., Lund L.K., Tanner, L.R. (2008). Images of gender, race, age and sexual orientation in Disney feature-length animated films. *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy*. 15(4), 19-44.

Trites, R. (1991). Disney's sub/version of Andersen's The Little Mermaid. *Journal of Popular Film and Television*. 18(4), 145.

Turner, R., Edgely, C. (1980). Sociological semantics: on reification, tautology and the destruction of language. *Sociological Quarterly*. 21, 595-605.

Wall, C. J., Gannon-Leary, P. (1990). A Sentence Made by Men: Muted Group Theory Revisited. *European Journal of Women's Studies*. 6(1), 21-29.

## APPENDIX

### Appendix A

All chi-square tests of comparison were conducted with a .05 significance.

Figure 1: *Frozen* & *Snow White* Female Comparison

	Gender Roles	Social Norms	Gender Expectations	Row Totals
Frozen	23 (30.94) [2.04]	57 (49.30) [1.20]	38 (37.76) [0.00]	118
Snow White	36 (28.060) [2.25]	37 (44.70) [1.33]	34 (34.24) [0.00]	107
Column Totals	59	94	72	225

Chi-square statistic is 6.8205. The P-Value is 0.033033. The result is significant.

Figure 2: *Frozen* & *Snow White* Male Comparison

	Gender Roles	Social Norms	Gender Expectations	Row Totals
Frozen	20 (15.51) [1.30]	28 (27.03) [0.04]	57 (62.47) [0.48]	105
Snow White	15 (19.49) [1.04]	33 (33.97) [0.03]	84 (78.53) [0.38]	132
Column Totals	35	61	141	237

Chi-square statistic is 3.2607. The P-Value is 0.195861. Result is *not* significant.

Figure 3: Elsa (*Frozen*) & *Snow White* Male Comparison

	Gender Roles	Social Norms	Gender Expectations	Row Totals
Frozen	8 (6.50) [0.35]	16 (13.85) [0.33]	28 (31.65) [0.42]	52
Snow White	15 (16.50) [0.14]	33 (35.15) [0.13]	84 (80.35) [0.17]	132
Column Totals	23	49	112	184

Chi-square statistic is 1.5363. The P-Value is 0.463899. Result is *not* significant.

Figure 4: Elsa (*Frozen*) & Males in *Frozen* Comparison

	Gender Roles	Social Norms	Gender Expectations	Row Totals
Elsa	8 (9.27) [0.17]	16 (14.57) [0.14]	28 (28.15) [0.00]	52
Females	20 (18.73) [0.09]	28 (29.43) [0.07]	57 (56.85) [0.00]	105
Column Totals	28	44	85	157

Chi-square statistic is 0.4717. The P-Value is 0.789883. Result is *not* significant.

Figure 5: Elsa (*Frozen*) Other Females Comparison

	Gender Roles	Social Norms	Gender Expectations	Row Totals
Elsa	11 (10.54) [0.02]	23 (24.80) [0.13]	19 (17.67) [0.10]	53
Females	23 (23.46) [0.01]	57 (55.20) [0.06]	38 (39.33) [0.05]	118
Column Totals	34	80	57	171

Chi-square statistic is 0.3636. The P-Value is 0.833787. Result is *not* significant.

## Appendix B

### Coding Sheet

Variable	Unit of Analysis	Categories
Male	Gender Roles	Providing for family Acting as protector
	Social Norms	Taking initiative Do first, think later Involved in physical activity
	Gender Expectations	Aggressive -Physically -Verbally Dominant Physically masculine Competitive Stoic Charming
Female	Gender Roles	Homemakers Seduce men Caretaker Vulnerable
	Social Norms	Express feelings -About self -About others Physically composed Nurturing Sensitive
	Gender Expectations	Delicate -Physically -Emotionally Beauty Dependent on males Submissive Materialistic