

AND THEY ALL LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER?

A Critical Analysis of the Disney Princess Phenomenon



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Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible were it not for my very patient and understanding supervisors, Professor Lucy Sargisson and Professor Steve Fielding. I would like to thank Professor Steve Fielding for his constant wisdom, support and humour. You taught me one of the most important things in my academic career: just write it. Once I had overcome this hurdle, there was no stopping me. Thank you for encouraging me to just make a start, rather than constantly worry. I have never been the same since.

To Professor Lucy Sargisson. When I walked into your office on my first day of my undergraduate degree, I don't think either of us quite knew the journey we were about to undertake. From encouraging me to challenge essay questions in political theory, to affirming my hopes to research the Disney Princesses, you have helped me to become the person and scholar I am today.

To you both, thank you for believing in me, listening to me, and guiding me on this journey.

I would like to thank Dr Helen Williams, Dr Helen McCabe and Dr Bettina Renz for their unwavering support and encouragement during my time at the School of Politics and International Relations. You have encouraged me to believe in myself and my work, and I will always be grateful for that.

To my best friend, Yalda Tomlinson. Thank you for believing in me, and for your never-ending wisdom and advice.

To Annabelle de Heus, my fellow afternoon cake enthusiast, my soul sister and dear friend. Thank you for all your advice, your knowledge and your encouragement.

To my friends I have met on this wonderful PhD journey: Ibtisam Ahmed, Elena Colombo, Chris Stafford, Marco Genovesi, Martin Thorley, Martha Flor Puebla, Juliana Semione, Lewis Scott, Adam Lindsay and Lucy Mahaffey. Thank you for the late-night dinners, heart to hearts, online chats and Disney debates.

Finally, I would not be here without the never-ending love and support from my family. To Geoff, Michelle, Sarah and Moeen, for always encouraging me and cheering me on. To my Nana

and Adat, the love and care you nurtured me with is what made me who I am today. To my own 'princess sidekicks' Meeko and Poppy, the love you have shown to me can always bring a smile to my face. To my Grandma and Grandad, for always helping me with my education, and always being there when I needed you the most. To my Dad, Ian, who has always challenged me to seek more from life, to learn more, do more and see more.

To my Mama, who shared her love of Disney with me, shared her experiences with me, took the stressed phone calls and listened to me reading each chapter out loud. I will never be able to thank you for what you have done for me.

And to my husband and very own 'Prince Charming' Matthew. Words cannot explain what you have done for me, and how you have supported me in these last few years. Thank you for your endless love and care. You have challenged me, encouraged me and shared this incredible Disney journey with me.

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Abstract

Disney princess films and marketing have captured the hearts of children and adults all over the world. However, they may also contain gendered messages that reinforce traditional societal expectations of men and women. This thesis examines the Disney princesses, a worldwide commercial and cultural phenomenon that made $1.686bn just in 2018 (The Licensing Letter 2019). The Disney princesses are 16 royal women featured within animated Disney and Pixar films that are loved by young girls across the globe. This research will explore the Disney princess phenomenon, aiming to answer the following research question: 'How is femininity depicted within the Disney princess phenomenon?' through facet methodology.

I examine the role of femininity through three facets. Firstly, by examining the models of femininity depicted in Disney princess films using textual analysis. Secondly, the identified models are used as a framework to examine which models of femininity are dominant in Disney princess merchandising and marketing experiences. Content analysis and interviews supplement this research. Thirdly, I build on this framework once more by examining which models of femininity are dominant within princess park experiences through autoethnography.

I identified five 'waves' of femininity within the princess films: passive dreamers, lost dreamers, active leaders, sacrificing dreamers and innovative leaders. Each wave demonstrated characteristics that adhered to psychological understandings of femininity and masculinity. It was found that as more masculine attributes were introduced, the princess' behaviour would be policed by the introduction of a romantic relationship. The most dominant model of femininity within princess merchandising was the innovative leaders due to the heavy marketing of Anna and Elsa (*Frozen* 2013). Without the sisters, it was the passive and lost dreamers who dominated. Within princess park experiences, the singular character trait of female support was most central, being depicted by active and innovative leaders. Overall, the most dominant model of femininity within the princess consumer experiences was the innovative leaders due to the heavy marketing of the Frozen sisters. Without them, it was the passive dreamers who were most dominant.

This thesis has provided an exploratory and holistic examination of the Disney princess phenomenon in its key representations: films, merchandising and marketing, and princess park experiences. It also has provided an up to date analysis of non-franchised and franchised princesses, including the recently released *Frozen II* (2019), adding further depth to the phenomenon. The film analysis framework created for this research is a transferable and adaptable structure that can be used by future researchers to analyse a phenomenon of their choice.

This research is a lens in which to view and understand how a global phenomenon such as the Disney princesses can contribute to the depiction of femininity within popular culture. I have identified micro changes within the phenomenon due to the in-depth nature of my analysis. It has provided a deeper insight to the 16 heroines in order to highlight how the phenomenon has changed and developed over time.

Once Upon a Time

> There is change here, because in the end, we are changed by what we see, just as we are changed when we are seen. (ITV 2019)

Growing up, I always wanted to be a Disney princess. My mother had introduced me to them when I was just a few months old, and as each princess film was released, the more infatuated I was. When I asked her what I liked so much about them, she told me that the princesses created a fantasy that I could escape to, I loved the colours on the screen, and as I got older, I loved the songs and the dresses. I could dress up to be Snow White, Cinderella, Aurora, Belle and Jasmine when I was younger. One of my earliest memories of wanting to become a Disney princess was when I was four. I used to dream that a horse drawn pumpkin carriage would arrive and take me to my prince, just like Cinderella. When I was six, I wanted to be a mermaid like Ariel. I was completely lost in the princess world, I had the dresses, the tiaras, the shoes, the bags, everything I needed to emulate my heroines. My mother told me that as Cinderella, I would dress up and pretend to go to the ball, as Jasmine I would pretend my favourite teddy was Rajah the tiger, and as Belle I would pretend to be studious and read books. The princesses enabled me to develop my imagination and be a different person in a different world.

I didn't get to meet a Disney princess until I was 19, it was Cinderella, my childhood favourite. I was so overcome with seeing her in 'real life', I cried with nostalgia. It was at this point that I realised how important the Disney princesses had been to my childhood. As the above quote, narrated by Trevor McDonald of ITV (2019) says, "we are changed by what we see, just as we are changed when we are seen". The Disney princesses had been my role models from such a young age, and I could see the same journey happening with my other young family members.

A few months later, *Frozen* (2013) was released in cinemas. The story of Anna and Elsa fascinated me, it was so different: complex heroines, with difficult relationships and a completely different 'happy ending'. Whilst I had already decided to focus my third-year dissertation on American Empire, I couldn't ignore the princesses. I kept thinking about how they had changed over time, and how significant that could be for the people who consumed them. If princesses were only shown as being passive and, in a relationship, what did that mean for the representation of women? Many of my classmates discouraged me, telling me that Disney princesses weren't a political topic of consideration. To an extent it was true, I knew that the princesses had been examined in the fields of media and cultural studies, but it wasn't

featured within the discipline of politics. However, I felt that the princesses were still politically significant, they could be used as a platform to understand how society views women. As Trevor McDonald narrated, "television holds up a mirror to who we are" (ITV 2019), and I recalled so many memories of me, my friends and peers, holding these princesses up as a mirror to see who *we* were. I decided to pursue the princesses, and soon learnt how much could be written on these women, and the global reach they had to young children all over the world.

The first Disney princess created in film was Snow White from *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937). As time passed, the Walt Disney Studios continued to produce princess films that led to merchandising and marketing of princess products. It was here that the princess phenomenon began. In 2000, the Disney Princess Franchise was created by Andy Mooney, chairman of Disney Consumer Products after seeing girls attempting to dress up as Disney princesses at a Disney on Ice show:

> ""Standing in line in the arena, I was surrounded by little girls dressed head to toe as princesses," he told me last summer in his palatial office, then located in Burbank, and speaking in a rolling Scottish burr. "They weren't even Disney products. They were generic princess products they'd appended to a Halloween costume. And the light bulb went off. Clearly there was latent demand here. So the next morning I said to my team, 'O.K., let's establish standards and a colour palette and talk to licensees and get as much product out there as we possibly can that allows these girls to do what they're doing anyway: projecting themselves into the characters from the classic movies.'" (Orenstein 2006:NP)

Although ten princesses had already been produced by the Walt Disney Company at this point, they had been marketed separately. Franchising select princesses answered the demand for the princess products Mooney had seen, and so the Disney Princess Franchise was born. However, not all of the princesses that the Disney studios had created were included. The initial princess line-up chosen by Mooney was Snow White, Cinderella, Aurora, Ariel, Belle, Jasmine, Pocahontas, Mulan and Tinkerbell (who was later removed and provided with her own Disney Fairies Franchise) (Orenstein 2006:NP). As more princess films were produced, they were added to the franchise.

The franchise now officially consists of eleven Princesses: Snow White (1937); Cinderella (1950); Aurora (1959); Ariel (1989); Belle (1991); Jasmine (1992); Pocahontas (1995); Mulan (1998); Tiana (2009); Rapunzel (2010); and Merida (2012). Between them, these

princesses made $1.686bn licensed retail sales in 2018 alone (The Licensing Letter 2019). Their products and films can be found in Poundland, B&M Bargains, Marks & Spencer, Debenhams and even Harrods. Globally, other toy companies such as Hasbro and Mattel have battled for the licensing fee just to produce princess dolls. Hasbro won, paying $500bn "just for the licensing fee to produce the princesses. So, you can see how big and how successful that product line is" (Interview 2).

However, other Disney princesses were not included in the franchise: Princess Eilwony of *The Black Cauldron* (1985); Kida of *Atlantis: The Lost Empire* (2001); Anna and Elsa of *Frozen* (2013) and Moana of *Moana* (2016). Disney has given no reason for these exclusions. Nevertheless, some of these princesses have success within their own rights. *Frozen* (2013) made $1,280,802,282 in the worldwide box office and is currently 16th in the worldwide top lifetime grosses of all films. It was the first princess film to make over a billion dollars. Its sequel, *Frozen II*, made $1,450,026,933, and sits 10th in that list. Seven out of the ten films in the top lifetime grosses list were produced by Disney (Box Office Mojo [q]).

The princesses are everywhere, when I recall moments from my everyday life: going to the cinema I have seen girls dressed as the princess they are going to watch; walking to the shops I can see children begging their parents to buy them the latest princess toys or books; even chatting with parents and their children who are family friends, their children tell me who their favourite princesses are, and why. Though to some the princesses are trivial, to the young girls of the world, these princesses are their role models, their inspiration, or as Trevor McDonald calls it, their "mirror" to see who they are. Therefore, I felt it was imperative to examine such a wide-ranging phenomenon that has captured the hearts of so many children and investigate what images these princesses are producing (Colombo & Muir 2020:17).

A key reason for this is that the 'princesses are the political', a play on words of the second wave feminist concept of 'the personal is the political' (Hanisch 1969). This focuses on how in many areas of the field of politics there are debates between what 'counts' as public and private knowledge, activities and issues, and which of these is included within the mainstream political agenda (Jones 1988:12). Hughes (2002) argues that 'private' knowledge is not necessarily only focused on women's private lives, rather, it focuses on how we place political meaning on to "women's everyday experiences of their personal and private lives" (151-2). I argue that there is little difference between a woman's personal life and her experiences. I do not think that women's experiences are the only experiences to be held within 'private' knowledge. It can be argued that "all research is political", whether it is focused on examining relationships, businesses or government (Bell and Encel 1978:4; Oakley and Cracknell 1981:54). It may not be considered political in a traditional sense, such as examining governmental institutions or policies, however issues that affect people within society is still a matter for

political debate and research (Savigny & Warner 2015:2; Savigny 2020:2-3). Sexism, racism, ableism and homophobia have been entrenched within societies across the world and still are to this day. They affect individuals across society and must also be debated in the political arena, as well as researched in order to provide new knowledge and experiences. They are also embedded through different means, some more subtle than others. For example, racist, sexist, homophobic or ableist abuse is a clear overt issue that most people can recognise. However, racist, sexist, homophobic or ableist images found in media are much more covert. Therefore, in order to remove these images, we must understand how they have become "so embedded within our culture" (Savigny 2020:4). This has been championed by theories other than feminism such as post colonialist theory, race theory and queer theory. Therefore, although this research is a feminist piece, it is also important to acknowledge that there are other fields that focus on subjects traditionally considered to be within the 'private' sphere.

Cultural phenomena such as the Disney princesses could be considered as a trivial issue to focus research on. This is perhaps due to the point of view that the Disney princesses are simply 'imaginary' characters, who therefore have no real influence on society, as after all, it's 'just a film'. This particular line of thought was demonstrated by Conservative MP Phil Davies, who argued that teaching school children about sexism and racism represented in Disney and the media is "politically correct claptrap" (*The Telegraph* 2016). My aim in this research is to make the "invisible visible" and render "the trivial important" (Reinharz 1992:248).

Analysing the Princesses

When I first started this project, I often felt that my research did not fit with what I had originally understood to be 'political'. I couldn't compare the princesses to political theorists, elections or international relations. They weren't impacting national or foreign policy, to many they were considered as a trivial part of childhood. After studying feminist methodology, I realized that studying the Disney princess phenomenon allowed me to provide a political platform for a topic that is considered to be just something 'fun' for children to engage with. As Shulamit Reinharz (1992) argued, trivial aspects of society to some are important to others, and I wanted my research to reflect this. Although Reinharz's (1992) research is located within feminist theory, it has wider implications for other disciplines that aim to make invisible concepts and phenomenon visible.

Because of the interdisciplinary nature of this research, there were many ways in which I could have approached the princess films. When I first started my project, I used an eclectic combination of theoretical approaches to understand the princess phenomenon: constructivism, socialization theory, institutionalism and feminism. However, whilst they melded well together in theory, when it came to apply the theories to my analysis and research

methods, it was more challenging. Whilst I was building on constructivist theories with empirical research methods, in practice there seemed to be no clear links between the theoretical approaches I had initially selected. Although I still regarded my research as feminist, I was struggling to find a branch of feminism that would give me the flexibility to explore such a large phenomenon. Although feminism could be used to examine the films, such as postmodern feminism or feminist film theory, I could not extend their theoretical underpinnings to examine further representations of the princesses. I considered a range of feminist theories when deciding how to approach my research question. At first, I wanted to use different strands of feminism to explore the role of femininity within the Disney princess phenomenon. I considered postmodern feminism as an approach to this thesis. Judith Butler's gender performativity theory was a particular inspiration here. Butler developed the idea "that the 'being' of gender is an *effect*, an object of a genealogical investigation that maps out the political parameters of its construction in the mode of ontology" (Butler 2006:45). Therefore, gender is a result of society. Part of Butler's argument is that gender roles have been constructed within society; they extended this theory by claiming that gender is also performed:

> Gender is the repeated stylisation of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being. (Butler 2006:45)

Therefore, when we perform our gender, we are constantly producing and reproducing what it means to be a 'man' or a 'woman', "it is real only to the extent that it is performed" (Butler 1988:527). So, we are not taking on a role of being a woman or a man, we are producing effects that socially define us as being 'men' or 'women', when in reality, neither exist. Because everyone does this, it is continually reproduced (Butler 2006:45). At first, I thought gender performativity would provide a clear framework to explore the role of femininity within the Disney princess phenomenon. However, although Butler provided an excellent platform for researchers to discuss and conceptualise gender, her theory did not enable empirical research. Butler is often considered as anti-positivist and does not conduct any empirical research to support their claims on gender. In order to overcome this limitation of gender performativity theory, I wanted to extend Butler's theory with standpoint feminism.

Standpoint feminism challenged the assumption that feminism was unable to contribute to "the production of scientific knowledge" due to its political nature (Harding 2004:1). As a result of its introduction to research, it was offered as not only an explanatory theory, but also a method "to guide future feminist research" (Harding 2004:1). As a methodology, standpoint

feminism can be used to explain the experiences and knowledge of women. By listening and prioritizing the voices of women (who are considered by standpoint feminists to be the marginalized group in society), researchers are also able to bring those from the margins, to the centre. This can also produce more questions for feminist research, such as: who produces and validates knowledge?[1] Placing standpoint feminism into the approach of this thesis would allow me to conduct empirical research on the consumer experiences of the princess phenomenon.

The use of standpoint feminism in my approach also came with limitations. Firstly, standpoint feminism would not be an approach that I could use consistently throughout my thesis, as it does not easily explain the different representations of femininity within the Disney princess films. I wanted a consistent theory that I could use throughout my thesis, rather than just in certain sections. Secondly, standpoint feminism's positivist approach conflicted with Judith Butler's anti-positivist gender performativity theory. Although a case has been made for postmodern and standpoint feminism to be used together (Hirschmarm 1998), I felt that the empirical extension of the theories was not enough to overcome the inconsistency of using anti-positivist and positivist theories. It was at this time that I also considered using feminist film theory in order to explore the role of femininity within the Disney princess phenomenon.

Feminist film theory uses theories such as psychoanalysis, post-structuralism and semiotics to examine two elements of cinema: the way that women in film are portrayed, and the conditions of women behind the camera.[2] However, this approach did not have many empirical extensions that could be used. It would also be limited to only analysing the princess films, and could not provide the flexibility of examining merchandising, marketing and park experiences, as it was constricted to only analysing film.

I knew I would need an approach that would allow me to explore all areas of the phenomenon, rather than just one. It was at this point I discovered facet methodology (discussed in depth in Chapter One), an "evolving approach" (Mason 2011:75) that allows research to define their phenomenon of interest as a faceted gemstone, containing different sides and reflections, but ultimately making up a single gem. This allowed me to examine the many different sides to the princess phenomenon using a range of research methods to understand and make visible the political importance of cultural phenomenon such as the Disney princesses.

I am seeking to answer, "how is femininity depicted within the Disney princess phenomenon?" through two key research questions:

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[1] For further reading on standpoint feminism, please see: Harding (1986); Harding (1987); Harding (2004); Intemann (2010).

[2] For further reading on feminist film theory, please see these key texts: Rosen (1975); Smelik (1998); Thornham (1999)

1. How is femininity depicted in the Disney princess phenomenon films?
2. Which models of femininity are the most dominant in princess consumer experiences?

Femininity is often defined in relation to sex and gender: 'sex' being biologically assigned to individuals based on their reproductive organs, and 'gender' being the behaviour and attributes we learn to associate with being a man or a woman. This is often developed through socialization, a process where people learn the "skills, behaviour, patterns, values, and motivations needed for competent functioning in culture" (Maccoby 2015:3). And, in the case of 'learning' femininity (and masculinity), "establishing different roles and expectations for men and women is one of the key aspects of socialization in most societies" (Eagle 1998:68). Gender socialization has been conceptualised as the process that individuals learn constructed 'gendered' behaviours that are culturally associated with their sex (Eagle 1988:69; Leaper and Friedman 2007:561; Reeves 1987:399). Here, sex prescribes an individual's gender as either 'boy', where they will learn 'masculine' traits, or as 'girl', where they will learn 'feminine' traits (Eagle 1988:69). As a child develops, their gender identity is influenced by the family, education, peers and the media, all of which reproduce and maintain gender roles in society (Eagle 1988:67; Leaper 2000b; Leaper and Friedman 2007:561; Wood & Eagly 2002). These early associations can affect the way an individual will lead their life and will often place men at a greater social advantage over women (Eagle 1988:68; Lever 1976:478).

I understand and define femininity as the behaviours, qualities, characteristics and hallmarks that have been socially prescribed to women and girls (Lorber 1994:14; Laurie et al 2014:3; Macdonald & Dolan 2013). These behaviours and qualities have been developed through socialisation (Lorber 1994:14) and an individual's environment, social context and time period (Laurie et al 2014:4). In addition, the construction of femininity intersects with class, race, age, sexuality or disability (Laurie et al 2014:4), and therefore will have different meanings in different societies, cultures and time periods. In order to explore what femininity means within the Disney princess phenomenon, I have purposefully kept a broader definition of femininity in order to investigate how it is situated.

These questions will allow me to explore how femininity is depicted by the Disney princesses in their three key areas of exposure to the consumer: films, merchandise and marketing, and park experiences. In order to identify how femininity is depicted in the phenomenon, I had three main objectives. Firstly, I constructed a framework in which to analyse femininity within princess films. It allowed me to examine speech, movement, plot lines, narratives and treatment of characters to identify characteristics displayed by each princess. This helped me to cluster princesses who shared traits, developing 'the waves system' that

demonstrated how the portrayal of femininity had changed over time. Secondly, I classified how depictions of femininity have changed over time through the framework. Using the waves system, I mapped out the changes in portrayals of femininity, and how this was reflecting society through historical context. Finally, I measured which models of femininity were the most dominant within the phenomenon through content analysis and autoethnography.

Defining the Princess Phenomenon

This thesis is examining the Disney princess phenomenon as opposed to the Disney Princess Franchise for three reasons. Firstly, Disney has produced six princesses that have not been included within the Disney Princess Franchise. I want to investigate whether the models of femininity of non-franchised princesses are different to those of the franchised princesses. Secondly, the most recent princess films have included Anna, Elsa and Moana. These films have featured a different storyline to other princess films, focusing on friendship and adventure rather than romance. It would seem Disney has 'developed' the princess film storylines, therefore I wanted to include the new additions to have a complete examination of the princess phenomenon. Finally, the term phenomenon truly emphasises how popular the princesses are, their products can be found anywhere from Pound Shops to Harrods, their global reach is one of the largest in the world (The Licensing Letter 2019). The term 'phenomenon' also allows me to encompass the vast range of products and experiences in which the Disney princesses feature.

There is, I argue, a circular relationship between film and merchandise: each princess features in a film, from which merchandise is created, some of which is used to market the forthcoming film. This can then lead to princesses having a 'coronation' ceremony to welcome them into the Disney Princess Franchise, which means they will continue to have their own products *and* be included within Franchise merchandise.[3] Beyond this, the princess may get representation in one or more of Disney's six theme park resorts which could involve a character 'meet and greet' (i.e. a face actress dressed up as the princess to meet guests), a stage show, a dining experience or further theme park merchandising. Disney also licences companies like Primark and Hasbro wishing to produce merchandise that will further the public profile of the princesses. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to examine such a vast array of products. Therefore, this thesis looks at the Disney corporation's *own* direct merchandising and marketing, and consumer experiences. Because the phenomenon is so present with popular culture and daily life, I argue it can be used as a vehicle to understand how images of femininity

[3] This is not the case for all princess heroines that are included in the phenomenon. Eilwony, Kida, Anna, Elsa and Moana have not had a coronation ceremony, nor have they been included in any Disney Princess Franchise products. In 2018, Moana has been included in marketing campaigns for the Disney Princesses 'Dream Big' campaign, more recently she has been included in some franchised products but has not received a 'coronation' ceremony.

are formed for consumers. In order to do this, I firstly identify what images of femininity there are, and which ones are dominant within consumer experiences.

Debates on the representation of gender in Disney princess films and the wider phenomenon are situated within the field of Disney, gender and media and communication studies. Some scholars have focused on the franchise as a whole (Davis 2006; England et al. 2011; Stover 2012), whilst others have focused on particular princesses (Craven 2002; Dundes 2001; Edwards 1999; Lester 2010; Ohmer 1993; Stott 2004). Whilst there are merits to both research scopes, analysing the franchise as a whole allows scholars to examine the changes to the princess films as they continue to be released (Davis 2006), as well as compare and contrast those changes (England et al 2011). Selecting one or two princesses provides an opportunity to analyse the princesses in a greater depth. Within this niche field, I identified a key debate: the progression and regression of presented gender roles in princess films. Whilst some discussed the centrality of romance (Maity 2014; Hefner et al 2017), and others have analysed merchandise in more depth (Auster & Mansbach 2012; Bryman 1995; Bryman 2010; Stein 2011; Wasko 2001a; Wohlwend 2009), the central argument within the study of Disney princesses is whether the heroines have progressed (Davis 2006; Davis 2014a; Hine et al 2018b; Hoerrner 1996; Itmeizeh & Ma'ayeh 2017; Lacroix 2004; Rozario 2004; Wasko 2001a; Zarranz 2007) or regressed (Maio 1998; Rudloff 2016; Stover 2012; Whelan 2012; Zipes 1999) with time. Others simply examine the gender roles within the princess films (Craven 2002; Dundes 2001; Dundes et al 2018; England et al 2011; Streiff and Dundes 2017a; Streiff and Dundes 2017b), but do not necessarily compare and contrast them to the rest of the princess line. In many cases, it is beyond the scope of the journal articles where the research is outlined for the scholars to be able to go into depth on how depictions of gender have changed.

I intend to comprehensively track the micro changes that have taken place within the princess phenomenon, beginning with the films. Through textual analysis, I identify a typology for the princesses, to demonstrate how the representation of femininity differs. I extend this further - something which has not been done in significant depth within the field of Disney princesses – and apply this typology to other key representations of the phenomenon: merchandising, marketing and park experiences. Through this, I am able to examine whether the images of femininity found in the films are reflected within park experiences, and which images of femininity are dominant, and which are dormant.

Structure of the Thesis

In Chapter One, I discuss how facet methodology provided a creative theoretical framework to examine the Disney princesses. I outline the different research methods I used in order to examine each facet of the phenomenon, reflecting on how each method enabled me to uncover

knowledge, and some challenges I faced during data collection. The thesis is then divided into two main sections. The first section examines each princess film and answers the research question "how is femininity depicted in Disney princess phenomenon films?" I begin with an introduction to the princess franchise and the princess phenomenon, followed by explaining the methodology, method and structure of the five following chapters. Chapter Two explores the depiction of femininity in the first wave princess films of Snow White, Cinderella and Aurora. Chapter Three examines how femininity was presented in the second wave films of Eilonwy, Ariel, Belle and Jasmine. Chapter Four identified images of femininity in the third wave films of Pocahontas, Mulan and Kida. Chapter Five explained the ways in which femininity was represented in the fourth wave films of Tiana and Rapunzel. Finally, Chapter Six explored how femininity was depicted in the fifth wave films of Merida, Anna, Elsa and Moana. In order to compare my own findings with societal understandings of feminine and masculine traits, Chapter Seven cross references the character traits identified in the film chapters with traits identified by psychologists in gender measurement tests.

The second section of the thesis answers "which models of femininity are the most dominant in princess consumer experiences?" in two parts. I firstly provide an introduction for Disney's consumer experiences, detailing Disney's marketing and synergy practices, the Disney Princess Franchise, and a comprehensive history of the Disney theme parks. Chapter Eight examines which models of femininity are the most dominant in princess merchandising through content analysis of UK Disney Store products, consumer choices participant observation and costume availability in Walt Disney World, Florida. Chapter Nine examines which models of femininity are the most dominant in princess park experiences. The chapter provides an outline of the park experiences available to consumers and is followed by an autoethnographic account of my field work in Walt Disney World, Florida. The conclusion to the consumer experiences section in Chapter Ten focuses on how through both merchandising, marketing and park experiences the Disney princesses have become role models to consumers.

Chapter One: Methodology and Methods

Disney princesses are present in many different areas of culture such as television, films, consumer experiences, marketing and costume play (cosplaying) and their depictions of femininity are complex and shifting. For this reason, my thesis used facet methodology. In this chapter, I outline and explain Jennifer Mason's concept of (2011) facet methodology and its uses. Then, I illustrate how I use this approach to reveal the different 'facets' of the Disney princess phenomenon.

Facet Methodology

Facet methodology was developed by Jennifer Mason and her colleagues at the Morgan Centre for Research into Everyday Lives at the University of Manchester. Mason and her colleagues view it as an "evolving approach" to be used in social research (2011:75). Although it is a new approach within the social sciences, it has already been used in a diverse range of fields such as dance and family studies (Sharp & DeCesaro 2015); health sciences (Phoenix & Bell 2019); education (Mann & Warr 2016); feminism (Marine & Lewis 2014; Lewis et al 2015; Lewis et al 2018); psychology (Larkin et al 2019); child studies (Conn 2015; Koch 2019); and sociology (Davies & Heaphy 2011). Facet methodology allows researchers to use creative approaches and methods to uncover knowledge from complex phenomena. Rather than defining it as a step by step *procedure,* facet methodology can be seen as an *approach* that "celebrates researcher creativity, inventiveness, a 'playful' approach to epistemology, and the pursuit of flashes of insight" (Mason 2011:76). It was originally used by Mason and her team when designing a study to examine perspectives on living resemblances and critical associations in relationships (Mason 2011:76). They realised that there were multiple perspectives to their research and the challenges that came with it (Mason 2011:76). In order to resolve their need to explore multiple areas of research, they conducted a number of "mini studies using different clusters of methods" which they define as 'facets' (Mason 2011:76).

Mason uses the metaphor of a gemstone in order to explain this more clearly:

> In facet methodology, the facets in the gemstone are conceived as different methodological-substantive planes and surfaces, which are designed to be capable of casting and refracting light in a

> variety of ways that help to define the overall object of concern (Mason 2011:77).

When imagining a gemstone, you can imagine that whilst you are looking at one whole 'gem', it contains different sides and reflections. Therefore, when looking at social phenomena, we can recognise that these are "similarly multifaceted and perspectives on them can vary depending on how they are illuminated through methodological and interpretative practices" (Mann & Warr 2017:548-9). This also means that you can see facets differently depending on how you examine them. If we imagine the Disney princess phenomenon as the singular gemstone, we can also envision how each side or 'facet' of the gemstone represents a different element: princess films, marketing, merchandising, and consumer experiences. Although each of these 'facets' are different, when combined they make up the gemstone, or in this case, the princess phenomenon. Mason explains that each facet will require researchers to use "different lines of enquiry" and "different ways of seeing" (Mason 2011:77), which allows researchers to use multiple methods for each facet in order to explore the phenomenon as a whole. This results in having a wider understanding of the research subject, as this is rooted in multiple combinations of "what we are looking at (the thing itself, the ontology), and how we are looking (how we use our methods to perceive it, the epistemology)" (Mason 2011:77). As this is being done numerous times, and in many different ways, the researcher is able to provide multiple, entwined perspectives on complex phenomenon. For example, I used textual analysis to examine the princess films, and I used content analysis to explore the marketing of products. This combination allowed me to identify how femininity was depicted, which princesses were the most marketed and dominant within the merchandising. Although the two elements (films and marketing) were separate facets, the facet approach allows me to demonstrate how they were connected through the models of femininity identified within the research. That is the aim of facet methodology. It creates "a strategically illuminating set of facets in relation to specific research concerns and questions" (Mason 2011:77).

This approach involves more than simply listing the different layers of a phenomenon, rather, it seeks to discover how different aspects, or facets of a phenomenon are entwined with one another (Mason 2011:79). This is how multiple methods can produce knowledge about a phenomenon, so that the researcher can investigate how each facet contributes to how we see the research subject (Mason 2011:79).

Researching facets

Mason defined facets as:

> ...mini investigations that involve clusters of methods focussed on strategically and artfully selected sets of related questions, puzzles and problematics. Each facet represents a way or ways of looking at and investigating something that is theoretically interesting or puzzling in relation to the overall enquiry and each seeks out particular instances or versions of the kinds of entwinements and contingencies that are thought to be characteristic of the object of concern in some way (Mason 2011:79).

Like the sides of a gemstone, facets can be large or small (Mason 2011:80). Additionally, the level of insight from facets is not determined by the study size, the smallest facet could produce the largest insight to the research question if the researcher has skilfully and imaginatively carved and interpreted the facet (Mason 2011:80). However, facets may also change throughout the research process as new insights are discovered and developed at various stages of research (Mason 2011:83). Within this thesis there are three key facets that make up the Disney princess phenomenon: films, marketing/merchandising and consumer experiences. In order to explore how femininity is depicted in the phenomenon, I must investigate three areas: how femininity is depicted in films; which of these models are dominant within merchandising; and finally, whether these depictions of femininity are reflected in consumer experiences with the princesses. Each facet has a different unit of analysis. Firstly, I examined the films, using textual analysis to identify dominant depictions of femininity. This section of the research yielded a typology of different models of femininity, which correspond to different chronological waves of Disney princess films. Then, I identified which princesses (and therefore which dominant models of femininity) were marketed the most in Disney merchandising. This was done through content analysis; calculating how many products are offered and advertised for each princess and who was included within marketing materials. These findings were supplemented by interviews with individuals who have worked for Disney, which provided expert explanations of product design and marketing. Finally, I explored whether these dominant models of femininity were reflected in Disney Parks consumer experiences with the princesses (meeting an actor dressed as a princess at the Disney theme parks) using first-hand fieldwork and autoethnography. Separately, these facets produced an insight to each element of the phenomenon (Mason 2011:80) and deep understanding of the phenomenon, as a whole. Together, each of these facets produced a holistic understanding of the princess phenomenon through their entwining nature.

Mason also intended that facets should "trouble" existing knowledge and assumptions (2011:82). Although this may not always be the case; and facets may actually reinforce prior understandings of the research subject; Mason argued that "facet methodology is guided by the aspiration to shift assumptions, and this is crucial in working out what the facets should look like" (Mason 2011:82). She explained this further in relation to her own research on critical associations. Mason and her colleagues wanted to 'trouble' the thought that our genetics can explain our resemblance to family members (2011:82). In order to do this, facet methodology allowed researchers to use a flexible range of data and methods in order to explore facets on a deeper level (Mason 2011:83). Any methods can be used, qualitative, quantitative or a mixture of the two (Mason 2011:84).[4] I used creatively collated research methods in order to provide multiple flashes of insight of a complex phenomenon (Mason 2011:82). Textual analysis shone a light on how femininity was depicted in each princess film. Content analysis provided insight on which princesses were featured in merchandising. Interviews produced expert industry knowledge on how a product was designed, created and marketed. Autoethnography and participant observation shone a light on how femininity was depicted in consumer experiences. Each of these methods provided a critical flash of insight that collectively explored the depiction of femininity across a complex global phenomenon, rather than just a descriptive summary of the Disney princesses (Mason 2011:83; Marine & Lewis 2014:14-5; Lewis et al 2019).

Method

Established ways of approaching the Disney princesses focus on analysis of the films (Craven 2002; Davis 2006; Dundes 2001; Edwards 1999; England et al. 2011; Hefner et al 2017; Lester 2010; Maity 2014; Ohmer 1993; Stott 2004; Stover 2012) and theme parks (Bryman 2010; Shuler 2015). However, these studies have not been revised to include the most recent princesses, nor do they illustrate the circular relationship between the different parts of the phenomenon (films, parks and merchandise). Through facet methodology I was able to highlight the intersecting facets of the princess phenomenon and explore how femininity was depicted within it. In order to do this, I adapted and expanded on methods used by other Disney scholars, all of which I discuss in this chapter.

[4] Mason does not define facet methodology as a mixed methods approach. She argues that facet methodology "is not *any* kind of approach to *methods alone*, mixed or otherwise", rather it is both "epistemological and substantive" (Mason 2011:84). It also does not require the use of both qualitative and quantitative research methods, unlike the eponymous mixed-methods approach. Mason wants to avoid facet methodology being seen as a hierarchical approach where methods must integrate and triangulate with one another (2011:84).

How is femininity depicted in the Disney Princess phenomenon films?

Each princess's market 'life' begins with a film. From here, merchandising and marketing campaigns are produced, and consumer experiences are introduced at Disney theme parks. Any models of femininity produced in the film may be transferred to further marketing and experiences. Therefore, I began my analysis with the princess films. Disney princess films have received rich textual analysis from a number of academic fields and have been approached from different methods by other scholars. Examples include discourse analysis (Wohlwend 2009); thematic analysis (Towbin et al 2004); content analysis (England et al. 2011; Faherty 2001; Robinson et al 2007) and textual analysis (Do Rozario 2004; Dundes 2001; Edwards 1999; Lacroix 2004; Maity 2014; Ross 2004; Zarranz 2007). Some studies have also focused on femininity and the princesses (Davis 2006; Zarranz 2007), but many of these studies have not been able to include some of the newer princesses from more recent films. One study to do this in particular was England et al (2011), who focused on the Disney princesses from Snow White to Tiana. They conducted a content analysis to identify gendered behaviour depicted in each of the princess films (558). The coding characteristics were described as "traditionally masculine or traditionally feminine according to past content analysis literature" of Do Rozario (2004); Dundes (2001); Durkin (1985); Hoerrner (1996); Klein et al. (2000); Leaper et al. (2002) and Thompson and Zerbinos (1995). There were 13 masculine characteristics[5] and 16 feminine characteristics.[6] The authors did not make it clear how they associated each trait as masculine or feminine, which I addressed in my own research through the inclusion of psychological gender profiling.

England et al's coding method consisted of the first author identifying the initial coding characteristics, with input from the research team to refine it (2011:558). This involved test-coding clips of the films and comparing the results in order to "hone the coding schemes" (558). During the data gathering, each researcher "coded the first 25 minutes of all nine movies", coding princes and princesses separately, but measuring each against both masculine and feminine characteristics (England et al 2011:558). Researchers coded a new behaviour if the character was described as having a particular characteristic or exhibited the characteristic themselves (England et al. 2011:558). Each new behaviour was coded after a scene change, even

[5] Masculine characteristics were identified as: curious about princess, wants to explore, physically strong, assertive, unemotional, independent, athletic, engaging in intellectual activity, inspires fear, brave, described as physically attractive (masculine), gives advice, leader (England et al. 2011:558-9).
[6] Feminine characteristics were identified as: tends to physical appearance, physically weak, submissive, shows emotion, affectionate, nurturing, sensitive, tentative, helpful, troublesome, fearful, ashamed, collapses crying, described as physically attractive (feminine), asks for or accepts advice or help and victim (England et al. 2011:599-60).

if that behaviour had been displayed before (England et al 2011:558), this would be useful to identify which behaviours were more common for the characters.

Although England et al's study was an interesting insight to the different ways femininity and masculinity are portrayed in princess films, I chose not to quantify the princesses in this thesis because I did not want to simplify their behaviour. Once the princesses and princes were coded, England et al. were able to identify whether princes demonstrated more masculine characteristics and princesses displayed more female characteristics through the quantified data. It is important to note that their coding was based on part of the film, so their data did not account for *all* actions committed by the princes and princesses. They were also able to use the coding to find out whether "rescuing actions would vary by the gender of the character" (England et al. 2011:560), and whether "gender role portrayals in the Disney Princess movies would become more egalitarian over time" (England et al. 2011:561). Rather than focusing on how often gendered characteristics were displayed; how certain actions were performed more by certain genders; and quantify how representations changed over time, I identify different models of femininity in all current franchised and non-franchised films, and explored which of these models were more dominant than others. By providing a thick description of each *full* princess film and their dominant characteristics, I provided a deeper understanding of the depiction of femininity within princess films.

I achieved this through textual analysis. This is a research method where researchers interpret a text (be it a film, television programme, advertisements for example) in order to understand how individuals or cultures would absorb the messages within that text (McKee 2010:1). It examines the structure of texts to explain its foundations and how it functions to construct meaning (Click & Kramer 2007:247). David Silverman suggests that researchers should treat texts as a representation and analyse its effects (2006:200). Within this thesis, I evaluated and analysed how femininity has been depicted within the films through character development, plotline, movement and interactions. Textual analysis has multiple definitions (Fürsich 2009:240; McKee 2010:2-3). For me, it provides a flexible and inductive approach to exploring how femininity is constructed within Disney princess films, which provided me with a foundation to explore other facets of the phenomenon. It also allowed researchers to overcome the limitations of content analysis which results in quantifiable categories (such as in England et al. 2011's paper), focusing instead on recognising meaning, patterns, assumptions and exclusions within a text (Fürsich 2009:240-1). This was possible because it permitted interpretation (McKee 2010:1). For example, one key finding of my research was the identification of a cluster of films in which the princesses had a strongly domestic role. I named this the 'first wave' of Disney princess films. When examining how first wave princesses were

depicted as domestic, I also explained how this 'feminine' behaviour was rewarded, whereas more 'masculine' behaviours depicted in princess films were punished.

My analysis of the films is a contribution to an already rich field of textual analysis (Do Rozario 2004; Dundes 2001; Edwards 1999; Lacroix 2004; Maity 2014; Ross 2004; Zarranz 2007). However, I have contributed new material as well, as this thesis included new princesses that had not been analysed previously. I used textual analysis to identify patterns of femininity depicted in the princess films. Once these patterns were established, I was able to indicate the relationship between patterns of femininity in the films and compare them to psychological understandings of femininity. My findings indicated how these models of femininity changed over time.

Film Analysis Process

My sample selection included all films that included a human princess. I did not include princesses who were portrayed as animals (Nala in *The Lion King*) or game graphics (Vanellope von Schweetz in *Wreck it Ralph*) in order to maintain consistency throughout the analysis.

I began the film analysis with a pilot study in order to test my method of analysis. For this, I watched the films in chronological order, making notes on plot points (i.e. what is happening in the film); quotes (i.e. descriptions of characters, dialogue between characters or *who* was speaking); behaviour and movement (i.e. the way that characters behave towards others); activities (i.e. what activities does the audience see characters doing) and dichotomies between characters (i.e. are some characters opposed to one another and in what way?). I observed patterns and found that certain princesses shared traits demonstrated by characterization, plot and their development. I also found that these traits and characteristics changed as more films were produced. For example, I noted that Snow White, Cinderella and Aurora all shared traits that could be described as 'passive', whilst Eilonwy, Ariel, Belle and Jasmine shared 'assertive' traits. The pilot study suggested that a typology of the princesses could be found within the analysis, and that this typology changed across time. The pilot study allowed me to refine my method and conduct deeper analysis in the second round of study.

When I began my film analysis after the pilot phase, I watched the films again in chronological order and took more in-depth notes on character development, plot and narrative changes, relationships, speech, behaviour and movements, activities and character dichotomies. Watching the films in chronological order may have impacted findings in the sense that the typologies identified were split chronologically, however I would argue that as these films were being produced, attitudes and perceptions of femininity were constantly changing, which was reflected within the differing typologies. All of these different factors contributed to the dominant characteristics of each princess. By characteristics, I mean the traits that each

princess displayed throughout her film, for example being domesticated, or assertive. Each princess exhibited numerous characteristics but not all of these were defining. I identified the commonly shared characteristics shared by different princesses. For a characteristic to be shared, each princess within the 'wave' had to display it significantly throughout the film. For example, Pocahontas, Mulan and Kida each demonstrated leadership as a dominant character trait. Each wave of princesses produced four to six shared characteristics which were analysed in depth throughout each chapter. This helped me to identify models of femininity that were present (and dominant) in each film. This allowed me to establish how femininity was depicted in the Disney princess films and examine the shifts and changes that occurred in these models over time.

The result of this analysis and its resultant typology is what I called the 'waves' system, in order to indicate the changing models of femininity as opposed to indicating a consistent progression. The waves system also identified patterns between the princesses and highlighted where these patterns began to change over time.

I wanted to develop the waves analysis further in order to demonstrate the relationship between the depictions of femininity in princess films and wider understandings of femininity. Therefore, I compared my findings from the films to psychological gender modelling scales. These scales are often found in the forms of 'tests' that psychologists used to examine and measure feminine and masculine characteristics. Gender measurement tests have been published from the 1936 to 2016 and vary in their measurement style. I identified and surveyed 55 gender measurement tests, examining the test's methodology and indicators. Many of these tests did not provide a clear measurement test or scale; or they were only measuring one gender. This would have prevented me from identifying how princess behaviour was changing over time through their adaptation of feminine or masculine traits. For this reason, I selected the six measurement tests that explored both masculine and feminine characteristics and had a clear indicator scale: Bem's (1974) 'The Measurement of Psychological Androgyny'; Spence, Helmreich and Stapp's (1974) 'Personal Attributes Questionnaire'; Diekman & Eagly's (2000) 'Stereotypes as Dynamic Constructs: Women and Men of the Past, Present, and Future'; Mahalik et al's (2005) 'Development of the Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory; Wilde and Diekman's (2005) 'Cross-Cultural Similarities and Differences in Dynamic Stereotypes: A Comparison Between Germany and the United States'; and finally a Disney studies interpretation of gender measurement, England et al's (2011) 'Gender Role Portrayal and the Disney Princesses'.

Once I had created a database containing each of the psychological indicators and film characteristics, I began to cross reference the psychological characteristics with the traits I identified within textual analysis. This proved challenging, as the words I had used to describe

the characteristics found within the princess films did not necessarily match the words used by psychologists. Therefore, I tried a different approach. I examined each psychological trait and grouped similar traits under an umbrella term. For example, "defends own beliefs" and "willing to take a stand"; (Bem 1974) could both be assertive traits. This allowed me to cross reference the characteristics from the films with masculine and feminine traits, and limited excluding certain traits due to different wording. The different wording of traits also allowed me to demonstrate how certain characteristics can be demonstrated through other actions. For example, being "yielding" is also an attribute of passivity. After cross referencing and identifying the feminine and masculine traits within each wave, I was able to explore how each wave's inclusion or exclusion of feminine or masculine traits impacted the character development and plot line of the story.

Reflections

The use of textual analysis can provide a rich and unique interpretation of a text. Although these interpretations are subjective to the researcher, the analysis can contribute to a wider understanding of a phenomenon. This flexibility means researchers are able to define their own parameters of analysis (Fürsich 2009). Of course, I also had to acknowledge my own identity as a researcher during this process. Textual analysis is subject to the 'readers' (i.e. my own) interpretation, therefore it was important to acknowledge that this research was adding another voice to a rich dialogue. During this research, I also wanted to be mindful of my own experiences that could influence the way that I interpret a text. Firstly, I am, and always have been heavily entrenched within Disney princess 'culture', I grew up watching princess films and therefore I wanted to ensure that I used my detailed knowledge to enhance my understanding of the models of femininity depicted in the films. Secondly, my own individual background could impact on how I view the text. I am a white, middle class university educated, cisgender woman, my interpretations are shaped by my own experiences. I hope that my contribution will provide a framework for others to interpret princess films, which would lead to more diverse voices in this field.

Although Fürsich (2009) has argued that using "textual analysis in combination with other methods may also miss important factors by straying away from the text" (248), it would be more rigorous to do just that. Textual analysis is based on the specific interpretations of the researcher (Phillipov 2013:212). By cross-referencing my textual analysis with gender measurement tests, I was able to map social understanding of gender onto my own analysis, which provided a deeper understanding. Using gender measurement scales allowed me to further my understanding of how femininity and masculinity is understood in society, and how the princess films have reflected and reinforced these understandings. In addition, combining

my film analysis with other methods such as autoethnography will allow research to continue to provide a wider insight to a phenomenon, rather than the researcher imposing cultural meanings of their own interpretation (Phillipov 2013:212). It has also been suggested that textual analysis combined with an ethnographic approach can provide "maximum depth and quality of information and understanding" (Malbon 1999:180), which this thesis will provide through the method of autoethnography.

Which models of femininity are the most dominant in princess consumer experiences?

I chose to focus on two specific consumer experiences within the Disney princess phenomenon: princess merchandise and theme park experiences. I chose these two facets of the phenomenon due to their accessibility. Princess merchandise can be purchased in a range of shops across the world and have a varied price range that is as affordable or as luxurious as consumers desire. I chose theme parks as this is the only physical place in the world where consumers are able to 'meet' their favourite princess.[7] Although the Disney princesses are featured in more consumer experiences than this (such as books, magazines and theatre shows on Broadway in New York and the Westend in London), the products and theme park experiences are the most prominent ways that consumers can interact with the princesses. Here, I explain how I have captured snapshots of two facets of the Disney princess phenomenon.

Disney Store Merchandise

Disney merchandising has been discussed by Disney scholars such as Alan Bryman (1995; 2010), Andi Stein (2011) and Janet Wasko (2001). It has also been a topic for discussion amongst other areas of academic research such as psychology and education as seen in Sharon Lamb and Lyn Brown's (2006) book *Packaging Girlhood: Rescuing Our Daughters from Marketers' Schemes*. These discussions have been textually analytical and use case studies to analyse the merchandising techniques of the Walt Disney Company. I wish to build on these studies through content analysis and interviews. Each method will contribute to a further understanding of the merchandising and marketing process, whilst simultaneously exploring another facet of the princess phenomenon. Content analysis will provide evidence of clear patterns within merchandise, and indicate what type of merchandise is available, and for which princess. Interviews with key actors will provide more in-depth information about the

[7] There is a growing trend in non-licensed Disney Princess Parties, where actresses dress up as the princesses for children's parties. However, none of these businesses are licensed or controlled by Disney themselves.

merchandising and marketing processes of the Walt Disney Company as an institution. Combining these methods together will provide a holistic understanding of the consumer experience facet of the phenomenon.

One way in which I explored which models of femininity were most dominant in the Disney princess phenomenon consumer experiences was by examining Disney princess merchandise, which is available all over the world from Poundland to Harrods. I chose to look at merchandise as these are one of the most accessible products to consumers at a varying price bracket. I have seen Disney princess products available to purchase from prices as little as £1 in stores such as Poundland or Primark. This merchandise exposure across the UK and all over the world means that consumers can easily access princess products. Of course, due to there being such a vast amount of possible merchandise to look at, I needed to narrow down my merchandise selection. I decided the most appropriate selection was Disney Store products themselves, as these have been created and authorized by the Walt Disney Company to ensure continuity.[8] Consumers can purchase Disney princess merchandise from the Disney Store or online. As the Disney Store's in the UK vary in size, I felt it was more appropriate to analyse the products on the UK Disney Store website.

Content Analysis

I felt that content analysis was the most appropriate method for this facet, as it "is a systematic and objective means of describing and quantifying phenomena" (Elo and Kyngäs 2008:108). Content analysis is considered as a very flexible method for researchers (Cavanagh 1997) and seems to have a different definition depending on the 'type' of content analysis conducted. It can be used qualitatively or quantitatively to provide a "condensed and broad description of the phenomenon" which produces "concepts or categories describing the phenomenon" (Elo and Kyngäs 2008:108-9).

Although this method has not been used to analyse Disney princess products before, it has been used in other studies on merchandising (Auster and Mansbach 2012; Hirdes et al. 2009).[9] It would seem that Hirdes et al (2009) is one of the few content analyses that has been conducted on actual merchandise. Their aim was to discover the different appeals and values that are associated with Jesus merchandise sold by Christian retail groups to consumers (Hirdes et al. 2009:142, 148). The researchers used undergraduate students as coders for the project, and the method consisted of four stages based on the researchers wanting to discover which

[9]Although Auster and Mansbach (2012) focused on Disney products, their analysis was intended to examine the appearance and appeal of toys for both boys and girls. Rather than focusing on the Disney princesses, they examined a range of toys across the US Disney Store website.

persuasive media appeals "most closely fit each piece of Jesus merchandise" and which "communication functions most closely fit each piece of Jesus merchandise" (Hirdes et al. 2009:150). The first stage focused on identifying the different types of merchandise in the catalogues used by the coders. This involved splitting merchandise into categories such as apparel, food, art, stationery, novelty items and so on (Hirdes et al. 2009: 149). Once the merchandise had been categorised, the coders moved on to stage two, where they identified whether each piece of merchandise was considered as 'Jesus merchandise'. This had been identified as including "a representation of Jesus' name, Jesus' image, or a combination of Jesus' name and image on it" (Hirdes et al. 2009:149). For stage three, the coders then determined which of the persuasive media appeals "most closely fit each piece of Jesus merchandise" in order to answer the first research question "What are the most frequently used persuasive appeals represented on Jesus merchandise?" (Hirdes et al. 2009:146). Finally, stage four approached the second research question: "Which communication functions - evangelism, edification, public relations, information/knowledge, and self-identity/expression - does Jesus merchandise most closely fit?" (Hirdes et al. 2009:148). The coders examined which communication function fit the closest with each piece of Jesus merchandise (Hirdes et al. 2009:150).

I have approached the merchandise of the Disney princess phenomenon in a different way to that of Hirdes et al. In order to answer my research question, I wanted to investigate whether the Disney princess phenomenon depicts models of femininity within consumer experiences. In relation to the merchandise section of this research question, I may not always be able to point out depictions of femininity on the products. This is because these products have printed pictures of the princesses, often just standing or sitting near each other, rather than completing a task. This of course, could be a finding in itself, from my own experiences of seeing other Disney products such as Marvel or Star Wars merchandise, I will often see the male characters in an 'active' pose, Iron Man is flying, The Hulk is punching something. Meanwhile, the princesses often stood or sat, staring back at me, clasping their hands near their face.[10] Therefore, as I may not be able to analyse models of femininity in this way, I will examine what type of products are available and investigate whether some princesses are marketed more than others. I will then use these findings in combination with my film analysis from the textual analysis chapters to create a better understanding of the models of femininity that the Disney princess phenomenon is producing and reproducing. This will provide an entwined understanding of two facets within the phenomenon.

[10] It would have been very interesting to draw comparisons between princesses and princes, however it was beyond the scope of this thesis.

My content analysis categorizes the different types of products available and indicates whether some princesses are marketed on products more than others. I used an inductive approach, focused on the UK Disney Store website. The website layout of the Disney Store changed since my analysis took place, but the Disney princesses had their own section on the website in order for consumers to be able to find products easily. Individual princesses have their own page solely for their own products under the character section, which can also be accessed from the Disney princess page.

Once a consumer reaches the Disney Princess page, they can either view all the items together or they can view them princess by princess. Disney princess franchise products (i.e. products with multiple princesses featured on them) would be included on the relevant princess page. For example, if Mulan, Cinderella, Belle and Rapunzel were included on a lunchbox, then this item would appear on each of the relevant princess pages. It is also important to acknowledge here that not all princesses I discuss in this thesis have merchandise on the Disney Store website. Eilwony and Kida are not featured at all on the UK Disney Store website and are therefore not discussed at length in this part of the thesis.

Stage One

I saved PDF copies[11] of each princess's web page, and then used this copy to conduct content analysis. This data was collected monthly over a twelve-month period from 18th January 2016 to 18th December 2016 on the UK Disney Store website. This provided me with an insightful snapshot of how Disney markets their princesses on products - and what type of products - and what kind of products are available for which princess.

Stage Two

After I had saved the webpage as a PDF, I opened the document and observed the different types of products available. In the first month, I did this for each available princess to ensure I had seen all available products in order to categorise them. The result of this was five categories: identification products, association products with one princess, association products with multiple princesses, DVDs and supplemental products. These categories allowed me to differentiate between products and how a consumer may use them.

Identification products can be used to assume the role of the princess in question. For example, a Belle costume would allow the consumer to assume the role of Belle in a role play activity. Identification products with multiple princesses can be used by the consumer to associate themselves with multiple princesses, or the princess brand in general. This may be

[11] All of these copies can be found in Appendix A.

appropriate for everyday experiences, like taking a Disney princess lunchbox to school. Identification products with one princess allow a consumer to associate themselves with a particular princess, this may be one of their favourite princesses for example. This again can range from anything to a t-shirt or plastic dinner and cutlery sets. DVDs will often introduce a consumer to a princess and will present the princess' story to the consumer. Finally, supplemental products were items that were related or featured in the film but did not feature a princess. These products could supplement any of the above categories when used by a consumer. For example, a Prince Charming doll (supplementary product) could be used in addition to a Cinderella doll (association product). Once I had categorised the products in the first month, the categories remained the same. I checked for the possibility of any new categories each month, but the product output remained very similar over the data gathering period.

Table 1: Disney Princess Categorical Variables

Identification Product	Dress, Shoes, Tiara, Wand, Jewellery, Handbag, Wig, including Baby Costumes
Association Product with Multiple Princesses	Anything that has a number of princesses printed on an item/ included in a product
Association Product with One Princess	Any merchandise that includes the princess herself and/or with anyone else from her film.
DVDs	A DVD of the film
Supplemental Products	Items that are related to the film, but do not feature the princess herself, e.g. Cinderella's carriage or a Prince Charming doll

Stage Three

Each month, I exported each Disney Princess web page, conducted a content analysis and coded each product in a category. This process involved me viewing the product image and title and coding it accordingly. For example, when I saw Cinderella's ball gown, I coded it under 'Identification Products'. In total, I coded 7981 products to create the product data set.

Stage Four

Once all of the data was coded into categories, I then had a very clear vision of which princesses had the most products in total and which princesses were marketed more than others. I analysed identification products, association products with multiples princesses and association products with one princess separately in order to explore which princesses were heavily marketed. I also analysed the total products, and products by wave in order to explore which waves were being heavily marketed.

Analysis

The result of content analysis provided "a condensed and broad description of the phenomenon" that produced "concepts or categories describing the phenomenon" (Elo and Kyngäs 2008:108). In the case of this research, I was able to identify five different types of princess products. This has allowed me to notice trends and make deductions about which princesses are most intensively marketed and how often a princess was featured within merchandise. This would allow me to detect any trends that may be occurring, such as some princesses being marketed more than others. I could then use this data as a "conceptual map" to outline how models of femininity have transferred from the films to merchandise. Combined, I could investigate the relationship between princesses who displayed certain models of femininity and their products.

Reflection

Content analysis has been regarded as "an overly simple method" with minimal literature on the analysis process (Elo and Kyngäs 2008:113). However, this challenge can actually provide researchers such as myself with the flexibility to carry out content analysis on a range of data (Bryman 2012:304-5; Elo and Kyngäs 2008:113), producing new and unique knowledge. This knowledge can also be established as reliable through a clear analytical framework (Bryman 2012:289, 304). It can also be easily combined with other research methods - like it has been in my own research design - to contribute an explanation of a wider phenomenon (Elo and Kyngäs 2008:114).

Of course, content analysis can only analyse the content that the researcher has, and therefore may not be completely representative. However, this will depend on the research subject. In the case of analysing princess merchandise, I specifically examine the products on the Disney Store website. The only issue analysing online store content was that if an item was out of stock, then it would not necessarily appear on the website, thereby excluding it from one month's analysis. Content analysis can overcome this limitation as it allows for longitudinal

studies that take place over a period of time, rather than a single case study (Bryman 2012:304). By conducting the content analysis over the period of a year, I was able to account for some products being out of stock on the Disney Store website.

Due to content analysis' flexibility for a longitudinal study, it is useful for tracking trends within the data. Although this will be descriptive and provide no direct reason for any patterns found, researchers are then able to continue the conceptual map they are building through other research methods and in my own case, through other facets I am researching. In this thesis, I will expand on the trends shown through interviews and auto ethnography in order to create a richer understanding of the princess phenomenon.

The one limitation I found during the coding process was due to changes in my research. When I began collecting data in January 2016, my research was solely focused on the Disney Princess Franchise, therefore I only collected data for franchised princesses. However, In September 2016, my research expanded to non-franchised princesses: Eilonwy, Kida, Anna, Elsa and the upcoming Moana. Neither Eilonwy or Kida had had any form of representation of the UK Disney Store website, however Anna and Elsa had, which meant I only had four months of data for Anna and Elsa. In the case of Moana, her film was released in November 2016, and merchandise was released in September 2016, which meant I was only able to code 4 months of Moana product data. These omissions did affect the data set, as Anna and Elsa in particular were very heavily marketed in the last four months of the collection period. I therefore decided to only analyse the last four months of data in order to ensure the data would not be skewed by Anna, Elsa and Moana's lack of representation in the previous months.

Interviews

I conducted interviews to supplement my understanding of the Walt Disney Company's merchandising and marketing processes. I conducted four interviews with former Disney employees and consultants in order to understand more about Disney's marketing and merchandising choices. Interviewing Disney employees is not always possible and can often be very challenging due to the private nature of the company. The interviews that were conducted provided me with in depth accounts of the product design and marketing process, as well as supplementary information about the princess phenomenon.

As some participants were current or ex Disney employees it was important to keep their anonymity. Although I did consider surveys, I felt that interviews would provide me with richer textual analysis. As the interviewer, I also had a firm control over expanding further on points I did not necessarily understand or required further information on, as well as more control over the direction of the interview (Saferstein 1995).

I conducted email interviews, skype interviews and face to face interviews depending on the geographical location and personal preference of the interviewee. Most participants lived far away from me, so email and Skype interviews overcame this issue. Email interviews are quite literally, interviewing via email. This can entail an email thread, with a few questions sent to the interviewee at a time, and upon receiving the responses the interviewer may send further questions (Bampton and Cowton 2002:NP). Alternatively, all questions can be sent for the participant to answer. Email interviews can take longer, as once the questions are sent, the interviewer must wait for the participant to respond, however this time also gives the participant opportunity to think about their response in their own time, and perhaps will allow them to provide more detail (Bampton and Cowton 2002:NP; Opdenakker 2006:NP). This also eliminated the transcription process as there is no spoken word. Ethically speaking, this time also allows interviewees "to protect themselves from making injudicious comments" (Bampton and Cowton 2002:NP). Some elements of interviewing are lost in the email interview, such as body language, non-verbal communication and emphasised speech (Bampton and Cownton 2002:NP).

These issues found in email interviews can be overcome through Skype interviews. Skype provides researchers an opportunity to access inaccessible participants (Deakin and Wakefield 2014:607). As Skype allows internet calling with audio and video, researchers are able to note tone and body language if the participant has consented to using audio and video. Email and Skype interviews can sometimes prevent the researcher and participant from developing a rapport with one another, and some answers may not be as detailed as they could be in a face to face interview - but I did not find these situations to be the case during my own interviews.

Access

I negotiated access to participants using a snowball effect, but access was somewhat challenging. When I initially started to contact people who had worked for Disney or were currently working for Disney within a merchandising and marketing capacity (whether this was with the Disney Princess Franchise or not), I was unsuccessful. It would seem that current Disney employees are unable to participate in interviews due to their contract (Interview 1), although ex-employees that I contacted were happy to be interviewed. I was able to get in contact with someone who had worked for Disney in a senior role, and they accepted my request for an interview. Once I had completed this interview, the participant asked if I wanted to speak to anyone else, and was able to put me in touch with another individual who worked for Disney, which led to another interview. These participants lived far away from me, hence the email and Skype interviews.

In order to gain more knowledge on the Disney princesses, I wanted to speak to Andy Mooney who created the franchise, however this proved impossible. As Mooney is no longer with Disney, I researched his current role as the CEO of Fender Music. I contacted Fender consumer relations to request an interview but received no response. After some further research I discovered that he had been interviewed for a magazine, so I contacted them to ask for any contact details or advice. They forwarded me some details of an agency; however, they were unable to help me. Finally, I noticed that Mooney had been given an honorary degree at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh. I contacted the university to ask if they could contact him on my behalf, however they were also unable to help me.

Considering the challenges I faced trying to interview Disney employees, I feel that I have been able to speak to participants who have provided this research with a breadth of expert knowledge and information. Not many researchers have been able to interview Disney employees, so this thesis will provide a new in-depth institutional knowledge about the Walt Disney Company.

Consent

Although the interviews I conducted did not discuss any confidential information, it was my duty as a researcher to protect participants' anonymity. My consent process consisted of a number of forms that were fully explained to the participant. Firstly, I sent a letter in email format to each participant, requesting their availability for an interview, this letter gave details on what the research was about and my interview intentions. I also offered to email the interview questions in advance in order to give the participant time to prepare[12]. If the participant agreed to the interview, I sent them a consent form in advance, and before the interview started, I explained the consent form to them and answered any questions they had about the research or the interview.[13] I then asked for their permission to record the interview. Once I had transcribed the interview, I emailed the participants with a copy of the transcript to ensure they were happy with my transcription, and if there was anything they felt needed changing.

[12] In both cases, the two participants who held a senior position at Disney worked for the company for a long period of time, I felt it would be helpful to supply questions beforehand so that they could, to an extent, prepare their answers rather than try and think of multiple experiences on the spot. In both cases, this was preferred by both participants.
[13] See Appendix B.

Structure of the Interview

Interviews were semi structured, thus allowing allow the participant to have a discussion with me on relevant topics, whilst providing opportunities for other relevant topics to emerge (Carter & Little 2007:2). As I had sent the questions prior to the interview, the participant knew what we would be discussing, but this did not prevent them from providing information beyond the questions asked.

I began the interview by asking open questions that would allow the participant to explain their role and responsibilities within the company. Once these had been outlined, the participant would then focus on topics that they wanted to discuss, with me asking occasional questions in order to clarify what they were saying. Interviewees provided a considerable amount of information about the merchandising process, so I occasionally asked questions such as "Are there any other responsibilities that perhaps you haven't mentioned already?" (Interview 2). This was to ensure that the participant felt they had included every topic they wanted to discuss. In other cases, I asked the interviewees more specific questions about the Disney princesses, sharing my own experiences of the franchise and my research with them. For example, when discussing merchandising and marketing strategy I explained to a participant that I had found through my merchandising content analysis that some princesses had more products than others. This ensured that the interview was a dual experience, rather than me just continually asking for information from the interviewee (Reinharz 1992:20). Although this could be construed as 'encouraging the participant', it is also tackling the power dynamic that can be created during the interview process (Reinharz 1992:20). This method also supported the rapport that I had built with the interviewees.

Overall, the structure of the interview allowed me to ask interviewees specific questions, but also provided the interviewees with an opportunity to discuss topics they thought relevant to the questions. I was careful to allow the participant time to think and made sure not to interrupt any silences in order to give the interviewee the opportunity to think.

Transcription and Analysis

Once an interview was complete, I transcribed it as the process was still 'fresh' in my mind. A transcript would also allow me to analyse the information from the interview (Bryman 2012:482) and provide participants with a reference of what they have said in the interview. I transcribed three interviews, which took between six to nine hours per interview, depending on the length (Bryman 2012:484). I purposefully did not transcribe the 'ums' and 'ahs' within the interviews, as I did not want to interrupt the flow of the text. My primary purpose for interviewing was to gain a richer understanding of the marketing and merchandising processes, therefore I felt I could omit these elements as it would not affect the outcome of the text.

Reflection

Interviews allow a flexible focus throughout the process (Bryman 2012:496). Through a semi-structured interview, the researcher is able to focus on topics they would like to know more about, but also learn about topics they have perhaps not even considered (Raymond 1979:16; Reinharz 1992:18). Interviews provide researchers with the opportunity to "probe the interviewee for clarity or for more detailed information when needed", especially as in other methods such as questionnaires further probing is not possible (Johnson and Turner 2003:305). This was certainly the case within my own research. Although I am a consumer of Disney products, I had no understanding of how these products were created or marketed. These interviews provided me with an invaluable understanding of how the merchandising and marketing of the princesses within the Walt Disney Company operates. This understanding contributed to the institutional approach I have used to understand the context in which the princesses are produced.

There are some challenges and tensions created by interviews. The participant may feel that they must explain or justify themselves to the researcher (Agar & MacDonald 1995), alternatively a participant may just wish to give the researcher the answers they think are desired rather than their own opinion. In the case of the interviews conducted in this thesis, participants were mainly providing information about processes so this issue did not arise, nevertheless this can be overcome through the interviewer ensuring they think about their body language and choice of words and tone so as not to be perceived as judgemental (King and Horrocks 2010:52).

Disney Parks

The third facet of the princess phenomenon I explored was consumer experiences in Disney theme parks. In order to provide a true-to-life experience of a visit to a Disney Resort or theme park, I conducted an autoethnography at Walt Disney World, Orlando, USA. As I had already explored the models of femininity presented by the princesses in their films, I wanted to examine whether these behaviours and models were reflected by their representations at the parks, as this is where children will be physically able to interact with their favourite characters. I chose to do this at Walt Disney World as it is here you can meet all of the officially franchised, and some non-franchised princesses that are examined in this thesis[14]. My experience at Walt

[14] I did conduct a small pilot study at Disneyland, California in 2016 in order to identify whether it would be helpful and possible to conduct an autoethnography at Walt Disney World. This allowed me to have an insight into what products and experiences could be examined. I also visited Hong Kong Disneyland in August 2016 as a pilot study to determine whether all Disney theme parks should be visited for this research, I found that the theme park had some similarities to the domestic resorts, but featured very different experiences, marketing and merchandising for guests as Disney does not have majority

Disney World provided an opportunity for me to analyse the choices made by the Walt Disney Company in relation to character availability, which can affect which princesses are 'seen' and which princesses are not.

Jimmie Manning and Tony Adams define autoethnography as a method that focuses on:

> The researcher's personal experience (*auto*) as it is embedded within, and informed by, cultural identities and contexts (*ethno*) and as it is expressed through writing, performance, or other creative means (*graphy*) (2015:188).

Unlike other ethnographies, autoethnography is an individual, personal experience where the researcher not only records their observations about a cultural phenomenon, but also their own personal feelings and influences. There are multiple ways to approach this method. Some researchers see autoethnography as the opportunity to create a critical narrative for the reader (McIlveen 2008), whereas others argue that it must be a continual movement between "experiencing and examining a vulnerable self and observing and revealing the broader context of that experience" (Ellis 2007:14). I have chosen to give a full account of my experiences, where I will also reveal the broader contexts, as Ellis (2007) suggests.

During my time at the park, I conducted participant observation and took pictures of locations in the parks. I used autoethnography in order to explore my personal experience in the theme parks, as it allows researchers to create a "layered account", where researchers produce a stream of consciousness about how we view and reside in the world (Ronai 1995:395).

Autoethnography made me aware of my own perceptions of the world, and how these perceptions are influenced (Boylorn 2008:415). Disney and the Disney Princesses have been part of not only my research career, but also my personal life. Taking an autoethnographic approach allows me to use my own experiences to understand this phenomenon and relay it to others (Méndez 2013:280). This multiple consciousness provides a "critical and self-reflective gaze" that offers a personal, yet analytical experience of the Disney Parks (Boylorn 2008:428).

Currently, there is one research paper that has used autoethnography in relation to princesses at Walt Disney World. Sherianne Shuler (2015) provides an autoethnographic account of motherhood and the princess culture. Primarily, she focuses on her daughter's

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ownership, but also because they are catering for a different culture (Interview 3 2017). Therefore I used Disneyland Resort and my first visit to Walt Disney World as a pilot study to look at how consumer experiences could be measured, and then conducted a field trip to Walt Disney World.

experiences of princesses in everyday life, including a princess themed birthday party. Shuler is "alternately frustrated, fascinated, bored, concerned, and intrigued by what has been termed 'the princess culture'" (2015:462) and wanted to explore new areas within the field. After finding that there was little scholarly work on the impact of princess culture on children, Shuler went on to investigate princess culture through an autoethnographic account of her "reluctance to mother a princess" (Shuler 2015:462). After focusing on her daughter's earlier childhood experiences and her experience of the princess pamper party she attended, Shuler turns her attention to Walt Disney World itself during their family trip. This particular account watches Shuler's daughter's experiences at the park through her mother's eyes and does not focus heavily on character or dining experiences. This chapter will reflect a more detailed account of Walt Disney World, but from an adult's perspective. This of course may have differing views to that of Shuler, however provides a more detailed account of guest experiences in the park.

With the exception of Shuler's (2015) brief examination of Walt Disney World, autoethnographies have not been specifically used in research on the Disney Parks, but have been used in critical examinations of popular culture (Adams 2013; Boylorn 2008; Herrmann 2013; Manning 2012). Herrmann argues, "popular culture helps us define who we are, what we believe, and influences whom we befriend", and in turn our identity and our ability to identify with certain elements of popular culture (such as the Disney Princess phenomenon) "assist in our creation of the self" (2013:7).

I collected my data in various settings due to the variety of characters, their availability and locations within each of the theme parks. My participant observation of the princesses primarily took place at Walt Disney World as it is the only Disney resort that gives guests the opportunity to meet all of their franchised and non-franchised princesses (with the exception of Eilonwy, Kida and occasionally Moana).

Fieldwork Locations

Walt Disney World contains six theme parks. I conducted fieldwork in three of these (Magic Kingdom, Epcot and Animal Kingdom) because these are the parks in which guests can meet (and dine) with the princesses. The princess meet and greet opportunities vary from park to park, and each park has a different 'theme' in terms of décor, style and experiences. Therefore, there is a possibility that different people may be drawn to different parks depending on their personal preferences. For example, if a consumer was a particular fan of the Magic Kingdom theme park because they enjoyed the experiences available at that park, they are more likely to meet Rapunzel, Tiana and Cinderella than the other princesses. Magic Kingdom has been identified as the most visited amusement park in the world (TEA 2018:10), therefore

consumers are likely to have experiences with certain princesses over others, which could affect their consumer choices.

Magic Kingdom was the first park to open in 1971 at Walt Disney World, and contains six themed lands as explained in the introduction. The Magic Kingdom features Cinderella's Castle at its centre, and guests can enjoy a number of things included in the park price, such as: theme park rides ranging from thrill rides to smaller rides for children; meet characters at outlined meet and greet spots; watch day time shows featuring Disney characters; watching evening firework shows in front of the Cinderella Castle and viewing parades that include themed character parade floats and dancers. Activities not included in the theme park admission price range from purchasing food and beverages; princess or pirate makeover experiences for children; purchasing any merchandise; character dining experiences and special events and guided tours.[15] I conducted participant observation during my meet and greets with princesses at their select meeting locations.

Epcot (Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow) was opened in 1982 and was originally planned to be a community where residents could live and work. However, after Walt Disney's death, the company moved forward with the project as a theme park rather than a community. Epcot consists of two themed areas: Future World and the World Showcase. When entering the park guests first encounter Future World, an area full of innovative attractions such as rides and experiences that give people a glimpse of the future. Beyond Future World, guests walk into the World Showcase, a huge lake surrounded by 11 country themed areas: Mexico; Norway; China; Germany; Italy; United States; Japan; Morocco; France; United Kingdom and Canada. Here, guests can purchase the food and beverages offered by the country, experience exhibitions and meet Disney characters from that country, such as Mulan in China.[16] In order to explore whether the Disney princesses depicted models of femininity during consumer experiences, I conducted participant observation during meet and greets with available princesses.

Animal Kingdom opened in 1998, and focuses very heavily on conservation of the environment and animals. The theme park features a number of themed areas: Oasis; Discovery Island; Pandora – The World of Avatar; Africa; Rafiki's Planet Watch; Asia and DinoLand U.S.A.. There are many opportunities for guests to see animals such as tigers, elephants and crocodiles, as well as there being shows dedicated to animals and animal conservation. The theme park also features rides, restaurants and the opportunity to meet characters such as Pocahontas and

[15] Please see the Walt Disney World Magic Kingdom information page for more information: https://www.disneyworld.co.uk/destinations/magic-kingdom/
[16] Please see the Walt Disney World Epcot information page for more information: https://www.disneyworld.co.uk/destinations/epcot/

Tarzan[17]. Pocahontas was the only princess available for me to meet at this theme park, and Pocahontas is unavailable to meet in any other park in the resort. Therefore, I conducted participant observation during my meet and greet with her.

Research Process

During my fieldwork I 'met' every available princess at each park in order to create a broad spectrum of princess interactions. My observations began once I had joined the queue in which to meet the princess: I took note of my surroundings as some princesses had a more elaborate meet and greet area than others, as well as what social demographics were choosing to meet certain princesses. I also observed the behaviour and the body language of the princesses whilst in the line.

When I arrived at the front of the line, the princess came to greet me. A character experience can rely on two things: the actress playing the role of the princess and how interactive the guests are. Although I did not want to lead my participants, I also knew from experiences in my first trip to Walt Disney World that avoiding interaction with the princess would lead to a much shorter meeting. Therefore, I decided to ask an open question that would allow the princess to expand in as much detail as she wanted, but also allowed me to compare her answer to the previous facets of the princess phenomenon I had analysed. I asked every princess I met what her favourite thing to do was. This would allow me to engage with the princess for a reasonable period of time (which was an issue in the first pilot study, as when I was concerned about leading the princess, the interactions were very short), and it allowed me to get further insight into the princess' activities and desires. In total, I met with 13 princesses during meet and greets: Snow White, Cinderella, Aurora, Belle, Jasmine, Pocahontas, Mulan, Tiana, Rapunzel, Merida, Anna, Elsa and Moana. These meet and greets lasted about four minutes on average.

Character Experiences

I conducted covert participant observation in order to explore the ways in which gender is represented within the Disney Parks. "Covert research is research which is not declared to the research participants or subjects" (Spicker 2011:118) and can therefore be ethically questionable. With this in mind, I had to think very carefully about the following ethical issues: informed consent and the participants' right to withdraw from the research; protection of identity; the issue of leading the participant and the appropriate use of private space.

[17] Please see the Walt Disney World Animal information page for more information: https://www.disneyworld.co.uk/destinations/animal-kingdom/

Ethical considerations

Informed consent and right to withdraw

Covert participant observation is ethically questionable due to its lack of informed consent for the unknowing participants (Spicker 2011:118): "If research is covert, people are not informed, they are not able to consent, and they cannot effectively withdraw" (123). Often, covert research may not disclose information to participants for two reasons. First, a researcher may not disclose to participants that they are being observed as "the experience of being observed is likely to affect the behaviour of the person" (Spicker 2011:120), this could impede on the 'natural' setting of an environment due to a participant changing their behaviour, which would invalidate the research (Australian NHMRC 2001:130). Second, it may also be impractical for a researcher to obtain consent (Spicker 2011:120). This point has also been discussed by Alan Bryman in specific relation to ethnographic research:

> In ethnographic research, the researcher is likely to come into contact with a wide spectrum of people, and ensuring that absolutely everyone has the opportunity for informed consent is not practicable, because it would be extremely disruptive in everyday contexts (Bryman 2012:139).

If I was to ask the permission of the actress playing a princess, who is already in character, before I began my meet and greet, this could affect her behaviour, or I may actually force her to 'break' character. Firstly, even if I were to ask no questions about gender or gender models during the character experience, the actress would be aware that I am analysing her behaviour, which could lead the experience to become unrepresentative of how that actress would usually portray her role. Secondly, we can presume that in the Disney princess film 'universe' there would be little known about informed consent, as a Disney princess is trained to demonstrate that they only 'know' about things from their film. For example, when I met Snow White in Disneyland, California, she asked me how I got to Disneyland. I explained I had travelled via plane, and she explained she didn't know what that was (there are no planes in Snow White's film). Therefore, in order for me to obtain informed consent, the actress would have to 'break' character. Spicker argues that limiting the disclosure that researchers can provide is something that researchers can do, however it may still be impossible to prevent the study from being affected (2011:120).

From a practicality sense, which is more in line with my own research design, it is impractical to obtain consent from an individual because the "observation is fleeting or

anonymous" (Spicker 2011:120). In the case of character experiences, the actresses playing the princess are anonymised as I am unaware of their true identity, and know them only as "Ariel" or "Elsa", as I am observing them 'in role'. Also, a character experience typically lasts no longer than five minutes, where there would be little or no time for interaction once the research and the rights of the participant had been fully explained. Furthermore, the research took place within a public nature, and as the princess is 'in character' there was no invasion of privacy (Lugosi and Bray 2008:471; Torres and Orlowski 2016:NP). Although in the case of Torres and Orlowski (2016), who debriefed their unknowing participants after the observation period ended (Torres and Orlowski 2016:NP), I was not able to do this for two reasons. Firstly, the meet and greet with characters, as already outlined, did not provide me enough time to do so. Secondly, I was unable to seek out the face character after the meet and greet, as the actress was anonymised and in costume, therefore I was unable to recognise them.

The Issue of Leading the Participant

Asking leading questions may not cause me to lose rapport with a princess, as a meet and greet is designed to be an interactive session. However, the actress may feel that she must please a guest, as an interviewee may feel they must provide an appropriate answer to a leading question, rather than clarifying anything (Leech 2002:668). In the social sciences, a leading question is one where a researcher may indicate "a preferred, excepted or acceptable response" to the participant; a question such as this must be avoided (Legard et al. 2003:169). In the case of this autoethnography, I had to think about how I could interact with the princess in order to avoid manipulating a conversation.

Therefore, I took care, when interacting with these actors, to avoid leading or opinion driven questions (Gubrium and Holstein 2003:31). This allowed me to not only see a standard experience with a princess without bias, but also to ensure I was not forcing the princesses 'out of character'. The actresses are trained to follow protocols and to behave in tightly prescribed ways. However, on reflection of my first time conducting an autoethnography at Walt Disney World, there may have been occasions where the way I was dressed could have affected the comments made by the princesses. For example, if I was wearing a yellow dress when I met Belle (whose ballgown is yellow), and she commented on it, my clothing choices could have led the conversation. Therefore, when I conducted this research again in 2019, I asked an open question of "what is your favourite thing to do" and wore very plain clothing. This issue is similar in other methods such as interviews, where the interviewer may consider their clothing choices and how they may affect an interview.

The Issue of Appropriate Use of Private Spaces

Walt Disney World is regarded as a privately owned public space rather than a public one (Mitrasinovic 2006). Traditionally, a public space is one that is owned by the people, for example parks and pavements. A private space on the other hand, is one that is owned by individuals or companies, such as houses or a shop. Observation that takes place in 'public' or in an environment where participants are aware of, or accept responsibility for their behaviour is very different "from observation which seeks to enter the private sphere unknown to the actor" (Shils 1982 [1959]:132).

In the case of this research, the actresses are aware that their actions can be viewed by any guests that may see her, with some guests even recording their experiences and uploading them onto the internet. Spicker (2011) argues that if participants are "in the public domain, they have no such rights" over their "opportunity to be informed, to consent, or to withdraw from research" (124). However, he also points out that "the boundaries between public and private spheres are complex, and they can be difficult to determine" (Spicker 2011:124). However, with Walt Disney World being subjectively defined as a privately owned public space, an argument can be made for the participant observation remaining in the public sphere.

Reflections

Autoethnography allows researchers to use their own personal experiences to compare to "popular culture theories and texts" (Manning and Adams 2015:200). This can inform our own experiences and contribute to the construction of our identity. However, these anecdotes must be informed by further theoretical underpinnings and methods in order to avoid becoming opinion based (Manning and Adams 2015:205). In this thesis, autoethnography is supplemented by the other methods applied to the different facets of the Disney phenomenon. In addition, because it is a personal piece of research, often in the form of a 'diary', it allows the researcher to create more "accessible and relatable research" (Manning and Adams 2015:203-4). Autoethnography is an innovative method that provides a unique viewpoint of a phenomenon that can be supported through other methods. By being such a personal approach, autoethnography allows me to consider my own relationship between my observations of the phenomenon and the construction of my social reality.

Conclusion

After indicating my methodological approach, this chapter has outlined the methods I have used to build understanding of the Disney princess phenomenon. These mixed methods provide an innovative, in-depth textual and empirical understanding of the role of femininity within the

different facets of the princess phenomenon. I have also outlined where my methods have been inspired by the research of others, and where this thesis will expand on previous work.

Firstly, I introduced and explained my theoretical approach of facet methodology, how it has been used, and how it will inform my own approach to the phenomenon. Secondly, I outlined my main research question, and my reasons for focusing on the phenomenon. I then went on to discuss the methods used for each of my research questions. I identified textual analysis as the most appropriate tool of analysis to examine whether models of femininity were depicted in princess films. Here, I outlined the inductive approach for the analysis of the films and their selection, before reflecting on my use of textual analysis. I used three methods when investigating whether these models of femininity were also present within consumer experiences. Content analysis was used to examine Disney Store merchandise, where I coded each product available. Interviews with key actors were conducted in order to gain a better understanding of the merchandising and marketing process. Finally, an autoethnography was undertaken to understand how these models of femininity then translated to theme park consumer experiences. I also considered the ethical implications of conducting an autoethnography within a public setting. Now that I have outlined and explained the methods I have chosen to critically examine the Disney princess phenomenon, I will now move on to the research itself, beginning with the textual analysis of the Disney princess films.

Section One: The Films

Introduction

How is femininity depicted in the Disney princess phenomenon? As a whole the phenomenon consists of a multitude of products and encounters: films, merchandising, marketing and consumer experiences. Before I am able to analyse princess products and experiences, I must dissect and analyse the core element of the phenomenon. Each Disney princess' marketing journey begins with a film. Therefore, the thesis starts with an analysis of each individual princess movie, asking, 'how is femininity depicted in the Disney princess phenomenon films?'

Traditionally, Disney scholars examine the Disney Princess Franchise (England et al 2006), which was created in 2000 by chairman of Disney Consumer Products Andy Mooney. Before, the princesses had each been marketed separately. The Disney Princess Franchise was a way for Disney to produce individual and group products for the princesses. However, as I explained in Chapter One, not all princesses were included in the original line up of the franchise, and not all later princesses have been included either. Currently, the Disney Princess Franchise consists of 11 women:

			
Snow White	Cinderella	Aurora	Ariel
			
Belle	Jasmine		
			
Tiana	Rapunzel	Merida	

However, these 11 women are not the only princesses that Disney has produced. Over the years, Disney has released other films that include princesses as either the main or supporting

characters: Eilonwy (*The Black Cauldron*); Kida (*Atlantis: The Lost Empire*); Anna and Elsa (*Frozen and Frozen II*) and Moana (*Moana*). As I discussed in Chapter One, there appears to be no official reason for these particular princesses to be excluded, however I will argue in the following chapters that it may be as a result of box office returns.

Having watched Disney films since very early childhood, I am familiar with the films not included in the franchise. I also discovered that these films were not being discussed within the literature, either because they were not part of the franchise (Eilonwy and Kida), or because their films had been released fairly recently (Anna, Elsa and Moana). I decided that in order to have a full understanding of how femininity is depicted in the phenomenon, I needed to look at franchised and non-franchised princess films. I use the word 'phenomenon' to indicate that I am encompassing franchised and non-franchised princesses.

The Disney princess phenomenon consists of 16 princesses who feature in Disney Animation Studios and Pixar Studios films:

			
Snow White	Cinderella	Aurora	
			
Eilonwy	Ariel	Belle	Jasmine
			
Pocahontas	Mulan	Kida	

			
Tiana	Rapunzel		
			
Merida	Anna	Elsa	Moana

The following five chapters will be dedicated to exploring how femininity is depicted within each film, and identifying the dominant models. Based on the typology that emerged through textual analysis, I split the princesses into five waves to demonstrate how the depiction of femininity changed over time (as indicated in the above table).

Methodology, Method and Structure

As explained in Chapter One, I conducted textual analysis to produce a thick description (Geertz 1973) of each princess film: plot points; how the princesses are described by others; dialogue between princesses and others; *who* is speaking; how do other characters behave towards the princess; what behaviours does the princess display herself; what activities does the princess take part in. I identified patterns within each film where princesses were displaying significant traits through their actions or behaviours and labelled these as 'character traits'. This allowed me to identify and compare different depictions of girls and women, which revealed 5 clusters or 'waves', each of which embodies a significantly different model of femininity. To indicate this, I have included five separate chapters in the film section.

In each chapter I will first place the 'wave' within historical context relevant to the time of its release. I summarise the character traits found within each film, and which traits were shared and will be discussed. The remainder of the chapter focuses on the analysis of each trait. This will place the princess films within a historical context and how these dominant images of femininity are constructed within the films. At the end of the film section, I compare the models

of femininity found within each wave with models of femininity identified in gender measurement scales. Developed by psychologists to measure masculine and feminine traits, I use this data to identify what princess traits are defined as 'masculine' or 'feminine'. This will allow me to compare which models are heavily featured within the next area of the phenomenon: merchandising/marketing and consumer experiences.

Chapter Two: First Wave Princesses

Historical Background

The first wave of princess films were released between 1937-1959, a time of financial hardship, war and societal change. The Great Depression, President Roosevelt's 'New Deal', and America entering World War II after the bombing of Pearl Harbour changed societal roles for women and men significantly.

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (1937) was Walt Disney's first full length feature animation, and the first of its kind. It was released at a time when millions of workers were losing their jobs; farmers and sharecroppers lost their livelihoods due to extreme drought; and no social security or unemployment benefit schemes to support workers until after 1935 (Jones 2004:429). Despite this, women had been granted access to many areas of the workplace, as well as political office. Hattie Wyatt Caraway became the first female elected to the U.S. Senate, whilst Frances Perkins was appointed as the first female within the U.S. Cabinet as the Secretary of Labour. However, these 'firsts' were short lived, with The National Recovery Act (1932) only allowing one family member to hold a government job (Deutsch 2000:453), resulting in many female government workers becoming unemployed (Evans 1997:201-2). Dominant sectors for women to find work were "sales, communications, and secretarial work" (Jones 2004:430). The 1930 census cited 10,752,116 (around 22% of women in the U.S.) as "gainfully employed" (Census 1930:6), whereas by 1940, 13,007,480 women were employed (Census 1940a:29), and 37,464,420 women were not considered to be in the labour force (Census 1940b:57). For black women this period was even more difficult. They could only find part time or seasonal work, were not paid living wage thanks to sexual and racial discrimination and were exploited within the workplace (Jones 2004:429). In the 1930s and 1940s, communications, sales and secretarial work was dominated by white women (Jones 2004:430), whilst "nine out of ten black women workers toiled as agricultural or domestic servants" (Jones 2004:429). In some cases, where black women were employed within manufacturing, it would be in the most dangerous areas where their health was put at risk (May 2000:482). This meant that whilst some opportunities were presented to white women, they were not extended to black women.

Cassandra Stover (2013) has suggested that despite the advance of women's rights, "the very first Disney princess drew on associations of traditional femininity, indicating the widespread encouragement of these traits within 1930's American culture" (2). Whilst women were able to vote and enter the labour market as never before, Disney's Snow White fitted the established model of "voiceless heroines who performed conventional gender behaviors like

housekeeping and nurturing" (Stover 2013:2). Despite The Great Depression, Snow White was a huge box office success:

> *Snow White* soon became the highest-grossing film of all time, a record it held until it was surpassed by *Gone with the Wind*. Now Walt Disney's studio had firmer footing. The short cartoons paid the bills, but Walt knew that future profits would come from feature films. (D23 N.D.)

The first feature animated film, Snow White, cost around $2,000,000 to produce. It was a shock to not only the animation industry for its cost, but the wider film industry as well (Davis 2006:89). This led to *Snow White* being described as 'Disney's Folly', but these criticisms became redundant when it became a box office success (Davis 2006:89), making $66,595,803 (Box Office Mojo [a]N.D.). Perhaps due to the financial hardship and uncertain future of the U.S., consumers wanted to use popular culture to escape their economic and employment worries (Gabler 2006:273).

Between 1937 and 1950 there were more changes. The 1941 attack on Pearl Harbour led America to enter World War II, with 16 million American troops serving. This was a new time for women, as each of the armed services created branches for them to serve in 1942. Around 350,000 women served in the WASP (Air Force), MCWR (Marines), WACs (Army), SPARS (Coast Guard) and WAVES (Navy) (May 2000:485-6). Women's involvement in the workforce rose, with them replacing men who were serving in the war (May 2000:476). However, they were confined to 'female' roles based on a sexual division of labour such as taping coils and inspections of parts (Milkman 2004:468-9). After the war ended in 1945, women were replaced as men returned home to their old jobs (May 2000:491). Despite the fact that women wanted to continue working, there were no jobs available for them (May 2000:491). Books such as *The Modern Woman: The Lost Sex* (1947) argued that "women's inner balance" could only be restored through returning to 'traditional' domestic life, where women are 'pro-family' and 'anti-workplace'.

The Walt Disney Company did not release another princess film until 1950. Although the company had begun work on projects such as *Pinocchio* and *Fantasia* in the 1940s, World War II had a huge effect on their profit (D23 N.D). Due to Disney losing their foreign markets through the war, their film costs became too high to produce good quality films, meaning other releases such as *Dumbo* had to have limited budgets (D23 N.D; Wasko 2001a:19). During the war, Disney also created films commissioned by the State Department such as *Saludos Amigos* and *The Three Caballeros*, as well as military training videos (D23 N.D; Wasko 2001a:17,19). By the time the

war was over, Disney had to resort back to films made up of short animations and live action productions (D23 N.D). As Janet Wasko explained, Disney used the late 1940s to transition from post-war production to new ventures in order to accommodate the changing market of entertainment (Wasko 2001a:20).

Their first full length animation since World War II, *Cinderella* (1950) grossed $10,000,000 (Box Office Mojo[b] N.D.) *Cinderella* appeared after the upheavals of World War II, which had seen women "leading the war effort at home and managing entire households and companies on their own" (Stover 2013:2-3). Instead of reflecting those changes, the movie further reinforced traditional ideas (Stover 2013:3).

After *Cinderella*, it would be nearly a decade until another princess film was released. Within that time, women continued to be de-centred, with the Democratic Party abolishing its women's division, NASA conducting astronaut tests with a female participant, but ultimately cancelling the women's program in 1963. Due to the economic boom, and households being able to run on one income (typically the man's), women's desires began to shift from the workplace to homemaking. There were however some changes, Rosa Parks, a black woman, refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white man (May 2000:520), which contributed to the beginning of the civil rights movement where many black women were politically active (Payne 2004:533). The late 50s also brought new household appliances, such as washing machines, that would save housewives time and effort on hard labour tasks (May 2000:501). These appliances were not necessarily intended to give women more time to do other things such as careers or hobbies, rather they were to improve the standard and efficiency of housework (May 2000:501).

Sleeping Beauty (1959) was the second top grossing film at $51,600,000 (Box Office Mojo [c] N.D.). Despite this, *Sleeping Beauty* was not well received by audiences, perhaps indicating an early post-war restiveness with established gender stereotypes (Stover 2013:3). First wave princess films were shorter than their successors (most likely due to feature animation films being a newer and more expensive venture), and therefore did not always have the opportunity to develop the most detailed characters and storylines.

1937-1959 was a time of huge change for women, with them being given greater access to politics and the workplace, but ultimately having that access curtailed as men returned from war to their old jobs. This led to an encouragement for women to return to the home, rather than to university and the labour market. The idea of romance and homemaking is reflected within first wave films. Romance, perhaps serving as a figure of hope in dark times, but also reflecting ideas about women returning to their role as homemakers, rather than entering the world of work. I will now move on to discuss the characteristics found within the first wave films.

First Wave Characteristics

When watching the first wave princess films, I noted a number of characteristics through speech, movement, narrative and plot lines. Snow White was depicted as a domesticated, passive, naive, positively minded, gentle, graceful, helpless victim who desired a romantic relationship. Other characters saw Snow White as wicked (Grumpy the dwarf, who believes women are wicked), beautiful and someone to take care of. Cinderella was also portrayed as a domestic, passive, helpless victim who eventually desires a romantic relationship once she meets the prince. However, Cinderella does display some confident and, in some cases, even assertive behaviour. Other characters saw her as a servant (the Tremaine family), someone to marry, to take care of, as beautiful, graceful, kind and gentle. Cinderella also displayed some mothering traits, especially towards her animal companions. Meanwhile, Aurora, who had a short role in her own film was also portrayed as a naive, domestic, passive, helpless victim. She desired a romantic relationship and was seen by other characters as a political tool, gentle, graceful, beautiful, someone to marry and someone with little to no personal autonomy.

I identified 19 characteristics in total across the films, and understood it was beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss each characteristic in depth. Some characteristics were seen multiple times, whereas others were only seen once or twice. In order to provide a thick description (Geertz 1973) of the first wave, I decided to only discuss characteristics that were shared between all princesses within the wave and appeared more than once within the film in order to provide the most in depth analysis. Therefore, in this chapter I will discuss domesticity, passivity, victimhood and desiring a romantic relationship.

Domesticity

Each princess demonstrated their adherence to domesticity throughout their film (Towbin et al. 2004:31; England et al. 2011:563). Both Snow White and Cinderella were forced into unpaid labour by their stepmothers. The element of force also indicated that both Snow White and Cinderella were enslaved by their stepfamily, making it more difficult for them to escape servitude. The first time we saw Snow White she was dressed in rags and working as a scullery maid, scrubbing the floors of the palace gardens. Similarly, Cinderella was forced into unpaid labour by her stepmother, Lady Tremaine. She was forced to serve and look after the entire chateau in France and wait hand and foot on her stepfamily (England et al 2011:563). Amy Davis argued that "they are shown performing quite hard physical labour (although, of course, their beauty and gentility shine through despite their rags)" (Davis 2006:101). Although both princesses were forced into servitude, there is a difference between the two women. Cinderella

was forced into domesticity and did not escape it until the end of the film. However, although Snow White escaped from her role as a scullery maid at the beginning; she seemed to actually enjoy it, singing the song 'Whistle While You Work" (Maity 2014:29) and relied on her domesticity as a bargaining tool for her own safety. Snow White was depicted as the only princess to enjoy housework, whilst for Cinderella it was an enforced burden. On the other hand, Aurora was not seen conducting as many domestic tasks as she spent very little time on screen.

When Snow White discovered the dwarf's cottage in the forest, she immediately noticed how untidy and dirty it was. There were plates everywhere, dust on the surfaces, dirt on the windows. Snow White was shocked, exclaiming "You'd think their mother would - oh! Maybe they have no mother" (Snow White 1937). Snow White thus associated a clean house with a female presence (Ayres 2003:44; England et al 2011:563). Here, the image of femininity was constructed through the absence of women. This suggested that a woman's role was to ensure the house was clean and tidy (Zipes 1995:37) - with men having no part to play in maintaining the house, an extreme dichotomy of gender stereotypes. If a house had no female presence, the housework would simply not get done.

This was reinforced when Snow White discovered that the seven dwarfs who lived there were completely incapable of housework, as she identified stacks and stacks of dirty crockery and thick layers of dust on the surfaces - presumably because they had never had a 'feminine' influence in the house. However, the state of the house could also be that the dwarfs had no desire to clean and tidy it. Perhaps it was at this point in the film that Snow White realised that her life of domesticity would benefit her, and she exclaimed, "We'll clean the house and surprise them. Then maybe they'll let me stay". With that, she delegated cleaning tasks to her newfound animal friends and began to sing her way through housekeeping. She also used her domestic abilities to ask to stay at the cottage when she finally met the dwarfs (Davis 2006:101). She offered to "keep house" and the dwarfs eagerly accepted when they heard that she could "wash and sew and sweep and cook". This once again affirmed that the dwarfs themselves were either incapable of housework or just refused to do it. However, it was only through housework that Snow White was able to demonstrate any assertiveness within her character. She was able to delegate tasks to the forest animals and scold the dwarfs for not washing their hands before dinner, but beyond this Snow White indicated no assertive characteristics throughout the film (England et al. 2011:562-3).

Cinderella was somewhat similar in this respect and was unable to show any assertive characteristics other than with animals during household duties (England et al. 2011:562-3). Throughout the film, Cinderella could be observed completing a number of different duties: feeding the animals (horses, chickens and Lucifer the cat) of the chateau; preparing breakfast

for her stepfamily and cleaning the floor. In addition to this, Cinderella was instructed to do further tasks by her stepfamily: mending and sewing clothes; laundry; ironing; cleaning carpets, windows, tapestries and draperies; tending to the garden and the terrace; sweeping the halls and the stairs; cleaning the chimneys and bathing Lucifer the cat. She accepted all of these tasks without saying a word. Although she indicated that she was aware of her mistreatment as a servant in her own home at the beginning of the film, Cinderella was unable to escape her life of unpaid labour until she married Prince Charming. After that, it was unknown whether she continued domestic duties in the same way as Snow White.

Princess Aurora of *Sleeping Beauty* (1959) was seen doing some domestic tasks. Like Snow White, the first time a 'grown up' Aurora was seen, she was cleaning the windows of the cottage she resided in with her aunts (who were really the Three Good Fairies). Other than this and picking berries in the forest, Aurora did not complete any other unpaid domestic labour. This may be due to her not being featured in the majority of the film as she fell under a sleeping curse and had to wait to be rescued. Nevertheless, in the scenes she was in, Aurora conducted mostly domestic tasks.

Each of these women were portrayed as domestic to different extents, and in different ways. Snow White was essentially forced into domesticity by her stepmother but chose to continue (and almost took joy) in conducting unpaid labour. It was one of the only activities she undertook throughout the film. On the other hand, although Cinderella was also forced into domesticity by her stepmother, she did not choose to continue it once freed from servitude. However, as she was only freed at the end of the film we would have to look to sequel films in order to assess whether Cinderella continues with this particular characteristic.[18] Like Snow White, Cinderella sang whilst she did her chores, however this did not seem to be out of joy. It was clear how unhappy Cinderella was with her situation when she sighed, "Alright, alright. I'm coming! Oh my goodness. Morning, noon and night". This not only showed how overworked she was as a servant in her own home, but that she was also miserable with it. Snow White made no indication of her unhappiness as a scullery maid or her mistreatment.

Aurora was the least 'domestic' of the three princesses, where we observed her completing only two domestic tasks. However, Aurora did not feature in the majority of *Sleeping Beauty* so it was challenging to assess whether Aurora would be more or less domestic if she were to be awake throughout the film. Of course, Aurora was a royal and therefore in the palace would not be expected to clean or cook, however this was not the way she had lived the first 16

[18] In Cinderella's sequel film, *Cinderella II: Dreams Come True*, Cinderella struggled to adapt to royal life, preferring to do things such as bake and cook for herself. A closer analysis of this film in future research would be needed in order to assess whether Cinderella did continue to perform domestic tasks.

years of life. Whilst she lived with the Three Good Fairies, Aurora could have been performing household duties, but this period of her life was not featured in the film.
Overall, this characteristic is shared among the three women and contributes to the first wave model of femininity, reinforcing the image that housework is a woman's role. I argue that this is the most significant point. Housework as a task within itself is necessary in order to have a clean and tidy home. The issue with the first wave Disney princesses is that it is only women who are portrayed as conducting any housework. Male characters contribute nothing to the upkeep of a house or a castle. By constructing the image of women tending to the house whilst the male characters are elsewhere suggests that a woman's role is to tend to the home and that this role is not extended to men. Therefore, these princess films are reinforcing accepted societal ideas through mass media. Films produced in the 1930s that did depict strong women through actresses such as Bette Davis and Katherine Hepburn, their empowerment was short lived when a 'stronger' man was able to overpower the 'strong' female character (Evans 1997:197-8; Deutsch 2000:454). Often, films would resolve issues of empowered females with domesticity and marriage (Evans 1997:197-8). With Snow White, Cinderella and Aurora being produced within or relatively close to that time period, Disney studios were imposing traditional ideas of femininity in a similar way, but without empowered women to begin with.

As discussed in the introduction, when the USA officially entered World War II, "activities once viewed as inappropriate for women suddenly became patriotic duties for which women were perfectly suited" (Evans 1997:219). With the absence of men, women were able to join areas of the workforce that had been previously inaccessible, and many women wanted to remain in employment (Evans 1997:224-5). However, Evans notes that "government and media propaganda consistently reassured Americans that while women would do their civic duty for the duration, they would certainly return to their traditional roles once the emergency was over" (1997:226). Although media is able to reflect current society, it also has a role of producing ideals (Evans 1997:226). The domesticity found in first wave films is not only reflective of pre-war gender roles, but also imposes traditional ideas of femininity on its audience in order to remind them of their original roles. First wave princess films reinforce domesticity as an ideal for women to embody in real society.

Passivity

Throughout each film, first wave princesses demonstrated their passivity through reactions to cruel requests or life changing experiences. The American Psychological Association (*hereafter*: APA) defined passivity as, "a form of adaptation, or maladaptation, in which the individual adopts a pattern of submissiveness, dependence, and retreat into inaction." (APAa N.D.). I defined passivity as the lack of resistance to authority, resulting in docile and yielding behaviour

within any situation. The image of passivity was reflected within each of the first wave princess films (England et al. 2011:565). Each of the princesses, when presented with cruelty or life changing experiences simply accepted the situation without complaint or resistance, despite the fact they were unhappy (Hoerrner 1996:223).

Snow White displayed images of passivity on three occasions within *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves*. Firstly, she accepted her new position as a maid in her own home. Secondly, she accepted she was about to be killed by the huntsman. Finally, she allowed herself to be guided through the forest to find a new home, accepting her new life without resistance. When the Evil Queen forced Snow White to become a scullery maid, she carried out her duties without complaint. When the huntsman tried to kill her, she screamed and covered her face, but made no attempt to run away or defend herself. Although Davis (2006) has argued that she "at least flees from danger" (101), her life was only saved when the huntsman realised he could not kill her. Here, Snow White demonstrated her passivity by simply holding her arms to her face and accepting her fate. She made no attempt to leave the situation and had to follow instructions from the huntsman in order to save her own life. This demonstration of passivity continued when she asked her newfound animal friends to take her to a place where she could stay. The birds physically took Snow White to the dwarf's cottage. Some of the birds were even pulling her along through the forest by her cape and adjusted it when the cape got stuck on tree branches. Here, Snow White was completely docile, allowing birds to guide her through an unknown forest rather than looking for a safe place herself.

Cinderella continued this docile and passive behaviour. A servant in her own home, Cinderella made it clear that she was aware she was being cruelly mistreated:

> Even he [*the palace clock*] orders me around… Well, there's one thing. They can't order me to stop dreaming. And perhaps someday, the dreams that I wish will come true.

Here, Cinderella demonstrated passivity by stating that she would 'wish' for her dreams to come true, rather than actively doing something about them. The audience were not privy to what these dreams were, but Cinderella did make it clear that she was constantly wishing during the song "A Dream is a Wish Your Heart Makes". Cinderella was not necessarily living in an environment where she could actively pursue her dreams, whatever they were. Therefore, Cinderella continued to be portrayed as passive as she was aware of her dreams, but did nothing to achieve them. This characteristic was extended when Cinderella complained about her treatment whilst preparing the family breakfast, conducting chores and being locked in a tower by her stepmother. She passively accepted any berating from her family with a simple

"Yes, Stepmother", even if it was completely undeserved. For example, when Lucifer the cat captured one of Cinderella's mice friends in a teacup, which Cinderella unknowingly took to one of her stepsisters, she was reprimanded for playing a cruel prank. In this particular case, Cinderella did try to defend herself but was silenced by her stepmother and punished with further chores:

> **Cinderella**: Oh please, you don't think that I-
> **Lady Tremaine**: Hold your tongue! Now, hm. It seems we have time on our hands.
> **Cinderella**: But I was only trying to-
> **Lady Tremaine**: Silence! [*Cinderella looks down at the floor and drops her hands by her side*] Time for vicious practical jokes. Perhaps we can put it to better use. Now, let me see. There's the large carpet in the main hall. Clean it! And the windows, upstairs and down. Wash them! Oh yes [*smiles*] and the tapestries and the draperies-
> **Cinderella**: But I just finish-
> **Lady Tremaine**: Do them again!" [*Cinderella's face falls and she continues to look down*] And don't forget the garden, then scrub the terrace, sweep the halls and the stairs, clean the chimneys and of course there's the mending and the sewing and the laundry. Oh yes, and one more thing. See that Lucifer gets his bath.

Cinderella, despite her attempts, failed to defend herself to her stepmother, and even tried to prevent her workload from getting higher by explaining she had already cleaned the tapestries. This was the only time in which Cinderella actively demonstrated her unhappiness and tried to improve her situation, and she ultimately failed. In some ways, Cinderella's image of passivity was more problematic than that of Snow White's. Snow White, whilst displaying passivity, indicated no awareness or knowledge of her mistreatment. Cinderella on the other hand was fully aware of her cruel mistreatment both verbally and visually, but was unable to do anything about it. Not only was Cinderella's exploitation focused on in greater detail than Snow White's, it was also significantly worse. Whilst Snow White had the Huntsman to tell her to leave because her life was in danger, Cinderella had no one and nowhere to go. Although at some points she tried to suggest things to her stepmother, it made no impact.[19] It could be argued that the

[19] Cinderella did demonstrate confidence and assertiveness at some points in the film. For example, when she was mocked by her step sisters for asking to go to the ball, Cinderella pointed out that she was also

constant silencing from Lady Tremaine contributes to Cinderella's passivity, however she still maintained her dreaming throughout the film.

One way Cinderella continued to dream was when she left the palace ball and discovered she had one glass slipper left that did not disappear with the rest of her magical outfit. She decided to keep it, perhaps as a memento of her evening, but was also able to use it to prove her identity as the mystery woman who danced with the Prince. Belinda Stott questioned whether Cinderella could be regarded as a "passive victim when she has the forethought to conceal and hold onto a symbol that represents both her true worth and the pathetic incongruity of her present victim position, only to produce it at the most opportune moment?" (2004:17). Whilst Cinderella was able to produce the slipper once the animals had saved her from being locked in the tower by Lady Tremaine, there was no plot development or story lines to suggest that Cinderella kept the slipper to remove herself from victimhood. No dialogue or storyline indicated Cinderella's intentions with the slipper, it could simply be read as a matter of coincidence more than Cinderella plotting to leave the Tremaine household. This not only suggested that the image of femininity was passive, but that there were no opportunities or desires for the princess to actually improve her situation, she merely accepted it.

Aurora also displayed images of passivity (Davis 2006:101; Hine et al. 2018a:2). This image was constructed through Aurora's yielding acceptance of her newfound royal status. Due to the curse placed on her as a baby, Aurora was taken into the forest and raised as a peasant girl by the Three Good Fairies. For the first 16 years of her life, she was unaware of her own identity, or the identity of her caregivers. On her 16th birthday, the Three Good Fairies informed her that they would return her to the castle where she would regain her status as a princess, and marry Prince Phillip, a man she had been betrothed to since birth. They also told her that her real name was Aurora, not Briar Rose. Aurora was deeply upset with these revelations, especially as she could not meet the boy she met earlier that day in the forest. She ran upstairs, crying. Like Cinderella, Aurora demonstrated her unhappiness with a life changing experience. However, when the time came to leave the only life she knew, Aurora followed the fairies to the palace without resistance. She made no attempt to stop this from happening, nor did she question why she had been lied to for her entire life. Her next development within the plot was

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eligible to go: "Well why not? After all, I'm still a member of the family. And it says, 'By royal command, every eligible maiden is to attend!". It was this display of assertiveness that allowed her an opportunity to go to the ball, although Lady Tremaine sought to sabotage it by overloading her with chores (Davis 2006:101). The only other display of confidence and assertiveness was at the very end of the film, when Cinderella was able to escape the tower in time to ask the Grand Duke if she could try on the glass slipper. Even when Lady Tremaine caused the slipper to be dropped and destroyed, Cinderella simply produced the other slipper, guaranteeing her freedom (Davis 2006:102). Nevertheless, these are the only two displays of confidence and assertiveness throughout *Cinderella*, with the rest of the film consisting of Cinderella's docile and passive behaviour.

to prick her finger on a spinning wheel and fall under a sleeping curse, rendering her completely helpless for the rest of the film. This forced passivity onto Aurora as she was given no means within the storyline to help herself. The story of her rescue continued without her, and analysis on Aurora's depiction was sometimes limited due to this. Aurora's yielding behaviour and lack of presence in her own film (through no fault or control of her own) demonstrated her passivity.

The most problematic element of this characteristic was how each woman's display of passivity was rewarded at the end of the film. First wave princesses are what I describe as 'passive dreamers', they waited for their dreams to come to them and made no attempt to pursue their dreams. Snow White demonstrated this through the song "I'm Wishing/One Song", hoping that the 'one she loves' would find her that day. Snow White was dreaming of her 'love', but she wanted him to find her. She did not indicate at any point that she would make an attempt to find him. Cinderella also wished for her dreams to come true in "A Dream is a Wish Your Heart Makes", but made no attempt to pursue them herself. Aurora also indicated that she was wishing for someone to love in "I Wonder", and explained to her animal friends that she kept dreaming of a prince:

> But they say if you dream a thing more than once, it's sure to come true. And I've seen him so many times.

Again, like her predecessors, Aurora made no attempt to pursue her dream. Rather, her love interest both physically and metaphorically had to find her. Despite each princess' yielding and docile behaviour, and their inability to pursue their desires, they were each rewarded for their passivity. Snow White was reunited with her Prince, Cinderella married Prince Charming, and Aurora's love interest from the forest was actually her betrothed, Prince Phillip, and they all lived 'happily ever after'. This image of passivity suggests that when a woman is passive and is submissive under duress and cruel treatment - rather than actively trying to dismantle or remove herself from this mistreatment or unfortunate situation - she would eventually be rewarded for it. This reward was emancipation from cruelty or a life changing experience in the form of a heterosexual relationship. This romance was the 'end' of the story, indicating that these princesses had achieved their final goal - a relationship.

Victimhood

I also observed victimhood as an indicator for femininity within first wave films. The APA defined a victim as "an individual who is the target of another person's violent, discriminatory, harassing, or assaultive behaviors" (APAb N.D). Whilst considering this definition, I have also defined victimhood as the unfortunate or mistreated state in which a character finds themselves

through no fault of their own, but they are completely unable or will not attempt to emancipate themselves. I will also consider the relationship between the first wave princesses' lack of agency and their victimhood. The APA defines agency as "the state of being active, usually in the service of a goal, or of having the power and capability to produce an effect or exert influence" (APAc N.D.). In the case of the first wave, I argue that a lack of agency and victimhood go hand in hand. Not only are the princesses victimised, but they lack the agency required to save themselves from it. Each of the three first wave films produced the image of victimhood in different ways, but all by older women, who were bitter or jealous of the princess in some way. Each time, they were 'rescued' by the male protagonist and love interest (Davis 2014a:48; Whelan 2012:23,24).

Snow White was presented as a victim at the beginning of her storyline. The Evil Queen, Snow White's stepmother, ordered the royal huntsman to kill Snow White so that she could maintain her status as the fairest one of all.[20] Following orders, the huntsman took Snow White into the forest and raised his dagger to stab her. Noticing a shadow behind her, Snow White turned and saw the huntsman trying to kill her. She screamed and covered her face, but made no other attempt to defend herself. Snow White's life was spared only through the huntsman's moral conscience: "I can't. I can't do it! Forgive me. I beg of Your Highness, forgive me". Snow White was indirectly rescued by her own perpetrator, because he could not bring himself to harm her - perhaps because she looked so helpless (Davis 2014a:48). The huntsman then warned Snow White about the Evil Queen. He told her that her life was in danger and that she should run into the forest to escape. Snow White was clearly distressed as she continually moves and shakes her head, widens her eyes and opens her mouth in shock. She ran through the forest as it got darker and darker, shielding herself with her arms and continually screaming, demonstrating how frightened she was. Eventually she collapsed on the floor, sobbing. This particular scene demonstrated Snow White's image as a victim by identifying two factors. Firstly, she had been persecuted by the Evil Queen due to her beauty, and because of this she had to abandon the only life she had known in order to try and save her own (at the instruction of the huntsman). Secondly, she ran through the forest, visibly distressed, unable to defend herself or protect herself in any way. She had been denied agency to be able to help herself. It wasn't until curious forest animals found her collapsed in a heap that she was able to go and find sanctuary in the cottage.

The final time Snow White was portrayed as a victim is towards the end of the film. When the Evil Queen discovered that Snow White was not dead, she transformed herself into an old hag and created a poisoned apple that would produce a death-like sleep. The Queen knew

[20] In fact, Snow White's beauty was the catalyst for the Evil Queen's actions, therefore she was punished and then rewarded for her beauty.

that Snow White would be vulnerable, stating, “She’ll be alone” and intended to take advantage of it. Disguised, the Evil Queen told Snow White that she had “a magic wishing apple” that would make all her dreams come true. Convinced, Snow White took a bite of the apple and immediately felt unwell, passing out on the floor. From this point, until she was woken by the Prince, Snow White was completely incapable of rescuing herself from the curse (Whelan 2012:24). Snow White became a victim again because she was physically and mentally unable to defend or rescue herself. She had to simply wait, sleeping, until her ‘true love’ arrived and gave her true love’s first kiss (Youngs 1999:312; Whelan 2012:24; Maity 2014:29).

Cinderella was portrayed as a victim in two ways throughout her film. Like Snow White, Cinderella’s stepmother was:

> Cold, cruel, and bitterly jealous of Cinderella’s charm and beauty,
> she was grimly determined to forward the interests of her own
> two awkward daughters.

Because of this the narrator explained that, “Cinderella was abused, humiliated, and finally forced to become a servant in her own house”. Unlike Snow White, she did not run away and there was no option for her to simply leave, which also implied Cinderella’s lack of agency provided in her storyline. Cinderella had to remain as a servant in the household, and there seemed to be no way for her to escape her life of servitude. This image presented Cinderella as a helpless victim as the narrative provided her with no outlets to escape. Like Snow White, it would seem that the thought of leaving or escaping had just not occurred to Cinderella (Davis 2014a:49). Of course, this was much easier said than done. Presumably in the fictional context in which *Cinderella* was set, it would be impossible for her to leave as she would have nowhere that was safe for a young woman to go. She would have no money, no property, and no guardian. Therefore, in the case of Cinderella, the way that she did escape from servitude was by marrying Prince Charming, whom she met at the ball. Prince Charming in effect rescued Cinderella through marriage. Cinderella married her way out of victimhood.

Images of victimhood continued when Lady Tremaine realised that it was Cinderella that the prince was looking for. In order to prevent her from having the opportunity to try on the glass slipper and prove her identity, Lady Tremaine locked her in a tower. Cinderella sobbed and begged to be let out, hanging onto the door handle and trying to open it. Once again, she found herself in a position where she was unable to help herself and had to rely on her animal friends to rescue her. Belinda Stott, however, argued that once she was let out by the mice she was able to demonstrate her empowerment and agency (2004:17). Stott argued that Cinderella asking the Grand Duke if she could try on the glass slipper (and was able to produce the other

slipper when Lady Tremaine orchestrated the original slipper to be broken), "Cinderella is able to salvage her rightful destiny" (Stott 2004:17). Stott's point is an alternative take on how Cinderella was presented, as once she was able to get out of entrapment, she was able to demonstrate agency over her future. I argue that the issue of her being unable to leave the tower by herself is still problematic, as it implies the lack of agency. Her reliance on animals magnified this further and without them she was not able to leave by herself, whereas audiences have seen Disney princes jump over walls to get to their desired location. This image reinforced women's roles as victims who are simply unable to fend for themselves. Particularly with the case of *Cinderella*, women demonstrated that when they were considered to be victims, the solution is to simply rely on animal friends to help, or marry out of it, rather than find an alternative solution.

Although Aurora was asleep during most of her eponymous film, her character also reinforced the image of being a helpless victim. Cursed to prick her finger on a spinning wheel and die at the age of 16, Aurora was forced into a sheltered life in order to shield her from her curse. However, on the day of her 16th birthday she was finally told that she was not a peasant girl - as she thought her whole life - but that she was in fact a princess. Not only that, but she had been betrothed to Prince Phillip, a royal from another kingdom. This betrothal had been agreed upon in order to unite the kingdoms of Aurora and Phillip's fathers, something they had always dreamed of.

Upon her arrival at the palace she was left alone by her guardians, the Three Good Fairies, to contemplate her new life. However, it was at this point where Maleficent the evil fairy was able to distract Aurora and lead her to a tower with a magical orb. Enchanted, Aurora followed the orb to the top of the tower where the spinning wheel was waiting for her. She hesitated under the enchantment, but eventually pricked her finger on the spinning wheel under Maleficent's command. She fell immediately into a deep sleep, and like Snow White, now had no ability to protect or rescue herself from the sleeping curse. Instead, she had to lie in wait for Prince Phillip, her unknown love interest, to come and rescue her (Youngs 1999:312; Whelan 2012:24). Maegan Davis (2014a) goes further with this, arguing that the 'gifts' of beauty, song and the counter-curse (Aurora was originally sentenced to death upon pricking her finger on a spinning wheel, but the final gift was to break the curse with 'true love's kiss') "only benefit Aurora as long as she finds her true love" (49). This made Aurora a victim from the very outset, as she had no ability to help herself. Throughout the film, Aurora was either absent or under a sleeping curse (Davis 2014a:49; Whelan 2012:24). Many decisions had been made for her, as she was used by her father as a political tool to unite a kingdom. Without her presence at the palace, Aurora's father, King Stefan, discussed and argued over Aurora's future with Phillip's father. She would be Queen and bear children to continue the royal lineage. Aurora had no say

in the matter, and nor did she know what her duties would be. Aurora was a victim of patriarchal traditions that dictated a woman's role as a wife and mother.

The image of women as victims was significant as it reinforced the image of victimhood to audiences. This was achieved in two ways. Firstly, through the victimhood itself. Snow White, Cinderella and Aurora were all victimised by the villain of the story, who was in all cases an older woman who had a great deal of agency, creating further tension. Although this could have been a plot point for the heroines to overcome, neither Snow White, Cinderella nor Aurora were able to escape their victimhood as they did not have the agency to do so (Colombo & Muir 2020:3). Both Snow White and Aurora were completely comatose and were physically unable to rescue themselves. Instead, they relied on others to rescue them (Colombo & Muir 2020:3; Whelan 2012:23,24). Cinderella, although awake, was also unable to escape her victimhood alone, as she was unable to leave her locked tower. The plot for each film provided the princess with no means of breaking free of victimhood by herself, forcing her to rely on others (Colombo & Muir 2020:3; Davis 2014a:49; Whelan 2012:23,24). The image of the helpless victim could be traced through each of the first wave model films, indicating that women were incapable of being able to rescue themselves.

Desirous of a romantic relationship

This model of femininity depicted women as desiring a romantic relationship, which was framed as an end goal and used as a reward. Snow White and Aurora desired romance from the onset of their films, whereas Cinderella only indicated a desire for a relationship at the end. Each princess was 'rewarded' with romance.

Snow White immediately outlined her romantic desires at the beginning of her story (Maity 2014:29), which then set the tone for her character development (Whelan 2012:28). Her first words were:

> I'm wishing for the one I love, to find me today. I'm hoping, and
> I'm dreaming of, the nice things he'll say.

She sang this whilst conducting her scullery maid duties, and stood over a wishing well, hoping her wish would come true. A few minutes later it did, as a Prince travelling on horseback heard her singing and climbed over the castle wall in order to sing with her. At first, she was very shy and ran away, but sent a bird down to the Prince (who was now serenading her from a balcony) to give him a kiss. This particular image of femininity was reinforced throughout Snow White's storyline, indicating the importance she placed on a romantic relationship. Now that she had met the prince, she desired romance even more, as she explained to the seven dwarfs:

Snow White: Well once there was a princess.
Dwarf: Was the princess you?
Snow White: And she fell in love.
Dwarf: Was it hard to do?
Snow White: Oh it was very easy. Anyone could see that the Prince was charming, the only one for me.

The dwarfs were fascinated by Snow White's story, asking her questions about his appearance and what their interactions were like. The dwarfs, who did not indicate their own desire for a relationship with someone, reinforced Snow White's desires by continually asking her about her dream romance. Snow White explained that "He was so romantic, I could not resist". For Snow White, this single interaction was enough for her to become invested in the chance of romance, despite the fact that as far as the audience was concerned, she did not know his name, how old he was, where he came from, or in fact any other personal information that would facilitate a decision about pursuing a courtship. Although she was without this information, Snow White desired not only a romantic relationship, but also the commitment of marriage:

Someday my prince will come
Someday we'll meet again
And away to his castle we'll go
To be happy forever I know.

Someday when spring is here
We'll find our love anew
And the birds will sing
And wedding bells will ring
Some day when my dreams come true.

In fact, Snow White desired a romantic relationship and marriage so much so that she was willing to outwardly wish for it when the Evil Queen, disguised as the Old Hag, gifted her a magical wishing apple:

Evil Queen/Old Hag: "There must be something your little heart desires. Perhaps there's someone you love."
Snow White: "Well, there is someone."

> **Evil Queen/Old Hag**: "I thought so! I thought so! Old Granny knows a young girl's heart. Now, take the apple, dearie, and make a wish."
> **Snow White**: "I wish… I wish…"
> **Evil Queen/Old Hag**: "That's it, go on! Go on."
> [*The scene cuts to the dwarfs rushing back to the cottage to rescue Snow White*]
> **Snow White**: "And that he will carry me away to his castle where we will live happily ever after."

It would seem that Snow White was so focused on attaining a relationship with the Prince that she had desired throughout the story, it was the first and only thing that came into her mind when thinking of a wish (Davis 2006:184). Despite her awareness of the Evil Queen wanting to kill her, Snow White wished for her Prince, rather than for her freedom (Davis 2006:184). This implied the importance that Snow White placed on a romantic relationship, and that she desired the liaison to an extreme extent.

Snow White was poisoned by the apple and fell into a deep sleep. Although the dwarfs defeated the Evil Queen, Snow White remained lifeless - and we next saw her lying in a glass coffin, as she was "so beautiful, even in death, that the dwarfs could not find it in their hearts to bury her". The narrator explained that the Prince had been searching for Snow White, heard of a girl sleeping in a glass coffin and went to visit. He leant down to the sleeping Snow White and kissed her awake.[21] One interpretation of this could be that Snow White's wish did come true (Zipes 1995:37). However, it is important to recognise what this scene suggests. Throughout the film, she had desired a romantic relationship, and had made no attempt to seek one herself: the Prince found her at the beginning of the film, and he found her at the end (Ayres 2003:40). Of course, she had been hiding from the Evil Queen, which could explain why she was not looking for the prince herself, nevertheless the only activity she had actively pursued was cleaning. As I have demonstrated in the previous section, Snow White had exhibited her passivity throughout the film through accepting her position of unpaid labour and eventual homelessness without resistance, as well as accepting the Huntsman trying to murder her. Despite her passivity she was rewarded with a relationship, her only desire in the film (Zipes 1995:38).

[21] Of course, the Prince kissing Snow White whilst she was asleep raises issues around the idea of consent, which has even been commented on by celebrities who have worked with Disney. Kristen Bell, the voice of *Frozen's* Princess Anna, discusses the issue of consent with her children after reading them Snow White. She asks, "Don't you think that it's weird that the Prince kisses Snow White without her permission?" and then follows up with an explanation for her children, "Because you cannot kiss someone if they're sleeping!". (Bever 2018:NP)

A nuance in the first wave princesses was Cinderella. Although she did desire a relationship towards the end of the film, Cinderella spent the majority of her story simply wanting to go to the palace ball. Continually having to perform unpaid domestic labour, Cinderella longed to go to the ball, her reason unclear, but she made no indication throughout the film that she had romantic intentions that could be fulfilled at the ball. However, when she arrived and met an unknown man (that the audience knew to be Prince Charming), Cinderella's narrative changed. "So this is Love" was a duet shared between Cinderella and Prince Charming, indicating that now they had met each other they understood what made life wonderful and that this was the miracle that they had been dreaming of. For Cinderella, it would seem that finding love with this unknown man was what she had been dreaming of from the beginning of the film - but she had only just realised it. Of course, this romantic moment was interrupted when the clock struck midnight, and Cinderella realised her true identity would be revealed. She ran away from the palace, but the Prince had claimed that he was in love with the mystery woman and wanted to marry her. When Cinderella discovered the King's proclamation that the Prince would marry the woman whose foot fit her glass slipper, she realised that she spent the whole evening with the Prince, and that she was the mysterious girl he was searching for. She went into an almost trance like state, allowing her stepsisters to dump clothes onto her laid out arms whilst she stared dreamily into the distance. It was her humming of the waltz that she and the Prince danced to at the ball that gave her identity away to Lady Tremaine, resulting in her being locked in the tower. Like Snow White, Cinderella - when she was actually desirous of a romantic relationship – could not seem to think of anything else. This narrative shift, particularly in Cinderella's case, indicated the new importance that Cinderella placed on her newfound romantic desire. At the end of the film, after managing to get out of the tower thanks to her animal friends, Cinderella was rewarded for her passivity demonstrated in the film through a romantic relationship resulting in marriage. This was where Cinderella's story ended, suggesting that a relationship was the newfound end goal.

Like Snow White, Aurora demonstrated her desire for a romantic relationship at the very beginning of her entrance in the film (Whelan 2012:28). As she was sent on her birthday to pick berries in the forest, she sang:

> I wonder, I wonder
> If my heart keeps singing
> Will my song go winging
> To someone who'll find me
> And bring back a love song to me?

Like Snow White, Aurora desired the romantic relationship but would not search for one herself. Rather, she would prefer to be 'found' by her love, and so she would simply wait for him. She continued to elaborate on her dreams of a man to her animal friends in the forest. She explained how she had met a Prince, who was "tall, and handsome and so romantic". She told them that they:

> ...walk together, and talk together, and just before we say goodbye, he takes me in his arms and then… I wake up. Yes it's only in my dreams. But they say if you dream a thing more than once, it's sure to come true. And I've seen him so many times.

Aurora explained that these dreams were recurring, indicating that many of her subconscious and conscious thoughts were directly related to desiring a romantic relationship. Therefore, although she was initially shocked when Prince Phillip found her in the forest and they danced together, she was overjoyed that she seemed to have found her 'prince'. Neither of them asked for the other's identity, but Aurora did ask him to come to her cottage that evening. This was the only active role she played in fulfilling her romantic desires. She returned to the cottage to tell her three aunts her happy news, stating: "This is the happiest day of my life. Everything's so wonderful. Just wait till you meet him". This statement cemented that she had her desires fulfilled, and this had brought her more joy than anything in her life. Of course, we had no concept of what Aurora's life had been like for the past 16 years and therefore we had nothing to compare this moment to. But clearly, Aurora deemed this moment of finding love to be the pinnacle of her short life so far.

Aurora's joy was short-lived, as when she was informed of her true identity and realised she could not see the man from the forest again, she broke down in tears. She was told that she was betrothed to Prince Phillip, whom the audience knew to be the true identity of the man from the forest, but Aurora did not. For the rest of her time in the film, before she fell under the sleeping curse, Aurora displayed her unhappiness at the situation she found herself in. As she walked to and through the palace to her safe room, she had her head bowed low. When Aunt Flora gave her a tiara as a final gift, Aurora broke down crying at the dressing table she was sitting at. This continuous display of unhappiness from Aurora indicated how miserable she was about being denied her love interest. At no point in the film did she ever indicate that she was upset because she had been lied to for 16 years, had her identity changed, and had been raised by people who were not her parents. At no point did Aurora question why any of this had happened, because she seemed to have focused all of her attention on the fact that she could no longer see the man she met in the forest. Although it could be interpreted that she was upset

that she now had to become a princess when Flora placed the tiara on Aurora's head, I argue that as Aurora had indicated no emotion towards the changing of her identity, and the only vocalisations she made are about her being upset about not seeing her love interest as she had been betrothed to another man, that Aurora only displayed her unhappiness due to her desire for a romantic relationship.

Each of the first wave princesses clearly had strong desires for a romantic relationship with the exception of Cinderella, who only displayed these desires towards the end of the film, once she had met the prince. As the desire for a relationship was, or became, the sole motivation for each princess, it left little room for any further character development. Furthermore, although each princess desired a romantic relationship, they were passive in actually doing something to achieve what they wanted. With each princess dreaming of a romance, but simply waiting for their dream to come to them, I identify first wave princesses as 'passive dreamers': women who identified their dream but made no active attempt to achieve it. Their dreams were also often reduced to desiring a romantic relationship, suggesting this was their final goal in the narrative (Davis 2014a:49).

Conclusion

I have explored how femininity has been depicted within first wave films, drawing out four key characteristics: domesticity, passivity, victimhood and desiring a romantic relationship. Drawing on my textual analysis and Disney scholarship, I identified the first wave princesses as 'passive dreamers'. Snow White, Cinderella and Aurora had no agency, and were regularly victimised with no ability to leave their situations. Despite their oppressive and in some cases dangerous living situations, they only wished for a romantic relationship. Even then, they would do nothing themselves, they would simply wait for their prince to come to them. Their passivity throughout their film was rewarded with a romantic relationship, indicating that love was their only end goal and marriage their only escape. This suggests that femininity within the first wave films was associated with passive victims who only desired romance. When not desiring love, they spent their time conducting domestic tasks, or being abused. These representations of femininity seemed to reflect the situation of women within the time period each film was produced. The strong focus on domesticity within princess films was very similar to the lives that women were leading within this period. Only in unprecedented times such as war were women able to leave the household for a career, and that career would still be gendered tasks. It was made especially clear that women's employment was temporary when they had to return to domestic life when American men returned from war. It cannot be a coincidence that three princess films that value and reward domesticity were released during a time that American women were being encouraged to return to the home. Even the focus on romantic relationships

within the three films can mirror societal expectations for '30s, '40s and '50s women, as they were being encouraged to start families and raise their children. The fact that Snow White, Cinderella and Aurora's passivity and domesticity was rewarded with the romantic relationship they craved so much demonstrated to audiences that this was the status quo: become a housewife and raise your children in order to be content. If it was good enough for Disney princesses, then surely it was good enough for the American woman and beyond.

Chapter Three: Second Wave Princesses

Historical Background

The second wave of princess films were released between 1985-1992. In the interim between the release of *Sleeping Beauty* (1959) and *The Black Cauldron* (1985), the women's rights movement had taken huge strides within areas of employment and the home. In 1960, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the commercial production of the birth control pill, which allowed women to have the autonomy to choose if and when they had children (May 2000:513; Bailey 2004:560). In 1963, the Equal Pay Act was signed into law, prohibiting women being paid less for the same work as men because of their gender (Chafe 2000:535-6). The following year, the Civil Rights Act was signed into law, preventing employment discrimination based on sex and other demographics, such as race and religion (National Archives N.D.). In 1968, this was extended to government contractors, as well as encouraging affirmative action to hire more women in the workplace (National Archives N.D.). Within education, federally supported programs were prohibited from discriminating applicants based on sex in 1972 (United States Department of Justice N.D.). In 1978, The Pregnancy Discrimination Act was passed, banning employers from discriminating against pregnant workers (U.S. EEOC N.D.). Despite such progress, there were setbacks for the women's rights movement. In 1982, the Equal Rights Amendment, which granted women equal rights to men, failed to be ratified by congress (ERA N.D.). It is still not ratified to this day.

Within society, women's roles and opportunities had also changed. In 1963, Betty Friedan published *The Feminine Mystique*, and three years later founded the National Organization for Women (NOW) in order to promote equal rights for women and societal change (Chafe 2000:548). In 1969, the state of California allowed mutually consensual divorce through the 'no fault' divorce law, and the Supreme Court granted unmarried couples the right to birth control in 1972 (Bailey 2004:567). More women were being seen within public and private sector roles: Juanita Kreps became the first female director of the New York Stock Exchange (1972); Paula Hawkins became the first female senator elected who had not followed the footsteps of male family members (1980); Sandra Day O'Connor was the first female judge to serve in the Supreme Court (1981); Sally Ride became the first American female to enter space (1983); and Geraldine Ferraro was the first female to be selected as a presidential running mate by a major political party (1984). Additionally, Roe v. Wade (1973) became a political and legal landmark for women's rights when the Supreme Court declared that a

woman's legal right to an abortion was protected by the U.S. Constitution. This prevented unsafe abortions where women's lives were put at risk in order to abort their foetus secretly. In 1981, state laws that gave husbands full control over property were overturned. Overall, by the time *The Black Cauldron* (1985) was released, women's rights and roles within society had drastically changed, with women being given more autonomy in the workplace and the home.

The Black Cauldron was one of Disney's unsuccessful releases, grossing $21,288,692.[22] It is ranked 42nd on the 1985 Box Office List (Box Office Mojo [d] N.D.). In 1966, Walt Disney died, leaving his brother, Roy, to take over the Disney Company, along with Donn Tatum and Card Walker to complete the management team (Wasko 2001a:30). A few months after the opening of Walt Disney World, Roy O. Disney also passed away leaving Tatum and Walker as chairman and president respectively (Wasko 2001a:30). However, at this point in its history the Walt Disney Company had been primarily focusing on real estate and recreation through expanding theme parks and trying (and failing) to create other resorts (Wasko 2001a:30). Entertainment had been pushed to the side. The management concerned with film production did not help matters. Roy Disney had appointed Ron Miller, Walt's son-in-law, as head of film production. The idea behind this being that Miller knew Walt, and would therefore be likely to emulate Walt's choices (Davis 2006:140). This was not the case, and Miller was unable to understand and make informed decisions based on the film market and consumer choices (Gomery 1994**:**78). This was reflected by Disney films unsuccessful box office ratings with releases such as *The Apple Dumpling Gang* (1975) and *Something Wicked This Way Comes* (1983). Even the animation side of Disney, with releases such as *Robin Hood* (1973), *The Rescuers* (1977) and *The Fox and the Hound* (1981) did not reflect the previous box office successes (Wasko 2001a:30). Wasko has suggested that a reason for this could have been Disney's lack of movement with industry developments, instead trying to reproduce their previous successes, and turning down film proposals which actually went on to be hugely successful, such as *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981) and *ET: The Extra-Terrestrial* (1982) (Wasko 2001a:30-1). In fact, in the early 1980s, "Disney's share of the box office was less than 4 percent" (Wasko 2001a:31; Davis 2006:141). Disney's explanation for this, through the official fan site D23 Disney history was:

> Moviemaking was also changing in America in the early 1980s. Audiences were diminishing for the family films that had been the mainstay of the Company for many years, and Disney was not

[22] Unfortunately, perhaps due to *The Black Cauldron*'s lack of box office success, there is very little research conducted on Eilonwy. Many scholars do not acknowledge her when discussing the princesses. This is most likely due to Eilonwy's exclusion from the princess franchise, so for many, the resurgence of the Disney princesses began in 1989 with *The Little Mermaid*.

> meeting the competition for films that attracted the huge teenage and adult market. (D23 N.D)

In addition to this, there was an attempted takeover of Disney due to the perception that "Disney stock was undervalued relative to the company's assets" (D23 N.D). Corporate raiders who identified Disney's potential value began purchasing huge blocks of shares in a bid to take over the company, however were prevented from going further by the Bass brothers, who purchased enough shares to own "around 25 percent of the Disney stock, enough to control the company and to appoint their own managers" (Wasko 2001a:32). The new owners appointed experienced industry professionals as the new management team: the new Chief Executive Officer was former head of Paramount, Michael Eisner, whilst the role of President went to former Warner Brother's vice chairman, Frank Wells. With new management putting multiple changes in place for the Walt Disney Company, Wasko commented that "since the new ownership/management team took over in 1984, the Disney empire has extended its tentacles more widely and tenaciously than ever before" (2001:33-3).

While tracing the relationship between princess films and women in society, Cassandra Stover commented that the 1980s was a time of backlash for feminism, resulting in "post-feminist rhetoric in the guise of promoting 'new womanhood'" (2013:3). Disney's new wave of princesses went from damsels in distress to heroines wanting adventure "with progressive qualities and character traits that corresponded completely to the increasingly acceptable gender roles in a society where women hold the same jobs as men" (Stover 2013:3). The release of *The Little Mermaid* in 1989 surged Disney princess films back into the top ten, grossing $184,155,863 (Box Office Mojo [e] N.D.). With the success of *The Little Mermaid*, Disney did not hesitate in producing another princess film. In 1991, *Beauty and the Beast* became the third highest-grossing film, making $346,317,207. Disney's success continued when their 1992 release, *Aladdin*, became the highest-grossing film with a worldwide gross of $504,050,219.

The '80s and '90s was another changing time for women, in 1986 the Supreme Court declared that work environments could become hostile and abusive when there was sexual discrimination (Library of Congress 1985:57). This allowed more scope for sexual harassment cases. In 1991, lawyer Anita Hill testified against Clarence Thomas (a Supreme Court nominee) for sexual harassment (Jacobs 2018). A great number of women were elected to the House of Representatives and the Senate (United States Senate N.D.). However, there were still setbacks for women's rights. Despite the Roe v. Wade abortion ruling, the Supreme Court allowed states to control public funding for abortions and the ability of public hospitals to perform them (*Webster v. Reproductive Health Services* 1989). In addition, they allowed states to impose further restrictions on abortions by introducing elements such as waiting periods and parental

consent in the case of minors (*Planned Parenthood v. Casey* 1992). Despite this, women had come a long way since the restricted employment and rights of the '30s, '40s and '50s, which was perhaps reflected within the second wave princess films. I will now discuss the characteristics found within the second wave films.

Second Wave Characteristics

Through textual analysis, I noted characteristics of each princess through their speech, movement, narrative and plot lines. Eilonwy was depicted as assertive, kind, domestic and as a leader. Other characters saw her as beautiful and in need of protection. Ariel developed the second wave further, being portrayed as assertive, active, rebellious, curious, eager to learn, adventurous, brave and at times, passive. Like first wave princesses, Ariel also desired a romantic relationship. Other characters saw her as childlike, beautiful, someone to marry, rebellious, a political tool, a means to an end, and someone to look after. Belle demonstrated assertive, curious, adventurous, eager to learn and brave traits. Like Ariel, she also desired a romantic relationship. Other characters viewed Belle as someone to look after, someone to marry, a love interest, rebellious, beautiful, odd and different. Due to Belle's pivotal role in being the one to potentially break the curse the Beast was under, she was also seen as someone to break the curse as a means to an end. She was also abused by the Beast, however when he learnt the error of his ways, he encouraged Belle's interests by giving her his library of books, and supported her by releasing her so she can help her father. Jasmine was depicted as rebellious, assertive, curious, adventurous, brave, astute, yet still desiring a romantic relationship. Other characters in Aladdin saw Jasmine as beautiful, as a love interest, someone to marry, someone to look after and someone to respect. Due to her assertive nature, the film's villain, Jafar, saw Jasmine as a shrew who was interfering with his plans.

In total, I identified 29 characteristics across the four films. Eilonwy was an anomaly, only sharing one characteristic with the other second wave princesses (assertiveness). A non-franchised princess (she is not recognised as an official princess in merchandising or the parks), I decided that based on her traits of leadership and assertiveness she would remain within the second wave, but would be discussed separately. Ariel, Belle and Jasmine all shared four characteristics: assertive, rebellious, brave and desiring a romantic relationship. This demonstrated a significant change from the first wave characteristics, and distinguished them from their predecessors.

Princess Eilonwy

Although this chapter is dedicated to exploring images of femininity in second wave princesses, I want to dedicate a section to discuss the anomaly of Princess Eilwonwy. Like in any research, anomalies can occur during analysis. Eilonwy was difficult to place, on the one hand, she demonstrated some domestic qualities and her 'happily ever after' seemed to involve a romantic relationship with Taran, the film's hero, reminiscent of first wave princesses produced 26 years earlier. On the other, Eilwony was confident and demonstrated leadership qualities lacking in even some second wave princesses. Ultimately, *The Black Cauldron* did not develop Eilonwy in the way Disney had done with other princesses. She was a supporting character to Taran and his journey to become a hero. The story was not centred around her, her life or her development (unlike the other second wave princesses, even Jasmine, who could also be deemed as a supporting character to Aladdin in his eponymous film, received a more developed plot line and narrative). Based on Eilonwy's images of confidence and leadership, she sits within the second wave princesses. I argue that even within this wave, she was different to Ariel, Belle and Jasmine. Eilonwy produced two prominent images: confidence and leadership; whereas Ariel, Belle and Jasmine displayed images of assertiveness, rebelliousness and bravery. Therefore, in this part of the chapter I will discuss Princess Eilonwy as an anomaly to both the first and second wave.

Princess Eilonwy demonstrated confidence and leadership in her first scene in *The Black Cauldron* (1985). Held captive by the Horned King, Eilonwy found the story's hero, Taran by following his voice through the dungeon. After their introductions (with Eilonwy introducing herself as a princess, and Taran introducing himself as a pig keeper) she sighed:

> **Eilonwy**: I was so hoping for someone who could help me escape! Oh well, if you want to come with me, you may.
> **Taran**: Can I?
> **Eilonwy**: Well yes, I said you could.

Eilonwy's intentions were to find someone to help her escape, demonstrating her active intent to escape the dungeon, rather than waiting for someone to find her (Davis 2006:158). When Taran revealed himself as a pig keeper, she realised he may not be able to help her but suggested he may accompany her. This confident and active wording demonstrated Eilonwy's position as a leader within the film. She continued to demonstrate confidence in the scene as she guided him through the dungeon and castle, stating "Well, you better stay close to me or you'll get lost" and, "Well come on then, help me look around" (Davis 2006:158). Eilonwy was clear

and focused, and instructed and delegated tasks to Taran. This confident attitude certainly differed from the way first wave princesses were developed.

Even when male characters such as Taran assumed she was unsafe by herself, Eilonwy's confidence did not falter. For example, when Eilonwy and Taran were separated whilst trying to escape the castle, Taran attempted to take the role of protecting Eilonwy:

> **Eilonwy**: Are you alright?
> [*Taran is swinging his newly acquired magic sword, pleased he has scared off one of the henchmen*]
> **Taran**: Oh good, you're safe.
> **Eilonwy**: [*Holds her arms out*] Why, of course. I-
> **Taran**: Come on. [*Takes Eilonwy's hand*] I'm going to get you out of here.

Despite Taran viewing her as someone in need of protection, Eilonwy believed she was perfectly capable of looking after herself, stating "Why, of course". However, as Taran had a newfound confidence due to finding an enchanted sword, he pulled Eilonwy through the castle looking for an escape. Unlike Eilonwy, Taran's confidence wavered under pressure as they were surrounded by henchmen:

> **Henchmen**: We've got you now pig boy!
> [*The henchmen begin to throw weapons such as axes and spears at the two prisoners*]
> **Eilwony**: Taran, do something! [*Avoiding weapons, as Taran's face grows with panic and fear*] Use the sword!
> [*Taran slams the sword against the castle gate chains, causing the gate to open*]

Eilonwy was able to jolt Taran out of panic in order to escape the Horned King's castle, demonstrating confidence and leadership qualities, even under pressure (Davis 2006:158). She continued to demonstrate her confidence when Taran attempted to take the credit for their escape:

> **Taran**: Well, I got us out of the castle didn't I?
> **Eilonwy**: You? I'd say it was the sword's magic.
> **Taran**: But it takes a great warrior to handle a sword like this!

Eilonwy: But, still, it is a magic sword.
Taran: What does a *girl* know about swords anyway.
Eilonwy: Girl? Girl? If it weren't for this *girl*, you would still be in the Horned King's dungeon!
Fflewddur: Here now, Princess Eilonwy, Taran…

Eilonwy immediately challenged Taran's claim in a respectful manner, and her confidence did not falter even when Taran continued to insist the rescue was down to him and questioned her knowledge due to her gender to support his argument. Eilonwy refused to accept Taran's comments and defended herself by exclaiming, "Girl? Girl? If it weren't for this *girl*, you would still be in the Horned King's dungeon!". Again, this was a stark contrast between Eilonwy's representation in *The Black Cauldron*, and the first wave princesses. Whilst Eilonwy was shown to perform a domestic task (mending Fflewddur's trousers), she was also incredibly confident, resourceful and as demonstrated above, assertive.

Assertiveness

Every princess demonstrated assertiveness throughout each film, a stark contrast to the passive images found within the first wave. The APA defined assertiveness as, "an adaptive style of communication in which individuals express their feelings and needs directly, while maintaining respect for others" (APAd N.D.). With this in mind, I define 'assertiveness' as being a confident individual able to clearly and effectively stand up for themselves and others. Through assertiveness, second wave princesses demonstrated their belief in themselves, their values; they did not allow others to doubt their skills. In this section I discuss the images of assertiveness produced by Belle and Jasmine. Rather than being assertive, Ariel had a 'rebellious' character and is not discussed in this section.

Belle's assertive nature emerged at many points in *Beauty and the Beast* (England et al 2011:564), specifically with her communication with Gaston and the Beast. Belle was considered to be 'odd' and 'different' to her fellow villagers. Despite this, the film's villain Gaston believed "she's the most beautiful girl in town" and pursued her throughout the film. Belle regularly rejected and corrected Gaston, demonstrating her assertive nature. It also implied a shift in princesses not being romantically interested in the first man she met (Davis 2014a:50). The audience saw this at the very beginning of the film, where Gaston's friend Le Fou mocked Maurice. She responded with "Don't talk about my father that way!". The audience could immediately see that Belle would stand up to men when she believed they were in the wrong. This was also demonstrated when Belle made the choice to return the injured Beast to his castle:

Belle: [*Wringing a cloth in hot water*] [*Gentle voice*] Here now, [*the Beast is licking his wounds*] oh don't do that [*he growls, and his servants back away, obviously frightened*], just hold still [*he keeps moving his arm away from Belle and the hot cloth, but she manages to place it onto his injured arm*]
[*The Beast roars with pain and the servants rush away, scared*]
Beast: [*Shouts in Belle's face*] That hurts!
Belle: [*Shouts in the Beast's face*] If you'd hold still it wouldn't hurt as much!
Beast: Well if you hadn't have run away, this wouldn't have happened.
Belle: [*Still shouting*] If you hadn't frightened me I wouldn't have ran away!
[*The Beast goes to shout in Belle's face again but realises he has no rebuttal, he thinks for a moment*]
Beast: [*Raising his voice*] Well you shouldn't have been in the West Wing!
Belle: Well you should learn to control your temper.
[*The Beast slumps in the chair, placing his cheek on his paw, realising he has lost the argument*]

Belle stood up to the Beast despite his shouting: she did not allow him to intimidate her into submission and held her ground within the argument. The Beast had already shouted and roared at Belle twice, firstly when demanding she ate with him, and secondly when he found her trespassing in the West Wing. For a third time, the Beast berated her even for doing something that was in his benefit - caring for him. He also tried to blame his behaviour and his wounds on Belle, suggesting that because she ran away from the castle she was to blame for his wounds and for him shouting at her. Although a first wave princess may have been too scared to speak at all or would have silently agreed with the Beast; Belle refused to accept his claims (Hoerrner 1996:223). Instead of retreating or agreeing, Belle actually shouted back and invaded the Beast's personal space in the way that he did to her. The Beast was much larger than Belle, so this reversal of invasion of space looked quite stark on screen. It clearly caught the Beast off guard as at first, he had no response, and when he did try to catch her out, she already had another comeback, suggesting that he should control his temper. That level of assertiveness was

not seen in any other second wave princess film. Belle's quick-witted comments and her refusal to be intimidated demonstrated her self-confidence.

Belle's assertiveness could also be seen explicitly at the end of the film. She rejected Gaston's marriage proposal at the beginning, so at its end Gaston decided to use Belle's father's claims about the Beast to place him into a mental asylum in an attempt to force her into marrying him:

> **Belle**: You know he's not crazy Gaston.
> **Gaston**: I might be able to clear up this little misunderstanding, if…
> **Belle**: If what?
> **Gaston**: If you marry me
> **Belle**: What?
> **Gaston**: One little word Belle - that's all it takes [*he encroaches her space*]
> **Belle**: Never! [*She pushes Gaston's face away from hers*]

Again, Belle was faced with an opportunity to free her father at the expense of her own happiness, but this time she refused to take it. Here Gaston had created a situation for him to envision Belle as a 'damsel in distress', a role often played by first wave princesses. However, Belle bluntly refused Gaston's blackmail, and her prescribed damsel-like role. Before, she would have politely rejected Gaston, now she forcefully did so, even pushing him away.

Belle then dealt with the situation herself using the enchanted mirror to show everyone the Beast, proving her father's claims. However, Gaston used Belle's proof to lead an angry mob to kill the Beast:

> **Gaston**: [*Takes Belle by the shoulders*] If I didn't know better I'd think you have feelings for this monster.
> **Belle**: [*Pulls herself away from his grip*] He's no monster Gaston, you are!

The audience could see that Belle would stand up for others through this action (Davis 2014a:50). Belle knew the Beast was real and wanted to defend her father when people were questioning his sanity. When Gaston tried to rally the villagers and incite them to think the Beast was a monster, the audience finally saw Belle unapologetically confront Gaston - something that no one else in the film had dared to do (other women in the town were regularly

seen fawning over him, with Belle as the only exception). Belle held up a metaphorical mirror to Gaston when she told him, "He's no monster Gaston, you are!", and whilst Gaston was too vain and arrogant a character to believe or listen, the audience was able to see a heroine continue to stand up for her beliefs and defy villainous bullies.

As Gaston began to lead the villagers to kill the Beast, Belle once again tried to stop him, saying, "No! I won't let you do this!". However, her efforts were in vain as she and her father were locked in their own basement so they couldn't warn the Beast. Although they managed to escape thanks to Chip, the enchanted teacup, Belle contributed very little to saving the Beast when she arrived at the castle. Rather than take an active role, she seemed to be positioned as the ray of hope for the Beast in the plotline. When Gaston finally reached the castle he immediately found and tried to kill the Beast. Having lost hope, the Beast refused to fight back for his life until he heard Belle's cry of "No! No Gaston don't!". Seeing that Belle had returned appeared to give the Beast the strength to fight back and we then saw the Beast and Gaston fight on the rooftop (Sumera 2008:43). Belle made her way into the castle and to the balcony where the Beast had seemingly won his fight. She helped him onto the balcony, but Gaston had returned and fatally stabbed the Beast. Although Belle demonstrated assertiveness in her interactions with individuals, it appeared there was a glass ceiling. It was significant to note how Belle was never portrayed as committing an act of violence, even for the sake of someone's life. But it was acceptable for the Beast to be violent within the same scene. Although Belle was assertive, in this particular scene the image of femininity was that of a peaceful woman, not a warrior. Nevertheless, moving away from passivity, Belle's assertiveness was an image of femininity within the second wave princesses, something which was also evident in Jasmine of *Aladdin.*

Despite being forced to marry before her next birthday, Jasmine's assertive nature was seen throughout *Aladdin* (England et al 2011:564):

> Disney animator and creator of Jasmine Mark Henn says of his character: 'Jasmine is very different from the rest [of the group of recent heroines]; a lot more feisty than Belle (from *Beauty and the Beast*), and not as naive as Ariel (from *The Little Mermaid*) (Staninger 2003:67)

Her assertiveness was demonstrated through the way she spoke with other men. Jasmine did not shy away from communicating her thoughts and feelings. This was particularly demonstrated when Jasmine was led to believe that Jafar had Aladdin 'killed' for 'kidnapping her' (Jafar had actually sent Aladdin to the Cave of Wonders). Jasmine shared her newfound

knowledge with her father, the Sultan of Agrabah. When the Sultan addressed the issue with Jafar and he apologised, she stated "At least some good will come of my being forced to marry. When I am queen, I will have the power to get rid of you". Jasmine was clearly aware of the little power she currently had and knew that she could use her forced marriage to her advantage and exert her independence freely.

Despite being constrained in her life, she regularly demonstrated her desire for independence through her assertive nature. When Aladdin - disguised as Prince Ali - arrived at the castle, he discussed his future with Jasmine with the Sultan and Jafar:

> **Sultan**: Jasmine will like this one.
> [*Jasmine enters the room unnoticed*]
> **Aladdin**: And I'm pretty sure I'll like Princess Jasmine.
> **Jafar**: Your Highness, no. I must intercede on Jasmine's behalf. This boy is no different from the others. [*Jasmine narrows her eyebrows and looks very cross*] What makes him think he is worthy of the princess?
> **Aladdin**: Your majesty, I am Prince Ali Aliababwa. Just let her meet me. [*Cocky*] I will win your daughter.
> **Jasmine**: [*Furious*] How dare you? All of you.
> [*The three men look very uncomfortable*]
> Standing around deciding my future? I am not a prize to be won!
> [*Jasmine storms out of the room*]

In this scene, Jasmine refused to be spoken about, and have her future decided by three men. She not only chastised them for making assumptions over who she would and wouldn't like, but for deciding her future as a wife without her presence or permission. Despite the Sultan, Jafar and Aladdin stripping Jasmine of her autonomy when it came to her marriage, she retrieved it and made it very clear that they should not have this discussion again. Jasmine declaring "I am not a prize to be won!" highlighted the way that she had been objectified by her own father, a potential suitor and a senior staff member at the palace, and her rejection of that objectification. Her words and actions in this scene demonstrated her assertive nature, which was then continued when Aladdin - disguised as Prince Ali - attempted to rectify the situation by climbing onto her balcony. She clearly and assertively rejected his attempts, stating, "I do not want to see you" and "Just leave me alone!". She was not interested in speaking to him, until she noticed something familiar about his appearance. Aladdin tried to put her off when she told him he reminded her of someone she met in the marketplace, telling her "I have servants who go to the

marketplace for me". To try and rectify his errors, the Genie helped Aladdin try to talk about Jasmine, however he focused on her appearance rather than her personality. Jasmine realised this was an opportunity to trick Aladdin:

> [*Jasmine and Rajah look at each other mischievously with raised eyebrows*]
> **Jasmine**. Mm… I'm rich too you know.
> **Aladdin**: Yeah.
> [*Jasmine slinks over to him, swaying her hips and arms*]
> **Jasmine**: The daughter of a Sultan.
> **Aladdin**: I know.
> **Jasmine**: A fine prize for any prince to marry.
> **Aladdin**: [*Looks nervous*] Right. Right! A prince like me.
> **Genie**: Warning. Warning.
> **Jasmine**: [*Places her hands on Aladdin's chest*] Right. [*Boops him with her finger*] A prince like you. [*Pulls on the plume of his headpiece*] And every other stuffed shirt swaggering peacock I've ever met [*Pulls his cloak over his face and walks off*].

Once again, Aladdin focused on her appearance and tried to persuade her that he was the one for her. And once again, Jasmine refused to accept his claims and put him back into his place by actively undermining him. Through this Jasmine not only demonstrated her assertiveness, she also implied that she was unimpressed by compliments, wealth and status. However, when Aladdin accidently revealed he had a magic carpet, Jasmine was curious and asked if it was safe. When Aladdin replied with 'do you trust me?', she realised Prince Ali was in fact Aladdin, the boy she met at the marketplace. After they had ridden on the carpet, she tricked him into revealing his true identity and then confronted him for lying to her:

> **Jasmine**: Did you think I was stupid? That I wouldn't figure it out?
> **Aladdin**: No! No! I mean… I hoped you wouldn't. No! That's not what I meant.
> **Jasmine**: Who are you? Tell me the truth.

Not only did Jasmine demonstrate her assertive nature through confronting Aladdin about his lies, she also did so through holding him accountable for his actions. Her question of "Did you think I was stupid? That I wouldn't figure it out?" suggested that people had underestimated

Jasmine before, and she found it irritating. Her behaviour and speech in this scene demonstrated assertiveness through her methods of confrontation and holding Aladdin accountable for his actions.

Both Belle and Jasmine presented images of assertiveness throughout their films. This assertiveness demonstrated a new self-confident and strong-minded model of femininity which was a stark contrast to the passivity and docile nature of the first wave princesses. Unlike their predecessors, Belle and Jasmine actively held others to account for their actions, stood up for themselves and others in situations where they were being objectified and mistreated, and exuded confidence in themselves and their abilities. These assertive images were presented throughout each film and produced a strong heroine. This was continued through the next image of femininity found within the second wave princess films: rebelliousness and bravery.

Rebellious and Brave

Another image of femininity produced by second wave princesses was rebelliousness and bravery. Typically, a rebellious nature is one that will seek to defy authority and control. Through rebellion, second wave princesses made their own choices within a patriarchal structure. It was through rebellion that they made attempts to free themselves of the confines of patriarchal society. Although the princesses did achieve this, I discuss how their 'freedom' was often replaced with another kind of patriarchy (desiring a romantic relationship) later on in this chapter. I consider bravery as courageous acts or behaviour completed by an individual. Through bravery, the second wave princesses demonstrated their active and, in some cases, fearless nature to follow their dreams and desires. Often, the princesses demonstrated rebelliousness and bravery in the same sequences. Here, I discuss the images of rebellion and bravery produced by Ariel, Belle and Jasmine.

Ariel began *The Little Mermaid* with an act of rebellion and bravery (Sells 1995:179). The first time we saw her, the audience realised she had missed her singing recital in front of the whole kingdom to search a shipwreck for human treasures. Ariel explored the shipwreck with her best friend, Flounder, and collected the human treasures she found. However, a nearby shark sensed their whereabouts and Ariel and Flounder began swimming for their lives. In the process, Ariel dropped her bag, and when she realised she had evaded the shark, she went back and found it, not wanting to lose the human treasure. Ariel not only retrieved her bag, she protected Flounder and herself from the shark and managed to trap him. Flounder's anxiety and fear was directly contrasted with Ariel's bravery.

When she realised she had forgotten the recital, she returned home and was scolded by her father, King Triton. He exclaimed, "Ariel, how many times must we go through this?", suggesting that this was not the first time Ariel had disobeyed her father. Because of her

rebellious nature, King Triton decided that "Ariel needs constant supervision" and appointed Sebastian, his trusted advisor to "...watch over her, to keep her out of trouble". Sebastian was less than pleased with his new role as he despaired of Ariel, calling her a "headstrong teenager". It was clear from the way that Ariel was introduced, and the way that others discuss Ariel that she had a rebellious nature. This was emphasised when Ariel continued to go to the ocean's surface, despite it being forbidden.

These characteristics were demonstrated further when she disobeyed her father's commands when she followed the sounds of a ship. Ariel saw Prince Eric for the very first time and was infatuated with him. When Eric's ship was struck by lightning and set on fire, Eric returned for his dog, Max. Ariel saw Eric rescue Max but then remain trapped in the ship himself. Seeing him unconscious, Ariel raced to rescue Eric from drowning and returned him to the beach (Zarranz 2007:56). This was one of the bravest acts carried out by a princess within the phenomenon: saving the life of another. Here, Ariel's rebellion and bravery went hand in hand. She was banned from going to the ocean's surface, banned from being near humans, yet she ignored her father's demands and watched the ship, rescued a human, and even took him back to the shore. For Ariel, this act of bravery was the ultimate act of rebellion against her father. Although King Triton wanted Ariel to stay below the surface for what seemed to be safety reasons, Ariel's curiosity got the better of her and she continually disobeyed her father. However, as I will discuss later, once Ariel set her eyes on Eric, her curiosity about the human world seemed to disappear and was completely replaced by her desire for a romantic relationship.

Ariel's final act of rebellion was to visit Ursula, the sea witch. This act, unlike the others, was fuelled by her desire to meet Prince Eric. She knew her father would not allow her to go to the surface, he had destroyed her cavern of human treasure, so she resorted to dark magic. Ariel stripped herself of her autonomy, willingly giving up her voice in exchange for a pair of human legs to have access to the human world, Eric's world (Maity 2014:30). Laura Sells (1995) commented on this act, arguing that: "Like so many women who enter 'the workforce' or any other 'male sphere,' Ariel wrestles with the double-binding cultural expectations of choosing between either voice or access, but never both" (179). Her final rebellious act was the one that silenced her rebellious nature as she was now reliant on Eric, a man she had never had a conversation with, to save her and her voice (Maity 2014:30). From this moment on, Ariel's acts of rebellion and bravery diminished until she defended her father at the end of the film.

Ariel was given three days to win Prince Eric's heart and receive true love's first kiss. But, without a voice Ariel was unable to reveal her true identity, Eric was enchanted by Ursula, and he did not realise Ariel was the girl who rescued him until it was too late. Ariel was returned to her mermaid form and taken back down to the ocean by Ursula to be her slave. King

Triton realised what Ariel had done and tried to destroy the contract in order to free his daughter, but it was legally binding. King Triton then decided to trade his freedom for his daughter's. Ariel's final act of bravery was in reaction to her father becoming imprisoned:

> **Ariel**: You! You monster!
> [*Ariel attacks Ursula, but Ursula overpowers Ariel and throws her against a rock*]
> **Ursula**: Don't fool with me, ya little brat! Contract or no I'll- ah!
> [*Eric has thrown a harpoon at Ursula, hurting her arm*]
> **Ariel**: Eric!
> **Ursula**: Why you little fool!
> **Ariel**: [*Ursula holds Ariel down with her tentacles*] Eric look out!
> [*Ariel wrestles with Ursula for the trident*]
> **Ursula**: [*To Flotsam and Jetsam*] After him!
> [*Flotsam and Jetsam chase Eric and trap him with their tails, pulling him back down to the ocean*]
> **Sebastian**: Come on! [*He and Flounder try to disarm the eels to free Eric, they release him, but Eric seems to be unconscious*]
> **Ursula**: Say goodbye to your sweetheart.
> [*Ursula aims the trident at Eric, but Ariel pulls Ursula's hair so hard it pulls her entire body, changing the direction of the trident's spell, killing Flotsam and Jetsam*]

Ariel had once again saved Eric's life. After this, Ariel became reliant on Prince Eric to save her as she was left helpless at the bottom of the ocean (Towbin et al 2004:31). It was Prince Eric who delivered the fatal blow, defeating Ursula and saving them all. Like Belle, although Ariel displayed characteristics of rebelliousness and bravery, the audience never saw Ariel commit an act of violence in the way men in the film did (Hoerrner 1996:220). Belle had to watch whilst the Beast and Gaston fought. Ariel was trapped in a whirlpool at the bottom of the ocean, watching and waiting for Eric to deliver the fatal blow to Ursula. The nearest thing to an act of violence that Ariel committed was the second-hand killing of Flotsam and Jetsam. I use the term 'second hand killing' as she merely needed to change the direction of the trident being wielded by Ursula. Ariel did not at any point have any control over the trident itself, she merely pulled on Ursula's hair in order to move the blow away from Eric. Like Belle, Ariel was confined to non-violent acts of bravery and rebellion. This produces the idea that women cannot and should not

commit acts of violence, even if it is to protect others.[23] It also highlighted the limits that seemed to be placed on the second wave princesses, they could be rebellious and brave, but not *too* rebellious and brave. They were allowed to sacrifice their life or their freedom to rescue others, but not themselves. This was evident in the contrast between the second wave princesses and the male characters. In *The Little Mermaid*, although Ariel actively tried to provide help to Eric by pulling on Ursula's hair, it was Eric who knowingly committed an act of violence. In *Beauty and the Beast*, during the Beast and Gaston's fight scene, the latter was trying to fight the Beast, who had given up due to losing Belle. When Belle arrived on the scene, she attempted to offer succour to the Beast by begging Gaston to stop but did not commit an act of violence herself. She merely encouraged the Beast to fight back, and it was the Beast who battled with Gaston.

Belle often carried out acts of bravery for men, rather than for herself. The audience first saw Belle's bravery when she asked to take her father's place as the Beast's prisoner (Craven 2002:125; Davis 2006:190,193). Belle lived with her father, Maurice, an inventor. He finally perfected a wood chopping machine and took it to a fair but got lost on the way. Seeking refuge unknowingly in the Beast's castle, the Beast took him in as a prisoner for trespassing. Back at the village, Belle saw Maurice's horse, Phillipe, without her father and realised he was missing. She immediately straddled Phillippe and allowed him to take her to where her father was last seen. She entered the castle and looked for her father, and when the Beast roared with anger that she had trespassed, she offered to take his place (Davis 2014a:50). Like Ariel, Belle sacrificed her own autonomy for that of another man, placing his needs above her own (Gray 1992:160; Downey 1996:195; Henke et al. 1996:238; Manley 2003:81; Davis 2006:193,194). Despite making the decision autonomously, Belle was upset at the thought of being a prisoner for the rest of her life. The Beast on the other hand knew that Belle was an opportunity for him to break the curse he was under.

> **Mrs Potts**: The girl has lost her father and her freedom all in one day.
> **Lumiere**: Master, have you thought that perhaps this girl could be the one to break the spell?
> **Beast**: Of course I have! I'm not a fool.

[23] Keisha Hoerrner (1996) notes that Ursula is one of the few female villains to commit an act of violence, her "violent attack on King Triton, Ariel, and Prince Eric during the final battle in *The Little Mermaid*" (224) involved turning Triton into a sea urchin, and trying to kill both Ariel and Eric. This contrast between Ursula and Ariel is striking, as the audience does not see Ariel commit an act of violence unless it is purely by accident, whereas Ursula does so without a second thought.

Lumiere: Good! So, you fall in love with her, she falls in love with you, and poof! The spell is broken. We'll be human again by midnight.

The Beast and his servants decided the best way to proceed with breaking the curse was to allow Belle to use the castle as her home, rather than force her to be a prisoner. However, this also brought out Belle's rebellious nature, especially when she had just arrived and was still upset:

Beast: I told you to come down to dinner!
Belle: I'm not hungry!
Beast: You'll come out or I'll… I'll… I'll break down the door!
Lumiere: Master, I could be wrong but that may not be the best way to win the girls affections.
Cogsworth: Please attempt to be a gentleman.
Beast: [*exasperated*] But she is being so difficult.
Mrs Potts: Gently, gently.
Beast: Will you come down to dinner?
Belle: No!
[*The Beast points at the door to prove his point*]
Cogsworth: [*Calming the Beast down*] Ah, ah. Suave, genteel.
Beast: [*Through gritted teeth*] It would give me great pleasure if you would join me for dinner.
Cogsworth: And we say please.
Beast: [*Through gritted teeth*] Please.
Belle: No thank you.
Beast: You can't stay in there forever!
Belle: Yes I can!
Beast: Fine! Then go ahead and starve! [To the servants] If she doesn't eat with me, then she doesn't eat at all!

There were two things to note here. Firstly, the Beasts' servants were clearly afraid of their master's temper, often skirting round telling him when he was in the wrong and trying to guide him gently in a more appropriate direction rather than telling him he was being rude or abusive. They had clearly conformed to their way of life in the castle. Secondly, Belle refused to conform to the Beast's authority and rejected his verbal and emotional abuse, despite being a prisoner,

which was in itself a rebellious act. Belle refused to dine with the very person who imprisoned her father - and herself - for trespassing, producing the image of femininity as refusing to conform, or be forced to do something that an individual didn't want to do. The image of rebellion produced connotations of a strong-willed femininity that the first wave princesses did not have. Snow White, Cinderella and Aurora were all docile, always doing as they were told and following instructions. The second wave princesses, on the other hand, rebelled against their (male) counterparts and refused to follow orders.

Belle's rebellious nature developed further when she left her room in search of food. After eating with Lumiere, Cogsworth and Mrs Potts, Belle wished to explore the castle and was once again reminded she could explore every single room - apart from the West Wing. Belle ignored this request and went to the West Wing to explore (Sumera 2008:44). The Beast found her with the enchanted rose and was furious. He screamed at her, roared at her, invaded her personal space and threw objects around the room. The Beast yelled for her to "get out" and, visibly scared, Belle ran from the West Wing and decided to leave, telling the servants: "Promise or no promise, I can't stay here another minute". Once again, Belle had rebelled against the rules of her imprisonment, which then led her to break her promise to the Beast. The way that Belle's rebellion was dealt with by the Beast was very poor. Of course, breaking rules does have consequences, but it should not result in verbal and physical abuse. This image of Belle's rebellion could suggest that whilst women rebel, they should expect abuse as punishment. Although Belle initially left, when the Beast followed her and was therefore able to rescue her from attacking wolves, she returned with him to the castle. However, I will discuss this later on in the chapter. Despite Belle returning, she still demonstrated a rebellious nature throughout the film.

Princess Jasmine also demonstrated rebellion and bravery throughout *Aladdin*. She was three days away from her birthday and had to be married before it. She had turned away every suitor that had come to court her, as she did not believe in being forced to marry. As her birthday drew closer, Jasmine decided to run away from the palace, telling her trusted pet tiger Rajah "I'm sorry Rajah. But I can't stay here and have my life lived for me." It was rebellious to reject all suitors in the first place, but to run away from the palace to start a new life was a complete rejection of her status as a princess. It was also brave (and perhaps a little naive) for Jasmine to leave the only life she had ever known, one that was making her miserable because it was restricting her freedom, in order to build a better one for herself. Of course, she took no money, belongings, nor did she have anywhere to go. This was naive of Jasmine, however her bravery to rebel against her royal status was something that no princess had ever done before. First wave princesses like Snow White, Cinderella and Aurora were all unhappy and wanted to leave their current living conditions (or in Aurora's case, a future that was set out for her

without her knowledge), but none even considered doing anything about it, they merely accepted their fate. Even Ariel and Belle had to be prompted before acting on their wishes, for Ariel it was seeing Prince Eric and her desire for a romantic relationship; for Belle it was the Beast emotionally and verbally abusing her that made her leave, but when he saved her from the wolves on her journey home she returned to the castle. Here, Jasmine made an autonomous choice to leave her current life and start a new one. Although, we did see later on that she was not as prepared for that life as she thought.[24]

The audience could also observe acts of rebellion from Jasmine through her interactions with Jafar, the royal vizier. After Jasmine had returned to the palace and met Aladdin (disguised as Prince Ali), she was happy with her choice. However, Jafar had hypnotized the Sultan to force her to marry him:

> **Jafar**: You're speechless I see. A fine quality in a wife.
> [*Jafar takes Jasmine's hand and puts his face very close to hers*]
> **Jasmine**: I will never marry you! [*Jasmine rips her hand away from Jafar, narrowing her eyebrows*] Father, I choose Prince Ali.

Jasmine rejected Jafar's advances and rebelled against her father's choice. Jasmine made her feelings of disdain towards Jafar very clear throughout the film and was disgusted at the thought of marrying him. She clearly rejected the proposal of marriage and refused to accept her fate as sealed. This was continued when Jafar managed to get hold of the Genie's lamp himself and made himself Sultan of Agrabah. He exclaimed that now he was Sultan, Jasmine and her father would now bow to him, to which she retorted, "We will never bow to you". Jafar realised that he could only force Jasmine to do as he bided through magic, so he chained her up and forced her to feed him. Still he tried to convince her to marry him:

> **Jafar**: A beautiful desert bloom such as yourself should be on the arm of the most powerful man in the world. [*He conjures a tiara*] What do you say my dear? Why with you as my Queen…
> [*Jasmine reaches for a glass with a drink in it*]
> **Jasmine**: [*Throws the drink in his face*] Never!

[24] Although Jasmine desired a life outside the palace, it became very clear once she left that she was not prepared. She had no concept of money and could not understand why people wouldn't listen to her as a peasant woman.

Jasmine made it clear once again that she would never conform to Jafar's wishes and would continually rebel against him. The only exception to her behaviour was when she deliberately pretended to be in love with Jafar after he wished for Jasmine to fall in love with him. Having seen her chance, Jasmine played along despite the Genie attempting to explain that he could not make people fall in love. Jasmine's quick thinking gave Aladdin time to get closer to the lamp, although Jafar ultimately caught him and threw Jasmine into a time turner filled with sand. Nevertheless, Jasmine's rebellious nature was clearly articulated throughout *Aladdin*. As demonstrated above, she refused to partake in anything she didn't want to and refused to be controlled by others. This produced the image of a headstrong woman who wanted to control her own life and would use whatever limited autonomy she had to do so.

Overall, second wave princesses continually performed acts of rebellion in spite of men, and acts of bravery for men. However, it is important to note that despite the continual link with men, the second wave princesses were a far cry away from simply hoping that someone (most likely a man) will come and rescue them. First wave princesses never even thought to rebel, let alone do it. For example, Snow White had to be told by the man who was ordered to murder her to run away, she did not even think to do so herself. Cinderella, once her dress had been ruined by her stepsisters cried until she was put in a pumpkin carriage and taken to the ball. Aurora did not even think to question her lineage and royal status, and despite the fact that the thought of her new life made her miserable, made no attempt to rebel against it. The progression from passive victims to assertive and rebellious heroines demonstrated the changes that Disney made to develop Ariel, Belle and Jasmine into headstrong heroines. However, second wave princess's development did halt when it came to them meeting a love interest. I will now move on to discuss how a princess's narrative, plot line and desires change when they meet their love interest.

Dreams lost in their 'Happily Ever After'

There have been some significant changes found within the images of the second wave princesses in comparison with the first. First wave princesses were domesticated, passive victims who were desirous of a romantic relationship. Second wave princesses on the other hand were assertive, rebellious and brave. Although second wave princesses, by this comparison, had progressed from the docile and passive images of femininity produced by the first, I argue that second wave princesses were denied further progression due to each princess's narrative changing. Each princess desired adventure and was curious and eager to learn new things. For Ariel, it was the human world (Whelan 2012:26), for Belle, it was "adventure in the great wide somewhere" (although she was not specific about what that was)(Sumera 2008:44), for Jasmine, it was to escape palace life and live freely according to her

own rules (Whelan 2012:26). These desires were what clearly set them apart from first wave princesses. However, second wave princesses seemed to do very little to actually achieve those desires, and once they met their love interest, their desire for adventure was lost in their 'happily ever after' (Colombo & Muir 2020:3; Lacroix 2004:224; Sumera 2008:42). In this section I discuss how each princess's desires and motivations change when they meet a love interest.

The first time we saw Ariel was when she was exploring a shipwreck looking for human treasure, rather than in a 'home' setting such as the first wave princesses (Davis 2006:178). She collected everything she could find from forks to smoking pipes and took them to the surface of the ocean to consult Scuttle the seagull on what they were (England et al 2011:564). She was desperate to explore the human world and experience all the things she only saw in the treasures she found (Sells 1995:179; Davis 2006:178; Stover 2013:4):

> **Ariel**: Betcha on land, they understand. Bet they don't, reprimand their daughters.
> Bright young women, sick of swimmin', ready to stand.
> And ready to know what the people know, ask 'em my questions and get some answers.
> What's a fire? And why does it, what's the word? Burn?
> When's it my turn?
> Wouldn't I love, love to explore that shore up above? [Reaches hand up towards the surface] Out of the sea, wish I could be, part of that world.

However, Ariel never pursued her desire of exploring the human world, perhaps because she didn't believe it was possible. But, when she saw Prince Eric and rescued him, it made her determined to be part of 'his' world:

> **Ariel**: What would I give to live where you are? What would I pay to stay here beside you?
> What would I do to see you, smiling at me?
> Where would we walk, where would we run?
> If we could stay all day in the sun?
> Just you and me, and I could be, part of your world.

Ariel's narrative (and her decisions thereafter) were now being fuelled by a desire for a romantic relationship (Sells 1995:180; Whelan 2012:26,28). When her father found out that she had fallen in love with a human and destroyed her cavern of human treasures, Ariel was found by Ursula's eels, Flotsam and Jetsam, who explained they could help Ariel become human, and used Eric as the final persuasion for her to do it. When Ariel met Ursula and found out that she could be given a spell to become human and win the love of Eric, she was intrigued. However, all magic comes at a price, and Ursula demanded Ariel's voice as payment for legs and access to the human world (Sells 1995:179). It was clear that throughout Ursula's rendition of 'Poor Unfortunate Souls' Ariel was torn between becoming a human forever and her life as a mermaid, she realised, "If I become human, I'll never be with my father or sisters again". Ursula then used Ariel's desire for a romantic relationship to persuade her further: "But, you'll have your man! Life's full of tough choices innit?". It was clear that Ursula believed that Ariel's desire for a romantic relationship was stronger than her desire to access the human world to explore it, and this was emphasised throughout 'Poor Unfortunate Souls', when Ursula centred the entire song around Eric, and what men liked and disliked. Ursula performed images of femininity reminiscent of the first wave princesses:

> **Ursula**: All I want from you, is your voice.
> **Ariel**: My voice? But without my voice how can I-
> **Ursula**: You'll have your looks! Your pretty face! And don't underestimate the importance of body language - ha! The men up there don't like a lot of blabber, they think a girl who gossips is a bore. Yet on land it's much preferred for ladies not to say a word and after all dear what is idle prattle for? Come on, they're not all that impressed with conversation! True gentlemen avoid it when they can. But they dote and swoon and fawn on a lady who's withdrawn, it's she who holds her tongue who gets a man.

Ursula was portraying the image of femininity as passive and subservient and was demonstrating to Ariel that performing womanhood in this way would help her attract Eric, even if she had no voice at all (Sells 1995:182-3). This was problematic, as it suggested that a woman's sole purpose was to attract men and encouraged women to give up their voice in order to do so (Maity 2014:30). Of course, in reality, women and girls cannot 'give up' their physical voice in the way that Ariel did. However, women and girls can give up their voice in other ways such as not standing up for themselves or others or not contributing in school or workplace settings. When audiences saw Ursula teaching Ariel how women should conduct themselves,

they were seeing women lose their voice in the public sphere. Ultimately, Ariel chose to give up her voice in order to become human to meet Prince Eric, and for the rest of the film she was unable to communicate her true identity to him, she was unable to ask any of the questions she wanted answering about the human world, and she was unable to stop him from marrying Vanessa (Ursula in disguise) instead of her. Essentially, by giving up her voice, Ariel gave up access to the human world that she desired so much.

Belle dreamt of adventure beyond her simple village life. An avid reader, she was portrayed as different from the rest of the villagers due to her love of books. Belle rejected romantic advances made towards her and explained that she wanted more than the provincial life she lived. She wanted adventure and someone to understand her - although she did not specify whether she desired a romantic relationship:

> **Belle**: I want adventure in the great wide somewhere, I want it more than I can tell. And for once it might be grand, to have someone understand. I want so much more than they've got planned.

It was here that Belle may have been referring to the villagers, who believed she was 'odd' for reading books and rejecting Gaston. Alternatively, she could have been referring to her previous altercation with Gaston. A hunter in the village, Gaston declared Belle "the most beautiful girl in town,'' claiming "that makes her the best, and don't I deserve the best?". Gaston went to great lengths to court Belle, who rejected every advance he made. He even planned and arranged their wedding outside of her house before even proposing marriage to her:

> **Gaston**: This is the day your dreams come true.
> **Belle**: What do you know about my dreams, Gaston?
> **Gaston**: Plenty! Here. Picture this. [*Puts his muddy shoes on the book Belle was reading*] A rustic hunting lodge, my latest kill roasting on the fire and my little wife massaging my feet while the little ones play on the floor with the dogs. We'll have six or seven.
> **Belle**: Dogs?
> **Gaston**: No, Belle! Strapping boys like me.

Belle rejected Gaston again - this time completely humiliating him. But once again we could see that it was because on face value, they were simply incompatible. He was a hunter who believed women shouldn't read - which he clearly indicated by putting up his muddy boots onto her book

- and she was an avid reader, eager to learn about the world. It was also clear that Gaston made no effort to actually understand Belle or what she wanted from life, this was made particularly clear when Belle questioned what Gaston knew of her dreams, and he described her being a housewife.

Belle's dreams of adventure were interrupted for a real one when her horse, Phillippe, returned without her father and she realised he could be in danger. Going to search for her father brought her to the Beast's castle, where she discovered her father had been taken prisoner for trespassing. She bravely decided to exchange her freedom for her father's so he could return home, and she was trapped in the Beast's castle. This was one of the two pivotal narrative changes within Belle's story line. Firstly, Belle was relinquishing her freedom, and any chance of having the adventures she had wished for, in order to save her father. This was out of filial duty and care for her father. The second pivotal narrative change to Belle's story line was when she made the decision to leave the Beast's castle after he verbally abused her in the West Wing. Belle galloped off on Phillippe into the forest but was cornered by wolves. She tried to defend herself but there were many of them and only one of her, with Philippe's rein trapped on a tree branch. The wolves closed in, but at the very last moment we discovered that the Beast had followed her from the castle, and he defended Belle against the wolves, all Belle could do in the situation is "helplessly stand aside" (Sumera 2008:42). When the Beast severely injured himself in the process of rescuing Belle, she still had a chance to escape. It was at this point that Belle, seeing the Beast fall to the ground, went to get back on her horse in order to go home. But she paused and looked back at the now injured and helpless Beast. Belle then made the decision to return the injured Beast to the castle and care for him, "her attempt to break free from her imprisonment is suddenly forgotten" (Sumera 2008:42). It was here that Belle truly gave up her freedom, when she returned the individual who said she could starve, and verbally abused her, to his home and continued to care for his injuries.

For the rest of the film, Belle and the Beast began to form a friendship, with the Beast being portrayed as misunderstood rather than abusive. Unlike Gaston, the Beast learnt about Belle's passions and gave her a library - but still kept her a prisoner. It was not until Belle saw that her father was sick that the Beast told her to go home, where she would simply go from caring for one man to another. Belle did receive her 'happy ending', she was reunited with the Beast, she broke the Beast's curse by falling in love with him, transforming him back into a human. Belle received a happily ever after in the form of a relationship with the Beast, but her desire for adventure seemed to be lost.

Jasmine rejected her life as a princess, feeling trapped because she had to marry before her next birthday. She longed for a life of her own choosing outside the palace walls. As discussed previously in this chapter, she was the only princess that actively did something to

remedy her situation. She left the palace in the dark and entered the market of Agrabah, exploring life outside the palace. However, after she met Aladdin and he was arrested by the palace guards she was forced to reveal her identity to save him, as she realised the guards would not listen to her in her disguise as a peasant girl. Jasmine then returned to the palace, to her life as a princess.

Still being forced to marry, Jasmine met Aladdin who was disguised as Prince Ali, but rejected his arrogant nature. It wasn't until she realised he was the boy from the marketplace that Jasmine decided to get to know him more. Aladdin - disguised as Prince Ali - took Jasmine all over the world on a magic carpet, explaining that he could 'show her the world'. This was Jasmine's second time out of the palace, and she was clearly excited to be seeing so many new places. However, Jasmine was steered back to the desire of a romantic relationship: the evening ended in a kiss between Jasmine and Aladdin, who had convinced her that he disguised himself as Aladdin in the marketplace and was a true prince. Even at the end of the film, after Jafar had been defeated, the focus remained on Jasmine's marriage. The Sultan decided that he would change the law:

> **Sultan**: Well am I sultan or am I Sultan? From this day forth, the princess shall marry whoever she deems worthy.
> **Jasmine**: Him. I choose… I choose you, Aladdin.

Christiane Staninger (2003) explains that "Jasmine's strong will and determination convinces her dad to change century-old laws" (67), suggesting that Jasmine's assertive nature contributed to changing her life. However, rather than changing the law to remove the forced marriage, the Sultan simply said that a princess could choose her own husband. Jasmine chose Aladdin, and her dreams of adventure were lost within her 'happy ending'. It would seem that although Jasmine was initially upset about the thought of her forced marriage (as she wanted to marry for love), the only persuasion she needed was to simply find the right Prince. And although Jasmine loved Aladdin, I question *how* after knowing him for such a short period, and for him lying to her for the majority of it. The storyline suggested that as soon as the 'right man' came along, everything would fall into place for the film's heroine, and her dreams of adventure outside the palace walls were lost.

First wave princesses were rewarded for their passive and docile behaviour with a romantic relationship, having desired one for the majority of their storyline. As discussed in Chapter Two, this was problematic for two reasons. Firstly, desiring a romantic relationship was the main focal point of first wave princesses, leaving little room for more complex character development. Secondly, first wave princesses are what I have called 'passive dreamers': they

know their desires, but they made no attempt to achieve it. Those dreams were reduced to desiring a romantic relationship, suggesting that was their final life goal. First wave princesses were often rewarded for their passivity with a romantic relationship in the film, with their prince literally coming to them, and often rescuing them in the process.

The second wave princesses however began their storyline as desiring more from life than those in the first wave, having dreams and aspirations that did not involve a romantic relationship, let alone men. However, as I have demonstrated in this section, there was always a change in the plot which caused the princess to change their desires. Cassandra Stover (2013) comments on the post-feminist narrative transition specifically within the context of Ariel. She explained:

> While the princess's desires and ambitions are largely unprecedented within the Disney canon, the film reorders her goals much in the way post-feminism reordered the American woman's goals. The film initially posits Ariel's fascination with land as cause for leaving the ocean, but in the style of backlash politics, it eventually channels her struggle for independence and autonomy into the more traditional, narrow goal of choosing a husband (Stover 2013:4-5).

Not only is this analysis relevant to Ariel, but the rest of the second wave princesses. Ariel desired to explore the human world but didn't even think to try and access it herself until she saw and fell in love with Prince Eric. When she did, it was solely to win his heart.[25] Belle desired adventure, but traded her freedom for that of her father's out of filial duty, and when she did have a chance to escape, she chose to return to the castle where she was imprisoned, and care for the person who had imprisoned her. By the end of *Beauty and the Beast*, Belle and the newly humanised Beast were in a relationship and there was no mention or suggestion of her desire for adventure. Finally, Jasmine longed for her freedom from a forced marriage outside the palace walls, however once she met the 'right' prince, she happily agreed to marry. Again, like Belle, Jasmine's wish for adventure was lost in her happy ending. Second wave princesses were what I call 'lost dreamers', as although Ariel, Belle and Jasmine (and the anomaly, Eilonwy) knew what they wanted - which allowed for further complex character development through

[25]Eric did take Ariel out in a carriage so that she could see the Kingdom, something she was very enthusiastic about. She was able to explore new environments and try new things, just like she had initially desired. However, this was the only part in the film where the audience could see Ariel doing what she originally desired.

images of rebelliousness, assertiveness and bravery - their initial desires and dreams are lost in their 'happy ending'.

Conclusion

I have explored how femininity has been depicted in second wave films, discovering the anomaly of Eilonwy; and identifying four main characteristics: assertiveness, rebelliousness, bravery and desiring a romantic relationship. Through textual analysis, and with support from Disney scholars, I have distinguished second wave princesses as 'lost dreamers'. Whilst Ariel, Belle and Jasmine demonstrated their assertiveness, rebelliousness and bravery through their desire for something more in their life; as soon as they met their love interest their initial desires became lost in their 'happy ending'. Their films ended with them having their romantic relationship, rather than achieving their original dreams, with their desires nowhere in sight. The shift in narrative suggested that femininity within the second wave was being policed when it began to differ from the first wave.[26] It also suggested that despite the changes to women's rights and roles within American society, women were still not 'quite there' in terms of equality. The progression that women's rights had made in the '80s and '90s, such as more legislation being passed that protected women from sexual harassment and discrimination in the work place; their right to an abortion and their increased presence in wider workplaces was perhaps reflected through the assertive, rebellious and brave natures of the second wave princesses. Whilst Eilonwy, Ariel, Belle and Jasmine's desires for more from life were lost within the romantic 'happy ending' of their film, the '80s and '90s American woman was also experiencing setbacks through states controlling public funding for abortions; which hospitals were able to perform them; and whether consent was required from a third party in the case of minors. Whilst these situations differed, the princesses were almost reflecting the curtailing of women's rights and journey to equality through their 'lost dreams'. The princess films seemed to be reminding the audience that whilst it was 'fine' to be assertive, rebellious and brave, as well as desire more from life, the end goal was still a romantic relationship.

[26] This shift in narrative will be explored further in Chapter Seven, when discussing the wider implications of princess femininity.

Chapter Four: Third Wave Princesses

Historical Background

Third wave films were released in close succession to the second wave, with *Pocahontas* in 1995, *Mulan* in 1998 and *Atlantis: The Lost Empire* in 2001. Because of this, there was very little change in women's rights and roles within U.S. society between the production of second and third wave films. The most notable was women's representation within the public sphere, and further legislation enabling women's rights. In 1993, Janet Reno became the first female attorney general of the United States, and in 1997, Madeleine Albright became the first female Secretary of State. In terms of legislation, the Violence Against Women Act (1994) was signed by President Bill Clinton. The act funded services and civil rights assistance for victims of rape and domestic violence (Clinton White House N.D.). A few years later, the Supreme Court denied victims of rape and domestic violence to sue their perpetrators in federal court (United States v Morrison 2000). In 1996, Fauziya Kassindja sought asylum in the U.S. to escape from her home country's practice of female genital mutilation (FGM), it was accepted and immigration law reflected a wider change for supporting FGM victims (Matter of Kasinga 1996).

Despite the success of Disney in the early 90s, there were a few issues arising around the time of *Pocahontas*' release. In 1994, the President of Disney, Frank Wells, was killed in a helicopter crash (Associated Press 1994). CEO Michael Eisner appointed Michael Ovitz (who was reportedly a friend of Eisner's) as his replacement (Mills 1995). Nevertheless, *Pocahontas* continued the success of previous princess films, despite the issues within the studio. The film had a worldwide gross of $346,079,773 (similar to second wave *Beauty and the Beast*) and was ranked fifth in the worldwide gross ratings (Box Office Mojo [h]). *Mulan* amassed $304,320,254 worldwide (Box Office Mojo [i]). *Atlantis: The Lost Empire* did not continue the success, generating $186,053,725 (Box Office Mojo [j]). This was perhaps why Kida was not included in the Disney Princess Franchise, as in comparison with the other recent princess films, it was not a success.

Pocahontas, Mulan and Kida were created soon after their second wave counterparts and Stover (2013) described the first two along with Ariel, Belle and Jasmine as "proactive heroines" that reflected changing gender roles of American society at this time (3). As Kida, like Eilonwy, is not in the official Disney Princess Franchise, Stover excludes her from analysis. I include her within my own analysis due to her royal status as a princess, whether she is included in the franchise or not. I argue third wave princesses receive further narrative and plot development outside of romantic relationships, so I consider them as a separate wave due

to their leadership, communication and negotiation skills, despite the fact they were made in a similar time period.

Third Wave Characteristics

As outlined in the first and second wave chapters, I identified a number of characteristics in the third wave films. I recorded each princesses' speech, movement, narrative and plot lines. Pocahontas was depicted as connected to nature, athletic, assertive, communicator, rebellious, curious, eager to learn, independent, desiring a romantic relationship, negotiator, brave, courageous, and a leader. Other characters also recognised her as connected to nature, rebellious, and as a negotiator and leader. She was also viewed as courageous and free spirited, but also someone in need of protection, someone to marry and someone to other. Mulan was depicted as scatter-brained, resourceful, intelligent, assertive, bringing honour, having filial duty, rebellious, brave (when she is herself as a woman), determined, athletic, communicator, a warrior, astute, courageous, a leader (when she is dressed as Ping and when is herself) and hints of a romantic relationship at the end of the film. Other characters viewed Mulan as scatter-brained, a means of upholding honour, a means of bringing honour, someone to marry, someone to bear children, dishonouring the family, othered (when she is herself as a woman), brave (when she is dressed as Ping), othered (when she is discovered as a woman), and she is honoured as a woman when she saves China. Kida was also depicted as curious, a communicator, assertive, a leader, blunt, athletic, protector of Atlantis and like Mulan, a romantic relationship is implied at the end of the film. Other characters viewed Kida as a leader, beautiful and protector of Atlantis.

I identified 44 characteristics across the three films. The third wave developed the second wave's assertive nature, producing signs of leadership, communication and negotiation. Romantic relationships were also not the only (and in some cases barely at all) focal point of the story, which is why Pocahontas, Mulan and Kida formed the third wave as a progression of the second. Pocahontas, Mulan and Kida shared five characteristics: assertiveness, leadership, communication, negotiation and a lack (with the exception - to an extent - of Pocahontas) of romantic relationships driving the plot. The third wave began to transgress from their predecessors entirely and produced plotlines that focused on conflict and the princesses' aims and success in resolving conflict.

Assertiveness

Like the second wave princesses, Pocahontas, Mulan and Kida each demonstrated assertiveness. I am using the same definition of assertiveness as in previous chapters: a confident individual who is able to clearly and effectively stand up for themselves and others.

Pocahontas demonstrated her assertive nature early in the film, when she was informed by her father, Powhatan, that a warrior had asked for her hand in marriage. This was something that first and second wave princesses had to deal with in their narratives. Both Aurora and Jasmine were informed they were to marry, with Aurora passively accepting her fate and Jasmine rejecting all her suitors until the 'right man' came along. Pocahontas, on the other hand, assertively communicated her disagreement:

> **Pocahontas**: Father, I think my dream is pointing me down a different path.
> **Powhatan**: This is the right path for you.
> **Pocahontas**: Why can't I choose- [*She is interrupted by Meeko falling into her arms*]

Rather than simply accepting the decision Powhatan had made for her (like Aurora) or rejecting it until the right man came along (like Jasmine), Pocahontas calmly disagreed and assertively said she did not want to do what he was asking (Towbin et al. 2004:38). Her father told her that she must take her place among her people as the daughter of the chief, comparing Pocahontas to the wild stream that must join the big river. It was difficult to tell whether Powhatan was suggesting that Pocahontas needed to take her place as a leader, or as a wife. Based on his interactions with her throughout the film it was clear that Powhatan respected his daughter, especially at the end (which I discuss later on in the chapter). He was perhaps pushing the idea of marriage to secure the family lineage. But Pocahontas did not see it the same way. When she went canoeing after their conversation, she commented, "He wants me to be steady. Like the river. [*Two otters jump from the water*] But it's not steady at all!". For the rest of the film, Pocahontas showed no interest in Kocoum, and instead developed a relationship with John Smith, an Englishman who came to Virginia to colonise the land. An imperialist, John told Pocahontas about his life in England, and how the English would bring their way of life to the people of Virginia, whether they liked it or not:

> **John Smith**: Wait a minute. Don't take it like that - [*Flit attacks him*] Hey - hey! Wait! Wait! There's so much we can teach you. [*He*

stops the boat that Pocahontas has begun paddling] We've improved the lives of savages all over the world.

Pocahontas: [*She is very cross*] Savages?

John Smith: Not that you're a savage.

Pocahontas: Just my people.

John Smith: No. Listen, that's not what I meant. Let me explain.

Pocahontas: [*Splashes him with her oar*] Let go!

John Smith: [*Grabs the boat and encroaches her space*] No. I'm not letting you leave.

This particular scene demonstrated Pocahontas using her assertiveness to hold John Smith accountable for his words. When she first met John Smith, she was curious about him, where he came from and his way of life. However, when he made racist and culturally imperialist remarks about her people, she refused to tolerate him. Pocahontas defended her own people's method for building accommodation when John Smith suggested that the English would be able to teach them to 'build better houses', she immediately retorted that their houses were fine the way they were. John then implied that she and her people didn't know any better, demonstrating his imperialism. By suggesting her 'ignorance', there were hints that firstly, she and her people were uncivilised and would therefore not understand the benefit of or need for English housing, and secondly, that as a woman she would not understand this because she was confined to the private sphere. When Pocahontas decided to remove herself from the situation, John patronised her, claiming there was so much the English could teach her and her 'savage' people. Pocahontas immediately reprimanded John for suggesting that she and her people were savages because they did things differently (Parekh 2003:168). When John Smith tried to backtrack the conversation, saying he wasn't referring specifically to her and physically grabbing her canoe so she couldn't leave, Pocahontas commanded him to let go of her canoe and splashed him with water. When he tried to intimidate her by encroaching on her space and telling her that he wouldn't let her leave, she removed herself from the situation again. Unlike the first wave, she refused to be dominated by Smith, and assertively confronted him for his poor behaviour. Unlike second wave princesses, Pocahontas was not easily persuaded by one simple apology for poor behaviour. Not only did she stand up for herself, but also for her people (Dundes 2001:353). Although the second wave also demonstrated an assertive nature by standing up for themselves when they were being mistreated by men, Pocahontas combined her assertive nature with communication in order to teach John Smith why he was in the wrong. Like Pocahontas and the second wave princesses, Mulan also demonstrated her assertiveness through her conversations with other men.

Another young girl who was expected to bring honour to her family by marrying well, Mulan was portrayed as the opposite to China's 'ideal woman'. She often demonstrated this through her assertive behaviour. Imposed images of femininity within *Mulan* were similar to that of the first wave:

> **Women**: Men want girls with good taste.
> Calm, obedient, who work fast paced.
> With good breeding and a tiny waist.

Mulan, however, was the opposite of this. Whilst her society asked her to be demure and obedient, Mulan spoke and acted when she was not supposed to. This was prevalent when it was announced that the Huns had invaded China, and one male from every family must join the army to protect their country. Mulan was an only child, so her father Fa Zhou had to enrol, however despite being a great warrior he was ill. Mulan wanted to protect her father's life and tried to intervene:

> **Mulan**: Father, you can't go.
> **Fa Zhou**: Mulan!
> **Mulan**: Please, sir, my father has already fought bravely.
> **Chi-Fu**: Silence! You would do well to teach your daughter to hold her tongue in a man's presence.
> **Fa Zhou**: Mulan, you dishonour me.
> [*Mulan's grandmother takes her away from the street*]

A proud man refusing to dishonour his family, Fa Zhou accepted the conscription note, however Mulan stood up for her father when he would not do it for himself. Mulan and her family were shamed for her assertive behaviour, reinforcing the idea that Mulan did not fit the ideal of Chinese femininity within the film. But it is this kind of behaviour that demonstrates how much the princess phenomenon has changed. It was likely that Mulan knew that speaking 'out of turn' to a man in such a public place was not accepted in her society, but she did it anyway in order to stand up for her father. As we saw in Chapter Two, although first wave princesses such as Snow White and Cinderella recognised they were being exploited, they did not have the capacity to do anything about it. Although it could be argued that this may be due to the period their stories were set, Mulan still rebelled against the mistreatment of others and prescribed gender roles within Ancient China. This seems to make the 'time period' as a reason for passivity redundant. Her assertiveness was amplified further when Mulan's father told her she had dishonoured him.

This image continued later on, when Mulan expressed her disagreement with her father's decision:

> [*Fa Zhou, Fa Li, Grandmother Fa and Mulan are sat silently eating their dinner. Mulan slams her cup down in frustration.]*
> **Mulan**: You shouldn't have to go!
> **Fa Li**: Mulan!
> **Mulan**: There are plenty of young men to fight for China.
> **Fa Zhou**: It is an honour to protect my country and my family.
> **Mulan**: So, you'll die for honour?
> **Fa Zhou**: I will die doing what's right.
> **Mulan**: But if you-
> **Fa Zhou**: [*Shouting*] I know my place! It is time you learned yours.
> [*Mulan storms out the room, crying*]

This time, Mulan challenged her father about his own decision making. As demonstrated in the previous scene, Fa Zhou was a proud man who would rather go to war knowing he was ill and die with honour than stay at home and recover with his family. Although his wife, Fa Li, and (presumably, though not confirmed) his mother, Grandmother Fa were both upset about his decision they did not question it. This was most likely due to tradition. However, Mulan did not agree and was not afraid to speak her mind, despite her ignoring tradition and honour to do so. This emphasised Mulan's assertive nature further, as in this case she was now holding her own father accountable to his actions, rather than just passively accepting his decision as the head of the family.

When she realised her father would not listen, Mulan took his choice away from him (Do Rozario 2004:52; Davis 2006:197; Davis 2014a:50). After seeing how her father's decision was impacting both her parents, she took action. Mulan prayed to her ancestors, took her father's conscription note and left her flower clip in its place. She cut her hair with her father's sword, took his armour and rode off into the night to take his place in the army. Although many have argued this was an act of filial duty (Youngs 1999:312; Ma 2003:153; Dong 2010:164; Maity 2014:30), Mulan protected her father by removing him from the situation altogether. Not only did this demonstrate her assertive nature, it highlighted her bravery for deciding to replace her father despite having no military or combat training. For the remainder of the film, other than the very end, Mulan disguised herself as Ping. It was through Ping that Mulan was able to continue acting assertively (for example, when she led an attack on the Hun by causing an

avalanche, saved Li Shang, despite the fact that she was breaking orders) and not be questioned, which demonstrated the gendered roles within her culture.

Kida, the princess of the lost city of Atlantis progressed the image of assertiveness within the third wave even further. Kida decided to welcome Milo Thatch and his group of explorers led by Captain Rourke in the hopes that they would be able to help her save Atlantis from dying out. She displayed her assertive nature from her introduction. Upon their first meeting, one of the explorers seemingly whispered something uninvited, unwanted and inappropriate in her ear, so she punched him. Other than Mulan acting as a warrior in the Chinese army, this was the first time a Disney audience saw a princess committing an act of violence. Although we did not hear what was said, Kida deemed it as disrespectful and unwanted enough to punch a man she had just met, a stark contrast to the princesses who came before her. Kida stood up for herself and made it clear that his words were unacceptable in Atlantis. This was a far cry from the way that first and second wave princesses reacted to their encounters with men. Snow White and Aurora seemed to forget that the 'true loves kiss' that saved them was non-consensual and therefore quite problematic. Belle and Jasmine were often dealing with men who made uninvited comments. For Belle, Gaston, and when she first met him, the Beast; and for Jasmine, the majority of the princes who came to court her, and at the beginning of his disguise, Aladdin. Neither of them reacted in this way. Perhaps what Kida heard was worse, we will never know. However, it never happened again for the rest of the film. Kida's assertive nature was often contrasted with Milo Thatch's nervous one:

> [*Milo is waiting for Kida*]
> **Milo**: [*Talking to himself*] Okay Milo, don't take no for an answer. Look, I have some questions for you, and I'm not leaving this city until they're answered. Yeah. Th-that's it. That's good, that's good.
> [*Milo goes to look for Kida but she has gone. She suddenly appears from nowhere and grabs Milo*]
> **Kida**: I have some questions for you, and you are not leaving this city until they are answered.
> **Milo**: Yeah, well I- okay.

Despite the fact that Milo was the one who wanted to initiate a conversation and get answers about Atlantis, it was Kida who drove the discussion. Milo spent some time giving himself a pep talk to speak to Kida, which could suggest that she made him nervous. His nervousness did not seem to be born from physical attraction to her, rather he saw her as an assertive woman and believed he needed to be equally assertive in order to get the answers he wanted. And, even

when Milo did seem to have the upper hand in a conversation, Kida would not allow him to patronise her:

> [*Kida shows Milo an Atlantean hovercraft*]
> **Kida**: Yes, but no matter what I try, it will not respond. Perhaps if-
> **Milo**: [*Getting cocky*] Way ahead of you. Okay let's see what we got here. [*He looks at the instructions*] Okay. 'Place crystal into slot'.
> **Kida**: Yes, yes, I have done that.
> **Milo**: 'Gently place your hand on the inscription pad'.
> **Kida**: Yes.
> **Milo**: Okay, did you turn the crystal one quarter-turn back?
> **Kida**: Yes, yes.
> **Milo**: Whilst your hand was on the inscription pad?
> **Kida**: Ye- no.
> **Milo**: [*Cocky again*] Ah, well, see, that's your problem right there. That's an easy thing to miss, you know. You deserve credit for even- [*Kida crosses her arms and looks unimpressed at him*] even gettin' this far. [*She is still unimpressed*]

Kida only used her facial expressions and body language to indicate that she did not appreciate the way that Milo was talking to her. And it was her facial expressions and body language alone that could prompt Milo to adjust his behaviour. This was a new character contrast within princess films, as the men that first and second wave princesses (and even Kida's fellow third wave princesses!) communicated with were incredibly confident. Although not playing a large role in the films, Prince Charming in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves*, Prince Charming in *Cinderella* and Prince Phillip in *Sleeping Beauty* were portrayed as confident and charismatic. This image of masculinity was seen again within second wave films, Prince Eric, the Beast and Aladdin were all incredibly confident men, which was especially seen in their interactions with women. Within *Beauty and the Beast*, Belle even had to contend with Gaston whose confidence blended to arrogance as the film went on. The fact that Kida's assertiveness made men nervous and perhaps intimidated by her demonstrated the progression of the third wave princesses, as well as a change in the way that men were being portrayed within Disney films.

Like the second wave, Pocahontas, Mulan and Kida were assertive. They stood up for themselves and the people they cared for, held people accountable for their actions and demanded respect from the people who surrounded them. They were even able to remain assertive, considering their stories take place in early time periods (in the case of Pocahontas

and Mulan), rendering the passivity due to the time period argument redundant. For Kida, her assertive nature contrasted with Milo's nervous one showed further progression for images of assertiveness within the third wave. However, this was just the first layer, as at this point, they shared an image of femininity with the second. What set third wave princesses apart from the preceding wave was their use of communication and negotiation.

Communicator (& Negotiator)

The third wave princesses' ability to communicate and negotiate with others also built their leadership skills, which I discuss in the next section. There was no psychological definition of being a communicator, therefore I define communication as an individual's ability to clearly and confidently discuss issues affecting themselves and others around them. I interpret a negotiator to be an individual who is able to reach a mutually beneficial agreement between two parties, often through communication. Through communication and negotiation, third wave princesses were able to confidently display leadership and resolve issues presented to them.

A young Native American woman, Pocahontas was presented as being free spirited and connected to nature. She was often encouraged to listen to her heart by her confidant, Grandmother Willow. These characteristics contributed to Pocahontas being set apart from the other characters of the film as a communicator and negotiator. Whilst the Powhatan's and the English were set on attacking each other to resolve their conflict, Pocahontas constantly tried to use communication and negotiation within her diplomacy (Edwards 1999:153,154). Pocahontas' skills in communication and negotiation were clearly seen when she had discussions with John Smith:

> **John Smith**: Look, don't do this. Savage is just a term for… people who are uncivilised. [*John follows Pocahontas through the tree she is climbing to get away from him*]
> **Pocahontas**: Like me?
> **John Smith**: [*He is struggling to navigate through the tree, whereas for Pocahontas it is second nature*] When I say uncivilised, what I mean is… is [*he grabs a weak branch and falls from the tree. Pocahontas lands gracefully*]
> **Pocahontas**: What you mean is… not like you.
> 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.

Pocahontas used the song 'Colours of the Wind' to highlight the wrongs of imperialism, colonialism and racism and held John Smith accountable for his words and actions (Edwards 1999:158-9). She educated John by taking him around her land and showed him the things that imperialism, colonialism and racism were destroying (Towbin et al. 2004:30, 38). She questioned his imperialist worldview, telling him, "You think you own whatever land you land on, the Earth is just a dead thing you can claim". She held him accountable for his racist and narrow-minded thinking, reminding him, "You think the only people who are people, are the people who look and think like you, but if you walk the footsteps of a stranger, you'll learn things you never knew, you never knew." It was clear that after the song had ended, Smith had absorbed Pocahontas' message (Dundes 2001:356). Critics of the film have problematized *Pocahontas* regarding it's romanticisation of British imperialism and brushing over the horrors of colonial rule (Buescher & Ono 1996; Edwards 1999:148,161; Dundes 2001:354; Parekh 2003:170,172). That Smith has internalised Pocahontas' message is (in reality) anachronistic.

However, my purpose here was to analyse the images of femininity created by Pocahontas. It became clear that Pocahontas' message had become instilled in John when he returned back to the English settlement and defended the Powhatan's and their land:

> **John Smith**: We don't have to fight them.
> **Thomas**: What's gotten into you?
> **John Smith**: I met one of them.
> **Ben**: You what?
> **Thomas**: A savage?
> **John Smith**: They're not savages. They can help us. They know the land. They know how to navigate the rivers. [*Meeko produces some corn from John's bag*] And look. It's food.

The fact that John Smith corrected his fellow Englishmen that the Powhatan tribe were not savages indicated that Pocahontas communicated clearly. John Smith had transformed from a man who once enjoyed looking for and killing 'savages' to one that advocated their rights, thanks to Pocahontas. He even exclaimed "But this is their land!" when Governor Ratcliffe said the Powhatan's were lying to John. This clearly indicated how Pocahontas was able to use

communication to influence others. The conflict between the Powhatan tribe and the English was one of diplomacy, which Pocahontas was able to navigate through negotiation. Pocahontas demonstrated negotiation when she attempted to speak with her father about the English:

> **Pocahontas**: Father, I need to speak with you.
> **Powhatan**: Not now, my daughter. The council is gathering.
> **Pocahontas**: We don't have to fight them. There must be a better way.
> **Powhatan**: Sometimes our paths are chosen for us.
> **Pocahontas**: But maybe we should try talking to them.
> **Powhatan**: They do not want to talk.
> **Pocahontas**: But if one of them did want to talk, you would listen to him wouldn't you?
> **Powhatan**: Pocahontas…
> **Pocahontas**: Wouldn't you?
> **Powhatan**: Of course I would, but it is not that simple. Nothing is simple anymore.

Pocahontas was not included in the council, even though she was the daughter of the Chief. This did not deter her, as she tried to persuade her father to talk to the English. Powhatan made it clear that the English did not want to talk, and therefore neither should they. Having persuaded her father to speak to an Englishman if they were willing to, Pocahontas set off to negotiate with John Smith:

> **John Smith**: Pocahontas.
> **Pocahontas**: John!
> **John Smith**: Listen to me. My men are planning to attack your people. You've got to warn them.
> **Pocahontas**: Maybe it's not too late to stop this. You have to come with me and talk to my father.
> **John Smith**: Pocahontas, talking isn't going to do any good. I already tried talking to my men, but everything about this land has them spooked.

It seemed that the male characters in *Pocahontas* refused to communicate and preferred to fight until one dominated the other. Pocahontas, however, seemed to believe that this would be futile, and tried to use her communication skills to negotiate a peaceful outcome. Even with John Smith on her side however, it did not work. Nevertheless, the fact that Pocahontas was persistent with her methods demonstrated her independent and assertive nature.

Pocahontas' negotiation continued to the end of the film, where she made a drastic decision to try and end the conflict. John Smith had been captured and sentenced to death as punishment for the death of Kocoum, the English had arrived to wage war on the Powhatan tribe for capturing and attempting to execute John. Tensions were high with both sides intent on destroying each other, however Pocahontas managed to arrive just in time to save John Smith:

> [*Powhatan raises his club to execute John Smith, but Pocahontas runs towards him and throws her body over John's*]
> **Pocahontas**: No! [*Powhatan forces himself to stop to save his daughter*] If you kill him you'll have to kill me too.
> **Powhatan**: Daughter, stand back.
> **Pocahontas**: I won't! I love him, father. [*All the men are shocked*] Look around you. This is where the path of hatred has brought us. This is the path I choose father. What will yours be?
> [*Powhatan looks at both armies, the wind surrounds him, presumably his late wife's spirit*]
> **Powhatan**: [*He holds his club up*] My daughter speaks with a wisdom beyond her years. We have all come here with anger in our hearts… but she comes with courage and understanding. From this day forward, if there is to be more killing, it will not start with me. [*He turns to a Powhatan warrior*] Release him.
> [*Pocahontas and John Smith embrace, and the warriors all put down their weapons*]

By risking her life to save him, Pocahontas was able to show her father the destruction caused by the two sides. Not only did this solve the issue, but Pocahontas was finally recognised by others for her communication and negotiation. Although her motives were partially influenced by her feelings for John, Pocahontas used the opportunity to give an impassioned speech for peace. Pocahontas' skills in communication and negotiation suggested a progression from the first and second wave. First wave princesses were never in a position to communicate or negotiate with anyone, second wave princesses had reasons to negotiate, for example Jasmine

could have attempted to negotiate her father changing the law on her forced marriage but were never given the opportunity to within their storyline. Therefore, third wave princesses like Pocahontas were a progression towards the representation of stronger heroines in film. This image of communication continued with Mulan.

An issue with analysing the images of femininity within *Mulan* was that Mulan spent the majority of the film disguised as a man. As we saw in *Pocahontas*, men did not seem to communicate with others, and this was also reflected in *Mulan*. As outlined in the previous section, Mulan assertively communicated the issues that affected herself and her family when her father was forced to enlist in the army as the only male in the family. However, once she was disguised as a man, her displays of communication were somewhat limited. Nevertheless, Mulan was still able to communicate with other men in the army when they needed support. For example, when Mulan heard her Captain, Li Shang being berated by Chi-Fu, she waited for him to leave the tent and told him that he was a good captain in order to boost his confidence. Li Shang seemed grateful, yet a little embarrassed, he turned his face back to her as he walked away, acknowledging what she had said. This suggested that Li Shang was not used to men speaking to him in that way, but was grateful that Mulan (disguised as Ping) was. Although her dragon, Mushu accused her of liking Li Shang, Mulan insisted she didn't (although her body language suggested she wasn't being truthful). Regardless of Mulan's romantic feelings towards Li Shang, she used communication to provide the support he needed.

Mulan used communication to support Li Shang again when she and the rest of the troop arrived at the village in the Tung Shou pass and realised that the rest of the Chinese Army had been defeated. When they were searching the village for survivors, they discovered that the General, Li Shang's father, was dead. Li Shang walked away from the rest of the troop with his father's helmet to pay his respects. Seeing his sorrow, Mulan went to comfort him, telling him she was sorry. Again, Li Shang did not say anything, but this time he placed his hand on Mulan's shoulder to express his gratitude for Ping's support. Although Mulan's displays of compassionate communication as Ping were small, it was clear they had an impact on Li Shang. His displays of embarrassment and discomfort indicated that he was not used to talking at a more personal level with other men (Towbin et al. 2004:29), however his response to Mulan's discussions highlighted the impact Mulan had on him in her time disguised as Ping. Within her role as a warrior, Mulan did not have an opportunity to negotiate, rather she focused on military combat which I discuss in the next section. Kida continued the image of communication in *Atlantis: The Lost Empire*.

Whilst Kida was the Princess of Atlantis, it was clear she wanted to take a more active role in order to improve the lives of Atlanteans. This was indicated when we saw Kida try to

communicate with her father and persuade him to let Milo Thatch and the other explorers help them restore Atlantis:

> **Kida**: Greetings your Highness. I have brought the visitors.
> **Kashekim Nedakh**: You know the law Kida. No outsiders may see the city and live.
> **Kida**: Father… these people may be able to help us.
> **Kashekim Nedakh**: We do not need their help.
> **Kida**: But father…
> **Kashekim Nedakh**: That is enough. We will discuss this later.

Like Pocahontas and Mulan, Kida found herself surrounded by men who did not want to communicate. Kida wanted to discuss options with outsiders in order to restore Atlantis to its former glory, however her father refused. Kida's ability to communicate and her attempt at negotiating with her father to allow the outsiders to stay for one night was successful, which provided Kida with the opportunity to question Milo about what he knew about Atlantis. Ultimately, Kida led Atlantis to flourish again thanks to her negotiating with her father and through the way she protected Atlantis under attack.

Communication and negotiation were defining features of the third wave princesses, differentiating them from their predecessors. First wave princesses were never given the opportunity to communicate or negotiate and while second wave princesses developed an assertive nature, they were prevented from progressing their own narrative further due to the introduction of a love interest. Perhaps if Ariel hadn't exchanged her voice for legs, literally preventing her from communicating, or Belle hadn't developed feelings for the Beast, and Jasmine had not fallen in love with Aladdin, the second wave could have used communication to fulfil their original desires: exploring the human world, adventure in the great wide somewhere, and freedom from the palace. It was not the physical act of falling in love that caused these women to be unable to communicate or negotiate for their intended desires but falling in love distracted them from their original goal. Third wave princesses, regardless of any romantic feelings they had were able to effectively communicate and negotiate with others in order to achieve their desired outcome that was outside desiring a romantic relationship.

Leader

Another characteristic that set third wave princesses apart from their predecessors was leadership, their ability to guide or direct others. Through leadership, third wave princesses

produced strong and confident images of femininity that had not been seen in the first or second wave, with the exception of Eilonwy (Stover 2013:4).

Not only did Pocahontas exemplify leadership as an aspect of her femininity, she was also recognised as a leader by others:

> **Powhatan**: When I see you wear that necklace, you look just like your mother.
> **Pocahontas**: I miss her.
> **Powhatan**: But she is still with us. Whenever the wind moves through the trees, I feel her presence. Our people look to her for wisdom and strength. Someday, they will look to you as well.
> **Pocahontas**: I would be honoured by that.

Pocahontas' own father, and the leader of the Powhatan tribe clearly saw Pocahontas as a leader based on this dialogue. Powhatan's emphasis on Pocahontas' wisdom and strength suggested he regarded them as qualities of leadership, implying that because their people would look to her, she would one day replace him as Chief. Davis (2006) even argued that Pocahontas was just "as much a leader of her people as her father, their chief, and in many ways her leadership is even more valuable for her tribe, since she has at her disposal the gift of female intuition" (184). Pocahontas had demonstrated her skills in diplomacy and continued to do so throughout the conflict (Davis 2006:184), which again contributed to the image of Pocahontas as a leader.
It was clear that Pocahontas took this future position seriously, and when she realised there may have been another way to resolve the conflict between the Powhatan's and the English, she attempted to persuade her father to communicate with the English colonists rather than fight them. Pocahontas used her assertive communication skills, which demonstrated a strong leadership style based on understanding, listening and negotiation. Although Powhatan did not truly listen to Pocahontas in this scene, as he was insistent that all of the English wanted to fight, he eventually understood when Pocahontas placed her body in front of John Smith's to force him to listen to her and save John Smith's life as discussed in the previous section (England et al. 2011:561). Edwards (1999) argues that "her show of love and sacrifice stops the battle and engenders a call for peace" (151). I would develop this further, as despite not being the official Powhatan leader, Pocahontas influenced her father's thinking and leadership style in order to resolve the conflict through communication (England et al. 2011:564) as well as personal sacrifice. Powhatan recognised how Pocahontas had used understanding and wisdom to rectify the situation, rather than the anger used by the men from both sides. It was as a direct result of

Pocahontas' actions that the war waged between the two sides came to a halt, and no lives were lost.

After this moment, Pocahontas seemed to take on an active leadership role within her community, even choosing to stay with her people, rather than travel to England with John Smith. When he asked her to come with him, she turned to her father who reassured her that she must choose her own path. She looked at both the Powhatan's and the English, and simply stated, "I'm needed here". Although some have argued that Pocahontas was giving up a future of adventure due to her newfound caring responsibilities (Dundes 2001:354,357; England et al. 2011:565), I argue that Pocahontas chose to remain with her community in order to provide the wisdom and strength of a leader, in the same way her mother did. I would suggest that Pocahontas' storyline implied she couldn't 'have it all' - she had to choose between leadership and romance. In Pocahontas' case, she chose leadership. This set Pocahontas and the third wave princesses apart from previous ones, as third wave princesses were finally being recognised as a leader not only as themselves, but also by others. This was continued by Mulan, both in her disguise as Ping but also within her own right.

Mulan's demonstration of leadership was slightly more complex than that of Pocahontas. Mulan started the film as a scatter-brained yet assertive woman, however when she arrived at the army training camp as 'Ping' she had little confidence to carry out her tasks. As Mulan developed into a great warrior, this also developed her leadership skills, with her orchestrating the Emperor's rescue and defeating Shan Yu (England et al. 2011:561). Therefore, I firstly discuss Mulan's display of a warrior before moving on to her image of leadership.
It took Mulan a long time to adjust to her new life as a soldier, however she was able to test her newfound skills when Mushu accidentally revealed the Chinese Army's location by setting off a cannon in the snowy Tung Shao pass. Realising where they were, the Huns launched an attack by shooting Li Shang with an arrow. The Chinese Army had limited canons left and used them to attack the Huns but they realised they were outnumbered. When they realised there was only one cannon left, Li Shang instructed Yao to aim it at Shan Yu. However, Mulan saw the reflection of a snowy mountain in her sword and decided to take matters into her own hands. She took the cannon and began running towards the Hun. She aimed, and after a number of setbacks managed to hit the mountain, causing an avalanche which took out the entire Hun army (Maity 2014:30). Mulan used her training and quick thinking to provide a better solution for the Chinese Army (Davis 2006:197), and through this caused her fellow comrades to follow her rather than Li Shang's orders. Her actions saved the Chinese Army and she earned their respect as a military strategy leader (Youngs 1999:312):

> **Li Shang**: Ping. You are the craziest man I've ever met. And for that I owe you my life. From now on, you have my trust.
> **Ling**: Let's hear it for Ping! The bravest of us all!
> **Yao**: You're King of the mountain!

Through Mulan's actions as a soldier, she was able to develop skills in order to lead her comrades when she returned to warn the Chinese Army that the Hun survived the avalanche she orchestrated. Although Mulan realised quickly that she was no longer listened to due to her status as a woman, she persisted in helping her comrades. When the Emperor was captured, the remainder of the Chinese Army unsuccessfully tried to break down the palace doors. Mulan led them in an alternative direction by having Ling, Yao and Chien-Po dress as concubines. Together, they entered the palace and distracted the guards so that Li Shang could get to the Emperor. Mulan quickly instructed Chien-Po to take the Emperor whilst Li Shang was fighting with Shan Yu. This entire sequence was created and executed thanks to Mulan's leadership (Davis 2006:197-8; England et al. 2011:561,564). More importantly, her act of leadership was carried out in her true identity as a woman, rather than that of a man (Davis 2006:197). This act led to Mulan being offered a seat on the Emperor's council as a woman. However, she rejected the opportunity to maintain the power she had whilst dressed as Ping in order to go home and bring honour to her family (Davis 2006:201). Mulan was the only princess within the third wave to reject a leadership role, which on the one hand provided a different storyline that focused on family, but on the other denied Mulan further character development that was offered to Pocahontas and Kida. It also suggested that whilst Mulan saved China and the Emperor, the storyline reminded her of her true place in society by having her return home. Li Shang followed her, and their future romance was heavily implied. Unlike Pocahontas, Mulan could have 'had it all' but her storyline removed the option of leadership from her future despite the fact that she had already proved her leadership skills.

In *Atlantis: The Lost Empire*, Kida took a more active leadership role. Not only did she act as a leader, but she was also seen as one by others. In addition to this, because of the powers that Atlantis held, Kida was also considered to be the protector of Atlantis, which contributed to her role as a leader within the film.

Kida cares deeply about the people and land of Atlantis, and realised there were issues that needed to be addressed:

> **Kashekim Nedakh**: Your heart has softened Kida. A thousand years ago you would have slain them on sight.

> **Kida**: A thousand years ago the streets were lit… and our people did not have to scavenge for food at the edge of a crumbling city!
> **Kashekim Nedakh**: The people are content.
> **Kida**: They do not know any better! We were once a great people. Now we live in ruins! The Kings of our past would weep if they could see how far we have fallen. [*Kida nurses her father, placing a compress on him*]
> **Kashekim Nedakh**: Kida-
> **Kida**: If these outsiders can unlock the secrets of our past… perhaps we can save our future.
> **Kashekim Nedakh**: What they have to teach us we have already learned.
> **Kida**: Our way of life is dying.
> **Kashekim Nedakh**: Our way of life is preserved! [*He holds her hands and cradles her face*] Kida, when you take the throne… you will understand.

Kida wanted to save her kingdom. It was clear that she and her father disagreed on the matter, with him wanting things to remain the way they were because the people were content. However, Kida knew the people of Atlantis deserved to live a better life (that they did not even know could exist) and wanted to use her social role as a leader to provide that (Davis 2006:186). She also indicated that she was consistently looking at how to improve their future, rather than just preserving their present. This was arguably a sign of leadership as Kida was always trying to be one step ahead, however it was her father that held her back. This changed when Captain Rourke's team turned out to be mercenaries that wanted to exploit Atlantis by stealing its crystal.

When Rourke's true plans were revealed, Kida was chosen by the past leaders of Atlantis to become the protector of Atlantis when it was in a state of peril:

> **Kashekim Nedakh**: She has been chosen like her mother before her.
> **Milo**: What?
> [*The scene changes to a flashback of a young Kida watching her mother being chosen to protect Atlantis*]

> **Kashekim Nedakh**: In times of danger, the crystal would choose a host, one of royal blood… to protect itself and its people. It will accept no other.

Although this meant that Kida was granted magical powers to protect Atlantis, it also meant she was unable to function properly as a leader whilst she was bonded to the crystal. Nevertheless, her father still saw Kida as a leader and asked Milo to save her so she could replace him:

> **Kashekim Nedakh**: If she remains bonded to the crystal… she could be lost to it forever. The love of my daughter is all I have left. My burden would have become hers when the time was right… but now it falls to you.
> **Milo**: Me?
> **Kashekim Nedakh**: Return the crystal. Save Atlantis. Save my daughter.

Although he asked Milo to take his place, I argue that Kashekim asks Milo to do so in order for his daughter to replace him as the leader of Atlantis, which was how the film ended. Although Kida did not feature heavily in the film, her presence and character development produced a strong image of leadership. Kida not only wanted to actively protect her people and their future, but she was literally chosen by the crystal to do so. She was recognised as Queen of Atlantis at the end of the film.

Each of the third wave princesses demonstrated leadership and were seen by others as leaders. Pocahontas negotiated the safety of her people, Mulan was credited with saving China, Kida saved Atlantis and her people. Each of these achievements were acquired by each princess' assertiveness and communication skills that allowed them to guide and direct others through conflict or hardship. This leads me to question what 'style' of leadership do the third wave encompass? Leadership has often been "conventionally constructed mainly in masculine terms" (Billing & Alvesson 2000:144), with psychological gender measurement scales reflecting that 'leadership' was a masculine trait. However, despite the fact that scholars have explored ideas of feminine leadership (Eagly & Johnson 1990; Billing & Alvasson 2000), it seems to be widely understood by social scientists that whilst there may be different leadership styles, there are "no reliable differences in the ways that women and men lead" (Eagly & Johnson 1990:233). This has two implications. Firstly, that there is no difference between how women and men lead because leadership is being defined through a masculine lens as a masculine characteristic or trait, and secondly, that women are simply adapting to those masculine characteristics in

leadership in order to progress. Eagly and Johnson (1990), in their journal article *Gender and Leadership Style: A Meta-Analysis* explained that:

> Men are believed to be more self-assertive and motivated to master their environment (e.g., more aggressive, independent, self-sufficient, forceful, dominant). In contrast, women are believed to be more selfless and concerned with others (e.g., more kind, helpful, understanding, warm, sympathetic, aware of others' feelings) (236).

Using these characteristics defining masculine and feminine styles of leadership, Pocahontas was clearly situated within a feminine style. Whilst she was assertive, her focus was understanding, and remaining with her people because they needed her. Mulan, when disguised as Ping, took on a more masculine approach to leadership that was focused on dominating the Hun with an aggressive attack. However, as herself, she was an androgynous mix, she remained assertive, independent and self-sufficient during her rescue of the Emperor and defeat of Shan Yu, yet when offered a leadership position, she turned it down to be with her family. Kida on the other hand, whilst being concerned for her people's quality of life, adapted a masculine leadership style throughout the film, she was independent, self-sufficient and dominant whilst putting her people first. I would argue that gendering leadership styles has its drawbacks, as it (like other gendering of character traits) creates a binary. Whilst others have developed masculine and feminine leadership styles to include more traits (Billing & Alvesson 2000:147), I would argue that leadership styles do not need to be gendered in the first place. Whether Pocahontas had aggressively protected John Smith by raising a weapon to stop him or whether she had used her body to shield him, she was still demonstrating leadership, the fact that she was a woman should not define whether her leadership should be characterised as masculine or feminine. The third wave princesses controlled and shaped their own path and were able to achieve great things as women. This was a far cry from their predecessors. First wave princesses displayed passivity and victimhood, needing to be rescued by others. Second wave princesses, whilst being assertive and brave were then distracted by the prospect of romance. Third wave princesses demonstrated how women could be considered as leaders, with or without men at their side (England et al. 2011:565).

Desiring Romantic Relationships

So far, I have discussed desiring romantic relationships as a consistent plotline within a princess film. As I discussed in the previous chapters, first wave princesses often desired a romantic

relationship from the very beginning of their film and were often rewarded with one for their passivity. Second wave princesses desired adventure, however once they met their love interest, their adventures were lost within their happily ever after. Third wave princesses, however, did not show any interest or desire in a romantic relationship when they first met other men, and any hinted relationship was suggested as more of an afterthought than a defining feature of this princess' storyline. It did seem that the relationship still had a significance within the plot. I will be discussing the lack of romantic relationships within the films, how they are 'added on' at the end, and what this suggests about the third wave.

Pocahontas was mainly focused on resolving the conflict between her people and the English. She met John Smith at the beginning of the film, and it was suggested that she developed an attraction towards him when she spoke with Grandmother Willow:

> **Pocahontas**: What am I doing. I shouldn't be seeing him again. I mean, I want to see him again.
> **Grandmother Willow**: Who wouldn't? I want to see him again.
> **Pocahontas**: But still, something inside is telling me it's the right thing.
> **Grandmother Willow**: Perhaps it's your dream.
> **Pocahontas**: My dream? Do you think he's the one the spinning arrow was pointing at?

This was the first suggestion that Pocahontas may want to pursue a romantic relationship, however the conversation was still too vague. Because Pocahontas was very curious, she could be suggesting that John Smith could be the answer to some of her questions. Her romantic feelings were made clearer later on when Grandmother Willow told both Pocahontas and John, "Don't you see? Only when the fighting stops can you be together". This motivated Pocahontas and John Smith to attempt to resolve the conflict, for the good of their people and for their future relationship (Edwards 1999:157; Dundes 2001:355). Towbin et al. (2004) have argued that whilst Pocahontas fell in love with someone from another culture, she still followed a similar plot device of falling in love, "and while it was not at first sight, this love occurred in one day's time and without even speaking the same language" (38; England et al. 2011:565; Edwards 1999:150). In *Pocahontas*, where the Disney studio once again chose to use a romantic relationship as a plot device to drive the story, it could be argued that Pocahontas' motives to solve the conflict were motivated by her desire to be with John Smith. I would counter that she was also able to see the bigger picture and wanted to solve the conflict in order to bring peace. Once the conflict was resolved, and John Smith asked Pocahontas to come with him to England,

Pocahontas declined and said, “I’m needed here”. Her decision to remain has been suggested as her placing “the needs of her own people over her own desires” (Lacroix 2004:224-5), despite this, Pocahontas’ rejection of both Kocoum and John Smith demonstrated a transgression in matrimonial goals and desires (Zarranz 2007:58; Stover 2013:4). Whilst it has been suggested that Pocahontas’ actions to bring peace between the Powhatan’s and the English colonists were “driven by her passion for a man who was leaving, the possibility that she decided to stay to be an activist is both undeveloped and unlikely” (Dundes 2001:361). Dundes goes on to argue that Pocahontas’ desire for leadership was not clear enough, and instead sacrifices her own needs for the needs of others (Dundes 2001:361). However, another explanation for this could be that although Pocahontas loved John Smith and would miss him, she did not need him to function as a leader or member of her community (Davis 2006:184). I would argue that when Pocahontas looked between her people and John’s, she realised her communication and negotiation skills would be needed to forge a new path for her people and the colonists (Davis 2006:184). My argument echoes that of Edwards (1999), who also suggested that “Pocahontas stays behind to maintain peace, facilitating bonds between the Powhatans and the English based on the Pocahontas-Smith inspiration of interracial love and sacrifice” (151) and Davis (2006), who argued that “Pocahontas rejects love - which would mean leaving behind her people and her function as a leader - and chooses to devote herself to her people” (184). She was the only third wave princess to decline the assumed proposal of a romantic relationship (Dundes 2001:353-4; Davis 2006:184), remaining and developing her role as a cultural mediator (Edwards 1999:157).

Mulan did not display any interest in pursuing a romantic relationship with any men she met during her time in the army, despite the fact that as a woman, it was her duty to make a match (Whelan 2012:30). Although it was hinted that she was attracted to her Captain, Li Shang; Mulan made no romantic gesture towards him at any point during the film. Mulan was more focused on keeping her identity secret, saving China and restoring honour to her family. At the end of the film, Li Shang also hinted that he was attracted to her, but seemed to be quite daunted by Mulan’s presence. After Mulan was honoured by the Emperor, Li Shang simply stated, “you fight good”. Mulan seemed disappointed by this, replying “oh... thank you”. This only seemed to be a fleeting emotion for Mulan, as she was intent to return to her family to tell them what she achieved. It wasn’t until Li Shang was encouraged by the Emperor himself that he visited the Fa residence in search of Mulan. He was again very nervous around her and her Father, whereas Mulan who had gained confidence thanks to her experiences simply asked him, “Would you like to stay for dinner?”, indicating that a romantic relationship may come to fruition after all. This could suggest that princess plot lines must still rely on some form of romantic relationship, despite the princess’ other achievements (Maity 2014:30). However, this

was set away from Mulan's triumph as a warrior and seems to be suggested as more of an afterthought at the end of the film or a reward for her "efforts in the battlefield" (Youngs 1999:312), rather than the film's 'happily ever after'.

Like Mulan, Kida also showed no interest in a romantic relationship. Instead, she was focused on ensuring the survival and improvement of her kingdom. She indicated no signs of attraction or romantic feelings to any men throughout the film. However, when she detached herself from Atlantis' crystal, floated back down and became conscious, she and Milo held hands. The expedition funder, Mr Whitmore, learnt that Milo chose to stay in Atlantis through a picture of him and Kida holding hands, which also indicated the development of a relationship. However, as Davis (2006) argued, it was Milo who chose to stay behind in Atlantis (188). Unlike Pocahontas, there was no question "that Kida might consider leaving her people to be with Milo… It is Milo who must decide, and it is Milo who chooses love over returning to the surface and becoming the hero who discovered Atlantis" (188). For the first time within the princess phenomenon, it was a man who must choose between his life elsewhere and pursuing a romantic relationship. For Kida, as the Queen and leader of Atlantis, that choice wouldn't even spring to mind. Like Mulan, Kida's relationship was not confirmed, and was certainly not a feature of her character development or plotline. It would seem that the presumed relationship is an afterthought added at the end, once Kida had saved Atlantis.

This brings me to the question, why did Disney filmmakers choose to include a romantic relationship at all? It would appear that none of the princesses within the third wave demonstrated any love interest. They did not have clear dreams or aspirations (like the second wave), they were leaders who focused on issues at hand. Therefore, the relationships possibly acted as a form of policing. Pocahontas had to choose between her relationship with John Smith and leading her people. Mulan rejected a place on the Emperor's Council in order to return home, a prompt reminder of where she truly belonged within Chinese society. This continued when the film ended with her implied relationship with Li Shang. She may have saved China, but her true role was to marry. It was only Kida who was able to lead Atlantis *and* have a relationship with a man, because he was the one to give up his life in America in order to stay with her. Whilst Pocahontas and Mulan were unable to because their storyline did not allow it; Kida was able to 'have it all'.

This was a very different image of womanhood than that of the previous waves. First wave princesses were passive dreamers, they knew their desire, but did nothing to achieve it. The desires themselves were solely romantic, with them being rewarded for passivity with a romantic relationship. Second wave princesses were lost dreamers, they desired adventure, but those desires soon became lost when they met a man. Their dreams of adventure were lost within the happily ever after they were granted in the film. Third wave princesses, however, did

not seem to have dreams at all (with the exception of Pocahontas, who literally dreamt a cryptic dream about a spinning arrow), rather they actively dealt with issues they faced and led themselves on a journey of self-discovery. They had romance at the end of their narrative, but it was often produced as an afterthought, simply added on to their story (perhaps to remind them of their expectations). Therefore, I call third wave princesses 'active leaders'. Here, a princess' story is not being defined by a man or a romantic relationship, it was being defined by the princess herself and the way that she approached challenges.

Conclusion

I have explored how femininity has been depicted in third wave films through five shared characteristics: assertiveness, communication, negotiation, leadership and romantic relationships serving as an afterthought. I identified the third wave as 'active dreamers' through textual and analysis, and with support from Disney scholars. Pocahontas, Mulan and Kida were each able to stand up for themselves and others; communicate and negotiate to get their desires met and demonstrated leadership. Whilst romance was still included within each film, it seemed to only be focused on at the end. Although the lack of romance during the main parts of the film allowed the third wave to flourish in their own skills, the return of prospective relationships at the end often resulted in the princesses having to choose between leadership and romance (with the exception of Kida), this will be discussed further in Chapter Seven. Nevertheless, the lack of romance was another change that the third wave brought to the princess phenomenon. As the third wave films were produced in the same time period as the second, Pocahontas, Mulan and Kida's assertiveness was perhaps also a wider reflection of the progression of women's roles within society. However, as I have discussed in this chapter, the third wave continued to build on their development through characteristics such as communication, negotiation and leadership. This was reflective of more American women entering the public sphere in roles such as the first female attorney general and the first female Secretary of State. The leadership demonstrated by the third wave could have been seen as a cultural mirror for the progression of American women. This brought a new challenge to the third wave, where the princess would have to choose between leadership and romance (with the exception of Kida), which possibly highlighted the sacrifices that women in leadership roles may have made in order to 'make it to the top'.

Chapter Five: Fourth Wave Princesses

Historical Background

The fourth wave of princess films were released in 2009 and 2010. Women's roles and rights had continued to progress. Within the military, women served America in the Afghanistan War from 2001-2014, and in Iraq from 2003-2011. Ann Dunwoody became the first female four-star general in 2008 (Army News Service 2008). Within government, women continued to progress into higher positions. In 2007, Nancy Pelosi was the first female speaker of the House (Pelosi N.D.). Hillary Clinton was the first female to win a presidential primary in 2008 (NBC 2008), but lost the overall nomination to Barack Obama (MacAskill & Goldenberg 2008). On the Republican side, Sarah Palin became the first woman to run for vice president (Barnes & Shear 2008). Within the legislature, abortion remained an ever-present issue, with Congress passing the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act in 2003, criminalising performing an abortion once the baby is being delivered (Congress 2003). In 2009, The Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Restoration Act was passed in order to support victims (who were often women) of pay discrimination (Congress 2009).

Within the Disney Company, Michael Eisner retired as CEO, with Robert Iger replacing him (The Walt Disney Company 2005). As CEO he subsequently purchased Pixar studios and bought the rights of Oswald the Lucky Rabbit - the first cartoon that Walt had created, and realised that he did not own the rights to his creation until later. This led to Walt Disney being very protective over his future creations (Christensen 2006). In 2009, Disney purchased the rights to Marvel Entertainment, allowing them to widen their entertainment outlets (Clark 2009).

The Princess and the Frog was released in 2009 with a worldwide gross of $267,045,765, improving the princess films since the release of *Atlantis* (Box Office Mojo [k] N.D.). *The Princess and the Frog* also introduced Disney's first African-American princess. However, due to other popular releases that year it was unable to reach the top ten (Box Office Mojo [k] N.D.). The following year, *Tangled* was able to return the Disney princess films into the top ten worldwide grossing films, grossing at $593,171,580 (Box Office Mojo [l] N.D.).

Fourth Wave Characteristics

As outlined in the first, second and third wave chapters, I identified a number of characteristics in the fourth wave films. I recorded each princesses speech, movement, narrative and plot lines. Tiana was presented as a chef, hardworking, determined, focused, entrepreneurial, ambitious, self-sacrificing, driven, assertive, negotiator, quick thinking, teacher, industrious, desiring a romantic relationship. She was seen by others as a chef, hardworking, should be desiring a romantic relationship, belittled, beautiful, too serious, self-sacrificing, Rapunzel was depicted as domestic, inquisitive, desires more from her life, abused, dreamer, quick thinking, negotiator, determined, assertive, having magical powers, desiring a romantic relationship, self-sacrificing. Other characters saw Rapunzel as someone to belittle, incapable, in need of protection, someone to manipulate, assertive, easy to abuse, a commodity and a leader.

Overall, I identified 32 characteristics across both films, with Tiana and Rapunzel sharing four characteristics. The fourth wave continued their assertive nature and desire for romantic relations, but also introduced new characteristics: determination and self-sacrifice. Both princesses were determined to fulfil their dreams, but ultimately sacrificed them for a romantic relationship. This moved away from the independence of the third wave, and back towards the reliance and desire for a romantic relationship of the first and second wave.

Determined

Fourth wave princesses produced a new component of femininity: determination. Both Tiana and Rapunzel were motivated to achieve their respective desires: open a restaurant and see the floating lights. Although previous princesses such as Ariel had dreams, they were not motivated to actually achieve them until a love interest was introduced, and once they pursued a romantic relationship their dreams were long forgotten. The APA defines determination as "a mental attitude characterized by a strong commitment to achieving a particular goal despite barriers and hardships" (APAe N.D.). I define determination as the decision to achieve a known desire under any circumstances. As I have discussed in previous chapters, I defined first wave princesses as passive dreamers for knowing their desire to have a romantic relationship but doing nothing to achieve it. Second wave princesses were defined as lost dreamers, as their desire for adventure was lost when they met their love interest. Third wave princesses did not seem to have any specific desires but were reactive to circumstances. I described them as active leaders. Their story was not defined by a love interest, it was defined by their leadership and the way they solved issues. Due to Tiana and Rapunzel having such strong desires to achieve their dreams, I will be identifying fourth wave princesses as active dreamers: women who knew what

they wanted, and would do what it took in order to achieve it. This was particularly highlighted through the image of determination.

The audience learns that since she was a young girl, it had been Tiana's dream to open her own restaurant, much like her father.[27] Although she wished on the evening star as a child, her father told her that she had to work hard in order to achieve her dreams, wishes were insufficient. As we saw the room transition from a young Tiana's to a teenage Tiana's, we learnt that she was working multiple jobs through her schedule and outfit changes:

> [*Tiana comes through her bedroom door, exhausted*.]
> **Tiana**: Well Miss Tiana, rough night for tips, but every little penny counts. [*She pushes the 'restaurant fund' jar against the many others.*] Don't you worry Daddy. We'll be there soon. [*She kisses the photo of her veteran father, it seems he has died before his dream of a restaurant could come true. She falls asleep for a few seconds before her alarm goes off*.] Goodnight Cal's. [*She returns one uniform in her wardrobe and picks out another*] Good morning, Duke's.

Tiana had continued her and her father's dream alone after his death, using her restaurant tips to save money for the restaurant. She seemed to have quite a lot of money saved up, which indicated she was either working multiple jobs or all possible hours. Her limited rest in the scene also suggested that she did not take time off, and tried to work the maximum hours she could. Her outfit changes solidified the idea that Tiana had more than one job and was working the maximum hours she could at both roles. This became clearer when she declined a social invitation (most likely not for the first time) in order to continue working:

> **Tiana**: You know I got two left feet. Besides, I'm… [*She attends to a customer*] You need a napkin sweetheart? I'm going to work a double shift tonight. [*She attends to another customer*] Here are your hotcakes. You know, so I can-
> **Friend 1**: So you can save for your restaurant. I know, I know. Girl, all you ever do is work.
> [*The service bell rings*]
> **Burford**: Order up!

[27] Tiana's father also dreamed of opening his own restaurant, but died before he was able to act on that dream.

Tiana: Maybe next time.
Friend: I told y'all she wouldn't come!

Her friend's use of "I told y'all she wouldn't come!" suggested that Tiana was regularly turning down social events in order to work (England et al. 2011:563). In addition, it was now clearer that Tiana was working double shifts at two jobs, in order to save up enough money to open her own restaurant. These decisions highlighted how hardworking and determined Tiana was to achieve her dream. However, many others, including her mother were concerned she was working too hard. When Tiana finally earnt enough money to put a down payment on the old sugar mill for her restaurant, her mother Eudora expressed her concerns:

Eudora: Baby cakes, I'm sure this place is going to be wonderful, but it's a shame you are working so hard.
Tiana: But how can I let up now when I'm so close? I got to make sure all Daddy's hard work means something.
Eudora: Tiana. Your Daddy may not have gotten the place he always wanted, but he had something better. He had love. And that's all I want for you sweetheart, to meet your Prince Charming and dance off into your happily ever after.
Tiana: Mama! I don't have time for dancing. [*Singing*] That's gonna have to wait a while.
Eudora: How long we talking about here?
Tiana: Ain't got time for messing around, and it's not my style.
Eudora: I want some grandkids!
Tiana: This whole town can slow you down
People takin' the easy way
But I know exactly where I am going
Gettin closer 'n closer every day
And I am almost there

These offers of concern did not deter Tiana, in fact she demonstrated her determination further by rejecting them completely. It must be said that Tiana had made some significant sacrifices in order to achieve her dream, especially at the age of 18. This was problematic as Tiana was not allowing herself to rest for an appropriate time. However, Eudora's concern was that Tiana would not meet her 'Prince Charming' if she was working so hard. Within the film at least, Tiana had made no suggestion that she desired a romantic relationship at this time in her life. It would

seem that Tiana did not want distractions (Stover 2013:7), she was so focused and driven towards achieving her dream that she would even take drastic action.

When she was told that someone had made a bigger offer on the sugar mill, Tiana was heartbroken. She saw the evening star and with lost hope, wished upon it. It was here that she met Prince Naveen, who had been turned into a frog by the Shadow Man (the film's antagonist). Under the impression that Tiana was a princess, he explained that she must kiss him to turn him back into a human. Tiana was reluctant to do this until Naveen suggested, "I also happen to come from a fabulously wealthy family. Surely, I could offer you some type of reward, a wish I could grant, perhaps?". Tiana looked back at the photo of Tiana's Place from her childhood and decided to kiss Naveen in order to outbid the other offer. However, this ultimately backfired and turned Tiana into a frog, as she was not a real princess. When Naveen revealed to her that he was turned into a frog by the Shadow Man, she chastised herself for getting involved: "It serves me right for wishing on stars. The only way to get what you want in this world is through hard work". This illustrated how focused and determined Tiana was to achieve her dreams. She immediately tried to think of a plan to get herself and Naveen back to their human form. As they spent their first night as frogs hiding from alligators, in the morning Tiana built a raft to take them back to New Orleans. They met a kinder alligator, Louis, who agreed to take them to Mama Odie for a spell. The trio discussed what they would do when they became human, Louis would be able to play his music without frightening humans, Naveen would continue his party and womanizing lifestyle, until Tiana reminded him of his promise to her - to marry Charlotte and give her the money for her restaurant:

> Your modesty becomes you
> And your sense of responsibility
> I've worked hard for everything I've got
> And that's the way it's supposed to be
> When I'm a human being
> At least I'll act like one
> If you do your best each and every day
> Good things are sure to come your way
> What you give is what you get
> My daddy said that and I'll never forget
> And I commend it to you.

Tiana once again repeated her hard work ethic to herself and others. It also highlighted the division of labour between Tiana and Naveen. Despite Naveen being the root of Tiana's issues, it

was Tiana's responsibility to return them to their human form, she drove the plot and Naveen seemed to just 'tag along' (Whelan 2012:31; Davis 2014a:51). She continued this when she met Mama Odie, who told Tiana she needed to 'dig a little deeper' to find out what she needed. Mama Odie was suggesting that Tiana should realise her feelings for Naveen and pursue a romantic relationship with him, however this thought had not even crossed Tiana's mind:

> **Mama Odie**: Well Miss Froggy, do you understand now child?
> **Tiana**: Yes I do Mama Odie. I need to dig a little deeper and work even harder to get my restaurant!
> [*Every signs and groans. They are disappointed that Tiana has clearly not understood the message.*]

Despite the fact that now everyone seemed to be insisting that Tiana should focus on a romantic relationship instead of getting enough money for her restaurant, Tiana continued to ignore them. This was a problematic trope within Tiana's storyline. Tiana was the first princess who had a clear desire *and* actively pursued it. Although second wave princesses had a clear desire, once a love interest was introduced, they became distracted. Third wave princesses, whilst not having a specific desire, were very active leaders. Tiana was focused and driven to opening a restaurant (Stover 2013:3), but her family and friends and now even Mama Odie were trying to deter her from it. This suggested that women should be focusing on pursuing a relationship rather than a career. For now, this did not affect Tiana's aspirations, which is why I identified Tiana as an active dreamer.

Whilst Rapunzel shared determination, it was for an entirely different desire. Taken from her royal home as a baby by Mother Gothel, Rapunzel had only known life within the tower she grew up in. She made it clear that she was unsatisfied with her mundane life in the tower during 'When Will My Life Begin?'. She finished the song by identifying her desire of seeing the floating lights that appear in the sky only on her birthday. She decided that when Mother Gothel returned home, she would finally ask her to take her to see them:

> **Rapunzel**: Mother, I'm turning eighteen. And I wanted to ask, what I really want for this birthday. Actually what I want for every birthday…
> **Mother Gothel**: Rapunzel please, stop with the mumbling. You know how I feel about the mumbling. Blah, blah, blah, blah. It's very annoying. I'm just teasing, you're adorable I love you so much darling.

[*Rapunzel pauses, but her chameleon sidekick Pascal encourages her*]

Rapunzel: Oh! I want to see the floating lights!

Mother Gothel: What?

Rapunzel: Oh. Well I was hoping you would take me to see the floating lights.

Mother Gothel: Oh, you mean the stars.

Rapunzel: That's the thing. I've charted stars and they're always constant. But these, they appear every year on my birthday, Mother. Only on my birthday. And I can't help but feel that they're, they're meant for me. I need to see them, Mother. And not just from my window. In person. I have to know what they are.

It was clear that Rapunzel had plucked up quite a lot of courage to ask her mother to take her to see the floating lights. Despite the fact that Mother Gothel belittled and tried to deter Rapunzel, she was still determined to ask her mother to take her. When Flynn Rider appeared in the tower to hide from palace guards, she knocked him unconscious and put him in a closet to prove to her mother she was capable of looking after herself. When she tried to tell Mother Gothel what she had done, Gothel lost her patience and forbade Rapunzel from leaving the tower. Realising she was running out of options for seeing the floating lights, she used the opportunity to get Gothel out of the tower in order to go without her:

Rapunzel: Okay, I've been thinking a lot about what you said earlier.

Mother Gothel: I hope you're not still talking about the stars.

Rapunzel: Floating Lights, and, yes, I'm leading up to that. [*She walks towards the closet containing Flynn Rider*]

Mother Gothel: Because I really thought we dropped the issue sweetheart.

Rapunzel: No Mother, I'm just saying, you think I'm not strong enough to handle myself out there.

Mother Gothel: Oh darling, I know you're not strong enough to handle yourself out there.

Rapunzel: But if you just-

Mother Gothel: Rapunzel, we're done talking about this.

Rapunzel: But trust me, I-

Mother Gothel: Rapunzel.
Rapunzel: Know what I'm- [*Rapunzel places her hand on the chair keeping the closet closed*]
Mother Gothel: Rapunzel.
Rapunzel: Oh, come on.
Mother Gothel: Enough with the lights, Rapunzel! You are not leaving this tower, EVER!
[*Rapunzel looks defeated, and removes her hand from the closet*]
Mother Gothel: Oh, great. Now I'm the bad guy.
Rapunzel: [*She looks at her painting of the floating lights*] All I was gonna say, mother is that… I know what I want for my birthday now.
Mother Gothel: And what is that?
Rapunzel: New paint. That paint from the white shells you once brought me.
Mother Gothel: Well that is a very long trip, Rapunzel. Almost three days' time.
Rapunzel: I just thought it was a better idea than the stars.

Rapunzel insisted on seeing the floating lights, however when Mother Gothel banned her from leaving the tower she realised she must try another way. Although the audience did not see Rapunzel's inner thoughts, it was clear that in this scene when she glanced at her painting of the floating lights, she decided that getting Mother Gothel out of the tower for three days would give her enough time to leave to see them. She appeased Gothel's desires by asking for paint, meaning she would be left alone, and used the word 'stars' instead of lights to fool Gothel into thinking she had surrendered her desire.

In fact, it was quite the opposite. She negotiated with Flynn Rider that she would return his satchel containing the stolen crown once he took her to see the floating lights (Whelan 2012:31-2; Davis 2014a:51). He eventually agreed, and Rapunzel was able to leave her tower with a guide. It was clear she was very torn about leaving, but her determination helped her to continue on her journey. Flynn Rider recognised the angst she was experiencing about leaving and betraying her mother and attempted to manipulate Rapunzel:

Flynn Rider: You know, I can't help but notice, you seem a little at war with yourself here.
Rapunzel: What?

Flynn Rider: Now, I'm only picking up bits and pieces. Overprotective mother, forbidden road trip. This is serious stuff. But let me ease your conscience. This is part of growing up. A little rebellion, a little adventure. That's good, healthy even.
Rapunzel: [*Laughs*] You think?
Flynn Rider: I know. You're way overthinking this. Trust me. Does your mother deserve it? No. Would this break her heart and crush her soul? Of course. But you just got to do it.
Rapunzel: Break her heart?
Flynn Rider: In half.
Rapunzel: Crush her soul?
Flynn Rider: Like a grape.
Rapunzel: She would be heartbroken, you're right.
Flynn Rider: I am, aren't I? Oh, bother. Alright, I can't believe I'm saying this, but… I'm letting you out of the deal.
Rapunzel: What?
Flynn Rider: That's right. But don't thank me. Let's just turn around, and you go home. Here's your frog. I get back my satchel. You get back a mother daughter relationship based on mutual trust and voila! We part ways as unlikely friends.
Rapunzel: No. I am seeing those lanterns.

Rapunzel did not allow Flynn to manipulate her into returning to her tower and returning his satchel. Although she knew that her mother would be hurt by this, she continued on her quest to see the floating lights. Like Tiana, although there were multiple people trying to prevent or dissuade her from her dream, Rapunzel continued on regardless, demonstrating her determination. This was similar to the adventurous and curious nature of the second wave, yet Tiana and Rapunzel did not allow themselves to become distracted (until the end of the film, which I discuss in the last section).

Assertive

Fourth wave princesses also displayed images of assertiveness. As in previous chapters, I define assertiveness as a confident person who is able to stand up for themselves and others in a clear and effective manner. Like the third wave, Tiana and Rapunzel demonstrated assertiveness through their communication with other men. Notably, Rapunzel also demonstrated assertiveness with Mother Gothel as she gained more freedom.

Tiana illustrated her assertive nature during her communication with Prince Naveen. When she first met him as a talking frog, she was terrified. However, when she was turned into a frog herself, and narrowly managed to escape being eaten by alligators, she displayed her assertiveness:

> **Naveen**: Well waitress, looks like we're going to be here for a while. So, we may as well get… [*flirtatious*] comfortable.
> [*A sound is made as if Tiana has hit him, and Naveen groans with pain*]
> **Tiana**: Get your slimy self away from me!

This interaction was similar to that of Kida and one of the explorers in *Atlantis: The Lost Empire*. It was more explicit in *The Princess and the Frog* that Naveen was trying to flirt with Tiana, although this time we did not see Tiana commit an act of violence, it was assumed. This suggested that Tiana would not allow men to speak to her in that way, nor allow them to touch her without her consent. It was also interesting, that despite Naveen knowing Tiana's name, as she revealed it when trying to stop a dog named Stella from eating them, he continued to call her 'waitress'. Naveen's disrespect of her status may be another reason why she chose to hit him. Her assertive attitude towards Naveen was continued throughout their journey. Another example of Tiana's assertiveness was when Naveen accused her of not being able to have fun:

> [*Tiana is slashing through the leaves with a stick, so they have a clear pathway*]
> **Naveen**: You know, waitress, I have finally figured out what is wrong with you.
> **Tiana**: Have you now? [*She continues making a path*]
> **Naveen**: You do not know how to have fun. There. Somebody had to say it.
> **Tiana**: Thank you, cause I figured out what your problem is too.
> [*She pushes a large branch back*]
> **Naveen**: I'm too wonderful? [*She seemingly lets it go off screen, winding him*]
> **Tiana**: No, you're a no-'count, philandering, lazy bump on a log.
> **Naveen**: [*Coughs*] Killjoy.
> **Tiana**: What d'you say?
> **Naveen**: Nothing. [*Coughs*] Stick in the mud.

> **Tiana**: Listen here, mister. [*She places her finger on his chest, pushing him*] This stick in the mud has had to work two jobs her whole life while you've been sucking on a silver spoon chasing chamber maids round y- your ivory tower!

So far, all Naveen had done was insult, mock and annoy Tiana on their journey together. A Prince who had been cut off from his family's money unless he married, Naveen had lived a life of luxury. Tiana was a (presumed) working class black woman who had to constantly work (and most likely work harder than anyone else) in order to achieve her dreams. Her social demographic was particularly highlighted when it was revealed someone had offered to pay in full for the sugar mill, and the realtors dismissed Tiana's argument for signing the papers with: "which is why a little woman of your - background, would have had her hands full tryn'a run a big business like that. You're better off where ya at". Even after all her hard work, Tiana was being discriminated against due to her race, sex and class. It was highly likely that Tiana did not have time to have 'fun' when working double shifts at two jobs. Therefore, when Naveen insulted her by claiming that there was something 'wrong' with her because he deemed that she didn't know how to have fun, Tiana stood up for herself. Tiana held up a metaphorical mirror to Naveen's laziness, and when he continued to insult her, she explained the dichotomy of their two lives. Tiana refused to allow Naveen to belittle and insult her when she had worked so hard for her achievements, standing up for herself and her choices.

Rapunzel was almost forced to develop an assertive nature in order to negotiate with Flynn Rider to go and see the floating lights. Mother Gothel regularly belittled Rapunzel, suggesting that she mumbled, was fragile, immature, gullible, naive and vague amongst other insults. It was clear that this affected Rapunzel's confidence as when she tried to communicate with Flynn Rider, she was very nervous. However, as the conversation goes on, she developed her assertive nature:

> **Flynn Rider**: Is this… hair?
> **Rapunzel**: [*Hidden*] Struggling… struggling is pointless. I know why you're here, and I'm not afraid of you.
> **Flynn**: What?
> [*Rapunzel comes into the light*]
> **Rapunzel**: Who are you, and how did you find me?

At first, she appeared apprehensive about speaking to Flynn Rider. This was quite understandable; she had lived alone in a tower with Mother Gothel for as long as she could

remember. Flynn Rider was the first human she had ever come across. It was clear however that during her interrogation she was very uncomfortable and inexperienced:

> **Flynn Rider**: Ho, oh no, where is my satchel?
> **Rapunzel**: I hid it, somewhere you'll never find it.
> **Flynn Rider**: It's in the pot, isn't it?
> [*Rapunzel knocks him out with the frying pan again, Pascal wakes him up*]
> **Flynn Rider**: Ah! Would you stop that?
> **Rapunzel**: Now it's hidden where you'll never find it. So, what do you want with my hair? To cut it?

Rapunzel did not think about hiding the satchel in a better place and had to knock Flynn unconscious in order to hide it again. As she interrogated him, she realised that he was not there for her hair, so he could help her to see the floating lights. However, when they began their journey, Flynn Rider tried to intimidate her by taking her to a pub full of ruffians and thugs, knowing it would scare her. When they arrive, the inhabitants of the pub recognised Flynn as a wanted thief and captured him in order to hand him over for a reward. Rapunzel realised she was losing her guide, so she attempted to rescue him:

> **Rapunzel**: Give me back my guide!
> **Flynn Rider**: Not the nose, not the nose, not the nose!
> [*Rapunzel pulls back a branch with her hair so that it hits a ruffian to get their attention*]
> **Rapunzel**: Put him down! [*All of the men are wide eyed and shocked*] Okay, I don't know where I am, and I need him to take me to see the lanterns, because I've been dreaming about them my entire life. Find your humanity! Haven't any of you ever had a dream?

Rapunzel managed to control a room full of men who collectively, have committed a great deal of crime. She single-handedly rescued Flynn Rider from their capture and was able to completely change the atmosphere in the room, with everyone sharing their dreams rather than trying to hurt Flynn Rider. This also led one of the ruffians to actually help Rapunzel and Flynn escape from the palace guards, and later on help Flynn escape from his execution at the palace.

Rapunzel's assertive nature was tested when Mother Gothel found her in the forest. However, Rapunzel had developed more confidence whilst being away from her and demonstrated it when Gothel tried to get Rapunzel to come home:

> **Mother Gothel**: We're going home, Rapunzel. Now.
> **Rapunzel**: You… you don't understand. I've been on this incredible journey and I've seen and learned so much. I even met someone.
> **Mother Gothel**: Yes, the wanted thief. I'm so proud. Come on Rapunzel.
> **Rapunzel**: Mother, wait. I think, I think he likes me.
> **Mother Gothel**: Likes you? Please Rapunzel, that's demented.
> **Rapunzel**: But mother, I…
> **Mother Gothel**: This is why you never should have left. Dear this whole romance that you've invented, just proves you're too naive to be here. Why would he like you [*she takes Rapunzel's face in her hand*] come on now really? Look at you! You think that he's impressed? Don't be a dummy, come with mummy. Mother-
> **Rapunzel**: No!

Before, Gothel was always able to manipulate Rapunzel into conforming to her wishes, however this time Rapunzel stood up to her 'mother' stating "No!" and ignored all of Gothel's attempts at belittling and abusing her. Rapunzel chose to stay with Flynn Rider to see the floating lights instead of returning with Mother Gothel. However, when Gothel tricked Flynn Rider into being captured and led Rapunzel to believe he tried to sell her for her hair to the Stabbington Brothers, Gothel was finally able to get Rapunzel back to the tower. However, Rapunzel had a flashback, finally recognising all of the pictures of suns in the kingdom as the same that she had been painting in the tower. She realised she was the lost princess that the kingdom released the floating lanterns for:

> **Rapunzel**: [*In a low voice*] I'm the lost princess.
> **Mother Gothel**: Please speak up, Rapunzel. You know how I hate the mumbling.
> **Rapunzel**: I am the lost princess, aren't I? [*Mother Gothel's face drops*] Did I mumble, mother? Or should I even call you that?

Mother Gothel: Rapunzel, do you even hear yourself? Why would you ask such a ridiculous question?
Rapunzel: It was you! It was all you!
[*Mother Gothel's face narrows*]
Mother Gothel: Everything I did, was to protect you. [*Rapunzel pushes past her*] Rapunzel!
Rapunzel: I've spent my entire life hiding from people who would use me for my power.
Mother Gothel: Rapunzel!
Rapunzel: When I should have been hiding, from you!
Mother Gothel: Where will you go? He won't be there for you.
Rapunzel: What did you do to him?
Mother Gothel: That criminal, is to be hanged for his crimes.
Rapunzel: No!
Mother Gothel: Now, now. It's alright. Listen to me, all of this is as it should be.
[*She goes to pat Rapunzel's hair*]
Rapunzel: NO! [*Rapunzel grabs Mother Gothel's wrist, preventing her from touching her*] You were wrong about the world. And you were wrong about me. And I will *never* let you use my hair again!

Rapunzel held Mother Gothel accountable for kidnapping her and using her for her hair. She forcibly stopped Gothel from touching her hair and told her that she would never allow her to use her for her hair again. This image of assertiveness was completely different to the shy and mumbling Rapunzel from earlier in the film. It was clear that Rapunzel had learnt a lot on her journey to see the floating lanterns, and she would not allow herself to be used or commodified again.

Overall, fourth wave princesses continued the image of assertiveness within the princess phenomenon. They stood up for themselves when people attempted to belittle or mock them and held them accountable for their actions. Like the third wave, Tiana and Rapunzel used physical action to demonstrate their dislike of their treatment, as well as verbally standing up for themselves. This illustrated how the phenomenon continued to change throughout the waves. Despite having a determined and assertive nature, Tiana and Rapunzel ended their films desiring romantic relationships over their dreams, which was reminiscent of the second wave.

Desiring a Romantic Relationship & Self-sacrifice

So far, I have discussed the determination and assertiveness of the princesses, identifying them as active dreamers. Tiana and Rapunzel knew what they wanted, and they would go to great lengths to achieve their dream. These images continued to progress the fourth wave within the princess phenomenon, with Disney portraying women as independent and ambitious. However, in the later stages of both *The Princess and the Frog* and *Tangled*, the narrative began to change for the female protagonist. Reminiscent of the second wave, Tiana and Rapunzel were placed within a plot line that forced them to make a decision between choosing their dream or a romantic relationship. Both chose the latter, knowingly sacrificing their dream in the process (Colombo & Muir 2020:4). I have identified this as 'sacrificing dreamers', as each princess had a dream, but knowingly sacrificed it for a romantic relationship. In this section, I discuss how the images of self-sacrifice for a romantic relationship were produced within the fourth wave.

Tiana identified and reminded the audience of her dreams and aspirations throughout the film. However, as she realised she was developing feelings for Naveen she began to doubt her choices. Her feelings were hinted at when Naveen taught Tiana to dance, they shared a moment where they nearly kissed, but Tiana prevented it by stating, "Lottie's getting herself one heck of a dance partner. We best be pushing on". At this point, she was still focusing on getting her restaurant. However, after Naveen made her a nice dinner on the boat back to New Orleans and once again promised her he would help her get the restaurant, she began to question her desires:

> **Tiana**: [*To Evangeline the star*] Evangeline, I've always been so sure about what I wanted, but now I… What do I do? Please tell me.

Tiana was clearly torn between the restaurant she had spent her life saving for, and the man she had known for around two days. Whelan (2012) argued that Tiana's goal for a restaurant never changed, "not when she first meets Prince Naveen, not when she realizes she loves him, and not even after she marries him" (30). However, Tiana's vocalised thoughts on whether she knew what she wanted seemed to prove otherwise. And after defeating the shadow man and resisting his tempting offer of giving her the restaurant through voodoo, Tiana stopped Charlotte from kissing Naveen, sacrificing her own dreams:

> **Charlotte**: Goodness gracious. This is so much to absorb. Let me see if I got this right. If I kiss you before midnight, you and Tiana

will turn human again? And then we're gonna get ourselves married and live happily ever after, the end!

[*Tiana hops into earshot*]

Naveen: Yeah, more or less. But remember, you must give Tiana all the money she requires for her restaurant. Because Tiana. She is my Evangeline.

Charlotte: Anything you want, sugar. Pucker up, buttercup.

[*Naveen is very unenthusiastic about kissing her*]

Tiana: Wait!

Naveen: Tiana?

Charlotte: Tiana?

Tiana: Don't do this.

Naveen: I have to do this. And we are running out of time.

Tiana: I won't let you!

Naveen: It's the only way to get you your dream!

Tiana: My dream? My dream wouldn't be complete without you in it. I love you Naveen.

Naveen: Warts and all?

Tiana: Warts and all.

There was an opportunity with *The Princess and the Frog* to give a princess exactly what she had worked so hard for. Yet, Tiana's storyline was brought back to romance, and she sacrificed her dream in order to pursue a romantic relationship. Two additional things must be noted here. Firstly, although having a restaurant was Tiana's dream, it was also her father's. It seemed that Tiana (perhaps out of filial duty) wanted to fulfil her father's dream so much that it had now become her own (Stover 2013:5). She demonstrated this when she explained to her mother at the sugar mill, "I got to make sure all Daddy's hard work means something", and when she told Naveen about her dream at dinner, she explained, "We always wanted to open this restaurant. He died before he could see it happen. But tomorrow, with your help, our dream is finally coming true". Therefore, it became clear that perhaps Tiana had been self-sacrificing throughout the film, for a dream that was not entirely her own. Secondly, Naveen actively wanted to help fulfil Tiana's dreams, because he knew that was what she wanted and because he loved her. This was why he made sure Charlotte would pay Tiana before he agreed to marry her.[28] However,

[28] This was an interesting contrast for Naveen, as he also seemed to have fallen in love with someone he had known for about two days. Like Tiana, Naveen was willing to sacrifice his dream (which was a relationship with Tiana) so that Tiana could have her restaurant. Although this thesis did not focus on

Tiana seemed to decide after knowing someone for approximately two days that her dream of a restaurant would not be complete without Naveen. Although it had been argued that Tiana and Naveen's romance developed over a longer time period and involved them actively getting to know one another better through their journey (England et al. 2011:564, 565), this was still a very large sacrifice for Tiana to make. Despite Charlotte agreeing to kiss Naveen anyway so she could help her friend, it was too late. Tiana and Naveen were now stuck as frogs, which they seemed to gladly accept. This brought Tiana's storyline right back to that of the second wave, as it was now focused on romance. This was further reinforced when, as frogs, Tiana and Naveen got married, which meant Tiana did become a princess, so when they kissed, they returned to their human forms. This could suggest that women can 'have it all' (Lester 2010:303; Maity 2014:31; Hefner et al. 2017:528), however I would argue that by making a romantic relationship the only way for Tiana to become human again; she was being rewarded for pursuing the romantic relationship with Naveen with her restaurant, instead of her being rewarded because of all the hard work she had done.

Rapunzel also produced images of self-sacrifice in pursuit of a romantic relationship. Like Tiana, Rapunzel revealed her dream to the audience from the very beginning of the film. And, she actually achieved it. Flynn accompanied her to the kingdom, they took a boat to watch the floating lanterns. At first, she was nervous. She wondered if the lanterns would be everything she dreamed they would be. Flynn reassured her, to which she wondered what she would do, now that she had achieved her dream. Flynn again encouraged her, telling her that she would get to find a new dream. It was implied during the song 'I See The Light' that Rapunzel's new dream could be Flynn, or perhaps her newfound freedom. However, this new opportunity was ruined when Flynn was framed and captured by palace guards, and Rapunzel was tricked into returning with Mother Gothel. Even though Rapunzel realised she was the lost princess of the kingdom, and she stood up to Mother Gothel, she was bound and gagged and set as a trap for when Flynn inevitably arrived at the tower to find her:

> **Flynn Rider**: Rapunzel, I thought I'd never see you again.
> [*He sees Rapunzel bound and gagged, she is trying to communicate with him to warn him, but it is too late. Mother Gothel fatally stabs him*]
> **Mother Gothel**: Now look what you've done Rapunzel. Oh, don't worry dear, our secret will die with him. [*Rapunzel's cries are muffled through her gag*] And as for us? We are going where no

images of masculinity, it was interesting to note that Naveen was being just as self-sacrificing as Tiana, but it seemed to be framed in a different way.

one will ever find you again. [*Rapunzel cries for Flynn again, she is resisting Mother Gothel*] Rapunzel, really. Enough already. Stop fighting me!
[*Rapunzel manages to get her gag off*]
Rapunzel: No! I won't stop. For every minute of the rest of my life I will fight. I will never stop trying to get away from you. But, if you let me save him, I will go with you.
Flynn Rider: [*Moaning in pain*] No! No, Rapunzel!
Rapunzel: I'll never run; I'll never try to escape. Just let me heal him. And you and I will be together. Forever, just like you want. Everything will be the way it was; I promise. Just like you want. Just let me heal him.

Rapunzel gave up any hope of freedom she had in order to save Flynn Rider's life. Although she had only known him for a short time, she had bonded with him, developed feelings for him, and had just watched him be stabbed.[29] However, Rapunzel was sacrificing her freedom in order to save Flynn Rider. She was essentially placing his life above her own freedom. Flynn Rider was deeply unhappy with the situation:

Flynn Rider: I can't let you do this.
Rapunzel: And I can't let you die.
Flynn Rider: But if you do this-
Rapunzel: Shhh.
Flynn Rider: Then you… will die.
Rapunzel: Hey, it's gonna be alright.
Flynn Rider: Rapunzel, wait… [*He reaches up as though he is about to kiss her, but instead cuts her hair with a shard of smashed mirror*]

Perhaps Rapunzel planned on healing Flynn, and then they could have defeated Mother Gothel between them, or perhaps she was convincing herself and Flynn that this was the best solution. Nevertheless, although Rapunzel made this decision autonomously, Flynn decided to take

[29] Rapunzel's situation was quite different to that of Tiana's which is why I argue that Rapunzel's actions were slightly more understandable. Although Rapunzel had known Flynn for roughly the same time as Tiana knew Naveen, Rapunzel had to watch her friend and love interest be stabbed by her fake mother. Flynn's status as a love interest aside, his life was at stake, and Rapunzel wanted to help. Although Naveen was sacrificing his happiness, he was not sacrificing his life to help Tiana.

control by cutting her hair. This act saved Rapunzel from Mother Gothel, as it caused her to age at an alarming rate. She was horrified by her reflection, tripped over Rapunzel's hair (with help from Pascal) and evaporated. Rapunzel was now free, thanks to Flynn Rider.

There were three issues to examine. Firstly, Rapunzel's choice to give Flynn Rider's life more importance than her own. This was very problematic, as Rapunzel was prioritising the romantic feelings she had developed over two days over her now realised false life and identity thanks to Mother Gothel. She willingly gave up her autonomy so that she could heal Flynn Rider, rather than just trying to defeat Mother Gothel. Flynn Rider even tried to stop her from healing him, because he knew that she was essentially sentencing herself to death by doing so. This led us to the second issue. Although Rapunzel had arguably made a poor choice, it was still her own. When Flynn took that choice away by cutting her hair, he was the one that was 'saving' her, which was reminiscent of first and second wave princesses being rescued. Although Rapunzel was freed by this action, she was being freed by a man, rather than achieving it on her own. Finally, Rapunzel sacrificed her next dream in order to save Flynn Rider. It was confirmed that a romantic relationship with Flynn was Rapunzel's new dream, as she admitted this to him before he died in her arms. Of course, as her dream *was* Flynn Rider, this did make sense. However, this would lead Rapunzel to become a damsel in distress. If she had been able to heal Flynn, and then leave with Mother Gothel, it would have then been Flynn's sole mission to escape his chains and the tower and go after Rapunzel, who was now unable to escape her captor. The only way that Rapunzel would then be able to achieve her dream, was if Flynn Rider rescued her. This reduced Rapunzel's new ambitions to a romantic relationship and would lead her to becoming a victim in need of rescuing, reminiscent of the first wave. Therefore, Rapunzel's self-sacrifice in the name of a romantic relationship was rooted in similar images of first and second wave princesses.

Tiana and Rapunzel had problematic storylines that led them to sacrifice their own dreams and freedom for the men they loved. Like the second wave, Tiana's dreams were lost within her pursuit of a relationship, and Rapunzel sacrificed her freedom in order to rescue the man she loved. This image of self-sacrifice caused the fourth wave princesses to be categorised as 'sacrificing dreamers', as their dreams were sacrificed due to their new desire for their love interest. Of course, both Tiana and Rapunzel were rewarded for this by being granted their romantic relationship, as well as their other dreams. However, both princesses were reduced back to relying on being rewarded with their dream due to forming romantic relationships.

Conclusion

I have investigated how fourth wave films have depicted femininity through four shared characteristics: determination, assertiveness, self-sacrificing and desiring a romantic

relationship. Fourth wave princesses were categorised as 'sacrificing dreamers', as they knowingly and willingly sacrificed their own dreams in order to pursue a romantic relationship. They were then rewarded for their actions with the romantic relationship and their original dream, their assertiveness and determination seemingly forgotten. The assertiveness and determination of the fourth wave remained a cultural mirror to American society for women. As discussed at the beginning of the chapter, women were breaking down barriers and accessing new areas of society. Women served in the Afghanistan and Iraq war and America had its first female four-star general. Hillary Clinton was the first female to win the first presidential primary, however lost the presidential nomination to Barack Obama. It seemed that America was still not quite ready for a female leader. The fourth wave seemed to mirror this, with neither Tiana or Rapunzel acting as or being in a leadership position. In fact, the fourth wave became self-sacrificing in order to pursue a romantic relationship. Despite the fact that within American society women's representation within the public sphere was continually rising, the fourth wave princesses fell short of producing another wave of strong leadership.

Chapter Six: Fifth Wave Princesses

Historical Context

Brave (2012) was released two years after *Tangled*, and no significant changes had happened during the interim. However, as *Frozen* was released in 2013, *Moana* in 2016 and *Frozen II* in 2019, a number of events and 'firsts' had occurred. Within legislation and the workplace there were some changes, but also setbacks. In 2012, The Paycheck Fairness Act that would have reduced gender discrimination in the workplace failed in the Senate after Republicans blocked the bill (Bendery 2012). In 2013, the U.S. military began allowing women to serve in combat roles (Harris 2013). Within society a number of changes were taking place as well. In 2016, Hillary Clinton was the first woman to run for President for a major political party, however despite receiving more votes (but less states), she lost to Donald Trump after an incredibly misogynistic campaign (Jamieson 2017). Despite this, 53% of white female voters helped Trump to get to the White House (Jaffe 2018:19). Although Sarah Jaffe commented that exit polls do not usually separate voters by more than one or two demographics, she identified five general categories "of Trump-voting women: the wealthy, the white supremacist, the evangelical, the security voter, and the worker" (2018:19). She also noted that Trump was able to gain 58.2% of white women over 65 (Jaffe 2018:20). It would seem that despite being a woman, Clinton was unable to gain the votes of the more traditional, older woman. His win caused outrage across the world, with women organising demonstrations, now known as the Women's March, to protest against the election of Donald Trump who had been publicly presenting himself as discriminatory before, during and after the election (Freedland 2016; La Ganga & Jacobs 2016; Tamkin & Grame 2017). The march was also highlighting a need for more legislation and policies on minority rights (Women's March N.D.). In 2017, the Me Too movement arose due to Hollywood Director Harvey Weinstein being accused of sexual abuse. Female celebrities began sharing their "Me Too" moment of experiencing sexual harassment, and it soon trickled down to the general public, with women sharing stories all over the world (Slawson 2017).[30] In 2017, there was a record number of female representatives in Congress, demonstrating a shift in women's representation in U.S. politics (Desilver 2018). Overall, this was a time of advance, but also of contestation when it came to women's rights. Despite Hillary Clinton making history as the first female to run for president from a major political party, her campaign was met with hostility and misogyny. Whilst women's rights took steps forward, America ultimately chose a man who was recorded bragging that "he could grab women's genitals" (La Ganga & Jacobs

[30] As of March 2020, Harvey Weinstein has been sentenced to 23 years in prison for sexual abuse (Aratani & Pilkington 2020).

2016). It would seem America was still not ready to let women have it all. Despite this, Disney was producing heroines who could.

Brave was released in 2012, grossing $538,983,207, ranked 13th overall (Box Office Mojo [m] N.D.). Meanwhile the Walt Disney Company acquired UTV Software Communications, allowing them to reach more Asian markets, and announced their plans to purchase Lucasfilm Ltd in October 2012 (D23 N.D.), giving them the film rights to the Star Wars franchise. In 2013, Disney's *Frozen* premiered and became the highest-grossing animated film, earning $1,280,802,282 (Box Office Mojo [n] N.D.). It was the number one grossing film of 2013. A year later, Disney purchased Maker Studios (Spangler 2014) and developed it into the Disney Digital Network in 2017 (Spangler 2017a). In 2016, after promoting Tom Staggs to COO a year prior, the company and Staggs parted ways (Garrahan 2016). Later that year, Disney purchased a 33% stake in streaming media provider BAMTech, hoping to create an ESPN streaming service (Miller 2016).

In late 2016 Disney released *Moana* grossing at $643,331,111 and ranked 12th for box office releases that year (Box Office Mojo [o] N.D.). In 2017, Disney increased its stake in BAMTech, now holding 75%. They announced their plan to launch a subscription streaming service of their films (this is now known as Disney+) (Spangler 2017b). A month after the Me Too movement against sexual harassment and abuse began, animator, executive producer, director, screenwriter and chief creative officer of Walt Disney Animation Studios, Pixar and Disneytoons Studios John Lasseter took a six month leave of absence from his various roles for misconduct in his behaviour. Many have alluded to Lasseter's supposed sexual misconduct directed towards employees (Masters 2017). In 2018, Lasseter left his role (Barnes 2018), implying the idea that even a company considered as wholesome as Disney was impacted by the patriarchal nature of Hollywood. Disney's most recent activity has been the acquisition of 21st Century Fox in March 2019 (The Walt Disney Company 2019), and the release of their own streaming service, Disney+ in November 2019 (Lee 2019). In 2019, Disney released the much-anticipated sequel, *Frozen II* which grossed third overall at $1,449,728,798 (Box Office Mojo [p] N.D.).

Fifth Wave Characteristics

Merida was depicted as an archer, a leader, adventurous, had a lack of communication, assertive, quick thinking, actively dealt with a situation, provided and received female support, was a communicator and a warrior. She was seen by other characters as an archer, needing to be lady like, warrior, brave, someone to marry and in need of protection. In *Frozen*, Anna was portrayed as adventurous, the opposite of grace, desires freedom, lonely, desires a romantic relationship, awkward, clumsy, isolated, protective, a leader, assertive, quick thinking,

negotiator, rescuer, fearless, provides (and receives) female support, lack of communication, brave, not interested in appearance, determined, self-sacrificing and having a respectful relationship. She was seen by other characters as isolated, beautiful, in need of protection, in need of help, should be desiring a romantic relationship, someone to marry and a political tool. On the other hand, Elsa was depicted as adventurous, powerful, having uncontrolled power, graceful, regal, poised, protective, practical, having controlled power and assertive. Other characters perceived her as powerful, isolated, beautiful, having freedom, embracing her magic, being fearful of uncontrollable powers, having a lack of communication, someone to marry and a political tool. In *Frozen II*, both princesses received further character development. Anna was depicted as desiring a romantic relationship, curious, giving and receiving female support, assertive, quick thinking, leadership, resilient, brave and having a supportive romantic relationship. Others saw her as someone to marry, in need of protection and a leader. Elsa, who did not receive as much development in the first film, centred more in the narrative of *Frozen II*, and was portrayed as not desiring a romantic relationship, curious, a leader, giving and receiving female support, powerful, quick thinking, determined, brave and self-accepting. Others saw her as in need of protection and a leader. Finally, Moana was depicted as adventurous, curious, chosen by the ocean, rebellious, a leader, having a different way of thinking, determined, exploring her identity, giving and receiving female support, assertive, quick thinking, negotiator, eager to learn, the chosen one, brave, supportive, communicator and a rescuer. Other characters saw her as a leader, rebellious, giving and receiving female support, a princess, brave and the chosen one.

I identified 59 characteristics across the four princesses. There were four key images of femininity shared by the four princesses: an assertive nature, leadership, female support and lack of romantic relationships.[31] The introduction of female support and a lack of romantic relationships distinguished them from their predecessors, as the storylines focused more heavily on the complexity of the characters and their journeys within the films.

Assertive

Like their predecessors, fifth wave princesses demonstrated assertiveness throughout their films. So far, this thesis has defined assertiveness as confident heroines who stand up for themselves and others in a clear and effective manner. Merida demonstrated this quality when she rejected the family tradition of her marrying to unite the clans. Anna was able to achieve her goals through her assertive nature in both *Frozen* and *Frozen II*. Whilst Elsa did not show signs

[31] As Hine et al (2018b) have suggested, there is very little quantitative or qualitative scholarly work on Disney Princess films released after 2003. Therefore, this chapter will focus on the primary data I have collected from my own analysis.

of assertiveness in *Frozen*, her character developed the trait through her leadership in *Frozen II* when she was the Queen of Arendelle. Finally, Moana displayed this characteristic during her communication with Maui, the demi-god.

Merida, Disney's first Scottish princess, was constructed as the opposite of the traditional archetypes produced by Walt Disney Studios. Whilst her mother, Queen Elinor reminded her that a princess must eat nicely, rise early, be compassionate, patient, cautious, clean "and, above all, a princess strives for, well, perfection!", Merida was the complete opposite of those things. She enjoyed mucking out her horse, Angus, climbing, and most importantly, archery (Itmeizeh & Ma'ayeh 2017:34). Of all the princesses created by Disney, Merida appeared to be the most 'unfeminine' within the phenomenon. Like princesses before her, she demonstrated an assertive nature when she was told she was to be betrothed:

> **Elinor**: The lords are presenting their sons as suitors for your betrothal!
> **Merida**: [*She is mortified*] What?
> **Elinor**: The clans have accepted!
> **Merida**: Dad!
> **Fergus**: [*He doesn't know where to put himself*] What? I… You… She… Elinor?
> **Elinor**: Honestly Merida. I don't know why you are reacting in this way. This year, each clan will present a suitor to compete in the games for your hand.
> **Merida**: I suppose a princess just does what she's told!
> **Elinor**: A princess does not raise her voice! Merida, this is what you've been preparing for your whole life.
> **Merida**: No! It's what you've been preparing me for my whole life! I won't go through with it! You can't make me!

Unlike Aurora, a first wave princess, who was unhappy with being betrothed to someone she hadn't met, but did nothing about it; and Jasmine, a second wave princess who was unhappy with marriage until the right man came along; and even Pocahontas, a third wave princess, who politely rejected her father's wishes for her to marry Kocoum (although this may be down to the mutual respect Powhatan and Pocahontas have for one another), Merida rejected the entire notion outright (Itmeizeh & Ma'ayeh 2017:34). Not only did her outburst question the tradition of arranged marriages and parental authority, but she was actually questioning 'princesshood' itself. By questioning "I suppose a princess just does what she's told" and rejecting her mother's

claims that this was what she had been preparing for her whole life, Merida demonstrated new bounds of assertiveness through the questioning of the actual structure she found herself in. So much so, that she decided to take matters completely into her own hands. She explained to her horse, "I swear Angus, this isn't going to happen! Not if I have any say in it". She realised she was allowed to choose the 'challenge' for her suitors, all of whom must be the first born of their clan. She chose archery, and when the time came, she presented herself as a contender. After the three contenders had shot their arrows, a hooded figure with the Dun Broch flag revealed themselves to be Merida. She declared, "I am Merida, firstborn descendant of clan Dun Broch. And I'll be shooting for my own hand!". Merida was not only taking her fate into her own hands, but she was challenging the patriarchal structures upheld by her society. Her refusal to marry, and her plan to fight for her own hand displayed signs of assertiveness that had not been seen within the princess phenomenon.

Although *Frozen* and *Frozen II* focused more on leadership and female support, Anna did show assertiveness in her communications with men. In *Frozen*, when she needed a guide to take her to the North Mountain to find her sister, Elsa, she came across a very antisocial Kristoff.

> **Anna**: I want you to take me up the North Mountain.
> **Kristoff**: I don't take people places. [*He lays back down on the hay and closes his eyes*]
> **Anna**: Let me rephrase that. [*She throws the supplies he tried to buy in the shop in his lap*]
> **Kristoff**: Umph. [*He takes a look in the bag*]
> **Anna**: Take me up the North Mountain. Please. [*He looks at her, unimpressed*] Look, I know how to stop this winter.
> [*Kristoff lies back down with his hat over his eyes so he can go back to sleep*]
> **Kristoff**: We leave at dawn… And you forgot the carrots for Sven.
> [*A bag of carrots lands in Kristoff's face*] Ugh!
> **Anna**: Oops. Sorry. Sorry. I'm sorry. I didn't- [*she catches herself*]
> We leave now. Right now.

Although Anna's nervous disposition suggested she was not necessarily used to being assertive (she did grow up in a more isolated household than others), she still had no issue with making demands to save Arendelle from Elsa's ice powers. She clearly thought her negotiation plan through, purchased what Kristoff couldn't afford and used it as a bargaining tool in exchange for his guidance. She even had the sense to hold one element back (Sven's carrots) so that when

Kristoff tried to decide when they would leave, Anna still had something she could use to get her own way. It became clearer that she may not necessarily be used to being assertive when she firstly apologised to Kristoff for hitting him with the carrots, before correcting herself to get what she came for.

Anna was another princess who was seen committing an act of violence. When her supposed beloved Prince, Hans revealed himself to be after the Arendelle throne, he left Anna to freeze to death and as the newly appointed King sentenced Elsa to death for treason, as she was the reason Anna began to freeze. However, he revealed his plan to Anna before locking her in a room. So, when Anna used her last moments before she froze to save Elsa, and Elsa was able to return Arendelle to its former non frozen state, Anna reprimanded Hans:

> [*Hans gets back onto his feet after the ice has been lifted, Kristoff goes to reprimand him, but Anna stops him with her arm, and walks over to Hans*]
> **Anna**: Ah, ah, ah, ah.
> **Hans**: Anna? But she froze your heart.
> **Anna**: The only frozen heart around here is yours. [*She turns away, pauses and then turns around and punches him in the face so hard he falls off the ship they have all been stood on*]

Although Kristoff attempted to deal with Hans, it was Anna that physically held him back as she wanted to reprimand him herself. Anna's confidence in her own ability demonstrated her assertive behaviour, and her method of dealing with Hans was one of the few purposeful acts of violence completed by a princess. Like Kida and Tiana, Anna reprimanded men who behaved inappropriately or wrongly towards her. She did not make allowances for Hans when she had seen his true intentions, and between Anna and Elsa, they had him returned to the Southern Isles in order to ensure he could not continue trying to access the throne.

Moana demonstrated assertiveness in her interactions with Maui, the demi-god she took to return the heart of Te Fiti (Hine et al 2018a:2). When she finally reached the island where Maui had been shipwrecked, she practised what she would say to the legendary man she had heard of since childhood:

> **Moana**: Maui, demi-god of the wind and sea. I am Moana of Motunui. You will board my boat. No. [*She speaks with a more commanding tone*] You *will* board my boat. Yeah.

However, when the time came, Maui who is known in Polynesian legend as a trickster, tried to distract her:

> **Moana**: Maui. Shapeshifter. Demi-god of the wind and sea. I am Moana-
> **Maui**: Hero of man.
> **Moana**: W-what?
> **Maui**: It's actually Maui, shapeshifter, demi-god of the wind and sea, hero of man. I interrupted, from the top. Hero of man. Go.
> **Moana**: [*Starting again*] I am Mo-
> **Maui**: Sorry, sorry, sorry, sorry. And women. Men and women. Both. All. Not a guy, girl thing. Ah, you know, Maui is a hero to all. You're doing great.

Maui continued to try and distract Moana from her task; however, she used her assertive nature to get Maui to listen to her. As he was trying to dazzle her by signing her oar, she took it from him, hit him in the stomach and took him by the ear:

> **Moana**: You are not my hero, and I'm not here so you can sign my oar! I'm here because you stole the heart of Te Fiti. And you will board my boat [*she tries to pull him, but he is too heavy*] Sail across the sea and put it back!

Although she was initially distracted by Maui, she maintained her confidence and gave him his commands. Like Anna, Tiana and Kida, Moana was also seen committing an act of violence when a male character was disrespecting her. However, Maui was persistent, and crafts an entire song to distract Moana enough to trap her in a cave so he could steal her boat. She managed to get out and repeated herself again, not taking no for an answer. Moana did not allow Maui to try and trick her again, rather she persuaded him to help her with negotiation. Although the fifth wave showed signs of assertiveness, it was not the defining characteristic of the wave. However, assertiveness did contribute to the development of leadership skills.

Leader

The fifth wave returned to an image of leadership within the princess phenomenon. Like Pocahontas, Mulan and Kida, the fifth wave each demonstrated leadership, with some quite

literally being leaders of their people. As with the third wave, I defined leadership as the ability to guide or direct others.

Merida was one of the only princesses who was seen being prepared for leadership. Quite significantly, she was prepared by her mother rather than her father, who was the official leader of all the clans. This suggested that Elinor felt Merida needed leadership training and had a larger input into the running of the clans than other Queens. Merida's princess lessons were seen at the beginning of the film, and whilst she indicated her contempt for them, she was being taught the history of the kingdom, public speaking and was given duties and responsibilities (although they are not made clear). All of these activities would help shape her into a leader, and they were all being taught by her mother. It was heavily implied that whilst Fergus was the King of the clans, it was Elinor who wore the crown. She was the one who commanded the attention of the unruly clans, who did the public speaking, and arranged for the clans to come. This was a transitional change for Disney princess films, as mothers were either dead (Snow White; Cinderella; Ariel; Belle; Jasmine; Pocahontas; Kida), or played a very small role in the film (Aurora; Mulan; Tiana; Rapunzel). Stepmothers on the other hand were the film's antagonist (Snow White; Cinderella; Aurora; Rapunzel). In *Brave*, Elinor appeared to be both a strong leader, but her conflict with Merida also placed her as the film's antagonist to begin with. Katie Kapurch suggested that Elinor was attempting to mould Merida "into the kind of princess Disney defined with Snow White and Cinderella" (2016:49). However, I disagree, Elinor was doing her best to help Merida be a leader within the structure they found themselves, and it was through that training that Merida was eventually able to change her fate. The Queen seemed to think that the way things were done could not be changed because of tradition, but Merida's fiery and assertive nature in combination with her training allowed her to rebel against the patriarchal norms. Elinor's husband, Fergus, was actually presented as the comic relief within *Brave*, rather than as the overbearing father (as in *The Little Mermaid*). This was made clearer when Fergus had to address the clans, and had no idea what to say:

> **Fergus**: So, here we are. [*Pause*] Uh… The four clans [*Pause*]. Uh… Gathering. [*Elinor puts her head in her hands*] For… uh… [*He looks very unsure*]
> **Elinor**: [*Rises from her throne*] The presentation of the suitors.
> **Fergus**: [*Once he gets an idea of what Elinor is saying*] The presentation of the suitors.

Not only did Elinor seem to be the true support of the clan, but she was passing this knowledge on to Merida. Although this was juxtaposed with Elinor wanting Merida to get married, Elinor

practiced explaining to Merida that "I understand this must all seem unfair, even I had reservations when I faced betrothal. But we can't just run away from who we are!". Here, she may have been referring to their royal status, and their need to continue lineage to avoid another war. By uniting two clans, their clan lineage was secure, and their clan grew larger.

However, Merida proved to her mother that she didn't need to be married to lead the clan towards the end of the film. As Merida and Elinor's relationship grew, Merida understood the importance of her role as a princess. When trying to sneak Elinor in her bear form back to the castle, Merida had to pacify the restless clan leaders who were demanding answers on the impending betrothal. Merida explained that their clans were bonded within their kingdom, and reminded them how despite their differences, the clans came together to defend the kingdom when it was under attack. She called on the clan leaders and reminded them how they all supported each other. Merida used her history lessons to rally the clans together again and used her public speaking skills to command a room full of hundreds of men. Despite her dislike of being prepared to be a princess, she was now able to use the tools in order to resolve the conflict she caused between the clans. Like Pocahontas of the third wave, Merida used her communication skills to resolve the issue, which was previously being solved through violence and war by the clansmen. Elinor looked on proudly at Merida, realising that her lessons had resonated with her and she was reaching her potential as a leader. Elinor then realised Merida didn't need to get married (Kapurch 2016:56):

> **Merida**: And so, there is the matter of my betrothal. I've decided to do what's right. [*Elinor gets Merida's attention*] And… and… and… [*Elinor signs a breaking motion*] break… tradition. [*Elinor nods and continues to sign to Merida*] My mother… the Queen, feels… in her heart, that I… that we be free to… write our own story. Follow… our… hearts. And find love in our own time.

Through Elinor and her blessing, Merida was able to change the narrative and the traditions of her society. This allowed her to change her fate, and in the future potentially become a leader in her own right, rather than need to marry someone. The fact that it was Elinor who provided the blessing, rather than Fergus (the actual leader of the kingdom) also implied how it was the women who were truly leading, and how Elinor knew that Merida was capable to do so with or without a man.

Frozen did not provide Anna and Elsa with many opportunities to display their leadership skills, as the story focused more on female support. Despite this, Anna did show signs of a developing leadership when she decided to go and find Elsa after she froze Arendelle and

ran away. She told her newly betrothed, Hans, "Elsa's not dangerous. I'll bring her back, and I'll make this right" and left him in charge whilst she was away. Whilst Anna took responsibility for solving the issues Arendelle faced, which demonstrated signs of her taking on a leadership role, she also left Hans, a man who she had known for a few hours, in charge of the kingdom. Her displays of leadership continued in *Frozen II*, where Elsa was Queen and they had to work together to restore Arendelle after the elements of nature disrupted the land and forced citizens to evacuate. Although not the official leader, Anna also demonstrated her leadership abilities throughout the film. Elsa on the other hand, quite literally led Arendelle and was recognised as their Queen. Elsa and Anna's leadership intertwined within *Frozen II* and therefore I will discuss them together.

Elsa was often depicted conducting Queenly duties, such as meeting with citizens and dignitaries, however, her leadership developed further when she accidently awakened the elemental spirits of the enchanted forest, putting Arendelle at risk. The spirits caused Arendelle to become a dark, windy, damaged and dangerous place, Elsa immediately evacuated the affected areas in order to keep her people safe. This showed Elsa's dedication and experience in leadership that she had developed since *Frozen*. She continued by deciding that she would journey to the enchanted forest to find out about the voice she was hearing, and to save Arendelle from further destruction. Elsa was the second princess who was in an official leadership role as Queen, and it was clear that she took the role seriously. Along with her sister Anna, Kristoff, Olaf and Sven, Elsa made the long journey to discover the voice only she could hear, which helped them locate the enchanted forest.

When they arrived, they met the Northuldra and Arendellian troops who were trapped in the Enchanted Forest after the entrance was sealed. After realising Elsa is now Queen, the Arendellian guards rallied around the sisters in order to demonstrate their loyalty, scaring the Northuldran people. Seeing this, Elsa assertively intervened in order to bring peace to the two opposing sides:

> **Elsa**: Wait. Please! Someone has called me here. If I can just find them… I believe they have the answers that may help us free this forest. Trust me. I just want to help.

Whilst the Northuldra were sceptical, Elsa proved her intentions when a fire spirit set the forest alight. Elsa quickly stepped into action, using her powers to save people and stop the forest from burning. Elsa promised the Northuldra and the troops that she would free the forest and restore Arendelle to its former state. Her sister, Anna was concerned with such a promise, telling her sibling, "That's a pretty big promise Elsa". This highlighted both women's leadership

styles. It would seem that Elsa, who was born with powers, was confident in her own abilities. On the other hand, it would seem that Anna preferred to manage expectations, explaining to another Northuldran, Honeymarrow, "We'll do all we can".

Whilst Anna accompanied Elsa for the majority of the journey through the enchanted forest, Elsa deliberately separated them to protect Anna from the rest of the journey. When they found the ship their parents left Arendelle in, and discovered they died trying to reach Ahtohallan (a river that holds the secrets of the past), Elsa (to Anna's protest) refused to allow Anna to accompany her to keep her safe. However, when Elsa reached Ahtohallan it was revealed her powers were gifted to her because of her mother selflessly saving their father as children. She discovered she was the fifth elemental spirit, alongside earth, water, wind and fire. She was also able to see more memories, and eventually found her grandfather explaining that the dam he offered to the Northuldran people was a plot to colonise their land. She watched him kill the Northuldran leader after he questioned the effects of the dam, which caused the war between the two groups. However, Elsa had ventured too far within Ahtohallan, and began to freeze. Using her powers, she sent the memory to Anna before she turned to ice. This was a strong representation of leadership, Elsa sacrificed herself in order to pass the knowledge on to Anna, knowing she would be able to protect Arendelle. Whilst Elsa's leadership focused more on her use of powers, Anna's appeared to be more pragmatic, something that Elsa was aware of, demonstrating Elsa's belief in Anna's abilities as a leader.

Receiving Elsa's memory, Anna realised what had happened and how it needed to be rectified. However, Olaf began to fade due to the loss of Elsa's powers, and he explained Elsa wasn't ok, and that she would have to go on without him. Assuming her sister was dead, Anna grieved for Elsa and Olaf, who had disintegrated due to losing Elsa. However, Anna also knew that she must continue to save Arendelle, which she sang in the song 'The Next Right Thing': "You are lost, hope is gone, but you must go on, and do the next right thing". Anna managed to escape the cave she was trapped in and saw the enormous sleeping earth giants. She attempted to wake them up so she could make them chase her to the dam, screaming "Come and get me! Come on!". Anna's aim was for the giants to damage the dam, which would cause an evacuated Arendelle to flood. She hoped that this would be an offering to break the mist and free the forest, and restore peace between Arendelle, the Northuldra and the spirits. They pursued her, and ultimately began to catch her. However, an unaware Kristoff was looking for Anna and Elsa in the woods and found her running from the giants. As she was about to be crushed, Kristoff was able to pull her to safety. However, his interaction with her indicated that he saw Anna as a leader. He asked, "I'm here, what do you need?", and when Anna explained she needed to get to the dam, he followed her instructions. Rather than taking charge himself, Kristoff left the plan and leadership to Anna, demonstrating his belief in her as a leader.

When they arrived, the Arendellian soldiers were trying to stop Anna from destroying the dam due to their orders all those years ago. However, Anna persuaded them to follow her own instructions, which eventually led to the giants destroying the dam. With the water gushing towards Arendelle, Anna's actions resulted in Elsa being unfrozen, so she was able to rush to save Arendelle from being engulfed in water with her ice powers. Although they worked separately, both Anna and Elsa's actions contributed to saving Arendelle and freeing the Enchanted Forest.

When the sisters were reunited, Elsa revealed to Anna that she was the fifth spirit, the one who would act as a bridge between magic and people:

> **Elsa**: And Anna, Arendelle did not fall.
> **Anna**: It didn't?
> **Elsa**: The spirits all agreed. Arendelle deserves to stand, with you.
> **Anna**: Me?
> **Elsa**: You did what was right. For everyone.
> **Anna**: Did you find the fifth spirit? [*Elsa looks at her*] You are the fifth spirit! You're the bridge!
> **Elsa**: Well actually a bridge has two sides. And mother had two daughters. We did this together. And we'll continue to do this together.
> **Anna**: [*They place their foreheads together*] Together.

The combination of both Elsa and Anna's leadership styles working together demonstrated their united strength. This led to a new start for both of them. Honeymarrow explained to Elsa that she belonged in the Enchanted Forest, rather than in Arendelle. As Queen, Elsa noted she made a promise to "do what's best for Arendelle", however she knew "just what that is" whilst looking at Anna. The final scenes of the film implied that Anna had become Queen of Arendelle, whilst Elsa remained in the Enchanted Forest as a leader. Anna was seen at her coronation, and Elsa was seen in the Enchanted Forest. Although she was not wearing a crown, she was dressed completely differently (and regally) to the Northuldran people. Anna's note that Elsa received continued to imply Elsa's leadership, telling Elsa to "keep looking after the forest". Both sisters ended the film as leaders of their people.

Moana was the daughter of the Chief of Motunui, and it was widely known that she would take his place. She was told by her father as a child that she was the "next great chief" of her people, and her mother told her she would do wonderous things (perhaps pre-empting Moana's quest to save Motunui). Moana's image as a leader to her family and people was

emphasised greatly at the beginning of the film: her father reminded her of her responsibilities, took her to the sacred place of chiefs, and showed her that one day she would place a stone on the highest part of the island to raise it higher under her leadership. He again reminded her that she was the future of her people. Whilst Moana accepted this to an extent, she was also drawn by the ocean, which she was trying to ignore during the song "Where You Are":

> **Moana**: I'll lead the way,
> I'll have my people to guide me,
> We'll build our future together, where we are.

Moana was the one of the few princess films to truly recognise the princess as a leader. Like Kida, Moana would inherit the leadership from her father, however Moana's father ensured she took an active role in leadership. He encouraged her to follow him, make suggestions and help their people. Before she embarked on her quest, Moana was seen to be fixing her people's problems such as leaking roofs and harvest issues. The people of Motunui also saw Moana as a leader, whispering to the Chief "she's doing great!". Moana's ease at leadership and problem solving was recognised by her father, who told her "this suits you". Unlike her predecessors, Moana was supported by her father and given responsibilities to keep the island running. Although the third wave and members of the fifth wave (Merida and Anna and Elsa in *Frozen*) demonstrated leadership, Moana was the first princess to be depicted as actively participating in leadership of her land. This was also seen in *Frozen II*, as discussed above.

Moana also seemed to demonstrate a different style of leadership to her father. As a child, she was drawn to the ocean, but Chief Tui would not allow anyone past the reef for fear of their safety. However, when it was brought to their attention that the fishermen were catching less and less fish, Moana had an idea. Although she first suggested rotating the fishing grounds and fishing on different sides of the island, she learnt the fisherman had exhausted all their options. So, she suggested that they fish beyond the reef. Her father immediately rejected it, reminding her they had "one rule". Moana persisted, arguing that it was an "old rule, when there were fish". Here, her father saw her as rebellious, wanting an excuse to go back to the water she so desperately craved. However, Moana was making an informed, sensible choice. If there was no fish near their island, they would need to venture out further in order to get food. This was not a case of wanting to be close to the ocean, Moana saw this as a case of survival, and wanted the best for her people. Whilst Chief Tui saw this as rebellion, I would argue this was a case of Moana thinking and leading in a more efficient way.

After Moana restored the heart of Te Fiti, she was able to return to Motunui. The film ended with Moana being celebrated as a leader. She had placed a seashell on the stones of the

sacred place of chiefs, indicating her taking on an official leadership role, but in her own way. The scene shifted to Moana leading her people to voyage for new lands as they did before. She helped her father direct the boat, her mother tie the ropes and felt the water in order to check they were heading in the right direction. After seeing her Gramma in her manta ray spirit form, and Maui in the sky, Moana took her place at the front of the boat, watching the horizon in front of her, and leading her people to a new land. Whilst Streiff and Dundes (2017b) argued that it was Chief Tui at the helm of the boat and in control (7), I would argue that the scene clearly depicted Moana leading and delegating, with her at the front. This was a powerful image for the film to end on, implying that Moana's bravery and determination when saving her island had developed her leadership even further.

As I have discussed in Chapter Four, leadership has often been defined within masculine terms (Billing & Alvesson 2000:144). Nevertheless, feminine forms of leadership have also been explored (Eagly & Johnson 1990; Billing & Alvasson 2000), with no "reliable differences in the ways that women and men lead" (Eagly & Johnson 1990:233). The third wave princesses produced a blend of feminine (Pocahontas); masculine (Mulan as Ping and Kida) and androgynous (Mulan as herself) leadership qualities. The fifth wave was also a mixture of gendered leadership styles. Merida produced images of masculine leadership, she was "self-assertive" and was "motivated to master" her environment by trying to change her fate (Eagly & Johnson 1990:236). Anna demonstrated feminine images of leadership, focusing on supporting, encouraging and protecting Elsa. She was "kind, helpful, understanding, warm" and affirmed those around her (Eagly & Johnson 1990:236). On the other hand, whilst Elsa also demonstrated feminine forms of leadership through her understanding and concern for others (Eagly and Johnson 1990:236); she also had masculine elements of leadership. Due to her strength and powers, Elsa was confident to use them to solve issues and to "master" her environment (Eagly & Johnson 1990:236). Moana, like Anna, also focused on a feminine leadership style, using understanding to solve issues within her environment (Eagly & Johnson 1990:236).

Female Support

The fifth wave introduced a new image, female support. In previous waves, the princesses had often been one of the few female characters within the film and were often pitted up against any other female character (Snow White, Cinderella, Aurora, Ariel and Rapunzel particularly). In later films, secondary female human characters were introduced such as Nakoma and Grandmother Willow in *Pocahontas*, and Mulan's female family members and Tiana's best friend Charlotte and her mother Eudora in *The Princess and the Frog*. However, most of these characters either had a minor role, or did not contribute to a princess' character development (with the exception of Grandmother Willow). The fifth wave films placed more emphasis on

female relationships, and how they shaped the narrative and development of the princesses. In *Brave*, this was demonstrated through the strained relations between Merida and her mother, Elinor; *Frozen* and *Frozen II* highlighted a difficult and complex connection between sisters Anna and Elsa; and *Moana* developed female familial support and the bond between heroine and villain.

Brave began with a flashback of Merida's childhood, where we saw her playing with her mother, Elinor. Although she disapproved of Merida's requests for weaponry, they still had a loving relationship. However, in the present scenes, with Elinor constantly training Merida to become a princess highlighting their stark differences, it was clear that there was a strain on their relationship. One of the main causes of this was their breakdown in communication, which was highlighted through Elinor's conversation with her husband Fergus, and Merida's conversation with her horse, Angus. Whilst Merida had tried to explain to Elinor she wanted no part in an arranged marriage, Elinor (bound by her duty as Queen) dismissed her daughter's concerns. However, neither would tell the other how they truly felt about the situation.

Elinor informed her husband that she didn't know what to do about Merida's unwillingness, and when Fergus told her to speak to her daughter again, she retorted, "I do speak to her! She just doesn't listen!". However, Elinor did not realise that she was not speaking *to* her daughter, rather she was speaking *at* her. The scene then flowed from Elinor's conversation with Fergus to Merida's monologue with Angus, where they were finally able to speak their minds, but the other could not hear:

> **Elinor**: Merida. All this work, all the time spent preparing you, schooling you, giving you everything we never had...I ask you, what do you expect us to do?
> **Merida**: Call off the gathering! Would that kill them? You're the Queen, you can just tell the lords, the princess is not ready for this. In fact, she might not ever be ready for this so that's that. Good day to you. We'll expect your declarations of war in the morning.
> **Elinor**: I understand this must all seem unfair, even I had reservations when I faced betrothal. But we can't just run away from who we are!
> **Merida**: I don't want my life to be over. I want my freedom!
> **Elinor**: But are you willing to pay the price your freedom will cost?
> **Merida**: I'm not doing any of this to hurt you.
> **Elinor**: If you could just try to see what I do, I do out of love.

Merida: But it's my life, it's… I'm just not ready.

Elinor: I think you'd see, if you could just...

Merida: I think I could make you understand if you would just...

Elinor: ...listen!

Merida: ...listen!

Finally, the two women shared their true thoughts, but not with each other. So far, Elinor had been quite strict with Merida, and here the audience was able to see why. As Queen herself, she knew the responsibilities that Merida would inherit and was trying to prepare her in the best way she could (also implying she never received such support herself). Merida finally revealed that she simply wasn't ready for marriage and saw betrothal as though her life would be over. Whilst Merida desired freedom, Elinor posed the question of whether Merida was willing to pay the price her freedom would cost, something she had not said to Merida in person. It became clear that the breakdown in communication between the two women had led the other to believe that they were against each other, when in fact they just wanted the other to see their point of view. Elinor wanted the best for Merida and believed that training her to become a leader would help her. However, she was training her and asking her to marry within a traditional male framework which only benefitted men. All of Elinor's teachings were based on what men needed to know in order to lead their clan. Merida on the other hand, wanted leadership on her own terms, including not getting married.

When the women saw each other on the day of the clan gathering, it was clear they were still unable to communicate properly with one another. Merida was wearing a very tight dress, with a cap that covered her long, unruly hair. She was clearly very uncomfortable, and when Elinor exclaimed how beautiful Merida looked, she tried to tell her mother how she felt, saying "I can't breathe!". Elinor did not listen, replying "Oh, shush. Give us a turn". Merida tried again, "I can't move, it's too tight!" and Elinor once again ignored her daughter, telling her, "It's perfect". However, they both took a moment, staring at each other, Merida seeing her mother so happy, and Elinor seeing her daughter so uncomfortable. It seemed as though they would finally say what they were thinking to one another. However, the moment passed, and Elinor simply reminded her daughter to smile. It was clear now that Elinor and Merida's communication had completely broken down. Elinor was allowing herself to be bound by tradition and legend, whereas Merida wanted to forge her own path without considering the consequences.

When Merida decided to compete for her own hand, shocking her family and the clans, it was the final straw for her relationship with Elinor. Dragging her back inside, Elinor chastised Merida for her recklessness:

Elinor: You don't know what you've done!

Merida: I don't care...

Elinor: There'll be fire and swords if it's not set right.

Merida: [*Exasperated*] Just listen!

Elinor: I am the Queen! You listen to me!

Merida: Oh, this is so unfair!

Elinor: Unfair?

Merida: You're never there for me. This whole marriage is what you want! Do you ever bother to ask what I want? No! You walk around telling me what to do, what not to do, trying to make me be like you. Well, I'm not going to be like you!

Elinor: Oh, you're acting like a child.

Merida: And you're a beast! That's what you are! [*She points her sword at sewing of Elinor on the tapestry*]

Elinor: Merida!

Merida: I'll never be like you! [*She points the sword further into the tapestry*]

Elinor: No, stop that!

Merida: I'd rather die than be like you! [*She rips the tapestry with the sword, separating the sewn Merida and Elinor*]

Elinor: Merida, you are a princess, I expect you to act like one! [*Elinor throws Merida's sword down, takes her beloved bow and throws it into the fire. Merida is heartbroken, and leaves the room*]

Elinor: Merida! Merida! [*She tries to get the bow out of the fire, but it is too late*] Oh, dear! Oh, no. What have I done? [*She breaks down crying*]

Even a blazing row, where Merida finally revealed her true feelings, did not prompt Elinor to try and communicate with her daughter properly. Instead, she became even more authoritarian, and destroyed something that was precious to Merida, her bow. The lack of communication and understanding between the two women is what led to Merida taking drastic action by asking for a spell to change her fate, which accidently turned her mother into a bear.

This narrative, driven by Merida, is what allowed them to develop their relationship and thus support one another. It was revealed that they had two days to "mend the bond torn by pride", otherwise Elinor would remain a bear forever. Elinor was unable to speak to Merida in English, so they were forced to listen and communicate with each other in order to reverse the

spell. They supported each other in various ways throughout the rest of the film. Firstly, Merida helped Elinor adapt to life as a bear. Secondly, both women worked together to protect one another from Mor'du, another bear. And thirdly, Merida protected her mother from the clansmen who believed Elinor was the bear that killed Elinor.

In order to support her mother, Merida helped her to adapt to her larger body and new skill set. Although Elinor tried to gather breakfast normally, she accidently selected poisonous berries in the forest. Merida used the opportunity to teach her how to catch salmon for a proper meal. They also tried to follow the wisps; in the hope it would lead them to more answers. It brought them to an abandoned castle, where they realised that the vicious bear Mor'du (who attacked the family at the beginning of the film) was the prince from the legend Elinor often repeated to Merida, the spell had happened before. Mor'du launched an attack on Merida, and she defended herself with her bow. Her weapons were not enough to defeat him, and Elinor tried to pull her out of the room. Mor'du came after them, but Elinor was able to use her new strength as a bear to push boulders towards him, trapping him. They realised they must return to the tapestry and fix it in order to reverse the spell.

Once they arrived at the castle, they tried to sneak in unnoticed, with Merida distracting the clansmen by claiming she had spoken to Elinor. Merida spoke confidently and assertively to the room full of men, with her mother looking on proudly. And although Merida was willing to go through with her marriage, Elinor stopped her. She signalled to Merida that she wished her to break tradition and be free to write her own story. This signified the growth of both women, and their relationship. Both were willing to support the other's wishes, with Elinor especially realising her mistakes and giving Merida the freedom to forge her own path.

However, this happy moment was short lived, as the clansmen realised there was a bear in the castle, and Fergus mistook Elinor's destroyed room (from when she transformed) and her absence for her death at the hands of a bear. Although Merida tried to tell her father what happened, he would not listen and went off to avenge his wife, locking Merida in her room. There was not much time left before the second sunset, when the spell became irreversible. Merida mended the ripped tapestry, managed to get out of the castle with her brothers' help and chased after her father to stop him. She arrived just as Fergus was about to unknowingly kill Elinor and disarmed him, shouting "Get back, that's my mother!". He pushed her away and the clansmen held her back, but Merida broke free, took a clansmen's sword and blocked her father again. She actively fought him, and hit his wooden leg with her sword, causing him to fall over. She told him again, "I'll not let you kill my mother". A new issue arrived with the entrance of Mor'du, and the clansmen attacked him. Mor'du easily beat them and aimed for Merida who was defending herself. He pinned her down, and Elinor broke free from her containment to protect her daughter. She fought with Mor'du, pushing him against one of the large boulders. He

managed to break free, and Merida protected both herself and Elinor with a spear, but the boulder crashed down on Mor'du, killing him and releasing the prince's spirit. Merida and Elinor's fierce protection of one another demonstrated their developed bond.

As the time to reverse the spell drew nearer, Merida draped the tapestry over Elinor, but nothing appeared to happen. Elinor's once brown eyes turned to black, and Merida realised it had not worked:

> **Merida**: Oh, no. I don't understand, I… [*She begins crying*] Oh, mum!
> I'm sorry. This is all my fault! I did this to you! To us! [*She hugs the bear*] You've always been there for me. You've never given up on me. I just want you back! [*The bear looks on, blankly, at the melancholy clansmen*] I want you back, mummy! I love you.
> [*The sun rises, and Merida holds the bear, sobbing. However, a human arm then strokes her head and Merida looks up to see her mother in human form*]
> Mum, you're back! [*Elinor laughs and kisses her daughter*] You changed!
> **Elinor**: Oh, darling. We both have. [*She kisses Merida's forehead*]

Elinor and Merida working together, supporting one another mended their bond, and had changed not only their relationship, but also themselves. The film ended with them making a new tapestry together (of Merida and Elinor as a bear), waving off the clansmen, and riding their horses together, being watched by a wisp. The development of Elinor and Merida's relationship went from a complete lack of communication and understanding, to one of protection and female support. Merida righted her wrongs and supported her mother, and Elinor supported her daughter's wish for freedom.

Following on from *Brave*, *Frozen* developed another complex and strained relationship, this time between two sisters. Close in childhood, Elsa and Anna ended up leading separate lives when Elsa accidently hit Anna with an ice blast whilst playing. Their parents agreed it was easier to isolate Elsa until she was able to control her powers, however it continued to get worse. In order to protect Anna, her memories of Elsa's powers were erased, and the sisters became estranged. When their parents were lost at sea, and Elsa inherited the crown, they were finally reunited at her coronation celebrations, but Anna's desperation for love and affection with her new love interest Prince Hans was thwarted by Elsa, who banned her marrying a man

she'd just met (in order to protect her sister)[32] and stopped the party. Accidentally revealing her powers, Elsa ran away from Arendelle, not realising that she had frozen the entire area. In a bid to save Arendelle and her sister, Anna embarked on a quest to find her and bring back summer. In *Frozen*, it was Anna's image of female support that was predominantly shown.

Although she had been separated from Elsa for as long as she could remember, Anna was desperate to rebuild their relationship. And when Elsa left Arendelle after freezing it, Anna immediately went after her sister to find her. When she did, Elsa's protective support and Anna's belief in Elsa was immediately shown:

> **Anna**:...I'm so sorry about what happened. If I'd known-
> **Elsa**: [*Retreats away from her sister*] No, no, it's okay. You don't have to apologise… But you should probably go, please.
> **Anna**: But I just got here.
> **Elsa**: You belong down in Arendelle.
> **Anna**: So do you. [*She moves towards Elsa, who continues to move back*]
> **Elsa**: No, Anna. I belong here. Alone. Where I can be who I am without hurting anybody.

Elsa's support was rooted in protection because of her fear of her own powers and the potential that they could hurt people. She had hurt Anna once (which Anna could not remember), and she did not want to do it again. Therefore, she constantly rejected Anna in order to protect her from her powers. Despite the fact that Anna had travelled a long way to find her sister, Elsa was terrified of something happening again, so she tried to force her to leave. Anna, on the other hand, tried to encourage Elsa by affirming that she belonged in Arendelle with her, together. However, Elsa continued to reject Anna, even when she tried to persuade her that they could be close again, like they were as children, especially as it caused Elsa to recall how she hurt Anna:

> **Elsa**: No, we can't. [*She begins climbing her staircase*] Goodbye Anna.
> **Anna**: Elsa, wait-
> **Elsa**: No, I'm just trying to protect you.
> **Anna**: [*Continues to chase Elsa*] You don't have to protect me. I'm not afraid. Please don't shut me out again,

[32] This was a first in Disney princess films, Elsa's words not only addressed Anna's choices, but also the choices of previous princesses (Davis 2014a:51)

Please don't slam the door
You don't have to keep your distance anymore
'Cause for the first time in forever
I finally understand
For the first time in forever
We can fix this hand in hand
We can head down this mountain together
You don't have to live in fear
'Cause for the first time in forever,
I will be right here.

Anna demonstrated her belief in Elsa, and her desire to fix things together. Anna was offering her support by way of teamwork and affirmations. However, Elsa was still too worried about hurting her own sister and wanted to protect her:

Anna: You've kind of set off an eternal winter... everywhere
Elsa: Everywhere?
Anna: It's okay, you can just unfreeze it
Elsa: No, I can't, I - I don't know how!
Anna: Sure you can! I know you can!
'Cause for the first time in forever,
Elsa: Oh, I'm such a fool, I can't be free!
Anna: You don't have to be afraid
Elsa: No escape from the storm inside of me!
Anna: We can work this out together
Elsa: I can't control the curse!
Anna: We'll reverse the storm you've made
Elsa: Ohhhh, Anna, please, you'll only make it worse!
Anna: Don't panic
Elsa: There's so much fear!
Anna: We'll make the sun shine bright
Elsa: You're not safe here!
Anna: We can face this thing together
Elsa: Oh!
Anna: We can change this winter weather
Elsa: AHHHHH...

Anna: And everything will be alright...
Elsa: I CAN'T!

Again, Anna was affirming her belief in Elsa, telling her that together they could fix the winter in Arendelle. However, Elsa became so distressed that in her bid to protect Anna she accidently lashed out, hitting Anna's heart with ice. It was clear that due to their isolation from one another, the sisters were completely out of sync. Although both were trying to support and protect the other, the combination of both attempts resulted in Anna getting injured again. However, when Anna sacrificed herself to save Elsa from Hans and turned to ice, Elsa realised the consequences of their isolation. Anna's final moments were dedicated to supporting and protecting her sister, an act of true love. Love (and in a way Anna's support) is what helped Elsa to see how she could control her magic. If love thawed, then Elsa accepting herself as she is, with Anna's help, was how to control her powers.

In *Frozen II*, when the sister's bond has been mended, they still displayed different forms of female support, based on their personalities. Again, Anna's support for Elsa was centred on her strong belief in Elsa's abilities. Elsa on the other hand was fearful that Anna would be hurt, so her support is centred on protection.

When Elsa realised she was hearing a voice that no one else could, she chose to keep it to herself. She became distracted whilst playing charades with Anna, Kristoff, Sven and Olaf and excused herself. For Elsa, this was her own way of protecting Anna, she did not want her to worry. However, Anna was very perceptive and realised there was something wrong, so she went to Elsa to find out:

Elsa: I just don't wanna mess things up.
Anna: What things? You're doing great! Oh Elsa, when are you going to see yourself the way I see you?
Elsa: What would I do without you?
Anna: You'll always have me.

As demonstrated here, Anna based her support around her love and belief in Elsa. In her eyes, Elsa could do anything she set her mind to, which followed on from her belief in *Frozen*. On the other hand, although Elsa was not lying to Anna, she was not telling her the truth about the voice she could hear, demonstrating that Elsa was still trying to protect her sister. This contrast continued as the film went on and Elsa tried to do things on her own without help; Anna also used her support to step in and guide Elsa away from her solitary ways. Anna told Elsa that she was upset that she wasn't told about the voices Elsa was hearing. However, Anna suggested that

she trusts Elsa's judgement that the voice was not evil and demanded to accompany her on the journey. Whilst Elsa offered her support in the form of protection again by trying to stop Anna from coming with her, Anna knew that she would be able to help Elsa. Although she had no powers of her own, Anna asked Elsa to promise her they would complete their quest together. This also showed Anna's emphasis on teamwork, she wanted them to work together in order to save Arendelle, she did not want the burden to fall to just one of them.

Elsa on the other hand, struggled with Anna's way of supporting her, preferring to do things alone so she could protect Anna with her powers. When the forest caught fire, Elsa began to use her powers to deal with the fire herself. Anna, concerned for her sister's safety tried to call to her:

> **Anna**: Elsa! Get out of there! [*Elsa continues putting out the flames, but more arise*] No. No. No. [*Anna begins running towards her sister*] Elsa!
> [*After Kristoff returns from rescuing lost reindeer, he sees Anna collapsing due to smoke inhalation*]
> **Kristoff**: Anna!
> [*Hearing this, Elsa turns, and already exhausted uses her powers to get rid of the fire around Anna, Kristoff is able to grab her*]
> **Elsa**: [*Weakly*] Get her out of here!
> **Anna**: [*She is being held by Kristoff on Sven*] No! Elsa! [*She reaches out for her sister as she moves further away*]

In this particular scene, Elsa saw Anna as someone in need of protection because she had entered the flames to try and help. Elsa's way of trying to support Anna was by protecting her and removing her from the situation entirely. Both sisters were trying to support the other, but whilst they were not clashing personally, their forms of support were. Anna reminded her sister that she was not being careful after they reunited:

> **Anna**: Are you okay?
> **Elsa**: What were you doing? You could've been killed. You can't just follow me into fire!
> **Anna**: [*Angry*] You don't want me to follow you into fire, then don't run into fire! [*Concerned*] You're not being careful Elsa.
> **Elsa**: I'm sorry. Are you okay?

Elsa tried to protect her sister with her powers, however despite Anna's belief in Elsa, she also wanted to protect her by helping. Similar to *Frozen*, Anna and Elsa's forms of support clash again, with them both trying to protect the other.

When Elsa decided to leave the Northuldra to continue to search for the voice, Anna went with her. She did not know where Kristoff is, but left without him, putting Elsa first. As the sisters and Olaf continued their search for the voice, they found their parents' abandoned ship. Upon learning they died trying to find out the source of Elsa's powers, Elsa felt responsible for their deaths. Anna once again provided Elsa with support, explaining, "You are not responsible for their choices Elsa". Whilst her sister disagreed, Anna reminded her that she was a gift, telling her:

> **Anna**: If anyone can resolve the past… If anyone can save Arendelle and free this forest, it's you! I believe in you Elsa, more than anyone or anything.

Anna's strong belief in Elsa helped her to continue on in the quest. But Elsa wanted to go on alone, she was concerned it was too dangerous for them both to go to Ahtohallan:

> **Elsa**: Not we. Me.
> **Anna**: What?
> **Elsa**: The dark sea is too dangerous for us both.
> **Anna**: No. No! We do this together. Remember the song? 'Go too far and you'll be drowned'. Who will stop you from going too far?
> **Elsa**: You said you believed in me, that this is what I was born to do.
> **Anna**: And I don't wanna stop you from that. I… I don't wanna stop you from being whatever you need to be. I just don't want you dying… trying to be everything for everyone else too. Don't do this alone. Let me help you, please. I can't lose you Elsa.

Again, this was Elsa's way of supporting Anna by protecting her. However, Anna was worried Elsa would go too far, as she proved when trying to tackle the forest fire. However, the sister's images of female support clashed again, as Elsa made the decision for her, claiming "I can't lose you either Anna" and sent her sister and Olaf away in an ice boat against their wishes in order to protect them.

The sisters were not reunited until the very end of the film, after Anna had destroyed the dam, and Elsa had protected Arendelle from going underwater. Anna was overwhelmed at the sight of her sister whom she thought was dead, exclaiming "I thought I'd lost you!". Elsa disagreed, telling her sister, "lost me? You saved me, again", referencing that Anna's act of true love in *Frozen* also saved Elsa from being killed. Although they acted separately, together their actions saved Arendelle and freed the Enchanted Forest. Elsa summarised their support to Anna, saying, "We did this together. And we'll continue to do this together", signifying that the events of *Frozen II* had truly solidified how both their interpretations of female support had entwined and complimented the other.

Moana featured three relationships between women, and their impact on Moana's journey. Rather than being strained, such as the relationship between Merida and Elinor or Anna and Elsa, Moana's relationships helped her to complete her quest to save her island. Moana's relationship with Gramma Tala was the most developed in the film. Her grandmother saw Moana's connection with the water and watched her being chosen to restore the heart. Although the young Moana had to return to her father, Gramma Tala retrieved the heart Moana left behind and kept it safe until the time was right. It was Gramma Tala who showed Moana the past of her people and inspired her to find Maui and return the heart. Even though she became gravely ill, Gramma Tala urged Moana to leave in order to save the island.

> **Gramma Tala**: [*She takes Moana's hand and weakly mumbles*] Go.
> **Moana**: Gramma?
> **Gramma Tala**: Go.
> **Moana**: [*Crying*] Not now. I can't.
> **Gramma Tala**: You must. The ocean chose you. Follow the fishhook.
> **Moana**: Gramma-
> **Gramma Tala**: And when you find Maui, you grab him by the ear. You say 'I am Moana of Motunui. You will board by boat [*she takes off her necklace*]. Sail across the sea, [*she places the necklace and heart in Moana's hand*] and restore the heart of Te Fiti.

Although Moana was hesitant, explaining "I can't leave you", her grandmother reminded her that "there is nowhere you could go, that I won't be with you". Gramma Tala's belief in Moana encouraged her to leave, even during a difficult time. She knew her granddaughter would be able to solve the issues the island had, and knew she was capable of doing so. Her

encouragement of Moana gave her the confidence to command Maui, as well as restore the heart herself.

As Moana packed her things to leave, she was discovered by her mother, Sina. Although Chief Tui would be against Moana leaving, the non-verbal scene depicted Sina helping her daughter and hugging her goodbye (Streiff & Dundes 2017b:6). Although a short visual, the female support demonstrated by the women in Moana's life encouraged her (Colombo & Muir 2020:11). And even when it was implied that Gramma Tala had passed away, her manta ray spirit left her body and guided Moana beyond the reef. These interactions with her female family members reassured Moana that she was not alone, and that she was supported throughout her journey.

Gramma Tala appeared again towards the end of the film, where Moana's first attempt at returning the heart failed and Maui abandoned her to protect his damaged fishhook. Defeated, Moana returned the heart to the ocean, explaining she wasn't the right person and they had to choose someone else. Gramma Tala appeared to support Moana again, explaining "I never should have put so much on your shoulders. If you are ready to go home, I will be with you". However, Moana hesitated in her Gramma's presence. Her grandmother used this as an opportunity to encourage Moana one more time:

> I know a girl from an island
> She stands apart from the crowd
> She loves the sea and her people
> She makes her whole family proud
> Sometimes the world seems against you
> The journey may leave a scar
> But scars can heal and reveal just
> Where you are
> The people you love will change you
> The things you have learned will guide you
> And nothing on earth can silence
> The quiet voice still inside you
> And when that voice starts to whisper
> Moana, you've come so far
> Moana, listen
> Do you know who you are?

Gramma Tala encouraged Moana to believe in herself, and that she could love both the ocean and her role as a leader. In fact, the combination of the two would allow Moana to complete her quest, as long as she accepted herself. Gramma Tala was using the song to ask Moana to think about who she was:

> Who am I?
> I am a girl who loves my island
> I'm the girl who loves the sea
> It calls me
> I am the daughter of the village chief
> We are descended from voyagers
> Who found their way across the world
> They call me
> I've delivered us to where we are
> I have journeyed farther
> I am everything I've learned and more
> Still it calls me
> And the call isn't out there at all, it's inside me
> It's like the tide; always falling and rising
> I will carry you here in my heart you'll remind me
> That come what may
> I know the way
> I am Moana!

Here, Moana not only accepted her identity, but acknowledged her success (Colombo & Muir 2020:9-10). She realised that if it wasn't for her, herself and Maui would not have achieved what they had at this point. She embraced her intuitive leadership, knowing that the call for the ocean was actually the call for her own identity, and she knew what to do next. With that, she jumped into the ocean, retrieved the heart of Te Fiti, and decided to restore it herself, affirming that "I am Moana of Motunui, aboard my boat I will sail across the sea and restore the heart of Te Fiti". This change in language indicated Moana's self-acceptance of identity, and the belief in herself that had been instilled thanks to Gramma Tala's support.

Because of the female support Moana had received, it allowed her to offer it to the villain of the film, Te Kā. After Maui stole the heart of Te Fiti, a new monster was born who wanted the heart for themselves. A lava monster, Te Kā guarded the barrier islands that allowed the access to Te Fiti and would stop at nothing to retrieve the heart. Moana managed to trick Te Kā so she

could get past the barrier islands, and when Maui returned to help, Moana was able to try and restore the heart. However, she discovered that the island of Te Fiti was gone. When she turned to Te Kā, she noticed the spiral on her chest that was identical to the heart of Te Fiti and realised that as Te Fiti was abused, Te Kā took her place. She knew that in order to restore the heart, she must return it to Te Kā. Moana held up the heart, causing Te Kā to stop attacking Maui. She asked the ocean to allow Te Kā to reach her, Te Kā began crawling towards Moana and she began walking to meet the lava monster in the middle. Moana sang:

> I have crossed the horizon to find you
> (Ou loto mamaina toa)
> I know your name
> (Manatu atu)
> They have stolen the heart from inside you
> (Taku pelepele)
> But this does not define you
> (Manatunatu)
> This is not who you are
> You know who you are

Like her Gramma and mother, Moana provided support and love to Te Kā, rather than conflict. She reminded Te Kā that although her heart had been stolen, it did not change who she truly was. Although Te Kā looked as though she was going to attack Moana, the princess stood defiantly on a rock unphased by the smoke and fire and simply sang "This is not who you are, you know who you are". Te Kā visibly softened her gaze and body language, her lava extinguishing from sight. Moana stepped forward and placed her forehead against Te Kā's and whispered "who you truly are" before restoring the heart. With this, Te Kā's lava began to fall from her body, revealing her to be Te Fiti. Moana had clearly learnt from the support given by Gramma Tala to embrace who she truly was, and had passed this onto Te Kā in order to save Te Fiti. Whilst this scene had also been interpreted as a moment of bravery, but not particularly thought out (Streiff & Dundes 2017b:8), I argue that Moana used understanding and communication in order to support Te Kā, rather than fight her. This not only demonstrated how secondary characters provided Moana with support, but how Moana learnt from these instances and applied it to her own situations in order to help and support others.

Lack of romantic relationships

Whilst previous waves had featured the desire for romantic relationships to great and small extents, the fifth wave films sometimes completely removed romance from the plotlines. *Brave*'s Merida rejected an arranged marriage, *Frozen*'s Anna focused her desires on Prince Han's, a man she had just met, before forming a relationship with Kristoff. Her sister Elsa had no mention of a desire for a romantic relationship and it was not even a part of her character development. In *Frozen II*, Anna's relationship with Kristoff highlighted a healthy partnership developing over time, whilst Elsa's narrative still had no mention of romance. Following in Elsa's footsteps, *Moana* had no mention of a romantic plot, the film focusing entirely on Moana's quest. The lack of romance within fifth wave films was an interesting image, especially in comparison to the previous waves. In this section I will discuss how the lack of romance in fifth wave films is depicted.

Arranged marriage was once again featured in a princess film. In *Aladdin* (1992), Jasmine was being forced into an arranged marriage against her will. Although she rejected multiple suitors, when she found someone she liked, she had no issue. Merida on the other hand entirely rejected the concept of marriage and romantic relationships, stating that she wanted her freedom and wasn't ready for marriage and may never be. Although her mother insisted she went through with it, Merida decided to take matters into her own hands and enter herself in the 'competition' for her betrothal, explaining to a shocked crowd that she would be fighting for her own hand. Although she won, her mother was furious and the two argued. Still not giving up, Merida ran away from her home and stumbled across a witch disguised as a wood carver who gave her a spell to change her fate. Realising that this was the only way for her to avoid the arranged marriage, she gave it to her mother in the form of a cake (which unfortunately turned her into a bear). The fact that Merida went to great lengths to not get married implied her unwillingness to have a relationship. Although the rest of the film was centred around Merida fixing her relationship with her mother, the film showed both Merida and Elinor's character growth when Elinor finally listened to her daughter and encouraged her to tell the rest of the clans that she and her suitors should be able to find love in their own time. Merida was the first Disney princess to end her film without a relationship at all, and the first to have never had one in the first place (Kapurch 2016:57). Merida's complete disinterest and frankly, disdain for romance demonstrated how the fifth wave of princesses were changing the narrative on desiring romantic relationships.

This image was continued in *Frozen* and *Frozen II*. Elsa also showed no interest in pursuing or having a romantic relationship in both films, focusing instead on controlling her powers and looking after her kingdom. This implied that there was more to a princess than just entering into romantic relationships, although others have criticised this representation as a

suggestion that women cannot 'have it all' (Streiff & Dundes 2017a:1; Hine et al 2018b:4). Anna on the other hand, did desire a romantic relationship. However, in this case it would seem that Anna's desires were rooted within her longing for companionship due to her separation from Elsa. In *Frozen*, Anna noted in 'For the First Time in Forever' that now the gates were opening for Elsa's coronation, she wouldn't be alone, and this day was a chance to change her lonely world:

> Don't know if I'm elated or gassy
> But I'm somewhere in that zone
> 'Cause for the first time in forever
> I won't be alone
>
> I can't wait to meet everyone! [*gasp*]
> What if I meet... the one?
>
> Tonight, imagine me gown and all
> Fetchingly draped against the wall
> The picture of sophisticated grace
> I suddenly see him standing there
> A beautiful stranger, tall and fair
> I wanna stuff some chocolate in my face
>
> But then we laugh and talk all evening,
> Which is totally bizarre
> Nothing like the life I've led so far
>
> For the first time in forever
> There'll be magic, there'll be fun
> For the first time in forever
> I could be noticed by someone

Anna's desire for a romantic relationship was made clear in this song, however it was also implied that her motivation for this was due to the years she had spent in isolation. Whilst Maja Rudloff (2016) contemplated whether Anna should have desired travelling the world rather than a relationship (35), I argue it was understandable that the lonely princess wanted some form of companionship. Anna was projecting her loneliness onto the desire of a relationship,

rather than trying to fix the complex one with Elsa. Her desire was clearer still, when Anna bumped into Prince Hans of the Southern Isles and immediately became infatuated, accepting a marriage proposal after knowing him for only a few hours.

When Anna and Hans broke the news to Elsa, the new Queen completely rejected the idea, telling Anna, "You can't marry a man you just met". Anna angrily retorted, "You can if it's true love". For the first time in a Disney princess film, the issue of heroines falling in love with men they had known for less than a day (and then marrying them) was laid bare. *Frozen* directly challenged its predecessors and set Elsa as the first princess to question the validity of such a relationship (Davis 2014a:51). Anna on the other hand, whilst trying to support the concept of true love was highlighting how a person can make rash choices when they were in a dark place (such as isolation). Elsa pointed this out, asking Anna, "what do you know about true love?", trying to suggest that her younger sister was making a poor choice. However, this backfired when Anna challenged Elsa, stating, "more than you, all you know is how to shut people out". This visibly hurt Elsa, as although she had isolated herself from Anna, she had done it out of love and protection. This was the first time in the film where it was hinted that 'true love' was not necessarily always 'romantic'.

Anna persisted with her relationship with Hans, however Elsa was not the only one to challenge it. When Anna left Hans in charge to go and find Elsa, she instructed Kristoff to help her get to the North Mountain (where she suspected Elsa was). She explained her situation to him:

> **Anna**: Oh well, it was all my fault. I got engaged but then she freaked out because I'd only just met him, you know, that day. And she said she wouldn't bless the marriage-
> **Kristoff**: Wait. You got engaged to someone you just met that day?
> **Anna**: Yeah. Anyway, I got mad and so she got mad and then she tried to walk away, and I grabbed her glove-
> **Kristoff**: Hang on. You mean to tell me you got engaged to someone you just met?!

Kristoff was visibly shocked at Anna's recklessness, whilst Anna seems to still think there was no issue. He asked her whether her parents warned her about strangers:

> **Anna**: Yes, they did… [*She backs away from Kristoff a little*] But Hans is not a stranger.
> **Kristoff**: Oh yeah? What's his last name?

Anna: Of the Southern Isles.
Kristoff: What's his favourite food?
Anna: Sandwiches.
Kristoff: Best friend's name?
Anna: Probably John.
Kristoff: Eye colour.
Anna: Dreamy.
Kristoff: Foot size?
Anna: Foot size doesn't matter.

Anna's answers demonstrated that she knew very little about her betrothed and highlighted again how quickly she had entered into a relationship. Kristoff's (and Elsa's) reaction was a stark contrast to the normalisation of romantic relationships developing over short periods in previous films, and this conversation highlighted that contrast. Although Anna insisted it was true love, both Kristoff and Elsa questioned her assessment.

The deconstruction of true love continued within the film. When Kristoff took Anna to see his troll family, they tried to persuade them to get married. However, Anna fell ill due to being struck by Elsa's ice powers, and the trolls informed Anna that "only an act of true love can thaw a frozen heart". Although some trolls tried to suggest that Kristoff should give Anna true love's kiss, Anna was insistent they returned to Hans. This scene embedded the idea that romantic love would save Anna. And, based on how princesses such as Snow White, Aurora, Belle and Tiana had been saved, *Frozen* was simply following suit. However, the focus on the romantic narrative shifted as it was revealed that Prince Hans was using Anna to get the crown. Although Kristoff was able to return Anna to the castle, Hans rejected Anna's request for true love's kiss. He kept Anna isolated, extinguished the fire in the room and explained that he wanted to marry into the throne to become king as he was the youngest of his brothers. Although he would have preferred Elsa, he could tell "no one was getting anywhere with her" but Anna was "so desperate for love" that she was instantly willing to marry him. He planned on killing Elsa and taking the throne for himself. However, after Elsa ran away and Anna was now dying, he could leave his betrothed, kill Elsa and become King.

The consequences of Anna's naivety and desperation for love were severe, yet the film still seemed to focus on romantic love. When Olaf the snowman found Anna, he implied that Kristoff may love her, and they agreed they would find him so he could give Anna true love's kiss. However, in the climax of the film where Elsa had escaped and her emotions were causing a snowstorm, Hans was trying to find her to kill her and Anna and Kristoff were trying to find each other to save her from freezing, the theme of romantic love saving princesses ceased. Upon

hearing Hans draw his sword, Anna saw him attempt to kill an unaware Elsa. Although Kristoff was close, Anna used all her strength before she fully froze to stand in front of Elsa, protecting her from the blow. Anna froze to solid ice, breaking the sword. As Elsa, Kristoff, Olaf, Sven and the citizens of Arendelle saw Anna's sacrifice, there was a sombre atmosphere. However, as Elsa was hugging and crying over her frozen sister, Anna's heart began to warm and thaw, along with the rest of her body. As the two sisters realised and embraced, the reason for Anna's saviour was clear:

> **Elsa**: You sacrificed yourself for me?
> **Anna**: I love you.
> **Olaf**: An act of true love will thaw a frozen heart.

For the first time in a Disney princess film, an act of true love did not necessarily mean romantic love (Davis 2014a:52). *Frozen* demonstrated that love could extend to family and friendship. This was a significant change from the focus on previous princess films. For the first and second wave, romantic love was the heavy focus of the films, with princesses often relying on romantic love to save them. Although third wave princesses controlled their own narrative and achieved their desires, romantic relationships still featured. Fourth wave princesses actually gave up their dreams to pursue romantic relationships and were then rewarded for their actions with their original dreams. Whilst romance had driven the plot (due to Anna's engagement announcement causing Elsa to accidently reveal her powers) (Rudloff 2016:35); *Frozen* had changed the narrative and introduced other understandings of love that extended beyond that of romance. And when romance was presented (in the case of Anna at the end of *Frozen*) it was one of respect, rather than romantic infatuation.

Anna and Kristoff's relationship was developed further in *Frozen II*, with their relationship lasting for a few years at this point. Although they lived in the castle (it was not revealed whether they shared a room), they were not married. The plot point that drove the development of their relationship was Kristoff trying (and failing) to propose to Anna throughout the film. He made a number of failed and very awkward attempts where he often accidently insulted Anna or she took what he was saying out of context. When he finally tried to arrange a proper proposal, Anna had already left to find the source of the voice with Elsa, separating them until the end of the film. Kristoff's solo song, 'Lost in the Woods' finally gave the audience the perspective of a male love interest. After they were separated, Kristoff wondered, "Who am I? If I'm not your guy? Where am I? If we're not together?". Kristoff's loss indicated how much he depended on his relationship with Anna, showing a vulnerability never seen

before in a Disney Prince. When they finally reunited after Anna destroyed the dam, Kristoff once again demonstrated his respect and devotion to Anna:

> **Anna**: I'm sorry I left you behind. I was just so desperate to protect her.
> **Kristoff**: I know. I know. It's okay. My love is not fragile.

Kristoff's understanding of Anna's actions demonstrated his respect and love for her. "My love is not fragile" also implied how Kristoff understood that he was not the only person Anna loved, and that there were times that Anna would put someone else before him, and he would always accept that. This demonstrated a healthy relationship based on mutual respect and understanding that had actually developed over a long period of time, rather than the few days of previous princesses.

Like Elsa, Moana did not have a love interest. In fact, Moana did not highlight or hint at anyone being a romantic interest to her, it was simply irrelevant to the story and film (Hine et al 2018a). Whilst *Brave*, *Frozen* and *Frozen II* featured romance in one way or another, *Moana* simply did not include it. This was the first princess film to not include a mention of romance at all, with the plot being entirely dedicated to the journey and development of Moana, and how she saved her island. This also demonstrated how princess films were changing, and the inclusion of romance was not necessary in order for a film's plot to develop.

First wave princesses were passive dreamers, who desired romantic relationships but had no means of achieving their goals. Second wave princesses became lost dreamers, women who wanted more from their life, but soon forgot their dreams when a romance was introduced. Third wave princesses changed the narrative, they were identified as active leaders. They actively led themselves on a journey of self-discovery and dealt with situations they faced themselves, romantic relationships were featured, but appeared to be more of an afterthought. Fourth wave princesses were also identified as lost dreamers, sacrificing their own desires for a love interest. The fifth wave can be identified as innovative leaders. They were focused on providing new solutions to the problems they faced, often through female support. They offered a different way of thinking, and whilst most did not engage with romance (Hine et al 2018b:9), the one who did maintain a healthy relationship based on mutual respect. The fifth wave offered a new way of thinking about Disney princesses, as women who controlled their own destiny completely.

Conclusion

In this final film chapter, I have explored how fifth wave films have depicted femininity through four shared characteristics: assertiveness, leadership, female support and lack of romantic relationships. Through textual analysis and with the support of limited secondary research on these more recent films, I identified the fifth wave as innovative leaders. Merida, Anna, Elsa and Moana were demonstrated assertive leadership that was often based on or enriched by female support. Romance, if it was present at all, was based on mutual respect and understanding and did not drive the plot or character development. Leadership was continuing to grow in American society as well, with Hillary Clinton being the first woman to run for President. Her experience and knowledge that made her a well-deserved nominee was contrasted by her misogynistic and politically underqualified opponent, Donald Trump. Despite losing the presidential race, Clinton's mere nomination suggested a slight change in attitudes towards women as leaders. However, America still did not seem to be ready for a female president. Nevertheless, American women were not discouraged. The Women's March fought for intersectional equality and the Me Too movement exposed sexual harassment and abuse within Hollywood and beyond, with women behind it all. More women were elected into office, demonstrating a shift in more female leaders, something which was also reflected in the fifth wave princess films. Merida, Anna, Elsa and Moana produced images of a different kind of leadership, one that was innovative and often androgynous rather than masculine. Leadership rooted in female support mirrored the female support experienced by women all over the world during the Women's March and Me Too movement, demonstrating that when women support one another, they can achieve greater things together.

Chapter Seven: Gender Profiling

Introduction

In this section of the thesis I used thick description to identify five waves of femininity depicted in the Disney princess phenomenon films. Firstly, I provided an in-depth account of the narrative, plot and characterisation of each princess film. This enabled me to identify five chronological 'waves' within the phenomenon, each separated by varying depictions of femininity, contributing to my answer to 'How is femininity depicted in the Disney princess phenomenon films?'. Secondly, these waves were used to help answer my broader research question, 'how is femininity depicted in the Disney princess phenomenon?' through identifying five clusters of models that I called 'waves' to demonstrate shifts of feminine depictions. The term 'models' suggests two things. Models of femininity highlighted the differing 'types' across the phenomenon, suggesting they could be archetypes of femininity. But these models also produced an 'ideal' depiction of femininity through the policing and moderation of princess behaviour. I argue each princess was rewarded or punished based on her behaviour and attitude, whether by other characters or the plot itself. For example, while Pocahontas was the first princess in the phenomenon to demonstrate developed leadership skills, she remained with her people instead of going to England with John Smith. Although this could mean she was to continue leading her people, it also suggested that if she was a leader, she should not pursue a romantic relationship - she could not have both. In each chapter, I identified a model of femininity that captured the overarching characteristics displayed by the princesses.

Those belonging to the first wave were distinguished as 'passive dreamers'. Their storyline focused on them being in some form of danger (Snow White & Aurora) or abused (Cinderella), but they lacked the individual agency to escape their environment, being forced to rely on the agency of men. They passively accepted heavy household duties (Snow White and Cinderella) or newfound identities (Aurora). In the context of their bleak situations, their only dream was to have a romantic relationship. Yet their storyline would have the heroine simply wait for the prince to come to them, rather than having an active role in their own journey. The princess would also be in some form of danger that their prince would rescue them from. For the first wave, romance was their final goal, and their passivity was rewarded with their prince at the end of the film. As the majority of the plot revolved around romance in some way, it did not allow the first wave princesses to develop their character any further than desiring romance. The model 'passive dreamers' indicated the first wave princess's inability to achieve their dreams by themselves, instead being rewarded for their passivity with their desire for a relationship.

The second wave were identified as 'lost dreamers'. These heroines had specific dreams and aspirations that did not involve romance or men. They wanted to escape entrapment (Eilonwy), explore human worlds (Ariel), have an adventure outside of provincial life (Belle) and explore life beyond restrictive palace walls (Jasmine). Each desire was different from the next, with each of the women wanting to explore something new. However, their aspirations were cast to one side when they met a love interest. Eilonwy managed to escape with Taran, and the end of the film implied the beginning of their romantic relationship. Ariel did not even think to try and become a human until she was motivated by her desire for Prince Eric. Belle gave up any chance of adventure when she took her father's place as prisoner in the Beast's castle. When she did have an opportunity to escape, she returned to care for the Beast, and only left to care for her sick father. Jasmine escaped the palace walls but was forced to reveal her identity to protect Aladdin, a boy she was attracted to, and then happily agreed to marry him at the end of the film. Their stories ended at the beginning of their marriage (Ariel and Jasmine) or relationship (Eilonwy and Belle), so the audience never saw if they were able to achieve their dreams they had at the beginning of the story, their initial desires lost in their 'happy ending'. 'Lost dreamers' acknowledged that the princesses had dreams that didn't involve romance at the beginning of their stories, which allowed them to develop assertive, rebellious and brave characteristics. However, their dreams became lost when they found their love interest, the princesses assertive, rebellious and brave behaviour policed through romantic relationships.

Third wave princesses were categorised as 'active leaders'. These women did not have dreams as such, rather they were leaders who focused on solving obstacles in their lives and communities. There was often an implied love interest, but with the exception of Pocahontas the relationships did not begin developing until the end of the film, often implying they were an afterthought. However, it could also be seen as third wave princesses 'having it all'. 'Active leader' implied that a princess' story was not defined by a romantic relationship. Rather, it was the princess' assertive nature, communication and negotiation skills that developed their leadership that drove the plot.

The fourth wave was classed as 'sacrificing dreamers'. Each princess had a specific dream and used their assertive nature and determination to try and achieve it, but knowingly sacrificed their dream for their desire of a romantic relationship. Tiana gave up her human body and her dream of opening a restaurant so she could be with Naveen. Rapunzel gave up her freedom in order to save Flynn Rider's life. Both women were rewarded for their sacrifice with their newly desired romantic relationship, and their original dream. However, the women had to sacrifice it in order to achieve it. 'Sacrificing dreamers' suggested that the princess' changed their priorities after a love interest arrived, and actively made a choice to sacrifice their dream for their male love interest, rather than just 'forget' it, like second wave princesses.

Fifth wave princesses were identified as 'innovative leaders'. Each princess demonstrated an assertive nature, offered and received female support in order to solve issues, and provided leadership, as well as being identified as official leaders of their community. Romantic relationships were either not featured at all in a princess' storyline (Merida, Elsa and Moana), or the princess was supported by her partner in a healthy and respectful way (Anna and Kristoff, specifically in *Frozen II*). 'Innovative leaders' demonstrated each princess' unique form of thinking and leadership, with each princess able to control their destiny within their storyline.

As I conclude the film section with this chapter, I want to provide more depth to these models by comparing my findings to wider understandings of femininity. I did this by using psychological gender modelling scales. These scales are used by psychologists to examine, measure and identify "traits traditionally considered as typically male vs. typically female" (Kachel et al. 2016:2), which in turn may lead to helping psychologists understand human behaviour (Constantinople 1973:389). The earliest gender measurement scale was created in the 1930s (Terman & Miles 1936), and the most recently published scale was produced in 2016 (Kachel et al 2016). The most developed and commonly used scale was created in the 1970s. Sandra Bem created the Bem Sex Role Inventory (*hereafter*: BSRI) which not only measured masculine and feminine traits, but also introduced the idea of androgynous traits (Bem 1974).

These gender measurement scales were used in the field of psychology to explain and analyse behaviour. Therefore, I compared my own findings with each measurement scale. I conducted a survey of the field and identified 55 measurement tests, but some were not usable, either because they did not include an actual or clear scale or did not measure both masculine and feminine traits. Of the 55, I selected six for use. These included the most widely used ones as well as those most relevant to my data: Bem's (1974) 'The Measurement of Psychological Androgyny'; Spence, Helmreich and Stapp's (1974) 'Personal Attributes Questionnaire'; Diekman & Eagly's (2000) 'Stereotypes as Dynamic Constructs: Women and Men of the Past, Present, and Future'; Mahalik et al's (2005) 'Development of the Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory; Wilde and Diekman's (2005) 'Cross-Cultural Similarities and Differences in Dynamic Stereotypes: A Comparison Between Germany and the United States'; and finally a Disney studies interpretation of gender measurement, England et al's (2011) 'Gender Role Portrayal and the Disney Princesses'. Each of these scales used a single word or phrase to define traits, which allowed me to cross reference my own findings.

Psychological Models of Gender

Comparing the models of femininity identified in Disney princess films with psychological gender tests drew out three key findings. Firstly, as time progressed, more traits associated with masculinity were introduced. Secondly, as 'masculine' characteristics were introduced, the

princesses' activity and behaviour became more heavily policed. Thirdly, the introduction of a romantic relationship was used in princess films as a tool to reward and punish those behaviours.

I found that upon comparing the character traits in princess films with psychological gender measures, the relationship was being used to reward or pacify the princess. In the first wave films, I identified key traits as domesticity, victimhood, passivity and being desirous of a romantic relationship. Each of these measurements were also identified by psychologists as 'feminine', either through the phrase itself or actions that imply the phrase. For example, the first wave princesses' domesticity could also be described as "very home oriented" (Spence, Helmreich & Stapp 1974); and "domestic", or "care for children" (Mahalik et al 2005). The princesses' display of victimhood could also be explained by behaviour such as "fearful"; "ashamed"; "collapses crying" and "victim" (England et al 2011). The first wave princesses' displays of passivity could be an umbrella phrase for "yielding" (Bem 1974); "very submissive" (Spence, Helmreich & Stapp 1974); "spineless"; "servile"; "subordinates self to others" (Diekman & Eagly 2000; Wilde & Diekman 2005); and "submissive" (England et al 2011). Even being desirous of a romantic relationship could be represented through "invest self in romantic relationship" and "sexual fidelity" (Mahalik et al 2005). Each gender measurement test identified these traits as feminine.

This suggested that the first wave princesses strongly adhered to what psychologists using these gender measures would deem as exclusively feminine qualities. The image of femininity that the first wave produced is one of victimhood, reliance upon others (specifically men), women as the archetype for domesticity and a lack of agency. Their only desires are to engage in a romantic relationship, often with their rescuer. I argue that these feminine qualities were rewarded with the romantic relationship. The princesses were passive victims who were able to do very little to remove themselves from oppressive or unwanted situations, and this was rewarded because they were acting in a feminine way. When looking at the above feminine traits, there were none that would help them escape their situation. Instead, being passive meant they remained in their situation, waiting for someone else to help them. The relationship at the end of their film was a reward for their passivity, and other 'feminine' traits. However, in the first wave, this was what they desired in the first place. From the beginning of their films, Snow White and Aurora made it very clear they wanted a romantic relationship, and Cinderella desired one as soon as she met the Prince. The concept of a relationship had already been introduced in the film and did not change the princess' behaviour. Therefore, it could be seen as a reward for the first wave's passivity, domesticity and victimhood.

The second wave changed this narrative. Eilonwy, Ariel, Belle and Jasmine desired something outside of a relationship. Eilonwy wanted to free herself from the Horned King's

Dungeon and have her freedom; Ariel wanted to explore the human world as a human rather than a mermaid; Belle desired the adventures she read in her books rather than the mundane life of her village; Jasmine wished to escape royal life and explore the world beyond her palace walls. Each of these desires were revealed at the beginning of the film (and in Eilonwy's case, when she was introduced). Not only did they demonstrate no interest in relationships (Jasmine even rejected marriage proposals, saying she wanted to marry for love in her own time); but the second wave displayed masculine and androgynous characteristics.

I identified assertiveness, rebelliousness and bravery and desiring a romantic relationship as key traits within second wave princess films. Two of these (assertive and bravery) were identified in the gender measurement scales as 'masculine', rebelliousness corresponded with both androgyny and femininity, while the desire for a romantic relationship was associated with femininity, as discussed in the paragraph above. Assertive traits could also be identified as "defends own beliefs"; "willing to take a stand"; (Bem 1974); "assertive"; (Bem 1974; England et al 2011); and "independent (Bem 1974; England et al 2011). Brave traits were also seen as "willing to take risks" (Bem 1974); "daring"; "adventurous"; "courageous" (Diekman & Eagly 2000; Wilde & Diekman 2005); and "brave" itself (England et al 2011). Rebellious traits featured both androgynous traits: "unpredictable" and "unsystematic" (Bem 1974); and feminine traits: "rebellious" itself (England et al 2011). The only other shared feminine trait was the desire for romantic relationships, which could also be described as "invest self in romantic relationship" and "sexual fidelity" (Mahalik et al 2005).

The mixture of gendered traits suggested that the characters and behaviour of second wave princesses did not correspond to the traditional model femininity found in the first wave. First wave 'feminine' passivity was replaced with 'masculine' assertiveness. The princesses no longer accepted injustice, they actively tried to dismantle it in some cases. First wave 'feminine' victimhood was replaced with 'androgynous' and 'masculine' forms of rebelliousness and bravery. Ariel, Belle and Jasmine were unhappy with elements in their life and were often seen rebelling against men who were trying to control them in some way. There was a limit to the rebelliousness and assertiveness they demonstrated, as Belle and Jasmine were never seen committing the violent acts needed to rescue themselves. These were committed by men, often on their behalf. Ariel did commit an act of violence to save Prince Eric, but it was pure coincidence rather than planned, and Ariel, Belle and Jasmine were rescued by their princes. Their bravery however seemed to know little bounds and each princess rescued or assisted their prince in some way within their films (with Eilonwy often having to give Taran instructions on what to do, but not actually doing it herself), something first wave princesses could not even do for themselves.

However, each princess' intentions to follow their dreams changed once a love interest was introduced into the storyline. Whilst the princesses demonstrated traits of assertiveness, rebellion and bravery throughout the film, their story ended with the beginning of a romantic relationship. Their character traits that corresponded in the gender measurement scales with 'masculine' and 'androgynous' were no longer seen as they were whisked off into the sunset: Eilonwy started a new life with Taran; Ariel married Eric; Belle danced with the newly human Beast; and Jasmine married Aladdin. It would seem that the introduction of a love interest was being used to police the princess' transgression from femininity. Romantic relationships quashed and suppressed the princess' masculine characteristics, perhaps reminding them of how they should behave. This was clearer when the story ended, and the viewers had no idea whether Eilonwy truly got her freedom; or whether Ariel learnt about the human world; if Belle truly got an adventure; or Jasmine was able to explore the world outside of palace walls. Their stories end with the beginning of a relationship, a reminder of their feminine expectations.

The third wave princesses continued to transgress certain feminine traits, which were again policed through a romantic relationship. Like the second wave, these women were not driven by a romantic relationship. Pocahontas wanted to meet the English and solve the conflict between her people and the colonisers. Within this context, she formed a relationship with John Smith, but chose to remain with her people at the end of the film. Mulan wanted to bring honour to her family, and herself. She indicated some attraction towards her Captain, Li Shang, but did not pursue anything until he initiated contact at the end of the film. Finally, Kida demonstrated no interest in a romantic relationship, instead focusing on helping and providing for her people. Like Mulan, there was a hint of romance at the end.

I identified communication, negotiation, assertiveness and leadership as third wave character traits. Romantic relationships were featured, but not desired. Their identified traits were a mixture of feminine, masculine and androgynous. Feminine traits, in the gender measurement scales, included negotiation, communication and leadership. Negotiation could also be seen as being "understanding" (Bem 1974).[33] Communication was seen as being "compassionate" and understanding (Bem 1974); being "very aware of feelings of others"; "very understanding of others" and "very warm in relations with others" (Spence, Helmreich & Stapp 1974); and "supportive" (Diekman & Eagly 2000; Wilde & Diekman 2005). Leadership as a feminine trait was identified as "loyal" (Bem 1974); "intuitive" (Diekman & Eagly 2000; Wilde & Diekman 2005); and "asks for or accepts advice or help" (England et al 2011). Masculine traits featured assertiveness and leadership. Assertive traits could also be viewed as "defends own beliefs"; "willing to take a stand"; (Bem 1974); "assertive"; (Bem 1974; England et al 2011); and

[33] This was the only personality trait that would match with the concept of negotiation.

"independent (Bem 1974; England et al 2011). Leadership included "acts as a leader"; "analytical"; "dominant"; "forceful"; "has leadership abilities"; "independent"; "makes decisions easily" (Bem 1974); "stands up well under pressure"; "not at all excitable in a major crises"; "can make decisions easily" (Spence, Helmreich & Stapp 1974); "stands up under pressure" (Diekman & Eagly 2000); "dominant"; "analytical"; "good at reasoning"; "good at problem solving" (Diekman & Eagly 2000; Wilde & Diekman 2005); "independent"; "gives advice" and "leader" (England et al 2011). Androgynous traits focused on leadership and communication. Leadership included "adaptable"; "reliable"; and "sincere" (Bem 1974). Communication featured being "tactful" and "truthful" (Bem 1974).

The third wave princesses were able to display 'masculine' traits such as assertiveness by standing up against imperialism and patriarchy on behalf of themselves and others. And, in the case of Pocahontas and Kida, their display of assertiveness was followed by respect from male characters. Pocahontas actively dismantled John Smith's imperial attitudes through her assertiveness and communication skills. Mulan defied tightly bound gender norms by standing up to her father and then making the decision to protect him by going to war in his place. Kida commanded respect from Milo and his men when they arrived in Atlantis, even committing an act of violence to do so. The third wave built on the second's image of rebellion and bravery through the 'masculine' trait of leadership. They did not have to rebel, as they themselves were in power. Pocahontas single-handedly resolved the conflict between the Powhatan's and the English colonists, even rejecting a relationship with John Smith to continue to develop her leadership role. Mulan not only managed to defeat the majority of the Hun, but saved the Emperor, killed Shan Yu and saved China thanks to her leadership skills. Kida demanded more for the people of Atlantis, and literally saved it when she was chosen by the crystal to protect her land. Third wave princesses may have had help and support to carry out their quests, but it was the princess at the helm.

It would appear that this newfound agency for the princesses did have its consequences. Pocahontas' and Mulan's behaviour was policed at the end of the film. Pocahontas chose to remain with her people rather than go to England with John Smith. After Mulan became one of the best warriors in the Chinese Army; saved China; and was offered a place on the Emperor's Council she respectfully declined and returned home to her family. She received the validation she needed from her father, and Li Shang arrived at their house and it was implied a romantic relationship would bloom. Both of these scenarios demonstrated their inability to have it all. If Pocahontas wanted to be a leader, she had to give up her relationship with John Smith. Whilst Mulan had achieved greatness, her return home rooted her firmly back in her life before she was a warrior, and through Li Shang's arrival she was reminded that to truly bring honour she must marry well. For Pocahontas and Mulan, it seemed you either cannot have it all

(Pocahontas), and if you tried you would be reminded of your place within societal structure. Again, romantic relationships were being used to punish the princesses for transgressing, forcing both Pocahontas and Mulan to choose between leadership and romance. Kida differed from this. She became a leader at the end of the film, and her romance with Milo was subtly implied at the end (there was no significant romantic storyline that drove the plot), but that did not change her role as Queen of Atlantis. Kida was not forced to choose between a relationship and leadership due to her transgression from feminine traits. However, Kida is a non-franchised Princess. It is significant that one of the non-franchised princesses who will receive less marketing, less merchandise, and less exposure to consumers, is the one who was truly able to 'have it all'. Meanwhile, princesses whose behaviour was policed, and who are forced to choose between leadership and love, were included within the Disney Princess Franchise.

Fourth wave princesses continued to contravene particular feminine traits, being depicted as assertive and determined. However, due to their desire for a romantic relationship at the end of their film, they also became self-sacrificing. Determination and assertiveness were both male character traits. Determination, for example, was conceptually close to "ambitious"; "self-reliant"; self-sufficient" (Bem 1974); and "never gives up easily" (Spence, Helmreich & Stapp 1974). Assertiveness could be demonstrated through "defends own beliefs"; "willing to take a stand"; (Bem 1974); "assertive"; and "independent" (Bem 1974; England et al 2011). Feminine traits were self-sacrificing and desiring a romantic relationship. Self-sacrificing could also be depicted as being "able to devote self completely to others" (Spence, Helmreich & Stapp 1974). Desiring a romantic relationship could also be portrayed as "invest self in romantic relationship" and "sexual fidelity" (Mahalik et al 2005).

Although comparing third and fourth wave gender scales tables would indicate a similar balance between masculine and feminine characteristics, the fourth wave princesses did revert back to some more traditional images of first and second wave femininity. Whilst the fourth wave featured 'masculine' characteristics within the images of assertiveness and determination, their 'feminine' self-sacrifice at the end of the film, owing to their desire for a romantic relationship, was difficult to ignore. Tiana and Rapunzel were both assertive, standing up for themselves when belittled (Tiana) and manipulated (Rapunzel) by men (and in Rapunzel's case, women as well). They also developed a new characteristic, determination. Third wave princesses did not have any specific or obvious desires; however, fourth wave princesses had a clear goal *and* a plan to achieve it. This determination was featured within the plotlines until the very end, where the narrative forced the princess to shift her goal by choosing between a love interest and her own dream. Whilst romance was an afterthought within the third wave films, it actually eclipsed the fourth wave princesses' desires. Tiana knowingly gave up her childhood dream of a restaurant to be with Naveen, and Rapunzel consciously gave up her freedom in

order to save Flynn Rider's life. This narrative shift was reminiscent of the second wave's behaviour policing. The fourth wave continued to transgress femininity with their determination and assertiveness, and therefore a romantic love interest was introduced. This punished the heroines, as they now had to make the choice between their original and new desires. Unlike the third wave, Tiana and Rapunzel sacrificed their dreams in order to pursue a romantic relationship (once again, they could not have both). However, because they did choose the relationship, both Tiana and Rapunzel were rewarded for their self-sacrifice with a relationship *and* their original dream. However, this was only because they had chosen the relationship *first*, rather than second. This was a plot line reminiscent of the second wave. It would also appear that princesses who began to display signs of 'masculine' traits were then pacified through the introduction of a relationship. This posed the question that if third wave princesses had chosen their relationship, would they have also been granted leadership?

The fifth wave princesses continued to demonstrate both feminine and masculine characteristics, however their behaviour was not pacified or policed with/by a romantic relationship. Continued masculine characteristics were assertiveness and leadership. Masculine assertive traits could also be depicted as "defends own beliefs"; "willing to take a stand"; (Bem 1974); "assertive"; (Bem 1974; England et al 2011); and "independent (Bem 1974; England et al 2011). Leadership included "acts as a leader"; "analytical"; "dominant"; "forceful"; "has leadership abilities"; "independent"; "makes decisions easily" (Bem 1974); "stands up well under pressure"; "not at all excitable in a major crises"; "can make decisions easily" (Spence, Helmreich & Stapp 1974); "stands up under pressure" (Diekman & Eagly 2000); "dominant"; "analytical"; "good at reasoning"; "good at problem solving" (Diekman & Eagly 2000; Wilde & Diekman 2005); "independent"; "gives advice" and "leader" (England et al 2011). Leadership as a feminine trait was identified as "loyal" (Bem 1974); "intuitive" (Diekman & Eagly 2000; Wilde & Diekman 2005); and "asks for or accepts advice or help" (England et al 2011). A new feminine trait was introduced: female support. This could be portrayed as "sensitive to the needs of others" (Bem 1974); "sympathetic" (Bem 1974; Diekman & Eagly 2000; Wilde & Diekman 2005); "supportive"; "nurturing" (Diekman & Eagly 2000); "nice in relationships (develop friendly and supportive relationships with others)" (Mahalik et al 2005); "supportive" (Wilde & Diekman 2005) and "nurturing" (England et al 2011). A masculine trait that could contribute to female support could be England et al's (2011) "gives advice".

As noted above, the fifth wave's demonstration of masculine and feminine traits were not policed with a romantic relationship in the film. Although Merida was faced with the prospect of an arranged marriage, she went to great lengths to reject it and was successful. For Elsa and Moana, it was not even a plot point or source of character development, it was simply not mentioned. The only princess who actually engaged with the idea of romance was Anna. Her

first love interest, Hans, was used to highlight her poor and desperate choices because of her isolation, and to dissect the idea of marrying a man she barely knew, which had become a hallmark of Disney princess films. However, when Anna entered into a relationship with Kristoff, it was the healthiest and most respectful relationship in the entire phenomenon. It had been built over time based on mutual respect and belief in one another. Anna did not have to choose between leadership and love, nor did she have to make any sacrifices for her relationship. Whilst the second, third and fourth waves have never been able to 'have it all'; in the fifth wave, relationships were not being used as a tool to police the princess' behaviour. It was again interesting to note that the three princesses who either had no relationship included within their plotline (Elsa and Moana) or had a healthy and respectful relationship (Anna) were not franchised princesses. This indicated a normative shift in the depiction of 'femininity'.

Conclusion

When thinking about an answer to the questions 'how is femininity depicted in the Disney Princess Phenomenon?'; and 'how is femininity depicted in the Disney princess phenomenon films?', this section of the thesis has identified five waves of princess films and demonstrated that each presents a different model of femininity. This model is either an 'ideal' or a 'transgression' and is treated accordingly. If the princesses were adhering to the hallmark of femininity (a stereotyped and the least politically progressive of the psychological gender models), they were rewarded, if they transgressed (perform masculine traits), their behaviour was policed. This pacifying was primarily done through romantic relationships. Of the five princesses who were not policed for their behaviour (Kida, Merida, Anna, Elsa and Moana), only one of them was a franchised princess (Merida). With this in mind, it will be interesting, in the next section of the thesis to see how these models are marketed within consumer experiences.

Section Two: The Parks and Merchandising

Introduction

This section of the thesis develops my analysis of how femininity is depicted in the Disney princess phenomenon through an examination of Disney parks and merchandising. It will specifically be answering my second research question, 'Which models of femininity are the most dominant in princess consumer experiences?'. As established in Chapter One, the phenomenon is multi-faceted. The design and use of space inside the parks are one facet. Disney's merchandising of 'princess products' (online and in the parks) is another. Because these are quite different fields of enquiry, I have used different research tools for each. As explained in Chapter One, I will be employing auto-ethnography for my discussion of the parks based on first-hand original fieldwork, and data content analysis for my examination of the merchandising. Both of these facets of the Disney princess phenomenon are massive in terms of income generation and potential impact on visitors and consumers. This introduction will briefly outline their history and scope. The subsequent chapters will discuss my findings and analysis.

Disney's Marketing and Synergy

In her book *Why We Love Disney: The Power of the Disney Brand* (2011), Andi Stein concluded, "marketing and promotion have been shown to be significant contributors to the popularity of the Disney brand" (215). Disney products can be found in a variety of different shops, from the Disney Store itself to Primark. With this high level of exposure, Disney is able to access a number of target demographics, from babies to adults. The most successful way they can achieve this is through the promotion of recently released films. Stein (2011) has stated that "for nearly Disney anything, there is a corresponding piece of merchandise", such as t-shirts or plush toys (229). A standout franchise for Disney to market is the Disney Princesses, which made Disney four billion dollars (Stein 2011:229). In 2020, Forbes named Disney 7th in their list of 'The World's Most Valuable Brands', with only brands such as Apple, Google and Facebook coming before them (Forbes 2020). The next 'leisure' company to be named was LEGO at 92nd; the nearest entertainment brand was Netflix at 26thand Disney owned ESPN at 58th, showing the dominance that Disney has when it comes to brand value. With choices for merchandise steadily narrowing as pointed out by Lamb & Brown (2006:37), it would seem that Disney have a large market share of that narrowing choice due to their licensing tactics.

Alan Bryman (2010) commented in *The Disneyization of Society* that merchandising has been a main business feature for Disney since the earlier years (84), perhaps thanks to Walt Disney himself realising "the immense profitability" (83). For Bryman (2010), "the key principle behind merchandising is a simple one of extracting further revenue from an image that has

already attracted people" (80). It would certainly seem that Disney take merchandising very seriously, to the extent of including it "as a theme in the filmic diegesis", such as 'Air-Herc' sports sandals featured in Hercules (1997) (Budd & Kirsch 2005:39). It would seem that these 'images' that extract further revenue can range from Mickey Mouse and Friends to Pixar, Marvel and Star Wars characters.

The predominant way in which Disney can increase revenue is through their use of synergy:

> …the Disney company has developed the strategy so well that it represents the quintessential example of synergy in the media/entertainment industry. "Disney synergy" is the phrase typically used to describe the ultimate in cross-promotional activities. (Wasko 2001a:71)

Disney uses synergy to promote all aspects of their business, which further increases revenue. Wasko (2001) uses a case study of Hercules (1997) to show the examples of cross-promotional activities that the company uses (72-81). Wasko noted that Disney used merchandising, mall tours, stage shows, a Disney on Ice show, Hercules themed locations (such as 'Baby Pegasus Playland'), interactive games and the chance to win a car from the vehicle sponsor (Wasko 2001a:72-3). All of these events and products were released before the film reached cinemas, which emphasises the high hopes that Disney have for their upcoming releases. This strategy has not changed since *Hercules*. In October 2016, Disney released merchandise for their upcoming film Moana before its December release in the UK. With merchandise already available, the Disney theme parks and resorts also scheduled events prior to the film's release. On the 20th November Disney World scheduled an early film screening for Moana (Smith 2016) and also meet and greets with Moana across various Disney resorts, including Walt Disney World and Disneyland Resort (Slater 2016). In 2019 Disney promoted *Frozen II* through merchandise, previews of the film in Hollywood Studios Park, and partnering with third party brands where consumers could win a trip to Norway, or have original stories read to them on their Google Nest Mini's (Thilk 2019). This prime example of more recent 'Disney synergy' used for *Moana* and *Frozen II* once again implies Disney's high hopes for the film. This also allows Disney to create profit before the film is actually released. Once the film arrives in cinemas, profits (in theory) should only increase. Wasko revealed that one Disney executive commented: "It's important to us that the entertainment comes first. First, the kids will see the movie and fall in love with the characters; then they'll want to bring home a piece of that movie" (Biederman 1997:24 cited in Wasko 2001a:72). However, this is not really what Disney are doing. Disney

are almost pre-empting that consumers will love the films they produce and will often produce merchandise and hold events before the film is released. Therefore, Disney are beginning the synergy process earlier, in order to maximise revenue for their shareholders.

Disney Princess Franchise

Synergy aside, Disney also keeps a constant flow of merchandise for their 'staple' character universes such as the Disney Princesses. Stein (2011) argues that one of the reasons why Disney's merchandising has been such a success is due to the specific demographic groups that are targeted (229). Examples include the Disney Princesses, which as explained in Chapter One, was developed in order to market all of the princesses to their target market, which is young females aged 3-8 (Interview 3), making $1.686bn in 2018 (The Licensing Letter 2019).

The original franchised princesses were Snow White, Cinderella, Aurora, Ariel, Belle, Jasmine, Pocahontas and Mulan. Since then the franchise expanded, including Tiana, Rapunzel and Merida. Interestingly, these eleven women are not the only princesses that the Disney animated classics and Pixar have produced. Princess Eilwony of *The Black Cauldron* (1985), Kida of *Atlantis: The Lost Empire* (2001), *Frozen* and *Frozen II*'s (2013 & 2019) Anna and Elsa and Moana of *Moana* (2016) are also princesses but are not officially included within the franchise. Anna and Elsa have their own *Frozen* brand, Moana is marketed separately (but has started to be featured on princess products), and Eilwony and Kida have no marketing at the present time. As I am exploring the princess phenomenon, each princess' merchandise will be included with the exception of Eilonwy and Kida as there is no data.

Despite not all princesses being included, the range of princesses could be steppingstones for consumers to engage with at different ages. As young females grew up, they may move from favouring one princess to another: "they might start with Cinderella and move up to Merida as they get older" (Interview 3). Therefore, in order to keep the princesses relevant, Disney would need to create a vision and a brand strategy. This was explained further in Interview 3[34]:

> So, it might be the vision for Princess might have been something like 'princesses that little girls around the world aspire to be' or 'who have the qualities that little girls aspire to be'... Now your brand strategy, your franchise strategy, might well say and your strategy says how are you going to achieve it? So we're going to

[34] Interviewee 3 no longer works for Disney, and is therefore not privy to the actual brand strategy of the franchise at the moment, they are drawing on their experience in the company.

> ensure that all princesses are equal, we are going to inspire that diversity is alive and well in all of our products or messages, marketing messages we might say look to develop a new princess every 3 years that's culturally relevant around the world, so that gives you your like, if your foundation is about what you're trying to do with princesses, those are your building blocks and if we do these four things, we will be on a longer term direction with this, rather than, you would never find in the Walt Disney Company a strategic goal being 'we need to make this much profit in a year', that would be – so it might be one of the commercial imperatives might be underneath your franchise strategy, might be to make sure we break even or we don't lose money, after 5 years of pushing this franchise, because a lot of franchi- you might have to over invest in them to get them known and get them working and it might seem like you're gonna – if you lose money in the short term for it you're doing the right thing in the long term that's fine." (Interview 3)

Although Interviewee 3 was drawing on their previous experience of the princess franchise rather than current information, the introduction of the Dream Big Princess campaign to market the princesses to consumers reflects the idea that there is a princess to inspire every girl. 'Dream Big Princess' aims to bring the stories of the Disney Princesses to the "front and center to inspire girls and kids around the world to realize their full potential and dream big" (Epstein 2016:NP). It would seem however that the princesses are not equal in terms of their merchandise and marketing (as I will explain in Chapter Eight), and as I will discuss in the section conclusion, are not represented accurately in the Dream Big Princess campaign.

However, the Disney Princess brand is also licenced to other companies (as per Disney's synergy model), with many businesses paying a significant amount of money to produce Disney's popular line:

> **Interviewee 2**: Because it's such a successful line, a brand you know of that particular merchandising. I know, you know, Disney Consumer Products and Disney Store probably did forty billion in revenue last year, forty billion, not million, billion, you know, a few years ago Mattel always used to have the rights to the princesses?

> **Interviewer**: Yes, and it's changed recently…
>
> **Interviewee 2**: They sold – Hasbro came along and paid 500 million just for the licensing fee to produce the princesses. So, you can see how big and how successful that product line is. (Interview 2)

My interviews with former Disney employees demonstrated the intricate details of the brand, all the way down to the packaging of the princess products. One former employee informed me that "each brand gets its own style guide. And within that style guide you're going to use a certain typeface, you know whether it's for a product name and then you'll have colour schemes, you'll have backgrounds, so you're kind of given a palette to work from… But these style guides would also go out to people like your Mattel and your Hasbro, they would have to produce packaging for the products they are producing" (Interview 2). The former employee explained that "Obviously with girl packaging it's a lot more pinks, sparkles, we have foils on here. You know, that's what little girls are looking for." (Interview 2), and when I asked how Disney made the decisions to brand girl focused merchandise in this way, they explained that:

> "...they'll have focus groups. And so, they'll invite girls of a certain age to come in and play with the product and look at the product and they get their response. So, they may have ten or twenty 3-5-year olds come in and they'll say, 'well what do you think of this?' 'do you like the colours, the hair?' They're not only looking at product, product within packaging, they'll have some different variations of the packaging, then they'll get feedback that way." (Interview 2)

It is clear that Disney makes a significant effort to brand their princesses for the consumers. This also is reflected in the synergy for the Disney Princess Franchise:

> "Obviously you've got this strong back up of movies, DVDs, all this branding that can back up, you know, your product. So, when you have, you know a princess that has a movie and is on Disney channel and all these other items that can support it. You know, that helps sell the product too. You know the little girls – she's

> watching something on Disney Channel or she's watching something on DVD and you know she's to have a new duvet or a t-shirt or some clothing, they have this hero worship of you know 'I want to be a princess, I want to be like this princess' you know, 'I want to dress up like this princess, I want to have the dolls, I want to have all the various products', this is how, you know, Disney sells their brand. (Interview 2)"

Disney also conducts a lot of consumer research in order to continue the brand's success. This may be one reason why some princesses have more exposure than others:

> "So, everything is given a chance, but they definitely listen to consumers, the research panels going on basically everyday somewhere in the world and then that feedback is then fed back to all the divisions to say ok be careful, or consumers cannot get enough of Anna and Elsa – what are we gonna do about it should we be making Frozen 2? Should we be creating a Frozen land in the park blah blah blah blah, those sorts of things. So that group helps steer you to whether you start watering down an effort behind a franchise or a character or whether there is a huge consumer desire and it's a consumer desire that – it has to have relevancy, so a lot of decisions in Disney they're not made for commercial benefit, they're only made – if its relevant. So rather than doing sort of, Princess and the Frog 2 and it's got no relevance to Princess and the Frog 1 it would just never happen." (Interview 3)

Consumer research is conducted to determine whether a princess should be put in the franchise, as well as examining how well the film performed in the box office. *The Black Cauldron* and *Atlantis: The Lost Empire* did not do well on their cinematic release and both women were not considered to be the 'main character' of the story. This could be the reason that Eilonwy and Kida were not included in the franchise:

> It is often the case that lesser known characters are not considered in the official line because they are less well known due to an underperforming film, or the character had only a

> secondary role in the film, or the character, herself, was simply not as appealing to warrant her addition. That said, I am not privy to the actual qualifications and decision criteria for any particular case. (Interview 4)

It is clear that Disney focuses on consumer research to inform their decisions, and although interviews have alluded that the company would rather please consumers than be profit driven, ultimately both factors go hand in hand. The Disney Princess Franchise is one of their most successful brands within the company, something that is also demonstrated at the Disney theme parks.

Disney Parks

In 1955 Walt Disney opened Disneyland in Anaheim, California, U.S.A, a theme park where families could enjoy a day out together. It was described like this, by Walt Disney:

> To all who come to this happy place: Welcome. Disneyland is your land. Here, age relives fond memories of the past, and here youth may savor the challenge and promise of the future. Disneyland is dedicated to the ideals, the dreams, and the hard facts that have created America, with the hope that it will be a source of joy and inspiration to all the world. (Walt Disney 1955)

Within the park, guests can go on rides; take photographs; meet characters; view parades and night-time fireworks shows; purchase food and beverages; purchase merchandise and have many more experiences. Originally, Disneyland consisted of five themed 'lands': Main Street, U.S.A; Adventureland; Frontierland; Fantasyland and Tomorrowland. Since then, Disney has added New Orleans Square (1966), Critter Country (1972), Mickey's Toontown (1993) and most recently Galaxy's Edge (2019). In 2001, the Walt Disney Company introduced a separate theme park: Disney California Adventure Park.

The business venture soon expanded, with Walt Disney World Resort opening in Orlando, Florida, U.S.A in 1971. Much bigger than its predecessor, Walt Disney World now boasts four theme parks within the resort: Magic Kingdom (opened in 1971), Epcot (opened in 1982), Disney's Hollywood Studios (opened in 1989) and Disney's Animal Kingdom (opened in 1998). In addition, Disney opened two water parks: Disney's Typhoon Lagoon (opened in 1989) and Disney's Blizzard Beach (opened in 1995), as well as Disney Springs, a shopping area opened in 1975; Disney's Wedding Pavilion (opened in 1995) and ESPN Wide World of Sports

athletic complex (opened in 1997). Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom has a similar layout to Disneyland, Anaheim, including: Main Street, U.S.A, Adventureland, Frontierland, Liberty Square, Fantasyland and Tomorrowland. Overall, Walt Disney Attractions received 157,311,000 guests in 2018 (TEA 2018:9), with Magic Kingdom at Walt Disney World and Disneyland, Anaheim ranking first and second respectively in the worldwide rankings of amusement and theme parks (TEA 2018:11).

My discussion, in Chapter Nine, will focus on Walt Disney World for two reasons. Firstly, it is their largest solely owned park, meaning the Walt Disney Company has full control over the way it is run, with no external influences such as other companies or governments. Secondly, it is the only Disney park in which it is possible to 'meet' most of the princesses[35]. Walt Disney World and Disneyland Resort are both solely owned by the Walt Disney Company. However, Disney part-owns a further four parks: Tokyo Disney Resort, Urayasu, Japan (1983); Disneyland Paris Resort, France (1992); Hong Kong Disneyland Resort, Hong Kong (2005) and Shanghai Disney Resort, China (2016). Overall, Disney's Parks, Experiences and Products[36] produce $26,225,000, of which $6,758,000 is operating income (Disney 2019:39). Within the Parks sector of Disney, domestic (US) parks (Walt Disney World and Disneyland Resort) contribute $17,369,000 revenue, whereas international parks (Tokyo Disneyland Resort, Disneyland Paris, Hong Kong Disneyland and Shanghai Disneyland) only contribute $4,223,000 (Disney 2019:41). Disney has full ownership over Walt Disney World, Orlando and Disneyland Resort, Anaheim (Disney 2016:7). For its international parks, Disney "manages and has effective ownership interests of 81% in Disneyland Paris, 47% in Hong Kong Disneyland Resort and 43% in Shanghai Disney Resort" (Disney 2016:7). Disney licenses its "intellectual property to a third party to operate the Tokyo Disney Resort" (Disney 2016:7). As Disney has full ownership over its domestic parks, they have control over all park business, licensing and marketing.

[35] At Walt Disney World it is possible to meet: Snow White, Cinderella, Aurora, Ariel, Belle, Jasmine, Pocahontas, Mulan, Tiana, Merida, Anna, Elsa, and on special occasions: Moana. Disneyland Resort in California does not have official meeting slots for Pocahontas or Mulan - although they recently unveiled a princess dining experience that included Mulan, and Pocahontas will occasionally meet at The Royal Hall. However, these are not guaranteed character meets like there are at Walt Disney World.

[36] This includes: theme park admission; parks and experiences merchandise, food and beverage; resorts and vacations; merchandise licensing and retail; parks licensing and other (Disney 2019:39)

Chapter Eight: Disney Princess Merchandising and Marketing

Introduction

I will now turn to a new facet of the Disney princess phenomenon: merchandising and marketing, focusing on which models of femininity are the most dominant within princess merchandising and marketing? Each princess' marketing journey begins with a film that establishes her story, personality traits, wants and desires. From this, the film and its subsequent merchandising is marketed to consumers. Whilst merchandise may come out before the film is released, Disney is basing the merchandising and marketing on the plot and characters that have already been created. Products can range from soft toys, books, music, costumes and playsets. In her book *Understanding Disney*, Janet Wasko (2001) argued that

> "Today, Disney films, comics, books, toys, theme parks, and other products are sources of pleasure for many – if not most – young American children, who learn and have reinforced ideas and values that may last a lifetime" (2).

Some of these ideas and values are related to femininity. Disney releases a vast volume of merchandise and Disney consumers experience what I call 'consistent exposure' to the products and, consequently, to depictions of femininity. As established in Part One of this thesis, models of femininity are established through the films and in this chapter, I seek to explore which ones are most heavily marketed, and which are not. My aim is to scrutinise these models and to ascertain whether there is one (or more) dominant one/s. This is significant because, as Sharon Lamb and Lyn Brown (2006) argue in *Packaging Girlhood*, "When one thing is so dominant, then it's no longer a choice; it's a mandate, cannibalizing all other forms of play. There's the illusion of more choices out there for girls, but if you look around, you'll see their choices are steadily narrowing" (37).

Firstly, I will explore the level of each princess's exposure within the merchandise and make comparisons with other princesses. As explained in Chapter One I will use product data that I collected over four months in order to show what products are available on the Disney Store UK website; examining the frequency, intensity and relative volume of exposure of different products. Secondly, I will compare the intensity of the marketing of princesses with the

analysis I conducted on the princess films and their depictions of femininity. Each section will be supported by original primary research data from my field notes, interviews and screenshots.

Data Gathering

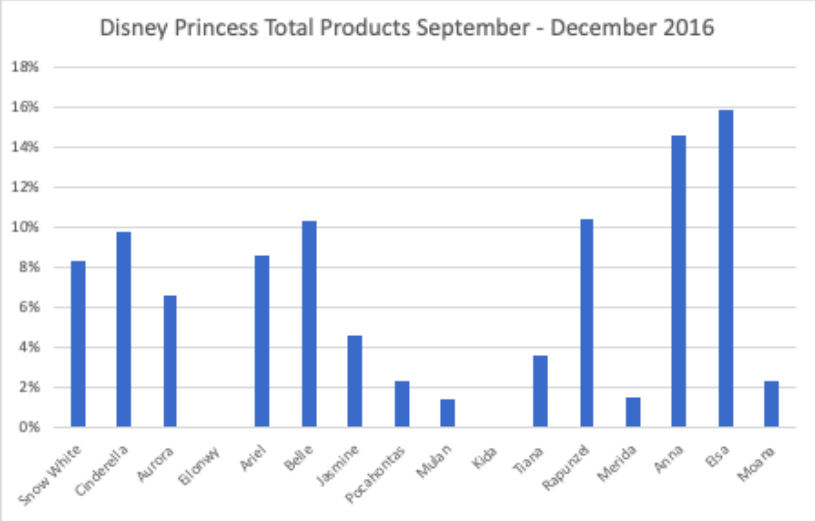
I introduced my data gathering methods in Chapter One. Here I will briefly expand on my processes to provide snapshots of how the Disney princesses are merchandised. From January 2016 to December 2016, I compiled a database consisting of 144 web pages for every available Disney Princess on the Disney Store UK Website. The year-long longitudinal study should reveal trends and patterns (Braun & Clarke 2006:6). Due to the vast amount of princess products Disney produces, a monthly data collection was the most appropriate to avoid an overflow of data.[37] Their merchandising and marketing are featured on separate pages which includes all of the *Frozen* and *Moana* characters. Further, two princesses, Eilwony (*The Black Cauldron*) and Kida (*Atlantis: The Lost Empire*) have no merchandise at all on the website. With these exceptions then, each webpage included all merchandise that featured one princess or elements of her film. For preliminary data analysis, I split the merchandise into five different sections based on what was available: Identification Product, Association Product with Multiple Princesses, Association Product with One Princess, DVDs and Supplemental Products.[38] This allowed me to see the range of ways each princess was represented, and also in which areas of merchandise a princess may be featured more, if at all.

I did not allow for double counting in my data to have a clear outcome. If some products were double counted, then the database would have been unreliable, as some princesses would have potentially double the number of products. In order to avoid this, I observed each individual web page, and assigned each item to just one of the five categories above. For example, each time I saw more than one princess on a product such as an item of clothing or a pair of shoes, I assigned that product to the Association Product with Multiple Princesses category. Once I had completed this process with all 16 princesses, I began to analyse the trends that indicated which princesses (and therefore which character traits) were being heavily marketed and which were being excluded. This was similar to how certain character traits within the princess films were being 'rewarded' and 'policed' with romantic relationships.

Data & Findings

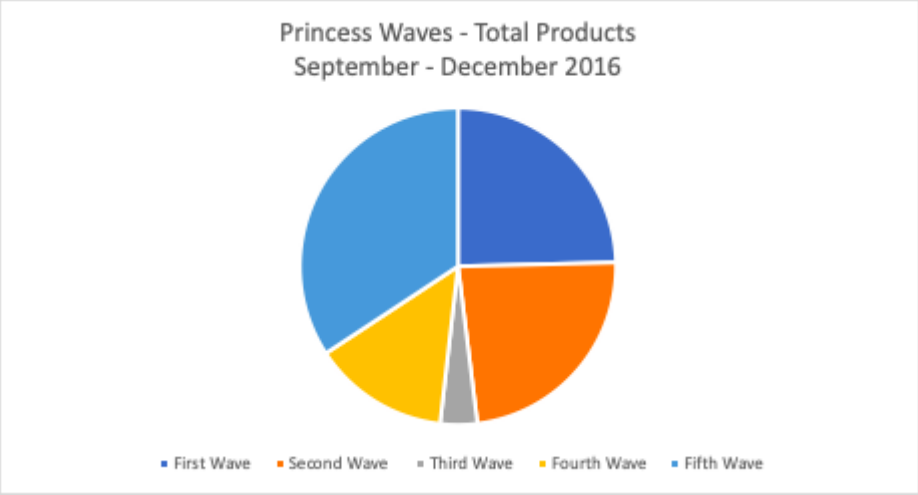
Figure 1. Disney Princess Total Products September - December 2016

[37] However, as explained in Chapter One, I have only analysed the final four months of the study.
[38] These terms are introduced in Chapter One.



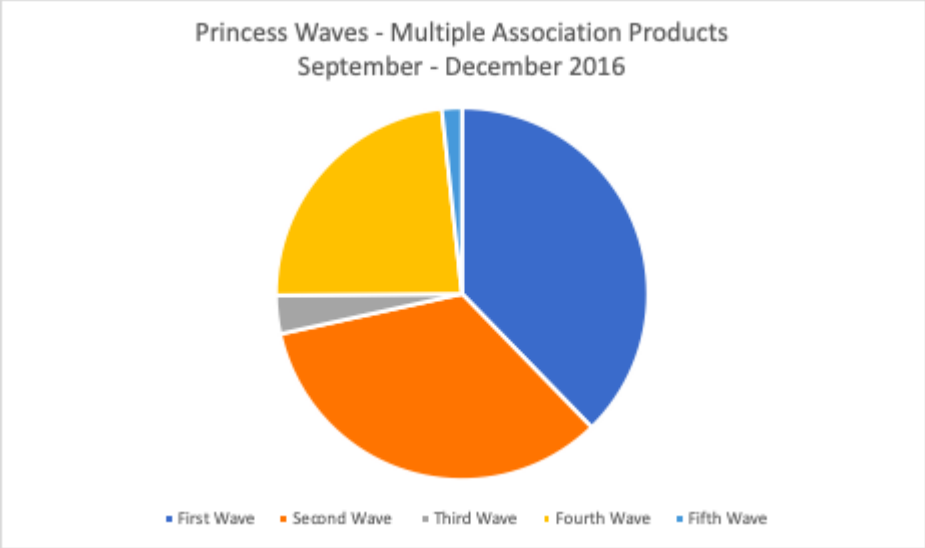
Overall, Elsa took 16% of the princess product share, whilst Anna took 15%, demonstrating them as Disney's most marketable princesses, despite them not being included in franchised products. Rapunzel, Belle and Cinderella followed with a 10% share each.

Figure 2. Princess Waves Total Products September - December 2016



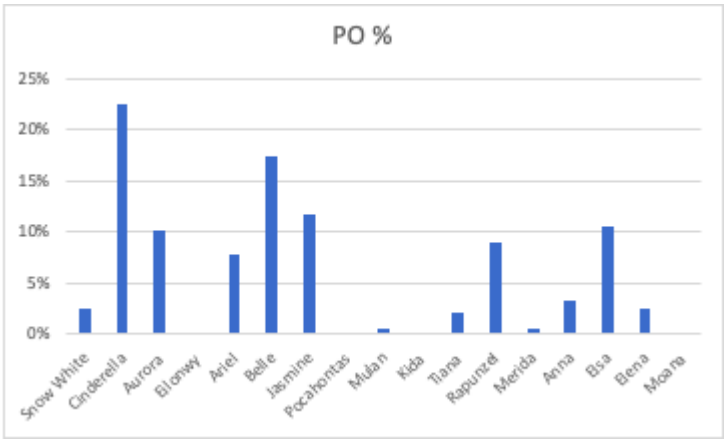
When examining the product share according to my waves system, it highlighted certain princess's dominance even further. Due to the large individual product shares of Elsa and Anna, the fifth wave dominated the market share by 34%. The first wave was represented in 25%, the second wave in 23% and the fourth wave in 14%. The third wave was the least marketed, with a 4% share.

Figure 3. Princess Waves Multiple Association Products September - December 2016



When examining how the waves are marketed inside the Disney Princess Franchise, the findings look different. Due to Anna, Elsa and Moana not being included in the Disney Princess Franchise, their products were omitted from this data. Therefore, the first wave had a 39% representation in franchised products. The second wave had a 34% share, with the fourth wave being included in 23%. The third and fifth wave were the least marketed in the franchised products, with the third wave having representation in 3% of the products, and fifth wave having a 2% share.

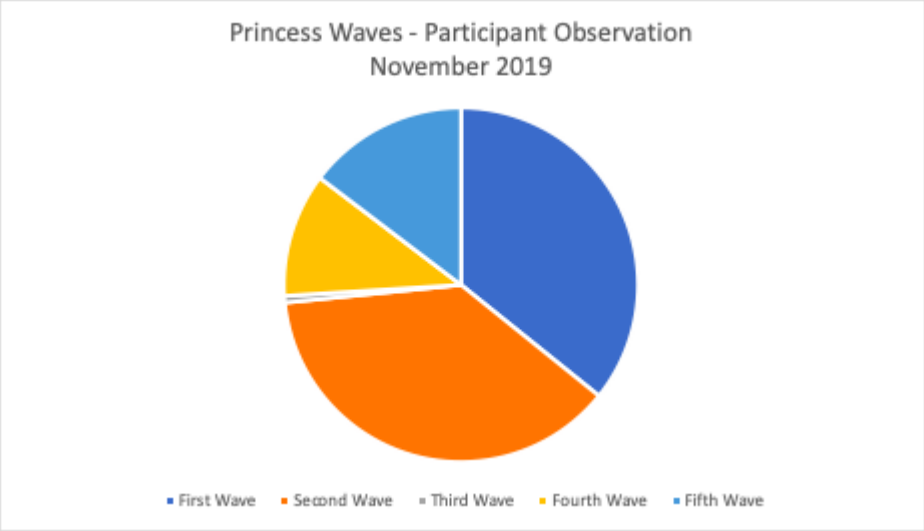
Figure 4. Participant Observation of Princess Consumer Choices November 2019



Whilst conducting an auto-ethnography at Walt Disney World, I also completed a participant observation study of consumer choices in princess costumes. I observed consumers for 20 minutes at different times of the day for four days (a total of seven times). To do this, I situated myself behind Cinderella's Castle in Magic Kingdom, Walt Disney World. This location allowed me to view consumers entering and leaving Fantasyland from multiple directions, as well as view them entering and leaving the Bibbidi Bobbidi Boutique, the shop for princess makeovers.

The most popular choice for consumers was Cinderella. The least popular were Mulan and Merida. No consumer chose to dress as Eilonwy, Pocahontas or Kida.

Figure 5. Princess Waves Participant Observation of Princess Consumer Choices November 2019



In terms of wave representation, I observed another disparity between the 5 typographies. In this case, the second wave as a whole was the most dominant in consumer choice at 38%, with the first wave closely following at 36%. The fifth wave princesses were 15% of the consumer choice, with the fourth wave following at 11%. Once again, the third wave correlated with their lack of merchandising, with 1% of consumers choosing to dress as a third wave princess.

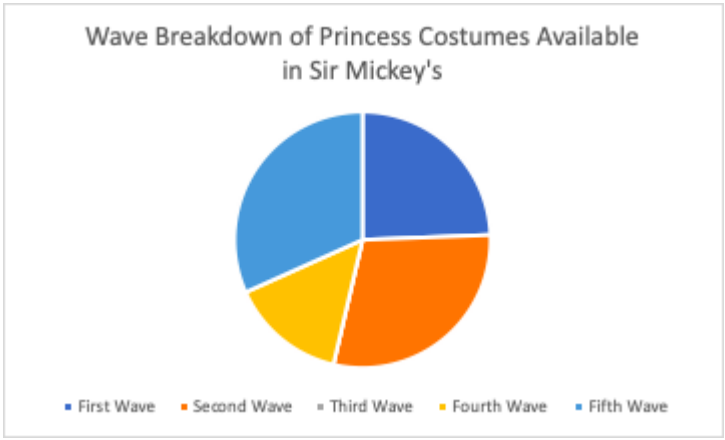
Figure 6. Princess Costumes Available in Sir Mickey's, Fantasyland



Belle, Anna and Elsa were the most marketed within the shop called Sir Mickey's, followed by Cinderella. At the time of my visit, *Frozen II* was weeks away from release, so I did expect Anna

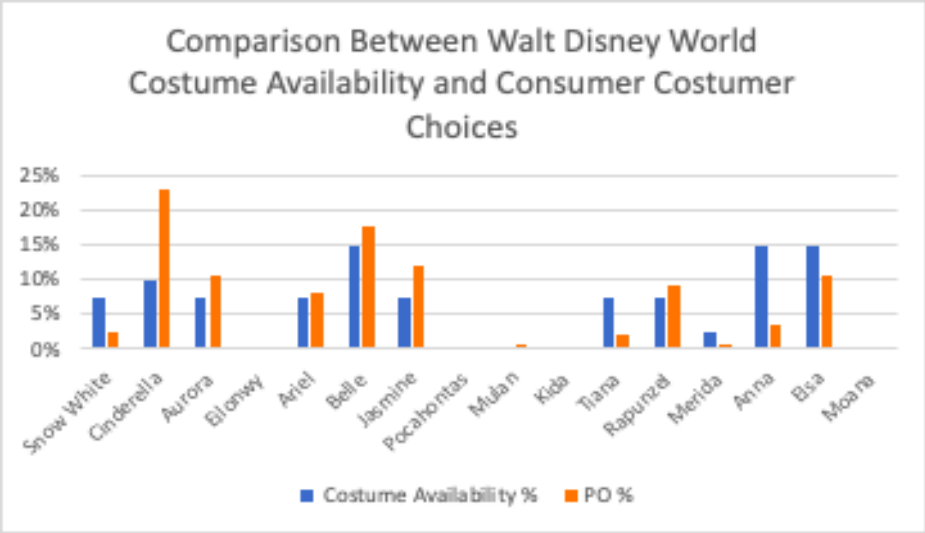
and Elsa's merchandise to be more heavily marketed than other princesses. Eilonwy and Kida, who were not marketed online, were also unavailable at Walt Disney World. Moana costumes, whilst not being available in Sir Mickey's, could be purchased at other shops in different lands of Magic Kingdom. Pocahontas and Mulan, despite being franchised princesses, had no costume representation in Sir Mickey's or any other store in Walt Disney World.

Figure 7. Wave Breakdown of Princess Costumes Available in Sir Mickey's



With regards to waves, the fifth wave had the largest representation in costumes with 32%, followed by the second wave at 29% and the first wave at 24%. The fourth wave was represented in 15% of the total costumes, whilst the third wave had no representation at all.

Figure 8. Comparison Between Walt Disney World Costume Availability and Consumer Costume Choices



Combining the two datasets demonstrated some interesting comparisons. Despite Cinderella only having a 10% share in costume availability, she was chosen by 23% of consumers. Belle's 15% costume share was reflected by being chosen by 18% of consumers. Again, despite Jasmine only having a 7% representation in princess costumes, she was chosen by 12% consumers. And, although Anna and Elsa had a 15% share of the costumes each (especially as their sequel was being released), only 3% of consumers chose to dress as Anna, and 11% of consumers chose to associate with Elsa. With Eilwony, Pocahontas, Mulan, Kida and Moana having no costumes available to purchase in Sir Mickey's, I also observed no consumers choosing to dress as the aforementioned princesses with the exception of Mulan, who was chosen by 1% of consumers.

Analysis

As demonstrated in Figure 1., Elsa and Anna were identified as Disney's most marketed princesses, with a 16% and 15% respective share of total products. Rapunzel, Belle and Cinderella followed with a 10% share each, being almost equally marketed with the newer heroines. Therefore, the main model of femininity being heavily marketed was 'innovative leaders' due to the dominance of Anna and Elsa. Disney's choice to market Anna and Elsa so heavily is likely to be related to their film's box office success, and general consumer popularity. As a previous consultant commented in their interview, "Clients [in this case Disney] spend their days simply trying to find out what children desire and what parents are accepting of, and they provide it to the best of their ability" (Interview 4). In the case of Anna and Elsa, the subsequent success of *Frozen* will have been the indicator that more Frozen merchandise was needed to meet the demands of consumers. Nevertheless, the heavy marketing of Anna and Elsa promotes assertive female leaders who support one another and have no reliance on romance.

The same cannot be said for the princesses that followed. Disney's marketing choices were further exacerbated when it was revealed that Rapunzel, Belle and Cinderella shared a 10% representation of products. Despite coming from different waves, each princess has a common denominator: their dreams *revolved* around men (Cinderella), they forgot their dreams *because* of men (Belle), or they actively sacrificed their dreams *for* men (Rapunzel). Despite their character development being quite limited (Cinderella) or curtailed and policed when demonstrating too much empowerment (Belle and Rapunzel), these are the princesses who Disney market the most after Elsa and Anna.

These consumer choices become more apparent when we consider the least marketed princesses: Eilonwy (0%), Pocahontas (2%), Mulan (1%), Kida (0%), Merida (2%) and Moana (2%). These princesses demonstrated assertiveness and leadership. Pocahontas, Mulan and Kida demonstrated communication and negotiation in times of conflict. Merida and Moana produced images of female support. Despite them being produced and developed in a very

similar way to Anna and Elsa, they were the least marketable princesses. It could be argued that Eilonwy, Pocahontas, Mulan and Kida are 'older' princesses, however with Cinderella (1950) and Belle (1991) having a 10% share in total products this is clearly not the case. An interesting finding from this particular figure is how such similar princesses have such disparate marketing patterns. Despite Anna and Elsa producing the same models of femininity in their films as Merida and Moana, and even similar models to Pocahontas, Mulan and Kida, they are marketed far more. In this case, the innovative leaders, through Anna and Elsa are being promoted, whereas their fellow fifth wave princesses are being ignored. This suggests that Disney is not focusing on promoting certain types of femininity, rather they are focusing on what sells the most. Perhaps the promotion and exclusion of models of femininity is driven by the consumer.[39] Disney promotes their most empowered princesses to consumers, and consumers happily purchase items and engage with merchandise. Alternatively, it is the consumers who enjoy the stories of these women and create demand for the merchandise, which Disney provides. With Frozen being a global phenomenon due to its successful film release and audience reception, their over exposure will have contributed to their heightened popularity. Therefore, I would argue that Anna and Elsa's empowerment in the film is not the reason they are so heavily marketed. Rather, it is due to their popularity and ability to bring in more sales for Disney and their shareholders. This point is supported when considering Moana's marketing. Despite Moana also being a fifth wave princess who was assertive, a leader, had female support and no romantic relationships, her representation within merchandise was a mere 2% in comparison to the Frozen sisters. In addition, Moana was the most recently released princess during data collection, and despite the fact that Disney "launch a product assuming that every princess is equal" (Interview 3), Moana's merchandise was limited. Another former Disney employee explained this further:

> But I would say over time it becomes obvious which princesses consumers like vs. which princesses consumers love and probably, so they probably liked Merida at the movies and they liked the fact that she was high spirited but they might not want to be – and they might want to have a dress up of Merida but new girls coming into, getting to know the franchise might not relate to Merida as much as they do to Cinderella, so everything starts off being given the same but I'd say after about two years it becomes obvious which princesses are in that sort of – all princesses are

[39] I discuss the importance of consumers, and how their perceptions of femininity (which are informed by society and popular culture) later on in this chapter.

> equal but definitely some are loved more than others. Cinderella is probably the oldest one, Rapunzel because again, she had long – whether it was her long hair or whether she was sassy as well, there's something about Rapunzel's new one. With Elsa and Anna that whole film, if you couldn't, people would buy anything, I think Elsa and Anna will stay there in that top 5 from now on because they're, they're so unique it was just – the whole film, everything just clicked on that particular film, but I don't think Disney expects every new film that comes out with a princess for that princess to make it to the top 3 or top 5 but just sometimes it happens and it clicks. The film still happens, whether it, it's not about – the film is still made if it's a great film like *Moana*, it's a great film with the right messages and great storytelling, it gets made even if you don't think that princess is gonna be the most loving of all time. So, it's not the products defining the film strategy, the film strategy sets up the product, hopefully. (Interview 3)

This suggests that Disney know that not every new princess film that is released will be as beloved as their previous and perhaps more iconic princesses, and they allow this to become clear once the film and products have been circulated. However, even when Moana (which during data collection was the most recent release) was being promoted, she did not have many products at all for such a 'new' princess. This suggests that Disney may not always solely listen to their consumers, but also make key decisions about promoting and ignoring certain princesses.

A factor that could impact consumer choice was the appearance of princesses, something which was discussed with interview participants. Eilonwy, Pocahontas, Mulan and Kida, despite being produced in the same period as Ariel, Belle and Jasmine were clearly not as popular, and none of these princesses had any form of 'traditional' princess dress:

> Interviewer: Which princess do you think is featured the least in the merchandising and why?
>
> Interviewee 1: I would say you've got your Pocahontas; you've got your Mulan who probably aren't seen as like the iconic princesses that are therefore pushed to the back just because they don't typically classify as a stereotypical princess. They haven't got the

> ball gowns and the kind of everything you would see with the others. They're kind of less well known. They're probably less popular films as well. So in terms of what sells, if it doesn't sell, then they won't – I doubt they they'd push it or them as much and if Mulan and Pocahontas and anything else aren't seen as the most popular ones they aren't gonna push them to the forefront because they aren't the ones that are gonna get the most commercially viable benefit from (Interview 1).

First wave princesses such as Snow White, Cinderella and Aurora each had a ball gown or nearly floor length dress to wear in their film. Ariel was a mermaid, and when she did become human her dresses were floor length and ball gown style. Belle's yellow ball gown was an elegant off the shoulder floor length dress. Jasmine was the only anomaly, wearing hareem pants and a cropped top with jewels, yet her outfit could still be regarded as 'feminine'. On the other hand, Pocahontas' outfit was a beige and tan short dress with only one shoulder, allowing her to run, climb, jump and swim. Mulan despised the traditional Chinese dress she was made to wear to meet the matchmaker, wore men's clothes for the majority of the film, and saved China wearing a long straight dress that was more practical for the activities she was participating in. Kida's outfit consisted of a bra-lette style top and a short wrap skirt that allowed her to swim, run and fight as a warrior. None of the third wave's outfits screamed the 'traditional' femininity of the previous waves, rather they were designed to be practical (how practical they would be in reality is another question entirely). When consumers choose the ball gowns of Cinderella, Aurora and Belle over the more 'practical' outfits of Pocahontas, Mulan and Kida, they are associating with a more traditional model of femininity. The fact that princesses who do not have a ballgown or traditionally 'feminine' outfit are the least marketed (and chosen) demonstrates that consumers are consciously or subconsciously conforming to the more traditional role models.

When examining the total share of products in waves (Figure 2) there are similar patterns. Due to Elsa and Anna, the fifth wave dominates the total product share, followed by the first, second, fourth and finally third waves. The dominance of the fifth wave could be explained through them simply being the most recently released princesses. *Frozen*'s box office success ($1,280,802,282) could also be a factor. One might hope that the empowering storylines and character development of the fifth wave would also contribute to their popularity. Based on this, Disney appears to heavily market innovative leaders at the forefront, however they are also providing passive dreamers, lost dreamers and even sacrificing dreamers with a lot of exposure. Active leaders are ultimately ignored in comparison to the others, which suggests that whilst

they share similar characteristics with the fifth wave innovative leaders, consumers do not seem to be interested in them.

However, when it comes to princess representation within Disney Princess Franchise products, the dominance of princesses and waves begins to shift. And whilst it can be argued that total product exposure is directly linked to consumer demand, it is Disney that makes the decisions as to which princesses are included in the princess franchise. In this case, the reason that dominance shifts in franchised products is because Elsa and Anna are not included. Because of their absence, first wave princesses dominate merchandise with a 39% share of products. This suggests that whilst Disney is aware of Elsa and Anna's popularity, they still choose to market them separately rather than include them in the princess label. Disney continues to market their 'classic' princesses the most. This notion is enhanced further as the second wave of princesses follow, with a 34% representation. The fourth wave decreases quite significantly, with 23%. However, the third and fifth wave's barely have any representation in the franchise at all, with a 3% and 2% respective share. It is the women who demonstrate passivity, domesticity and victimhood that are promoted most heavily in the franchise, whilst the princesses who demonstrated assertiveness, leadership and female support are excluded. The first wave had no dreams of their own, only waiting for a prince to come and rescue them. When a child chooses to associate with the Disney princesses, it is the first wave that they will be most exposed to. This creates a circle of association: the consumer associates with the princesses that are *available* to them which repeats the demand of the *same* princesses. Meanwhile, the princesses who demonstrated leadership, communication, negotiation, assertiveness, and female support are the least represented, which means that unless consumers create a demand for something they barely have access to, the market spread will not change. Whilst Disney may be looking to increase their profits and their decisions are based on consumer demand, their prioritisation of the first, second and fourth waves do reinforce particular models of femininity. This cycle of association is therefore informed not only by Disney's marketing and business choices, but also by the perceptions of consumers.

This was particularly reflected during my autoethnography in Walt Disney World, as indicated in Figure 4. Through participant observation of consumer costume choices, I identified Cinderella as the most popular choice, with 22% of consumers choosing her costume. Belle followed with 17%, Jasmine was next at 12% and Elsa and Aurora followed with 10% each. As one of the earlier, most established princesses, Cinderella appeared to be the clear consumer favourite. And, with Belle and Jasmine both being featured in the more recent live action remakes of *Beauty and the Beast* and *Aladdin*, it is understandable that their popularity continued. When the participant observation was split by waves (Figure 5), the dominance of the first and second wave was demonstrated again. 38% of consumers chose a second wave

princess, whilst 36% of consumers chose a first wave princess. Thanks to Elsa, 15% of consumers chose fifth wave princesses.

Of course, my merchandising data was based on UK product availability, so whilst I was in Walt Disney World, I took note of what merchandise was available in Fantasyland, Magic Kingdom. In Figure 6, I identified Belle, Anna, Elsa and Cinderella as the princesses with the most costume merchandise available to purchase in Sir Mickey's (a shop in Fantasyland). In terms of waves, Figure 7. highlighted the fifth (32%), second (29%) and first wave (24%) princesses as the most popular consumer choices. The fifth wave's popularity was mainly driven by Elsa, whereas the second wave was driven by both Belle and Jasmine (perhaps due to their live action film releases). The first wave's popularity was mainly because of Cinderella as the most popular consumer choice. The majority of these princesses also had the most representation in the Fantasyland shop. Belle, Elsa and Anna had 15% of the product share in the shop, which was reflected by the consumer choices made during participant observation in Figure 8. Cinderella, despite being the most popular consumer choice, only had 10% of the total costume share. Overall, this does suggest that the costume availability (that is determined by Disney and their own consumer research) is impacting consumer choices.

This emphasizes the circle of association, once some princesses have more product availability than others, that seems to affect consumer choices. However, it would also seem that certain princesses, such as Cinderella, stand the test of time. Therefore, what consumers are 'choosing' to buy results in them conforming to certain models of femininity. However, it would now appear that the issue is how much 'choice' does a consumer have when product availability is determined for them? As I have mentioned, more presence and exposure will often lead to further popularity, therefore the most 'marketable' princess will have more reach to young girls if she is at the forefront of the franchise. This can have a potential impact on the options available to young girls as Lamb and Brown (2006) have pointed out. Therefore, the qualities of the princess that is the most marketable are important to consider when thinking about gender representation within popular culture. The character traits of the most popular princess may be absorbed through the 'princess experience' of watching films, meeting princesses and experiencing the merchandise.

Explaining princess dominance

The dominance of certain waves over others can be explained in three different ways. Firstly, if we take Alan Bryman's (2010) approach to merchandising, Disney is merely gaining more profit from characters that have already attracted people (80). It thus makes sense that the earlier waves are so popular, as they have been around the longest. It then also seems plausible that members of the fifth wave are also popular, as they are the most recently released

for consumers to engage with. However, the character traits of some of the popular princesses are not necessarily ones that should be reflected as an interpretation of femininity. As already discussed in Chapter Two and Three, the first wave of princesses were identified as 'passive dreamers' due to their lack of agency, domesticity, passivity and dreams of a romantic relationship. Despite developing assertive, rebellious and brave characteristics, the second wave princesses forgot their desires for adventure and knowledge when they met a man, they were identified as 'lost dreamers'. These depictions for young audiences demonstrate women conforming to a very tightly prescribed image of femininity that is policed by romantic relationships. Despite their problematic character development and storylines, the first and second wave seem to consistently maintain their popularity perhaps because they have just simply been around for longer.

A second explanation for certain waves dominating the market share is consumer choice. Perhaps the reason for the popularity of fifth, first, second and fourth wave princesses is that they sell the most products to consumers at this point in time. In a consumer-based society, Disney will produce what their target market desires. This hypothesis is supported by a marketing consultant who has consulted for the Disney brand. When I conducted an email interview with them, they commented that, "Clients spend their days simply trying to find out what children desire and what parents are accepting of, and then they provide it to the best of their ability" (Interview 4). The dominance of certain waves then, may merely be because this is what the target market demands, rather than Disney trying to influence a target market. Rather, as insightfully put, "So instead of thinking of companies being Pied Pipers in which they play a magical tune that children and parents follow, companies are actually listening to the tune that children and parents create while trying to catch up" (Interview 4). Therefore, if focus groups with consumers direct Disney to promote the earlier princesses, then it is very unlikely they will go against the status quo and start to market less popular princesses.[40]

A previous employee of Disney who worked in marketing also supported this:

> Like they're gonna always put whichever princess is the most commercial and has the biggest financial gain to them is gonna be at the forefront. So, the most popular one with that age group of their target market. You've got your Snow Whites, your sort of Aurora's

[40] This practice is certainly used during the film making process. Susan Ohmer (2006) comments in *George Gallup in Hollywood* that during the postwar era of film production, Walt Disney's main reason for hiring George Gallup (an expert in polling) was to assist with audience research. The studio believed that by using audience reactions in the earlier stages of production of films they could cut down on costs and identify any issues before the film progressed (208). Ohmer (2006) also noted "According to Shamus Culhane, who worked at other animation studios before joining Disney, Walt Disney was one of the few cartoon producers who was willing to change a film based on audience response" (208).

> and your Cinderella's, that are all kind of at the forefront and also with the remake of the films, you've got Cinderella and Sleeping Beauty being remade, um would have given it a new shift to make kids see that film again and make it more popular again. So, I'd say they are at the forefront of advertising at the moment. (Interview 1)[41]

Although this interviewee did not work primarily on the princess brand, and was not involved in any discussions on how decisions were made on the marketing of the princesses, this point echoes that of Interviewee 4's in that Disney will not heavily promote something that their target market will not enjoy or purchase. This is not to say that less popular characters will not have any merchandise at all, they will just have less representation within products.

A final explanation for the dominance of the fifth, first, second and fourth wave princesses is a combination of the above reasons. Despite previous employees of Disney all stating that the target market for the Disney Princess brand is females aged 3-8 (Interview 1; Interview 2; Interview 4), another target market to consider is parents:

> Also realize that while the "target audience users" of dolls are girls, the "target audience buyers" for these dolls are mothers who have considerable influence on what their children receive. The younger the child, the more mom has influence. Companies such as Disney aim to create products that are both appealing to children and acceptable by their parents. (Interview 4)

When we think of parents as the target consumer, we can see how exposure to some princesses over others has taken place, as well as why some princesses may be consumed more than others. The reason is two-fold: firstly, parents will often want to expose their children to the princesses that they consumed in their own childhood, and the more recent ones. For myself, my mother showed me Snow White, Cinderella and Aurora, as they were the princesses she grew up with. I was born in 1994, so the recent princesses at the time were the second and third wave. Today's parents would have grown up with the second wave and third wave and may be introducing their children to the more recent fourth and fifth wave. However, despite this, the third wave is still underrepresented. This idea was also reflected by a former employee of Disney:

[41] This interview was conducted face to face, and has therefore been transcribed word for word. This results in answers being less articulate than say, email interviews.

> I think parents have grown up with it, see Disney is quite a safe brand, quite a trusting brand, and they're happy to let their kids watch them. And kids when they see something that they love they grasp onto it very easily, and it's something that they're shown at a very young age, that happens even easily. But um, I think it's just something that as you grow up with it, its seen as something that you love and that you want to buy more of it and also if your friends have got it and its seen as something like, collectible thing with you friends then I think you've got the pressure with your friends to almost have the latest sort of most popular toy which probably is a Disney Princess doll or something like that. (Interview 1)

So, whilst parents as the target buyer will have influence, the socialization of children at school, playgroups, peers and family will also contribute. But these decisions on exposure will not only come down to which princesses' parents were associated with in childhood, but which ones they approve of as adults. This concept was echoed by a former Disney employee:

> I just think from- I think because they are characters, characters have been created which children can easily aspire to be like. So it's very hard to find fault with them, and I think kids especially at the age we're talking about, want to either be in a world of make believe and so they can – you get most of the time you will get parental approval to Disney Princesses, and that would come up in focus groups, saying 'oh yeah I could leave my child, I could leave the room and know that my daughter's watching Cinderella and know that I don't have to watch it with her because I know that it will- there will be nothing in there that I need to worry about. Whereas there might be a DreamWorks film that the mother might say but I would never leave them with a DreamWorks film till I'd watched it once because of making sure that the messages that were coming out were the ones I wanted my daughter to hear. (Interview 3)

For Disney then, the characters that they are creating are seen as almost positive role models for children[42], and parents want to approve of the princesses so that they feel happy with their child engaging with the phenomenon. As the princesses perform and display models of femininity though, this suggests that the children who engage with them may also be exposed to the models of femininity produced by the films. However, as established by the gender profiling scales (Chapter Seven), society's understanding of femininity is in a continual cycle of reinforcement. Brands such as Disney contribute to the mirroring of particular ideas of femininity, whether they mean to or not. Janet Wasko even commented in *Challenging Disney Myths* (2001b) that although Disney is often associated with the traditional American values such as conservatism and lack of culture:

> Disney did not create these attributes, but it is possible to argue that the Disney empire helps to perpetuate them. Are they the only company that does so? Of course not. But they do it very well and (at least for many) in an appealing, seductive, and enjoyable way (252).

What Wasko could be suggesting here is that Disney reinforces certain values and stereotypes within their films. Disney are simply enabling already established gender roles, reflecting them rather than actually creating them. Consumers then, and particularly parents of Disney's target market, will be more likely to find princesses who 'stick to the status quo' of femininity more agreeable than those who transgress it.

When thinking in these terms, the 'good girls' of the first wave who accepted their lives and did not fight back against their oppression, the 'fixed' girls of the second wave and fourth wave who forgot about their assertive, rebellious and determined natures and dreams to pursue romance are those that parents are happy to purchase for their children. The stories and character traits of the third wave, despite their empowering tone, does not seem to be desired by consumers based on product availability. The fifth wave then, appears to be an anomaly. Whilst Anna and Elsa are a clear favourite with parents and their children based on product availability, Moana and Merida are left by the wayside. This, and the exclusion of the third wave, suggests that the fifth and third wave as a whole do not seem to be in demand for the target consumer, with Anna and Elsa simply being an exception. With this in mind, Disney will simply continue to do what the consumer wants, as pointed out by another former employee:

[42] Something that was emphasized by Disney themselves when they launched the 'Dream Big Princess' campaign, which is discussed at the end of this section of the thesis.

> I think they'll just try and continue to follow what the public want, because I think they listen and they're quite forward facing, like they're not just gonna, I don't think they just put something out there and say you have to accept it I think they wanna listen to what the public want and then try and give them that because they're not gonna wanna cause a stir with society and with what, like the whole PR and publicity that they get nowadays I think they're quite conscious of their image and how they come across, so they wouldn't want it – negative publicity to them is not what they want. (Interview 1)

Therefore, as long as the target market desires the first, second, fourth and fifth wave, that is how the product share will remain. It is important to note that the only princesses from the fifth wave that are desired by consumers are Anna and Elsa, who are also from the same film. I would argue that because of this, they are an anomaly within the fifth wave, and the only reason the fifth wave has been considered so dominant within this research is due to the demand and marketing of Anna and Elsa. Without them, the fifth wave would join the third as the excluded princesses; and Disney would be focusing entirely on the first wave (passive dreamers), the second wave (lost dreamers) and the fourth wave (sacrificing dreamers).

Conclusion

This chapter has explored which models of femininity are the most dominant in princess merchandising and marketing. Through content analysis, I identified the fifth wave (innovative leaders) as the most dominant model of femininity within the phenomenon. However, I have also noted that this is solely due to the marketing of Anna and Elsa, the other fifth wave princesses have very little representation within the merchandise. The second dominant model of femininity identified was the first wave (passive dreamers). The excluded model of femininity was that of the third wave (active leaders). However, during participant observation conducted in Walt Disney World, it was the second and first wave that were chosen by the target market. Therefore, the most dominant models of femininity were (with the exception of Anna and Elsa), the first and second wave. I will now turn to examine which models of femininity are the most dominant in Disney park consumer experiences.

Chapter Nine: The Parks

Introduction

This chapter is split into two sections in order to examine which models of femininity are the most dominant in princess park experiences. Firstly, I will outline the park experiences I have researched during my fieldwork in Walt Disney World, Orlando (a pilot study conducted in April-May 2017 and an autoethnography in October-November 2019). Secondly, I will present my 2019 autoethnography from Walt Disney World. Discussion will be organised through the waves system, developed in Section One of this thesis. Overall, this chapter will determine which models of femininity are reflected in park experiences, and whether some models are more dominant than others.

Character Experiences

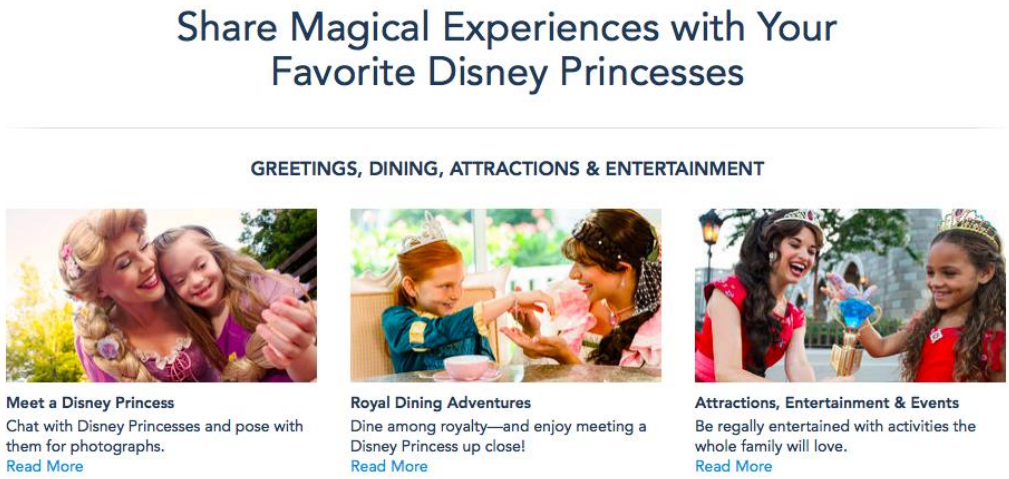
A 'character experience' at Walt Disney World is an opportunity for guests to encounter their favourite Disney characters 'in real life', including the Disney princesses. This includes 'character experience shows' and 'meet and greets', where park guests can 'meet' actors depicting Disney characters. Meet and greets are available in every theme park. However, I noticed, when exploring the different areas, that although there is uniformity in terms of how the theme park itself is set out, the character meet and greets were often variable. For example, some characters are available to meet in one resort but not another: guests can meet Pocahontas at Walt Disney World Resort, but not in any of the other Disney theme parks in the world.

Disney princesses can be met at their own 'character location', such as Cinderella at Fairytale Hall in Walt Disney World, or alternatively there are opportunities to meet princesses during 'park experiences' such as dining at a princess themed restaurant[43], or an at interactive park attraction such as 'Enchanted Tales with Belle' in Walt Disney World[44]. However, the most common way to 'meet' the princesses is by going to their meet and greet locations.

[43] Dining with the princesses is a way in which park guests can guarantee to meet princesses without the long wait lines. Often, princess dining is a table service meal, which can cost anything from $35 and above. The princesses are announced to the restaurant and make their way around each table and interact with guests. These experiences differ from park to park, with different princess themed restaurants to experience all over the world. Dining experiences are not included within the park ticket, and some of these meals can cost over $100, however each restaurant I visited was always full, which indicates that these experiences are a popular way to meet the princesses. However, as it was not something every guest could do, I decided to focus mainly on character meet and greets in my autoethnography.

[44] Enchanted Tales with Belle is an interactive attraction in Fantasyland, Magic Kingdom. Selected guests are invited to retell the story of Beauty and the Beast, and young guests are able to meet Belle at the end of the story.

Figure 1. Ways to Experience Disney Princesses at Walt Disney World



Source: Walt Disney World (2020)

As the above images depict, children and adults can have a conversation and have their photographs taken with a princess. All princesses are played by a female actress selected by Disney Parks Talent Casting.[45] Once selected, the actresses go through extensive training in order to fully embody the character. For example, each actress must learn their princess film's script and mannerisms in order to embody the character but also be able to interact with guests at the most intricate level (Oakes 2017).[46]

[45] https://disneyauditions.com

[46] Jennifer Oakes was a former employee of Walt Disney World with her own YouTube channel explaining her experiences as a Disney Princess. She joined in 2004, so some processes may have changed, but her videos give a fascinating insight into the life of a 'Disney Princess'. In one video, she explained that 'princess training' is a two day course with an experienced princess trainer (someone who has played the princess they are training). Day one consisted of exploring the costume department and getting fitted, trying on the wig and being taught how to apply makeup. She met with cosmetologists who would style the wigs and makeup, as well as teach the actress the 'princess make up look'. Before any actress leaves the costume department to begin work, their make-up must be approved, demonstrating Disney's focus on consistency and quality. The second half of day one focused on the actual character training. Jennifer was given a folder that focused purely on Princess Jasmine's mannerisms, "how she stood, how she carried herself" (Oakes 2017). The folder discussed posture, Jasmine's stance ("they said she was very confident in herself, um, but without being snobby") (Oakes 2017), the types of things that Jasmine would say. Jennifer was encouraged to watch anything that featured Jasmine and remember everything about it in order to develop her character. As Jennifer was cast in 2004, Jasmine's outfit was similar to the one in *Aladdin* and revealed midriff. Interestingly, Jennifer was informed she should never bend at the waist to show any stomach rolls, presumably so Jasmine looked graceful and accurate at all times. Jennifer was then asked to do a mock meeting, where the trainer would act as a guest and would ask all sorts of questions that she had to answer in character so that she knew how to reply properly to guests. She then received feedback on the exercise. The trainer encouraged her to watch the film the princess featured in in order to learn their mannerisms and speech. Day two consisted of the actress doing a regular shift and doing it all by herself, but she was being watched. This was repeated a number of times and then she was approved to be Princess Jasmine. After this, Jennifer began working as Princess Jasmine, but also attended a mentoring meeting with other princesses and her own trainer. One particular piece of advice that Jennifer remembered was that the actresses would be told they were beautiful very often, and that they

Some princesses such as Snow White, Aurora, Belle, Jasmine and Mulan have a meet and greet section within one of the four parks in Walt Disney World Resort. For example, Snow White greets guests by the wishing well in Germany, Epcot World Showcase in Walt Disney World Resort. Other princesses have more specific meet and greet locations, for example, Cinderella, Tiana and Rapunzel all meet in 'Princess Fairytale Hall'. All locations try and make the guest experience as exclusive as possible, this is mostly done through queue management by cast members. Only a select number of people are allowed into each meet and greet room. From there, guests are taken in groups to the princess. In more open areas, such as meeting Pocahontas on Discovery Island Trails in the Animal Kingdom, guests are taken separately to meet Pocahontas, who is about five to six meters away from the guest queue. This means that each guest gets an exclusive experience with a princess without any interruptions.

A typical 'meet and greet' with a princess will often involve an embrace at the beginning; a brief conversation; autograph signing; photos and finally, a hug goodbye. The princess is dressed in their outfit from the film,[47] with the occasional additions to allow for weather - for example, Cinderella may sometimes have a long-sleeved dress in the colder months, rather than her traditional puffed sleeves from the original film. From my observations within the parks, all actresses playing princesses wear wigs in order for their hairstyle to be completely accurate, with a full face of makeup, and essentially will look as true to the animated character as possible.

Reflections on my Autoethnographic Pilot Study, Walt Disney World 2017

During my 2017 pilot study I was swept away by the magic of Walt Disney World, star struck by the princesses (especially those I had not met yet) and found it difficult to be critically distant from the phenomenon I was studying. On reflection of my pilot study, I identified several areas of research design that required amendment.

Firstly, my appearance had been commented on a lot by many of the princesses. In 2017, Jasmine had called me "gorgeous" and "beautiful"; and Tiana had said that I looked "as beautiful as a magnolia in May" (which was also a film reference). I had realised this was mainly due to

shouldn't let it go to their heads, because they are replaceable. She recalled the trainer saying that the people will tell the next Princess Jasmine that they are beautiful too (Oakes 2017). This anecdote demonstrates the intensity of princess training that happens for each character. Therefore, if an actress portrays multiple princesses (which they often do) they will have to go through this training multiple times.

[47] Cinderella, Aurora, Belle and Tiana are in their ballgowns from the film (despite the fact they mostly spend more time in other outfits). Snow White, Jasmine, Pocahontas, Mulan, Rapunzel, Merida and Moana are dressed in their 'normal' outfits from their film. Ariel varies from her status as a mermaid and a ballgown. Finally, Anna is dressed in her travelling outfit rather than her ballgown, and Elsa is dressed in the blue gown she fashioned for herself rather than her Queen's robes. After *Frozen II* was released, Anna and Elsa were both in their Queen's robes.

how I was dressed: I had styled my hair, done my makeup and selected nice clothes to wear for a day in the parks. On reflection, I realised that this had perhaps led my participants (the princesses) and driven the discussion down a particular path. In order to solve this, I decided to make my appearance as plain and stripped back as possible: hair scraped back in a bun, no make-up, no contact lenses, plain black top and shorts and plain shoes. It wasn't my usual style, but I was interested to see whether my appearance would be commented on as much by the princesses. I also realised that my previous appearance could have led to princesses calling me a princess myself. This is something Shuler also noticed during her own autoethnography. From displaying her tickets to board the bus to Disney, to the arrival of the hotel, Shuler's daughter was referred to as a princess by most of the Disney staff:

> After we grab our luggage, we enter the reception area and encounter a man dressed as a Mardi Gras jester. He bends down to Lucy and says, "Hi there, Princess! Welcome to the French Quarter Resort," while placing a strand of shiny green beads around her neck.
>
> "Thank you!" she answers him. Then she bounces with excitement toward the registration desk. "Everyone keeps calling me Princess! I think it's because I look so pretty!" (Shuler 2015:474)

Here, we can see that Shuler's daughter has internalized that the concept of being a princess is inextricably linked to being beautiful. If young girls want to be like their princess role models, then they may also be considering that their appearance is a part of this, which may form a part of their developing self-identity (Anderson & Cavallaro 2002:161). Therefore, by changing my appearance to be as 'plain' as possible, I was hoping that this would not lead my participants to make comments about my appearance.

Secondly, I remembered that collecting data whilst trying not to lead the princess in a guest centred interaction was very difficult. If I limited my answers when conversing with a princess, it often led to a very short and empty discussion. I realised that if I wanted to lengthen the time I spent with princesses I would need to interact with them, but without leading the conversation. Therefore, as explained in Chapter One, I decided to ask each princess the exact same open question: "what is your favourite thing to do?". This question meant that they could answer with their own opinion, without being led by me, and we could converse about their own topic of choice.

Thirdly, my husband accompanied me on both trips, his presence influenced my discussions with the princesses. They would often ask, "is this your prince?", which, as he was often right next to me was not an unfair question. Therefore, during this trip, I asked him to move next to the photographer in order to take pictures of my interactions that I could examine later. Removing him from the situation would hopefully allow the princess to focus on me, and not be led by external influences. With this in mind, I made detailed notes of my meetings with the princesses, which thanks to my question became a lot more detailed in most cases. Below, I have provided full accounts of my second autoethnography at Walt Disney World.

Walt Disney World 2019 Autoethnography

I returned to Walt Disney World in October 2019. As before, I was thrilled to be back in one of my favourite places, but this time I knew things would be a little different. I was more aware of the dichotomy between my love of Disney and my critical evaluation of the phenomenon. This is something that was also found by Shuler, especially when she was watching her daughter meet and interact with the princesses:

> Seeing the pure joy on Lucy's face as she posed for photos with Ariel and Belle and Cinderella and Snow White made me forget my objections for a blessed moment. Getting caught up in the experience as a fan and forgetting my feminist critique felt, well… magical. (Shuler 2015:477)

In 2017, there had been moments during my trip to Walt Disney World where I was caught up in the magic in the way that Shuler was, especially when I met princesses such as Pocahontas that I had not met before. I knew that my 2019 autoethnography would be no different, I was still a Disney fan, but thanks to my pilot study in 2017, I was able to consider what elements of my research design needed to change in order to formulate a more rigorous autoethnography.

First Wave

Snow White

My husband and I began queueing to meet Snow White in the Germany Pavilion of Epcot. As I was about to discover with most lines for princesses, the guests were white Caucasian children with their parents. There were around 20 guests in total, and Snow White was meeting them at her wishing well. Unlike other princesses who met outside, Snow White had a greeter as well as a fastpass photographer. I watched her interact with other guests whilst in the line, observing

her graceful movements and gentle expressions. When it was finally my turn my husband moved over to the fast pass photographer as he took pictures of our interaction. Noticing this, Snow White asked if she had frightened him away. I said no, that he was just going to take our picture (something that happens often at the parks). "Is he your prince?" she asked in an incredibly high-pitched voice. I paused, unsure of how to respond. When I had conducted a pilot autoethnography in 2017, I never wanted to answer or speak in a way that would 'lead' the princess. However, this often resulted in very quick and empty interactions. I decided to answer honestly. "I guess you could call him that", I laughed. "Did you meet at a wishing well too?" she asked, I explained that we had met through a mutual friend. She smiled innocently, "did you wish for him?". I paused again, not quite believing what she had said. I explained that no, I hadn't wished for him. "No?!" she exclaimed, shocked, "it was a surprise then? I love surprises!". I sighed internally, frustrated by this conversation. I knew that this was not necessarily something she would say to a young child, however her focus on relationships meant we didn't really discuss anything else. We took our picture, and she invited my husband to join in with a photo. I asked her what her favourite thing to do was. "We love to clean the cottage", she smiled. I asked her to clarify who 'we' meant. She explained it was the seven dwarfs, and they enjoyed singing songs whilst they cleaned, although sometimes Grumpy didn't join in because he was grumpy.

Cinderella

"Hello princess!" Cinderella beamed at me. I had been queueing with about 20 people as the park had just opened. It was mostly Caucasian girls and their families, and the young guests were in awe of the princesses. "What kingdom are we from today?" Cinderella asked me. I explained we were from the U.K. and she exclaimed that it must have been a very long carriage ride requiring a lot of magic dust. Cinderella told me her favourite thing to do was have tea with the fairy godmother, where sometimes her mice friends Jaq and Gus would join them, but she had to be careful with the teacups in case Gus was hiding in them. This interaction was a prime example of a short one, with very little dialogue.

Aurora

"Hello, your excellency" said Aurora so softly that I could barely hear her. I returned her greeting and she took a few moments to look at me. I could see her scanning me, my hair tied up in a bun, no make-up, glasses, plain black clothes and shoes. I had deliberately dressed this way, so that my usual appearance (curly hair down, make-up applied, sundress and sandals) would not lead the princesses. I could see Aurora desperately searching my appearance to look for something to say. Eventually, she found it. "I love your sparkly nails!" she exclaimed and

reached for my hand, I extended it from its folded, hidden position. "Oh, and your sparkly ring! Did your dream prince give you the ring?" I said yes, and she probed further, asking if I enjoyed dancing with my dream prince the way she did with Prince Phillip. I agreed that dancing was quite nice. She explained that this was her favourite thing to do. She said she also used to enjoy dancing with her animal friends in the forest, but now she loves dancing with Prince Phillip in the castle.

First Wave Reflections

The first wave princesses were predominantly focused on appearance, domestic tasks and romantic relationships during our interactions. Based on the characteristics I identified within film analysis, I was not surprised. Snow White and Aurora's immediate focus on relationships, whether it was mine or their own demonstrated that once again the desire for romance was their primary focus. The first wave's 'favourite thing to do' varied: Snow White preferred to clean the cottage with the dwarf's; Cinderella liked to have tea with her Fairy Godmother and Aurora enjoyed dancing with Prince Phillip. Snow White's favourite activity aligned with the domestic tasks she was regularly seen conducting in the film; Aurora's also matched the desires she had for Prince Phillip. Cinderella was the only princess who deviated from her film's characteristics, preferring to spend time with her fairy godmother than her Prince or conducting cleaning tasks. Therefore, within the wave of passive dreamers, the most dominant trait was the desire for romantic relationships and domesticity.

Second Wave

Ariel

"Hi there! Would you like to sit?" Ariel said from her rock. She was in mermaid form and couldn't stand. "I like your hair!" she told me, pointing at my bun, "I wonder if I could do my hair like that, did you use a dinglehopper?". As I knew from previous trips, princesses and other face characters would often use film references when interacting with a guest. Ariel was referring to the fork she believed to be a hairbrush in *The Little Mermaid*. As I used a large hair clip to secure my bun, I explained that my clip was a version of a dinglehopper, and she told me she would need to get one so she could do it too. When I asked her what her favourite thing to do was, she told me it was exploring shipwrecks looking for gadgets and gizmos.[48] Her favourite piece of treasure she found so far was her dinglehopper. She then took me by surprise and asked me

[48] However, character experiences can vary based on the actress playing the princess. When I attended the Bon Voyage Adventure Breakfast (where you could meet Ariel and her prince, Eric, and Rapunzel and her prince, Flynn Rider), Ariel told me her favourite thing to do was "kiss prince Eric". Therefore, it is clear that depending on which actress ends up playing the princess, the responses will vary.

what my favourite thing to do was. I hesitated, as I didn't want to say anything that could lead the conversation, but as a guest I wanted to answer honestly. I told her that my favourite thing to do was to read. "Oh! So, you're like Belle, you're a bookworm! What is your favourite book?" I paused again, I had to be careful with my answer. If I picked a book outside of the 'Disney Universe' I would force Ariel to break character or lose the flow of the conversation as she would be forced to say she had never heard of it. I explained that I enjoyed the Tinkerbell book series and she told me she thought that was lovely, and that she had given Tinkerbell a seashell from the reef once, and that the clownfish jokes there were very funny.

Belle

"Bonjour!" smiled Belle, "have you seen my Papa on your adventures today?" I explained that I hadn't seen him yet. She explained to me that he was looking for new inspiration for his inventions and Chip was helping him, as he also liked to invent things. When I asked her what her favourite thing to do was, she told me she enjoyed reading, spending time with her friends and exploring the castle with her horse, Phillipe. I found this interesting, as she did not mention the Beast at all, preferring to focus on her original hobbies, that seemed to be forgotten at the end of *Beauty and the Beast*.

Jasmine

"Hi Princess! Where are you visiting from?" beamed Jasmine as I walked towards her. She asked if I came from the U.K. by camel or magic carpet. I said I went for the magic carpet and she agreed, as unless we had swimming camels it would be quite difficult. She noticed my husband, who was taking pictures for me, and asked who he was. Like in my interaction with Snow White, I wasn't sure how to respond, so laughed and said I wasn't sure how to describe him. "Is he your diamond in the rough?" she asked. "I guess I could call him that" I laughed. "Does he fly you around on his magic carpet often?" Jasmine asked, I smiled and said, "No, I do the flying" and she laughed, asking if I did all the singing too. Jasmine told me her favourite thing to do was fly on the magic carpet with Aladdin. They enjoy going to new places to discover new lands, try new foods and activities they haven't tried before. She thanked me for asking her a question.

Second Wave Reflections

The second wave princesses seemed to focus more on film references and linking them with their guests. Ariel focused on dinglehoppers, Belle asked about her father and Jasmine discussed magic carpets. Only one princess, Jasmine, seemed to notice my husband and allude to a romantic relationship, the others were more focused on discussing film references. Despite my

appearance, Ariel was the only princess to comment on it, whereas Belle and Jasmine concentrated more on references and prince's respectively. None of the second wave demonstrated particularly assertive, brave or rebellious traits as they did in the films. They were actually very graceful in their movements and still softly spoken. However, Ariel did state her favourite thing to do was to explore shipwrecks, demonstrating her eagerness to learn about the human world; Belle reinforced her love for reading and exploring, and Jasmine did explain she explored new lands, foods and activities with Aladdin. Therefore, the interactions with the 'lost dreamers' of the second wave did demonstrate that the princesses are able to continue their hobbies and dreams. The most dominant trait within the second wave therefore was the focus on their original desires, despite the fact they were lost within their happy ending at the end of their respective films.

Third Wave

Pocahontas

"Wingapo!" said Pocahontas as I walked towards her in Animal Kingdom. I was surprised that her meeting spot had moved, as I recalled her having a dedicated area with a platform, fastpass photographer and an area for queueing. Two years later, I found something very different, there was no dedicated meet point, you simply met her just behind the huge 'tree of life'; she had no fastpass photographer and if you didn't know where to go, the only way you would find Pocahontas is by bumping into her on the path or checking the park map. Later on in the day, I did see a cast member holding up a sign near her meet point with a picture of Pocahontas on it, and I asked to take a picture of the sign. She told me that I could have a real picture with Pocahontas if I wanted to. Having explained I had already done so, the cast member actually commented that Pocahontas needed a fastpass and a solid meeting spot as people didn't know where they could meet her without her standing with the sign. I knew this was most likely the case, as when I arrived to queue there was a small line, some families with young boys and a few Caucasian families with young girls. When I greeted her, Pocahontas asked where I had travelled from, and I explained I was from the U.K.. She smiled and told me that her friend John Smith was from England, "I'm sure you've heard of him" she said. After we took our photo, she said she would tell John that she had met me. Before I left, I asked her what her favourite thing to do was. "Well, I like to run through the hidden pine trails of the forest and talk to Grandmother Willow." I recognised her film reference from 'Colours of the Wind' but probed further to find out what they talk about. She explained that she and Grandmother Willow talked about everything but placed a lot of emphasis on when she is going through her journey through life, she seeks advice from Grandmother Willow. She asked if I had someone like that in my life and I answered that I spoke a lot with my mum and my grandma. Pocahontas smiled, and

explained that her mother passed away so "Grandmother Willow is kind of like my mom". She thanked me for the question and hugged me again, holding my hands before waving 'Ana' (which is how she says goodbye).

Mulan

I met Mulan in the China pavilion, Epcot. I was one of the first in the queue and walked towards her with my husband before he moved to take pictures. "Did you bring your army with you today?" asked Mulan, gesturing towards my husband. I laughed and said yes, Mulan wanted to know if I was the Captain of my army, and if I was a wise one like Li Shang. When I asked her what her favourite thing to do was, she was gracefully animated. By this, I mean it was clear that discussing this excited her, but she maintained a graceful composure so as not to get 'over excited' which I found interesting. Mulan, when she was truly herself, was not particularly composed, yet here she was standing in her matchmaker's meeting outfit (the uncomfortable dress she disliked and rearranged at the beginning of the film) demonstrating the grace that had been asked of her during 'Honour to Us All'. However, what she said was the complete opposite of her appearance. "I love to train new recruits, especially the younger ones, and especially girls now that they can join the imperial army. I want to train girls to believe in themselves and know they are noble of heart and can serve their country". She thanked me for the question, smiling, and I could tell that Mulan was delighted to have spoken about something she was so passionate about.

Third Wave Reflections

Meeting the third wave princesses within Walt Disney World was fascinating. After I had asked her what her favourite thing to do was, Pocahontas developed a more interactive guest experience. Interestingly, the main thing that she discussed was female support through her relationship with Grandmother Willow. This was something that I would argue was hinted at in the film, but not necessarily developed to its full capacity in the same way as the fifth wave. It also demonstrated her communication traits. She did not necessarily adhere to her assertive nature, leadership or negotiation within our interaction, preferring to focus on her relationship with Grandmother Willow, and asking me if I had a similar relationship with others. Another significant finding from our interaction was her description of John Smith as a friend, rather than someone she was in a relationship with. Of course, at the end of the film, Pocahontas chose to stay with her people rather than return with John Smith. It was established that in *Pocahontas II: Journey to a New World*, Pocahontas begins a romantic relationship with John Rolfe (Pocahontas' real-life husband). Therefore, Pocahontas describing John Smith as her friend did allude to there being no more romance between them, but her exclusion of John Rolfe

meant that our interaction did not discuss romance at all. Mulan was similar, only mentioning her love interest Li Shang when discussing the military. Mulan also seemed to prefer to discuss female support in the form of her training female recruits in the imperial army. This also demonstrated her leadership and communication traits as well. The third wave princesses not only presented some of their own traits, but also developed them further towards female support. Therefore, female support, despite not being a characteristic of the third wave 'active leaders' was the most dominant trait in the consumer experiences.

Fourth Wave

Tiana

"Hello there, come on over! How are you doing today?" said Tiana in Princess Fairytale Hall. "I'm good, how are you?" I replied. "I'm good!" she exclaimed, "I made a load of beignets this morning and only got to eat one! My friend Louis ate all the rest of them!" Like Pocahontas, I noted Tiana's use of film references during the interaction. When I asked Tiana what her favourite thing to do was, she told me "I love cooking gumbo, and making beignets! A close second is spending time with my best friend, Lottie. We love going shopping and talking about when she's gonna find her prince". I asked Tiana if Lottie had found her prince yet and she told me no, she keeps telling Lottie to take her "man-catching beignets" on dates so they don't leave.

Rapunzel

After I saw Tiana, I was moved straight over to meet with Rapunzel in the same room. "Hello there! Come on over" beamed Rapunzel. "Are you exploring today? Have you eaten your lunch yet?" I told her yes and she exclaimed that it was therefore time for dessert. She invited me to join her at the Snuggly Duckling as they were always looking for cupcake testers, "The ruffians and thugs are a bit rough around the edges and they always eat all the frosting, but I'll keep them in check for you!" When I asked her what her favourite thing to do was, she explained it was painting and drawing.

Fourth Wave Reflections

Despite the fact that in their films, fourth wave princesses demonstrated assertiveness, determination, desire for romance and a self-sacrificing nature, their Disney Park counterparts did not reflect their film traits. My interaction with Tiana mainly focused on film references, although she did explain how much she loved cooking (yet did not mention her restaurant) and spending time with her best friend Charlotte. At first, I thought this was another representation of female support, however Tiana then proceeded to tell me they spend their time discussing

Lottie's desire for romance and how Tiana's 'man catching beignets' will help her. Although this can be understood as a form of female support, it is firmly rooted in a desire for romance. Tiana did not demonstrate any of the determination or assertiveness she did in *The Princess and the Frog*. Similarly, Rapunzel also focused on film references, even when it came to her favourite thing to do. The only hint of her original character traits was her assertiveness when she told me she would keep the ruffians and thugs in check.

Fifth Wave

Merida

"Hiya!" Merida shouted as she put her hand out for a handshake, "I'm Merida, it's nice to meet you! Where have you come from today?" After she found out I was from England she told me if I came a bit further north I would be in Scotland. She told me to come and visit but warned me her brothers may play some tricks on me. I asked her what her favourite thing to do was, "archery! I love archery. I also love playing hide and seek with my brothers. That's a fun game. I love riding on my horse, Angus. He doesn't like it if I ride other horses though. I tried to ride Pegasus, but it didn't work out. What's your favourite thing to do?" I explained that I also enjoyed archery, I'd only experienced it once, but I did hit the target. "Oooh that's great!" she exclaimed, "We should pose like archers then!" Whilst we posed as archers for our photo, she said that I was a natural, and explained that she wasn't and had to keep practicing. When I left, she said goodbye and a final "cheers!" as she waved.

Anna

As I walked towards Anna, she welcomed me to the Kingdom of Arendelle and discussed the weather. We had a relatively short interaction, but when I asked her what her favourite thing to do was, she told me she loved building snowmen with Elsa. She explained how much she loved her sister days with Elsa and invited me to join them.

Elsa

Like her sister, Elsa also welcomed me to the Kingdom, reminding me that the gates were always open. She invited me to go ice skating with her, telling me that Olaf will teach me what to do, and if I can't it doesn't matter as I will fit right in. When I asked her what her favourite thing to do was, she reiterated Anna's response. She loved spending time with her sister and building snowmen.

Moana

I met Moana on a day where I was not conducting research. I didn't know if I would even be able to meet with her, as she did not have a temporary or permanent meeting space anywhere in Walt Disney World. However, the night that I was attending the Magic Kingdom park for "Mickey's Not So Scary Halloween Party" (a ticketed event to celebrate Halloween, where guests are able to dress up) I noticed that Moana was meeting guests in Adventure Land. I was dressed in a costume in order to celebrate Halloween and didn't have a change of clothes, so I had to meet Moana dressed as Kida, Queen of Atlantis (a third wave princess). When I approached her, she noticed my blue necklace (the stone of Atlantis) and asked if it had magical powers and if I needed to put it back where it rightfully belonged, like her own. I nodded and asked her what her favourite thing to do was. She explained she loved to be out on the water and go voyaging with her friends to new islands where they could meet new people and learn about their stories and cultures. She also liked to share her story with others and inspire them.

Fifth Wave Reflections

My interactions with fifth wave princesses varied. Merida and Moana provided a very detailed interaction, including film references in their dialogue, but also demonstrating their free-spirited nature. Whilst Merida did not necessarily demonstrate her assertiveness, leadership or female support character traits, she encouraged my 'archery' skills. Moana's love of learning about new cultures and stories as well as sharing her own mirrored the leadership, communication and female support she displayed in her film. On the other hand, Anna and Elsa's interactions were quite limited, yet they displayed more of a Queenly demeanour by welcoming me to their kingdom and demonstrating their female support through their love of spending time with one another. Therefore, the most dominant trait of the fifth wave innovative leaders was that of female support.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on exploring how consumers can have a real-life experience with the Disney princesses, and which models of femininity were the most dominant in princess park experiences. It has reflected on the pilot autoethnographic study at Walt Disney World conducted in 2017, and from those reflections has developed a full account of Disney princess consumer experiences at Walt Disney World. Whilst there was no dominant model of femininity in terms of princess waves, as nearly all princesses were available for a meet and greet, the most dominant character trait was that of female support. This was demonstrated by not only the fifth wave, but also the third wave during a character experience. This was an interesting

finding, especially when comparing this with the dominant waves within princess merchandising in Chapter Eight. Otherwise, the first wave mirrored the film counterparts, the second and fourth wave focused mainly on film references. The second wave did demonstrate the yearning for knowledge that was focused on at the beginning of the second wave films, whilst the fourth wave did not seem to demonstrate any of their film traits.

Chapter Ten: Consumer Experiences Conclusion

> The thing we really have is our princesses are real, our princesses have heritage, they have soul, they have good ethics about them, they've got qualities that you want little girls, they're actually, they're not edgy, they're not sassy because that's not what Disney Princesses are so we should stick to our heritage and our roots and maybe just make sure we make them appealing but in a very authentic Disney way. (Interview 3)

'Consuming' Disney Princesses

Chapter Eight identified the most dominant model of femininity in the phenomenon to be the fifth wave (innovative leaders) due to the heavy marketing of Anna and Elsa of *Frozen*. It was noted that without Anna and Elsa, the fifth wave was barely represented at all, and the first wave princesses (passive dreamers) would have been the most dominant model. Chapter Nine could not identify any dominant model of femininity within the princess waves as all princesses with the exception of Eilonwy and Kida were available to meet at Walt Disney World. However, the most dominant character trait was female support, which is found within the fifth wave. During participant observation, I noted that not only the fifth wave, but also the third demonstrated this trait. The dominant fifth wave trait can certainly be mirrored by the dominance of fifth wave princess products that seem to be demanded by consumers. However, it was interesting that whilst the third wave princesses demonstrated female support in consumer experiences at Walt Disney World, they had no merchandise available at the theme parks, and were the most underrepresented wave identified in my merchandise content analysis - even though they demonstrated similar behaviours to the ever popular Anna and Elsa. When considering product availability, consumer choice participant observation and the dominant character traits during princess meet and greets, it seems that despite the dominance of the fifth wave, it was in fact the first and second wave who were chosen the most by consumers to dress as. As I have already noted, without Anna and Elsa, the first wave was the most dominant in product availability, closely followed by the second.

Disney Princesses as Role Models

A typical understanding of a role model is "'someone to look up to', and someone to base your character, values or aspirations upon" (Gauntlett 2002:158). Based on a number of examples of celebrities; athletes; television and film characters; and even toys such as the Barbie doll, Gauntlett identified six different types of role models (2002:160). Among these were "the 'challenging stereotypes' role model", where women challenge the concepts of femininity and only men taking the tough and action based leading roles, for example the character of Lara Croft (Gauntlett 2002:161). And secondly there was "the 'wholesome' role model", a role model that older generations feel more comfortable exposing their children to based on their good behaviour and morals (Gauntlett 2002:161)[49]. As Disney princesses are described as characters with a "moral code" (Interview 3), both descriptions of role models are effective to use when discussing the Disney Princesses.

The Disney Princesses were not officially described as role models by the Walt Disney Company, however after the release of the 'Dream Big Princess' campaign in February 2016, it is clear that this is how Disney are framing the princesses. All of the officially recognised franchise princesses are included other than Aurora. Eilwony, Kida, Anna, Elsa and Moana are not officially recognised as Disney Princesses (in a franchised sense) and are not featured in 'Princess' branded products, although Moana is starting to appear on some, but has not received an 'official' welcoming. The end of the Dream Big video encourages all of the 'princesses' around the world to dream big. Following on from this, multiple Facebook and Instagram posts have been circulated asking consumers how they dream big like their favourite princess such as Ariel or Cinderella.[50] Although not being officially labelled as 'role models', the Disney Princesses have certainly been characterised through Disney's marketing to be – as Gauntlett states - "'someone to look up to', and someone to base your character, values or aspirations upon" (Gauntlett 2002:158).

When children meet the princesses in 'real life', and engage with their merchandise, these experiences may contribute to the development of identity. Therefore, how these princesses behave and 'perform' is an important factor to consider when examining how femininity is produced by the Disney princesses. Currently in the Disney princess phenomenon, the first, second and fourth wave can be considered as 'wholesome' role models due to their wholesome virtues. First wave Princesses did not misbehave within their films and were simply rewarded for their passivity with a romantic relationship. Although second wave princesses

[49] Gauntlett's other role model types included: "The 'straightforward success' role model"; "The 'triumph over difficult circumstances' role model"; "The 'outsider' role model"; and "The family role model" (Gauntlett 2002:160-1).
[50] Please refer to the Disney Princess Official Instagram account for more examples of this: https://www.instagram.com/thedisneyprincesses/

became more assertive, rebellious and brave, their empowered traits were lost in their romantic happy ending. I argue that fourth wave princesses demonstrated wholesome (and empowered) values such as determination and assertiveness but were also willing to renounce the results of their hard work for men. Third and fifth wave princesses could be considered as 'challenging stereotypes' due to their reluctance to adhere to the values of their predecessors. Third wave princesses demonstrated that women were also able to take part in combat battle and leadership, as well as communicate and negotiate between two very different groups of people. They demonstrated assertiveness, and in the parks even showed female support (something that was not featured in their own films). Fifth wave princesses established that women did not have to fit the forms of traditional femininity and could still uphold wholesome morals whilst seeking and undertaking change in the societal demands of men and women. They were assertive leaders, but their stories centred around female support, and there was a complete lack of romantic relationships.

My experiences of the Disney princesses at Walt Disney World did not always echo the new marketing of the Disney princesses. First wave princesses' interactions focused on appearance, domestic tasks and romantic relationships. These princesses were not dreaming big, they were cleaning and dreaming of their princes. Second wave princesses hinted at their desire for knowledge through revealing their favourite things to do, but did not demonstrate the assertive, rebellious or brave nature from their films. Rather, the second wave focused mainly on film references. Both the first and second wave can be identified as Gauntlett's 'wholesome role model', as the princesses discussed 'safe' subjects, rather than demonstrating any kind of assertiveness. Experiences with third wave princesses emphasised how the characters would challenge stereotypes. This was certainly a change from the traditional narrative of the first and second wave princesses within the theme parks. Pocahontas and Mulan both demonstrated female support, and only mentioned men in relation to their rank or status as a friend. Perhaps more conversations about female support and in Mulan's case leadership where women and girls play an active role will lead to young girls envisioning their dreams through their princess role model's adventures.

Fourth Wave Princesses did not reflect their values and gender models throughout my experiences with them. Tiana and Rapunzel both dream of a better life, and do strive for it, until they ultimately choose their love interest at the end of the film. However, both princesses are still 'rewarded' with their desires, with the achievement of their dreams being the added 'bonus' of their happy ending – these princesses can truly 'have it all' as long as they sacrifice their own dreams first. During both experiences, Tiana and Rapunzel focused on film references, with the former hinting at desiring romantic relationships with her best friend Charlotte, and Rapunzel

suggesting an assertive nature when communicating with the ruffians and thugs. However, their determination for their dreams was not mentioned at all.

Fifth Wave Princesses did reflect some of their qualities identified in previous chapters. Merida encouraged my archery skills, proving female support in the experience; Moana demonstrated her communication and leadership skills through her love of sharing her story and experiencing new cultures; whilst my interactions with Anna and Elsa were limited, their show of female support for one another was clear in both interactions.

There was a clear difference of experience between the different waves of princesses. Understandably, when in the role of a Disney princess, the actress must know everything about the character and be able to mimic the princess from their walk to their hand gestures. Therefore, a character experience with a first wave princess such as Aurora is going to be very different to an experience with a third wave princess such as Mulan, based on how they are portrayed in the film. However, in my experience some princess behaviour – specifically those in the second and fourth wave – did not reflect their representation in the films. Therefore, intentionally or not, these princesses are role models to consumers. The outcome of the princess phenomenon is that these heroines are role models that consumers can not only identify with through merchandise, but they can physically meet in person. Additionally, some princess role models are given more exposure to consumers than others. The fifth, first and second wave are the princesses that have the most merchandise and have the more popular meet and greets. Representation is one way in which children form their self-identity, and if there is only a narrow definition of what 'being a girl' is through what is available for them to consume, then young girls will be unable to break out of pre-prescribed gender roles. Especially when the most empowered princesses the phenomenon has produced (with the exception of Elsa and Anna) are the most undermarketed.

As Lamb and Brown (2006) have stated, "Disney's version of girlhood is everywhere" (67), however the question for this section has been what image of femininity has been the most dominant? In the case of merchandising, Anna and Elsa were the most dominantly marketed princesses, which led to the fifth wave being the most dominant wave. However, without Anna and Elsa, the fifth wave had barely any marketing at all. This led to the most dominant waves being that of the first and second wave, with the third wave being the least dominant. If it wasn't for Anna and Elsa, Disney's version of girlhood would in fact be that of passive and lost dreamers. It is clear that the Frozen sisters are an anomaly, as despite Merida, Moana and even the third wave princesses sharing very similar characteristics, they are the least marketed princesses. So, whilst Disney may be heavily marketing two innovative leaders, it is really the passive and lost dreamers who are the most exposed 'role models' to young consumers.

Happily Ever After?

Throughout this thesis I have sought to discover how femininity is depicted within the Disney princess phenomenon through three facets: films, merchandising/marketing, and park experiences. I examined films first, as this is where a princess' marketing journey begins. I created a film analysis framework that allowed me to use the examination of speech, movement, plot lines, narratives and treatment of characters to identify characteristics displayed by each princess. From there, I categorized princesses who displayed similar traits into five 'waves', developing a typology illustrating how depictions of femininity had changed over time through macro and micro changes. Using the waves system, I was able to map out how, from a feminist perspective, depictions of femininity could be judged to have progressed and, in some cases, regressed. Using historical context, I was able to identify whether princess films mirrored the changing roles and rights of women within society. The princess films produced five models of femininity that reinforced certain societal understandings of womanhood: passive dreamers, lost dreamers, active leaders, sacrificing dreamers and innovative leaders. Each model consisted of a number of characteristics identified as masculine or feminine character traits in psychological gender measurement tests.[51] When 'masculine' traits were adopted by the princesses, they were likely to enter a romantic relationship in which these masculine traits were lost. In this case, femininity was depicted in complex and changing ways, often developing over time, and mirroring the societal climate.

I then turned to merchandising, marketing and park experiences to identify which models of femininity were the most dominant. Within merchandising, the most dominant model of femininity was the fifth wave (innovative leaders) due to the heavy marketing of Anna and Elsa. Without the Frozen sisters, the most dominant models of femininity were that of the first wave (passive dreamers) and the second wave (lost dreamers). Within park experiences, it was actually a singular character trait that was most dominant: female support. This was demonstrated by fifth and third wave princesses during participant observation. Overall then, the most dominant model of femininity within princess consumer experiences was the fifth wave (innovative leaders), however that was only thanks to the heavy marketing of Anna and Elsa. Using role model theory, I argued it was important for consumers to have a diverse range of princesses to aspire to be, especially as without Anna and Elsa, consumers were most exposed to the first wave passive dreamers.

[51] As discussed in Chapter Seven.

Significance and Implications

This comprehensive study of the princesses can be used as a lens to view and understand their contribution to the depiction of femininity. Through in-depth analysis, I have identified micro changes within the princess phenomenon that could be easily lost in an overview of the franchise (England et al 2011). My research has provided a deeper insight to the phenomenon in order to expose how it has progressed and regressed from a feminist and gendered perspective over time. It also examined the princesses within their key representations: films, merchandise and park experiences. Through analysing each key feature, I have provided a comprehensive understanding of how each of these princess experiences are inextricably linked for the consumer. I have explored the patterns and dominant models within these key representations, and how models from the films are being reinforced through other consumer outlets, resulting in further model exposure to the consumer. This understanding of the breadth and depth of the phenomenon leads to four key implications of my research.

Firstly, popular culture shapes people's understanding and beliefs. Therefore, there should be a level of responsibility afforded to those who produce that popular culture. In order to challenge gender roles within society, we must challenge the sources that perpetuate them, critically analysing what is being produced for our consumption (Colombo & Muir 2020:17). Whilst I understand there are a great number of factors that influence our interpretation and understanding of gender (environment, family, peers, education for example), the media, and more specifically popular culture, is so dominant in our society that what they produce must be examined critically. In order to do this, we must begin within influential and overarching brands such as Disney, Universal, DreamWorks and other film studios. This research is contributing to a breadth of research that is critically evaluating media sources, and its impact on consumers.

Secondly, I hope that publication of this research may inspire parents to critically engage with the content they expose their children to. I hope it sparks conversation about whether, for example, it was okay for Snow White and Cinderella to endure the cruelty of their families, or why the story of Snow White, Cinderella, Aurora, Eilonwy, Ariel, Belle and Jasmine ended when they started their romantic relationships. This will also allow members of society to challenge the dominant gender norms produced by popular culture, which will force film studios to change their representations of women and men in order to give the consumers what they want.

Thirdly, I want this research to provide a platform for the princess phenomenon to be explored by more scholars using my film analysis framework, and for it to be used to analyse phenomenon beyond the princesses due to its transferability. Beyond the Disney Princesses, I hope to use the framework to critically analyse the women of the Marvel and Star Wars cinematic universe, as well as other franchises created by Universal or DreamWorks. I hope that

this framework will mean the research possibilities are endless, as long as popular culture continues to produce characters.

Finally, I hope this research becomes a platform from which I can publish and consult film studios and merchandising companies on how they are presenting gender. This research demands a call for accountability of film studios that produce images of femininity. I want studios and companies to think harder about how they are depicting their male and female characters, and what the consequences will be for impressionable young minds who consume their products.

Contribution to the field

This extensive research of the princess phenomenon, encompassing its many facets, is an original and comprehensive contribution to the field of Disney studies, as well as the wider field of media and gender. I have provided a detailed, critical and thorough analysis of the Disney princess phenomenon, examining not only the films (as most scholars have done within the field of Disney), but how the princesses have been continually marketed by Disney. Whilst textual analysis has been conducted on films (Do Rozario 2004; Dundes 2001; Edwards 1999; Lacroix 2004; Maity 2014; Ross 2004; Zarranz 2007), there was less research found on princess marketing and merchandising (Auster & Mansbach 2012; Wasko 2001a; Wohlwend 2009) and very little found on experiences with the princesses (Shuler 2015). Therefore, my research provides Disney studies with an in-depth examination of the three common ways in which consumers can interact, identify and experience the princess phenomenon. In addition to this, it provides the field with a piece of research that is completely up to date with regards to the current princesses included within the phenomenon.

Whilst there have been two key arguments of the progression and regression of the Disney princesses, my research has produced a 'third way' of examining the changes in the phenomenon. The princesses have progressed, regressed and progressed again over time: there was the anomaly of Princess Eilonwy, the policing of the first, second, third and fourth wave princesses, and the sacrificing nature of the fourth wave. This thesis has highlighted that it is too simplistic to suggest that the princesses can just progress or regress over time. Rather, the princesses are a complex phenomenon where micro changes can demonstrate all variations within the phenomenon.

In regard to the wider field of media and gender, I have created a transferable and flexible film analysis framework that can be used by other researchers to examine macro and micro changes within phenomena. Due to the adaptable nature of the framework, it can be used to examine masculinity as well as femininity. This framework, and the results of it within this thesis has demonstrated that the 'princesses are the political' and not only due to their vast

presence within the children's entertainment and toy market, but also because of their identity as role models to the children who consume them. The findings of this thesis, of which images of femininity are the most dominant within princess waves, and which princess waves are exposed to consumers has demonstrated how femininity has been disseminated within this worldwide phenomenon. As I explained in the introduction, one way femininity is learnt is through socialisation. Therefore, we must see the princesses as the political in order to investigate how femininity is being constructed in spheres that are seen as trivial yet may have the most impact on children's development and learning of gender. When the princess films are so embedded within culture, we must examine them in order to identify the cultural messages of gender within this phenomenon. It is my hope that researchers will be able to use this framework in order to produce their own typologies of phenomenon, which will contribute to our wider understanding of the place of popular culture within our lives.

Further research

I experienced two main challenges whilst conducting research on the Disney princess phenomenon: data collection and access. When I first began my journey as a researcher, it was on an MRes project. As it was to be completed in one year, with a smaller wordcount, it was my intention to examine the Disney Princess Franchise. However, as time went on and I was thinking about how many princesses had been excluded from the franchise, I realized I needed to widen the project. It was at that time that I applied to transfer my MRes to a PhD, in order to give me the scope to examine what I now call the princess phenomenon. However, due to my research agenda and scope changing after I had collected the merchandise data, I did not collect as much data on non-franchised princesses as I would have liked. As mentioned in both Chapter One and Chapter Eight, this meant I was only able to use four out of the twelve months of data I had collected in order to have reliable results. In future research, I would start the data collection again in order to have a full year of princess merchandise (including *Frozen II*).

Another challenge I faced was access to industry experts, which in my case was key figures within the Walt Disney Company. This proved to be incredibly challenging, and something which I was unable to overcome. Even those individuals who no longer worked for Disney, such as Disney Princess Franchise founder Andy Mooney were impossible to contact. In some cases, I was able to overcome this, through interviews with ex-employees and watching YouTube videos of ex-employees' experiences. Those individuals I was able to interview and watch provided invaluable knowledge, however as they were no longer with the business, I was unable to gauge whether the processes and procedures were still ongoing. Whilst I doubt in future research, I would have more success accessing employees of Disney, I want to

acknowledge that access to Disney stakeholders would add another dimension to any research on the company.

As my research and writing on the princess phenomenon drew to a close, I reflected on my future research. It was beyond the scope of this thesis to examine how consumers absorbed messages of femininity, as it was imperative to establish how the phenomenon depicted femininity first. I intend to build on the findings of this thesis by conducting mixed methods research with consumers of the Disney princess phenomenon. Now that I have identified how femininity is depicted within the phenomenon, I would use surveys and focus groups with children and their parents (the key target market of the princesses) to explore how consumers experience and absorb the phenomenon.

It was also beyond the scope of this research to examine the Disney princes. Although I have established that the princesses have been researched within the field of Disney in great depth, the princes have been explored sparingly (Davis 2014b). As my film analysis framework is transferable, I intend to explore how images of masculinity are depicted within the princess phenomenon within relation to the Disney princes. I would continue to expand this by examining consumer experiences of the Disney princes, and how consumers experience and absorb images produced by the male characters of princess films.

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Appendix A

Princess Products Web Pages Sample: 18/09/2016

Snow White



Quick Look
(1)
Snow White Costume For Kids
£30.99



Quick Look
(17)
Snow White Animator Doll
£20.95

Ariel



Quick Look
(1)
Disney Princess Varsity Jacket For Kids
£19.99



Quick Look
(1)
The Little Mermaid Varsity Jacket For Kids
£19.99
61 - 65 of 65 Results Page: 6

Pocahontas



Quick Look
(15)
Disney Princess Figurine Set
now £10.00 reg £12.99



Quick Look
(11)
Pocahontas Soft Toy Doll
£16.95
1 - 12 of 13 Results Page: 1



Quick Look
Pocahontas Classic Doll
£12.99

Tiana



Quick Look
(1)
Disney Princess Varsity Jacket For Kids
£19.99



Quick Look
Disney Princess Briefs For Kids, Pack of 5
From £7.99



Quick Look
(7)
Tiana Costume Dress For Kids
£30.95

Merida



Quick Look
(1)
Merida Medium Soft Toy, Brave
£17.99



Quick Look
(3)
Merida Mini Animator Doll Playset
£15.99



Appendix B

Participant Consent Form

Participant Consent for Interviews

The University of Nottingham has a high standard for the ethical conduct of research. I ask you to consider the following points before signing this form to show you accept the terms below and agree to participate in this interview.

- Your contribution to the research will be through an interview. Your comments will be recorded and transcribed on an encrypted computer.
- The recordings will be kept in a secure place (i.e. a locked cabinet and encrypted hard drive).
- The transcriptions will be retained by the researcher and analysed as part of the study. A copy of the transcript is available at your request.
- Your contribution is very important to this research. However participation is completely voluntary, if, at any point during the course of the interview or afterwards you wish to retract your contribution, you may do so at any time without the need to provide explanation.
- Please let the researcher know if you would prefer for your answers to be anonymous.

Confirmation and Consent

I confirm that I agree to participate in this research project. I have been briefed on what this involves and I agree to terms above. I understand that the material is protected by a code of professional ethics. I hereby assign the copyright for my contribution to the 'University of Nottingham'.

Participant Name

Participant Signature: _____ Name:_____ Date: ____

I confirm that I agree to keep the undertakings in this contract.

Researcher Name

Researcher Signature: _____ Name:_____ Date: ____