

TAMÁS LILI

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DISNEY'S ZOOTOPIA: RACIAL BIASES IN POST-RACIAL AMERICA

Kulcsszavak: rasszizmus; Egyesült Államok társadalmi kérdései; Disney animáció; Zootopia; Zootropolis

Walt Disney Pictures' 2016 animated feature film Zootopia (titled Zootropolis in Hungary) is set in a fictional world where animals have evolved above the duality of predator and prey and now live together in harmony. As a pretence of a post-racial society, the American Dream of equal opportunity prevails: anyone can become anything in the titular city.

However, analysing Zootopia as a social record of American attitudes to racism in the 2010s and the apparent instances of racial biases, the paper contends that instead of presenting a utopia, the film cleverly challenges the liberal concept of post-racial America through its relatable animal characters. The paper's structure leans on Camara Phyllis Jones's theoretical framework for understanding racism on three levels and will explore examples of institutionalised, personally mediated, and internalised racism in the film. This analysis reveals that despite the progress made, deeply ingrained racial prejudices still exist and can influence one's interactions and opportunities. The film's thought-provoking commentary notwithstanding, Zootopia acknowledges the aspiration to the ideal of post-racial America.