Long May She Reign: A Rhetorical Analysis of Gender Expectations in Disney’s Tangled and Disney/Pixar’s Brave

Caitlin J. Saladino
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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Justifying the Study of Rapunzel and Merida:

1. Examining gender AND race is outside the scope of this project.
2. The tension for both princesses originates in expectations set forth by their mothers.
3. Rapunzel and Merida are the two most recent princesses.

Tangled

Synopsis:
“Rapunzel spends most of her life in a tower with her
chameleon friend, Pascal, imagining the world outside. 
When she meets Flynn Rider, the two of them go on an 
adventure so she can finally live her dream.”

Merida

Synopsis:
“Merida is a Princess by birth and an adventurer by spirit. 
She spends her days practicing archery, riding her horse 
Angus, and exploring the world around her. She loves her 
father, but she wants to control her own destiny.”

Conclusions & Future Directions

Moral Messages
“messages about how we ought to live, about morality”

1) Marriage is not a necessary evil.
2) Keying tradition is necessary in the quest for self-discovery
3) Standing up for yourself is important.
4) A “real” girl should be androgynous.

Opinion editorial writer, Katie Patton states, “As adults, we know that what makes a princess, of the Disney or real-life variety, isn’t what she is wearing or how she looks; whether Prince Charming sweeps her off her feet or she carves her own independent path. What makes a princess is, who she is and what she stands for.”

Frozen (2013)

Disney’s “I Am A Princess” Campaign