

Animating Desire:

Lacan, Deleuze, and Disney Erotica

Kalervo A. Sinervo
@kalervideo
kalervo.sinervo@gmail.com
April 2011

*"When you wish upon a star
Makes no difference who you are
Anything your heart desires
Will come to you"
--Jiminy Cricket*

1. Foreplay

In December of 1937, Walt Disney Productions released their first full-length animated feature, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, through RKO Radio Pictures. The film, based on the Brothers Grimm fairy tale *Snow White*, offered a simple enough if somewhat inexplicable story: the young heroine Snow White is plotted against by evil stepmother, who is jealous of White's beauty. Enraged by her magic mirror's statement that "Snow White is the fairest in all the land," the stepmother orders a servant to take White into the forest and kill her. The servant, however, takes pity on the young girl and warns her to run away, which she does, eventually finding her way into the home of seven prospector dwarfs. Further cuteness ensues, but eventually White is felled by a poison apple delivered to her by the stepmother (who is disguised as a hag). Rather than dying, the beautiful young lady falls into a deep sleep, and is only awakened for her perpetual slumber by the kiss of a prince. Roll credits.

In the nearly 75 years since, Disney Studios has produced and released scores more animated features, nearly all involving magic, love, and a happy ending. The films tend to pattern themselves on this successful formula, and though the stories are always different, they all share in common the one constant that makes all stories possible: want. Desire is the lynchpin of the general Disney animated feature, as it also serves as a catalyst in nearly all of human behavior. This claim is one that would be shared to varying degrees by French thinker and psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, as well as French philosopher Gilles Deleuze. However, the two might well look at the statement, and more importantly the Disney cartoon fairy tale feature, from different angles. Lacan would view a movie like *Snow White* or *Sleeping Beauty* or *Pocahontas* and likely see in all of them the failure of desire to traverse the fantasy and glimpse the real, as well as evidence of the absence of sexual relationships. Deleuze, on the other hand, would likely come away from a screening of *Beauty and the Beast* or *The Little Mermaid* much more interested in the positive desiring-production of the medium itself—that is, animation. Where both might agree, in the end, is in the uncovering of lack—Lacan through an examination of content, and Deleuze through an exploration of limitations imposed by the paranoiac machines inherent to capital. Whatever the implications, it seems that an appraisal of the Disney animated feature offers multiple opportunities to find points of intersection as well as debate between Lacan and Deleuze. Consequently, such an appraisal—made from the theoretical perspectives of both thinkers—may provide insight into a discussion of the two in relation to one another.

2. Love, Disney-style

A Lacanian investigation into the customs of Disney animated features would probably begin with a focus on the typical romantic relationship to be found in a Disney film. By targeting relationships in Disney movies, we can see from a Lacanian perspective how such relationships reinforce notions of lack and desire, and ultimately Lacan's statement that there is no such thing as a sexual relationship.

To begin with, an examination of the narratives of many Disney films makes evident the failure of desire to confront our object *a*. The first piece of proof for this claim can be found by recognizing the addressing of taboos in Disney. Many Disney animated feature narratives involve the threatening of taboo, which clearly gestures towards sexualized repression. Take for example *The Little Mermaid*. Based on a Hans Christian Andersen story, Disney's *The Little Mermaid* tells the tale of Ariel, a young and rebellious half-woman, half-fish who dreams of life on land, falls in love with a human prince, and is lucky enough to have him love her back. Every one of these desires represents some taboo: Ariel's longing to experience life on the surface is simply not shared by anyone else in her undersea society and the love between her and Eric is essentially bestiality; this is quite similar to Belle's love for the Beast in Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, which reflects the taboo of bestiality even in its title; furthermore, both *Sleeping Beauty* and *Snow White* have storylines that involve a man being in love with a comatose woman, which points towards necrophilia; the Disney versions of *Lady and the Tramp*, *The Aristocats*, *Oliver & Company*, and *Aladdin* are all essentially class warfare stories in which star-crossed lovers fight against societal caste boundaries; and *Pocahontas* deals with issues of interracial romance. All of these aspects reflect to the perceptive viewer the presence of sexual

repression at work in society through the silencing of that exquisite excitement and fear over the Other's desire that Lacan calls *jouissance*. In *Seminar XX*, Lacan asserts that repression serves as proof that *jouissance* is not "appropriate" to a sexual relationship:

[If] *jouissance* comes to someone (*celui*) who speaks, and not by accident, it is because it is a bit premature. It has something to do with the renowned (*fameux*) sexual relationship, concerning which he will have only too many occasions to realize that it doesn't exist. It is thus second rather than first. There are traces of it in Freud's work. If Freud spoke of *Urverdrängung*, primal repression, it was precisely because the true, good, everyday repression is not first—it is second.

People repress the said *jouissance* because it is not fitting for it to be spoken, and that is true precisely because the speaking (*dire*) thereof can be no other than the following: *qua jouissance*, it is inappropriate (*elle ne convient pas*)... Repression is produced only to attest, in all statements (*dires*) and in the slightest statement, to what is implied by the statement that I just enunciated, that *jouissance* is inappropriate—*non decet*—to the sexual relationship. (*Encore* 61)

This passage illuminates Lacan's point that the sexualized relationship is repressed because it does no service to *jouissance*. Extending this argument, we can claim that taboos are repressed for just the same reason: whatever *jouissance* derived from taboo does not fit with the Lacanian view of either *jouissance* or sexuality.

Accordingly, these Disney narratives document the efforts of taboo relationships trying to justify their *jouissance*, when even the *jouissance* of non-taboo sexual relationship is inappropriate. Furthermore, consequent to all these relationships *being* taboos is the fact that all are therefore struggles. This is well in keeping with the Lacanian perspective on desire, as a Lacanian vantage point can tell us that the direct path towards one's desire is almost always doomed to failure. Lacan scholar Bruce Fink iterates as much in his book *Lacan to the Letter* when he writes, "desire

is structurally unsatisfiable... Having is static, being is a pursuit" (*Lacan to the Letter* 23). Fink picks this opinion up from Lacan's own *Écrits* where we are told that desire always lies "elsewhere," outside what we believe to be the object of our yearnings:

A man of desire, of a desire that he followed against his will into ways in which he saw himself reflected in feeling, domination and knowledge, but of which he, unaided, succeeded in unveiling, like an initiate at the defunct mysteries, the unparalleled signifier: that phallus of which the receiving and the giving are equally impossible for the neurotic, whether he knows that the Other does not have it, or knows that he does have it, because in either case his desire is elsewhere; it belongs to being, and man, whether male or female, must accept having it and not having it, on the basis of the discovery that he isn't it. (*Écrits* 277)

What this excerpt means is that regardless of whether we pursue an object for our own gratification, or if we try to gratify the Other in the pursuit of *jouissance*, there will always be something at issue to spoil satisfaction. The key point is that it is the "discovery that he isn't it" which is perpetually the thing at issue, i.e. that we *invent* the prevention of our dissatisfaction, just as we invent our own desires in the first place. Belle dreams of a life outside her little village, but at first finds it horrifying and oppressive. Aladdin longs for riches and luxury, but finds the trappings of princehood to be quite empty. Disney films are littered with instances of characters achieving their hearts' desires only to find that what they truly want is something else. And while all of the film's present viewers with approximations of happy endings, it is a certainty that any direct-to-video sequel produced will present the characters some dissatisfaction, breaking up the "static" of having in favor of replacing it with the "being" of pursuit—often incarnated in some new taboo.

3. The Case of the Missing Disney Vagina

While the presence of the taboo points toward sexual repression, the lack of a sexual relationship is often symbolized in the role of what we can call the Disney Princess. The Disney Princess, that is, the female subject of a Disney film, is often relegated to the sidelines, deprived of agency and therefore relegated the status of the “not-whole” feminine. We can infer from a reading of Lacan’s *Seminar XX* that jouissance is the excess produced by lack, and that the female *is* this lack because she represents a signifier that cannot signify anything:

There’s no such thing as Woman, Woman with a capital *W* indicating the universal. There’s no such thing as Woman because, in her essence... she is not-whole... “Woman” (*la*) is a signifier, the crucial property (*propre*) of which is that it is the only one that cannot signify anything, and this is simply because it grounds woman’s status in the fact that she is not-whole. That means we can’t talk about Woman (*La femme*).

A woman can but be excluded by the nature of things, which is the nature of words... The fact remains that if she is excluded by the nature of things, it is precisely in the following respect: being not-whole, she has a supplementary jouissance compared to what the phallic function designates by way of jouissance. (*Encore 72-73*)

This means that woman is not complete unto herself because any jouissance she carries is supplementary to truly phallic jouissance. Therefore, the woman can only offer support to the man’s jouissance, because she is most often the lack that he seeks to fill. And because to the Lacanian, woman represents a lack, then it is therefore natural for woman to be excluded. This is quite compatible with the customs of the Disney animated feature narrative and characterization. Let us take as our first example Disney’s *Sleeping Beauty*. The title of this film as well as its more well-known qualities are enough to show us that the titular character herself, Princess Aurora, moves her own story little, but a slightly closer look at the

narrative is further revealing. *Sleeping Beauty* opens with Aurora's birth, which is quickly followed by the King's betrothal of her to Prince Phillip. Her three doddering fairy godmothers arrive to bless her, but before they can complete their rituals, an evil witch arrives and curses Aurora, foretelling her death at age sixteen by pricking her finger on a spinning wheel's spindle. Aurora's royal father asks the fairy godmothers to break the curse, but all they can do is modify it: instead of dying when she pricks her finger, she will instead fall into a deep slumber, only to be awakened by her true love's first kiss. We are now fifteen minutes into this 75-minute film, with the entire storyline's premise laid out, and the main character has yet to issue an utterance (and there will be an additional three minutes of plot development before she does speak). This is a perfect example of what Lacan means by exclusion, and the fact that the key to waking the heroine is a kiss from the hero is a perfect example of the woman's jouissance serving only as supplementary to the man's phallic function.

The situation is quite similar in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. Like Aurora, Snow White is put into a deep sleep and awakes only when the dashing prince arrives and kisses her sleeping form, and like Aurora, White generally remains blissfully unaware of the danger surrounding her: she is threatened without provocation and then saved by the huntsman almost before she even knows that she is *being* threatened. She moves from this man's arms into the arms of seven more men, and only leaves them when she is whisked away by the final man, her handsome, unnamed prince.

Taking yet further examples, in *Beauty and the Beast* Belle is traded like chattel between her father and the Beast, in *The Little Mermaid* Ariel is rescued from Ursula by Eric, in *Cinderella* the heroine is delivered from her life of drudgery first by her fairy godmother and ultimately by Prince Charming, in *Hercules* Megara is resurrected by the demy-god from the depths of Hades, and in *Aladdin* Jasmine is first offered up to multiple suitors and then finally saved by Aladdin's quick wit. Even *The Lion King* takes this concept of the not-whole feminine subject, powerless and oblivious without the masculine subject, and finds it reflected in nature, showing that many female lions cannot stand up to one male lion because their function is to hunt (supplement the male), not fight. To rebel against a tyrannical alpha male, a pride of female lionesses calls on one male lion and a few of his bumbling buddies. And if we look into the stories of latter works like *Mulan*, we are presented with a woman who needs to disguise herself as a male before she can use any agency.

All of these examples only further reflect the Lacanian view of woman as not-whole and her jouissance as supplementary to man's. But this concept of the feminine incomplete subject can be extrapolated into sexuality as well. In the relationship of the not-whole female object of the Disney animated feature to her counterpart male subject, an absence is present, just as there is a Lacanian view that what marks the feminine as not-whole is her lack of a phallus, i.e. her vagina. What creates jouissance in man is his excitement over filling the woman's lack, which can be interpreted literally as filling her vagina with his phallus. Because the woman lacks a penis, she is only a partial object, which incites the male's jouissance. With

the Disney Princess, however, the vagina is totally absent by nature of the Disney film being rated “G” for general family consumption. This is the other side of *jouissance*, the abject terror that accompanies the excitement. When presented with the partial object, we are able to reconcile ourselves to it, but the *wholly obscured* partial object is the nightmare in the same sense that the impossible whole object is the nightmare. In order to deal with this nightmare, we must decide that no sexual relationship exists in the first place, which is exactly what the Disney animated feature does.

This brings us to the main point of the section, which harkens back to the earlier discussion of taboos. In Disney, the taboo is never broken, and the feminine subject is never made whole. The ending of *Beauty and the Beast* sees Belle given her handsome prince from the husk of the beastly creature she desired moments before, allowing their love to progress without the connotations of bestiality. In spite of this, consummation remains absent. At the close of Disney’s *The Little Mermaid*, Ariel is permanently transformed into a human being so that she can marry Prince Eric, again cancelling out the possibility of cross-species romance, rendering their love socially acceptable and normative; consummation once again goes absent. Both Aurora of *Sleeping Beauty* and Snow White of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* are roused from their torpor before anything too necrophilic can happen, and *again* there is no consummation. Disney’s *Pocahontas* presents a greater challenge, as the taboo there is the interracial love shared by Native American Pocahontas and white settler John Smith. So the film’s conclusion sees Pocahontas remain in the New World while John Smith returns to Britain. An ocean

separates the lovers, and obviously consummation of their love must remain absent. One exception would be *Aladdin*, where the young hero remains a pauper but is allowed to have a relationship with the princess anyway. But in this example, the sultan simply abolishes the law that says only a prince can marry a princess, effectively nullifying the taboo qualities of such a union (and *again*, consummation is nowhere to be seen).

What all these examples are telling of is that while the taboo nature of the typical Disney romance relationship is indicative of sexualized repression on a societal level, the fact that the taboo *stays* unbroken implies that the Disney film *itself* is repressed. This not only holds with the Lacanian idea of sexualized repression inhabiting every level (because there is no relation between the sexes), but also with Lacan's point that no matter what, one's "desire is always elsewhere," i.e. that what one *thinks* he or she wants is rarely what one *gets*, and if one does get it, he or she immediately decides to want something else.

4. Disney Baroque, Disney Pr0n

In a way, the absence of all this copulation goes back to points made by Lacan in "On the Baroque," the ninth chapter of *Seminar XX*. "[A]ll of the jouissances," Lacan tells us, "are but rivals of the finality that would be constituted if jouissance had the slightest relationship with the sexual relationship." (Lacan *Encore* 112) What this means is that jouissance, that fervent excited anxiety over the excitement of the Other, is at its core devoid of any sexuality whatsoever, because what the split subject really wants cannot be given. Lacan finds ample evidence of this in the baroque:

In everything that followed from the effects of Christianity, particularly in art — and it's in this respect that I coincide with the "baroquism" with which I accept to be clothed — everything is exhibition of the body evoking jouissance — and you can lend credence to the testimony of someone who has just come back from an orgy of churches in Italy — but without copulation. If copulation isn't present, it's no accident. It's just as much out of place there as it is in human reality, to which it nevertheless provides sustenance with the fantasies by which that reality is constituted. (Lacan *Encore* 113)

What baroque art presents to the viewer is love without copulation, nudity and near-nudity bereft of sex. Because the trappings of baroquism exhibit such strength of desire and human contact *without* overt sexuality and copulation, they demonstrate the Lacanian view that the phallic function is not about wanting sex, but about wanting object *a*. Lacan subsequently goes on to say that "Nowhere, in any cultural milieu, has this exclusion been admitted to more nakedly" (Lacan *Encore* 113), but the baroque may be trumped on this meter by many of the Disney animated films. The vast majority of Disney animated features are about romantic love, but nowhere in *any* Disney feature is clear fornication. This gestures towards a gap that the Lacanian view would posit exists in all desire; essentially, desire's failure to satisfy. To aid this discussion, it behooves us to explore the existence of two Disney-based media that have no official ties to actual Disney animated features (and are most likely condemned by the Disney corporation): Disney and comic book artist J. Scott Campbell's recent "Fairy Tale Fantasies" calendars. Disney is, in essence, pornographic art of Disney characters, usually rendered in the same style as that used in the Disney animated feature from which the characters are taken. Perhaps Snow White is having an orgy with the seven dwarfs, or Cinderella is being whipped by her wicked stepmother, or Belle and the Beast are making love doggy-

style. Sometimes characters from two movies animated in similar styles will cross over and Jasmine will be drawn embracing Ariel, or characters will be depicted engaged in a type of slash fiction, Genie fucking Aladdin fucking the Sultan. It may even be something as simple as Aurora performing fellatio on Prince Phillip.



Cinderella & stepmother via drawn-sex.com



Ariel & Jasmine via toon-sex-now.org



Belle & Beast via toontoon.com

Whatever the specific content, Disney is always an attempt to eroticize the Disney canon through parody. Put as basically as possible, Disney is what Disney would look like—if it were pornographic.

J. Scott Campbell's Fairy Tale Fantasies calendars, on the other hand, are attempts to eroticize Disney from the other direction. Campbell, a popular comic artist who built his reputation on his lascivious renderings of the female form, took his popular drawing style and applied it to the women of Disney animation. Instead of retaining a given Disney film's style and altering its content, Campbell avoided overt pornography in favor of eroticizing Disney through his technique. In Fairy

Tale Fantasies, no sex acts are portrayed, but all figures are nonetheless depicted erotically:



Left to right: Fairy Tale Fantasies versions of *Sleeping Beauty*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and *the Little Mermaid*. All images via jscottcampbell.com

The reason that both Disney and Fairy Tale Fantasies are relevant to our discussion of desire in Disney animation is that both are attempts to address the impossibility of phallic jouissance that Disney animated features show us. Firstly, they attest to the gap presented by the strangely eroticized Disney animation. Disney princesses and princesses are depicted as beautiful figures in their own worlds, but they do not represent reality. Clearly, the existence of Disney and Fairy Tale Fantasies display the desire that can be inspired by Disney films, but they also display the gap in that desire, the failure to satisfy. If the Disney films were enough to satisfy the desire that they create, outside consumers of them wouldn't feel the need to alter either the content or the style of them in an attempt to eroticize them. Essentially, these images produced by fans speak to the urge to plug the gap between the strangely

eroticized but not overtly sexualized Disney women (or men) and the unsatisfiable desire that they produce. Turning back on themselves, these attempts to plug the gap, to resolve the Lacanian failure of desire, serve as evidence that the films are being *experienced* as a gap. In this way, the Lacanian model of desire gives us an accurate portrayal of what is actually happening (or, at the very least, what can actually happen) when Disney animated features are consumed. Even further telling is that these attempts are always a failure: they do not, and likely cannot, synthesize both the Disney form and pornographic content successfully. Eroticizing either the style (as *Fairy Tale Fantasies* does) or the content (as *Disney* does) perpetually falls short of producing satisfaction or traversing the fantasy. Most important to our discussion, though, is that the production of these types of things at all means that the Disney film itself fails to fill the split subject's lack.

5. An Animated Discussion with Deleuze

From these sections, a Lacanian position on Disney film can be summed up thusly: what Disney creates is a gap. The desire represented in Disney animated features and the desire they evoke in viewers all operate on principles of lack. The lack the Disney movie produces is its product—essentially, we buy lack from Disney. For Deleuze, however, this is all wrong. The Deleuzian model would view a Disney film and see two things: *productive* desiring-machines and limited novelty. This is because the Deleuzian perspective would first take into account the stage upon which all of this is being played out: animation. Because animation is produced, Deleuze would see a Disney film as being not about an inherent lack, but instead the need for more production. While the Lacanian model has us micro-examine the

content of Disney films, seeking out their common customs, the Deleuzian model steps outside to view the medium and the system of capital in which that medium is produced.

For Deleuze, animation is first and foremost a desiring machine. This means that the mere fact that an animated film is produced is evidence of a type of desiring-production. Seeing animation as desiring-production opens up a much more positivist view of desire in Disney features, and a Disney animated feature is surely a type of desiring-machine because it can intersect with the body in various ways. In fact, animation is almost definitive of desiring-production, as it implies a chain of flows not unlike that of a desiring machine:

Desiring-machines are binary machines, obeying a binary law or set of rules governing associations: one machine is always coupled with another. The productive synthesis, the production of production, is inherently connective in nature: "and..." "and then..." This is because there is always a flow-producing machine, and another machine connected to it that interrupts or draws off part of this flow... And because the first machine is in turn connected to another whose flow it interrupts or partially drains off, the binary series is linear in every direction. Desire constantly couples continuous flows and partial objects that are by nature fragmentary and fragmented. Desire causes the current to flow, itself flows in turn, and breaks the flows. (*Anti-Oedipus* 5)

In this passage taken from their book *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and his colleague Félix Guattari explain that everything that exists is produced by desire, which creates a flow to be eternally interrupted and redirected by desiring-machines. In our discussion, we can see desire as leading to the production of animation, which redirects the flow of desire through its various processes, and subsequently flows the desire to the viewers, some of whom subsequently redirect their desires into the production of things like Disney drawings or Fairy Tales Fantasies images. Instead

of viewing the animation as a gaping vortex of existential lack, Deleuze would see the medium itself as production, as *making*. This is one essential difference between the Lacanian perspective and the Deleuzian view: the former sees the signifier and the failure of desire to be located therein, while the latter sees the process, experiencing the positive production inherent in the “binary series” of the form.

6. Capital Ideas

Even more important to Deleuze than the positive modes of desire found in the medium of animation would be the broader implications of capital and novelty he would detect. In fact, Deleuze might view the entire Lacanian argument as just another case of paranoiac limitation. In Deleuzian theory, there are two types of push: the limiting, constraining paranoiac push and the novel, univocal, and expansive schizoid push. In the Disney animated feature form, Deleuze would find both driving forces at work, both paranoiac constraint and schizoid novelty. Where Lacan would look at the Disney movie and say that the viewer is purchasing lack, Deleuze would say that what we are really buying is half a unit of novelty. This is because each Disney animated feature is creative (novel) enough to entertain and even captivate the audience, but simple enough not to challenge the audience in any essential sense. The important differences from film to film from a Deleuzian perspective would be found in the cadence of different actor’s voices or the rises and falls of each new cinematic score. These are the schizoid drives of Disney films, because they involve differences of production and differences of form. Meanwhile, though these differences mean everything, and viewers do love them, Deleuze would also find a critique of capital in the films, because in his view capital wants to

make money rather than better people—which is why the Disney animated feature straddles a line between the novel schizoid and the constrained paranoiac. Due to this, the films are made different, but stop at just enough difference to make viewers buy a ticket rather than think. Disney films, with their repetitive storylines and relationship structures constraining the vitality and novelty of the different beautiful vistas in *Aladdin* and *The Lion King*, would appear to Deleuze to perfectly encapsulate capitalism. This is because Deleuze views capitalism as having both constrictive and energizing or vitalistic components:

The decoding of flows and the deterritorialization of the socius thus constitutes the most characteristic and the most important tendency of capitalism. In continually draws near to its limit, which is a genuinely schizophrenic limit. It tends, with all the strength at its command, to produce the schizo as the subject of the decoded flows on the body without organs—more capitalist than the capitalist and more proletarian than the proletariat... What we are really trying to say is that capitalism, through its process of production, produces an awesome schizophrenic accumulation of energy or charge, against which it brings all its vast powers of repression to bear, but which nonetheless continues to act as capitalism's limit. For capitalism constantly counteracts, constantly inhibits this inherent tendency while at the same time allowing it free rein; it continually seeks to avoid reaching its limit while simultaneously tending toward that limit. (*Anti-Oedipus* 34)

Put simply, capitalism wants to bring us novelty, which tends towards the limits of the schizoid, so capitalism must always also push back against this schizic limit with paranoiac constraint. Put even more simply, capitalism must walk a fine line. This is exactly what a Disney animated feature does. In the schizoid view, all must be seen as univocal, deriving from and existing as one. Hypothetically, the schizoid sees everything as connected, and a schizophrenic can paint a picture in which everything and anything that ever has been or will be will imply or is implied by anything and everything else. The paranoiac drive, on the other hand, breaks things

down into parts that may or may not even relate to one another, parsing out, compartmentalizing, structuring, ordering, and categorizing (though oddly enough, the paranoiac drive is itself in a sense univocal, because its unchecked progress parses and compartmentalizes to such an endless extent that it, in essence, totalizes). Similarly, the Disney animated feature both produces and limits desire at the same time, running the engines of both desire production through and the constriction of desire through predictability and “safe” content. The Disney film, after its capitalistic fashion, needs to have qualities that are novel, alive, vital, and interesting, but not *too* novel, alive, vital, and interesting. Consequently it vacillates between the schizic fostering of difference and paranoiac constriction of difference.

This idea of schizoid and paranoiac drives as they pertain to capital can also be applied to things like Disney and Fairy Tale Fantasies. While the Lacanian perspective on consumer-produced Disney erotica is that it is the return of the repressed, the Deleuzian way of looking at things would see them as the free play of schizoid desire that such objects as Disney animated films themselves might have taken were they constrained by the paranoiac back push of capitalism. In the Deleuzian sense, the desirous, sexual components of Disney films are not repressed because of a gap in desire, but because of the paranoiac machines inherent to capital.

7. Climax Points

Everything else taken into account, it is further important to note that the Deleuzian camp would find the real problem to be one of limitation. For Deleuze, the sexual component of the Disney-desire-repression exploration would be only

one aspect that is limited and constrained by the capital's paranoiac machines. Others might include vibrancy, phenomenal resonance, and emotional engagement. This final quality, like the sexualized components of Disney desire, can be pushed and constricted according to the logics of capital. Capitalism, Deleuze might say, doesn't like to give us movies that overly engage us in any way, be it sexual, emotional, intellectual, or otherwise, because to be so engaging on any or every level the schizic must be pushed too far and the paranoiac does not have the chance to cut out enough. A movie constrained by capital, which Disney animated features most certainly are, can only go so far on any register. The register that has been the most important for a contrast of Deleuze and Lacan is the register of desire, and in this discussion has often been sexual desire. But this is exactly the problem that Deleuze would have with the psychoanalytic discussion of Disney desire, the same problem Deleuze has with psychoanalysis in general: it itself is constrained by its focus on its own discourse of phallic function and desire that it ends up being reductive. Deleuze believes that psychoanalysis can explain everything while simultaneously missing everything because it has to operate within its own discursive practices and, like the paranoiac drive, breaks everything down into component parts. Deleuze looks at Lacan and sees a correct viewpoint, but one limited by its own boundaries.

So where does this leave us? In the end, delving into the structures of desire to be found in Disney animated features has been revealing in several ways. To begin with, the exploration has shown us an essential difference between Lacanian methods and Deleuzian techniques: Lacanian thought processes focus in on one aspect and go deep, much the way the analyst is meant to focus on any one

utterance from the analysand, because it may be the utterance that is a key slip. Deleuzian thought processes, on the other hand, step back from the content to examine the context—of the medium, and the system in which that medium is produced. It seems that the two tacks are quite different, but there may be a point of synthesis that has been glossed over. This synthesis point is found in the desire itself. Earlier in this discussion, we posited that subject's object *a*, the true object of the subject's desire, is always elsewhere. This is not coincidental; the subject manufactures reasons to keep on desiring and keep on pursuing. This isn't all too different from the Deleuzian view of desire as productive. It may be a small point of intersection, but in a discussion that revolves around desire, it is a significant one. Finally then, it seems that whether it is Aladdin's yearning to be rich *and* have Jasmine, the animator's longing to create a lasting work in film, the consumer's ambition to eroticize either the characters or the art style, or our desire in this paper to make sense of it all—desire is both produced and productive, both subjected and subjective, at once creation and master.

*"A dream is a wish your heart makes
 When you're fast asleep
 In dreams you lose your heartaches
 Whatever you wish for, you keep
 Have faith in your dreams and someday
 Your rainbow will come smiling through
 No matter how your heart is grieving
 If you keep on believing
 The dream that you wish will come true"
 --Cinderella*

Works Cited

- Aladdin*. Dir. Ron Clements, John Musker. Walt Disney Pictures, 1992. DVD.
- "Ariel and Jasmine." Image. <http://www.toon-sex-now.org>. Web.
- The Aristocats*. Dir. Wolfgang Reitherman. Walt Disney Pictures, 1970. DVD.
- Beauty and the Beast*. Dir. Gary Trousdale, Kirk Wise. Walt Disney Pictures, 1991. DVD.
- "Belle and Beast." Image. <http://toontoon.com>. Web.
- Cinderella*. Dir. Clyde Geronimi, Wilfred Jackson. Walt Disney Pictures, 1950. DVD.
- "Cinderella and stepmother." Image. <http://www.drawn-sex.com>. Web.
- Hercules*. Dir. Ron Clements, John Musker. Walt Disney Pictures, 1997. DVD.
- Lady and the Tramp*. Dir. Clyde Geronimi, Wilfred Jackson, Hamilton Luske. Walt Disney Pictures, 1955. DVD.
- The Lion King*. Dir. Roger Allers, Rob Minkoff. Walt Disney Pictures, 1994. DVD.
- The Little Mermaid*. Dir. Ron Clements, John Musker. Walt Disney Pictures, 1989. DVD.
- Mulan*. Dir. Tony Bancroft, Barry Cook. Walt Disney Pictures, 1998. DVD.
- Oliver & Company*. Dir. George Scribner. Walt Disney Pictures, 1988. DVD.
- Pinocchio*. Dir. Norman Ferguson, T. Hee. Walt Disney Pictures, 1940. DVD.
- Pocahontas*. Dir. Mike Gabriel, Eric Goldberg. Walt Disney Pictures, 1995. DVD.
- Sleeping Beauty*. Dir. Clyde Geronimi. Walt Disney Pictures, 1959. DVD.
- Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. Dir. William Cottrell, David Hand. Walt Disney Pictures, 1937. DVD.
- Campbell, J. Scott. *Fairy Tale Fantasies*. San Diego: IDW Publishing, 2011.

---. "J. Scott Campbell.com." <http://www.jscottcampbellstore.com>. Web.

Deleuze, Gilles, and Guattari, Félix. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*.

Trans. Robert Hurley, Helen R. Lane, Mark Seem. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000.

Fink, Bruce. *Lacan to the Letter: Reading Écrits Closely*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004.

Lacan, Jacques. *Écrits: A Selection*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1977.

---. *On Feminine Sexuality, the Limits of Love and Knowledge: Seminar XX Encore 1972-1973*. Trans. Bruce Fink. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1998.