Article

Postfeminist Masculinity: The New Disney Norm?

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Abstract: A recent trend in Disney scholarship attends to postfeminist readings of Disney film and media. This paper contributes to that conversation by focusing on the representations of *masculinity* that accompany postfeminist sensibilities in and through Disney media and its reception. With a sociological focus on postfeminist masculinity, this article reviews several Disney characters to argue for a new model of postfeminist masculinity advanced in recent Disney films, with a particular focus on the *Incredibles* films, and examines how this representation has been received in popular media.

Keywords: Disney; postfeminism; masculinity; gender; cultural studies

1. Introduction

A recent trend in Disney scholarship, in the wake of the blockbuster animated film *Frozen*, attends to postfeminist readings of Disney film and media (e.g., Frasl 2018; Macaluso 2016; Stover 2013) and public reception of these films. Because of Disney's questionable history of perpetuating dangerous gender stereotypes on film (e.g., Bell et al. 1995; Giroux and Pollock 2010)—and perhaps because of its implicit acknowledgement of this history, as evidenced by a recent string of movies with female leads—this postfeminist line of inquiry seems especially apt.

This paper contributes to that burgeoning conversation but focuses mainly on the representations of *masculinity* that accompany postfeminist sensibilities in and through Disney media and its reception. Though much work has been done to examine cinematic depictions of postfeminist masculinities in general (e.g., Abele and Gronbeck-Tedesco 2016; Gwyne and Muller 2013), this paper looks specifically at Disney and Pixar (hereafter, only "Disney") films' constructions of this concept, as previous conversations have typically concentrated on the portrayal of women and girls. As traditional or stereotypical versions of masculinity and masculine power continue to be supported and reaffirmed (through political and sports figures, superhero movies, and a plethora of gendered cultural practices and representations) but also challenged and dismantled (with such cultural movements like #MeToo), many have begun to wonder as to the criteria of and for masculine success. What role models might young boys—and adolescent and adult men—aspire to? With this question in mind, recent scholarship examines Disney films to offer more productive critical discourse around masculinity (e.g., Davis 2013; Wooden and Gillam 2014). Towards that same effort, I ask: How are recent Disney men discursively positioned through and by discourse? More specifically, how do Disney movies, as important texts of cultural production, reinforce a model of postfeminist masculinity? To answer these questions, I review several Disney characters to push back against simplistic categories of Disney men and to argue for a vision of masculinity that Disney seems to promulgate in its most recent films. Then, I illuminate the discourses and inherent meanings in and around *Incredibles 2* and its popular reception. In the process, I will argue that a postfeminist masculinity sensibility pervades these Disney cultural texts, signaling a new era—and yet another troubling model—of Disney masculinity. With a sociological focus on masculinity in particular, this paper responds to Rumens (2017) call for "more engaged research in the complicated ways in which discourses of postfeminist masculinities are historically patterned and intermingle with cultural . . . discourses" (p. 245).

2. Postfeminism and Postfeminist Masculinity

Before I discuss the conceptual tools that guide this paper, I find it necessary to briefly revisit the broad construct of postfeminism, as it can be employed and mis/used in a variety of ways. As I understand and use it, postfeminism (e.g., McRobbie 2007; Tasker and Negra 2007; Butler 2013; Munford and Waters 2013) refers to a range of contradictory gender discourses generally tied to, reified in, and arising from cultural and contemporary media. Postfeminism, in general, highlights narratives of achieved gender equity and sentiments that the goals of feminism and feminist equality and representation have been achieved or actualized or are no longer necessary. These "success narratives" tend to take cultural shape in media as "instances of typically heterosexual, white, middle-class [female] achievement in male-dominated workplaces, women's ability to treat men as sexual objects and the seemingly unfettered freedoms women enjoy in respect to career choice, parenting and domesticity" (Rumens 2017, p. 247). As a result, these narratives signify or indicate the end, fulfillment, or passing of feminism—and hence, an era of post-feminism where traditional feminist goals of gender equality, equal rights, and collective action are replaced by discourses and depictions of female empowerment, choice, and independence. Part of its contradiction stems from the inherent link or entanglement (McRobbie 2007) between postfeminist and feminist discourses: Postfeminism celebrates the perceived successes of feminism. Further, because of its perception of feminist actualization, postfeminism can also perpetuate a general backlash against feminism, by men and women, because of its—again, perceived—threatening, extreme, or difficult expectations for both men and women (Tasker and Negra 2007).

As postfeminism is linked more broadly with gender, culture, and power (Tasker 2008), it also employs its own discourse of and around masculinity. Tasker and Negra (2007) theorized postfeminist masculinity, the focus of this paper, as a discourse that "celebrates women's strength while lightly critiquing or gently ridiculing straight masculinity" (p. 21). In other words, postfeminist masculinity represents straight masculinity as foolish or comedic, perhaps even immature or incapable, in order to highlight capable, independent women. As Gill (2014) describes it, postfeminist masculinity is personified "in the repeated depiction of men as somewhat hapless, bumbling 'victims' or 'losers' in the 'sex wars,' alongside the presentation of feminism as extreme, old-fashioned and unnecessary/superfluous" (p. 191). The classic example of this trope can be seen in Ray Romano, the character from the popular television series *Everybody Loves Raymond*. On the show, Ray's wife regularly refers to him as an "idiot" while she is portrayed as strong, confident, capable, and demanding. More often than not, the comedic timing of the show comes at Ray's expense, as his words and actions—sometimes tied to his understanding of what it means to be a man or dad—tend to get him in trouble. This trope portrays the gendered-opposite formula of the classic television sitcom *I Love Lucy*—rather than Lucy and Ethel's antics, it's Ray's; and he, his brother, and his father seem to be the butt or subject of the show's jokes. Postfeminist masculinity can take on other forms, including vulnerable men in crisis, supportive husbands, and/or caring and inclusive male-figures, but the ridiculed depiction of masculinity seems most prevalent in Disney films of late.

3. Models of Disney Masculinity

It seems that Disney, as a producer of knowledge and culture, (implicitly or explicitly) recognizes certain traits and types—or fixed attributes—of masculinity in many of its male protagonists. For example, Davis (2013) has analyzed a broad swath of films to posit three broad depictions of Disney men—boys, heroes (both princes and non-aristocratic), and villains. But discussions around Disney masculinity problematically tend to stop here and attempt to pigeonhole characters into one category. In this section, I expand upon these categories—what I call "models of masculinity" (Table 1)—and offer a new model based upon recent Disney films.

Table 1. Models of Disney Masculinity.

Boy	Hero/Prince	Villain
Pinocchio Miguel	Prince Charming Prince Phillip Prince Eric Tarzan Hercules	Gaston Ratcliffe Judge Frollo Shan Yu Jafar Dr. Facilier
Aladdin Peter Pan John Smith Quasimodo		

The traditional depiction of Disney masculinity comes in the form of a dashing prince or hero. For example, early films like *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* and *Cinderella* depicted relatively passive princes (the nameless "Prince Charming") who served as secondary characters and objects of affection for the despondent or trialed female protagonists. Once these female characters were free of their wicked stepmother, they were able to escape to a "happily ever after" with this prince. The trope of the sidelined prince changed with movies like *Sleeping Beauty* and *The Little Mermaid* with named princes Phillip and Eric, respectively, who, though still an object of affection, played a vital role in heroically vanquishing the villain and, thus, more actively saving the princess in distress. The brave actions of these princely heroes essentially superseded those of both Aurora and Ariel—princesses in their own right by birth. Other non-prince characters also serve as heroes in Disney movies, including Tarzan, Hercules, and Aladdin.

Aside from heroes, Disney also tends to advance the trope of the boy-turned-man by way of some attainment of knowledge and/or personal understanding (i.e., moving from innocence to experience). This is classically personified in Pinocchio who learns what it means to be a "real boy" after a series of shameful and sinful associations with the likes of Lampwick, Honest John, Stromboli, and even Monstro the whale. In the end, Pinocchio learns that nothing can replace the value of family. Other Disney boys who experience some type of coming of age or bildungsroman include Miguel from *Coco*, who comes to much the same conclusion as Pinocchio, and even Peter Pan and, again, Aladdin. Though Peter could also fall into the hero category, he does come to realize the importance of the Darling children and their safe return to London. Aladdin, too, by the end of the film, understands the importance of being honest to himself and others about who he really is. In the words of the Blue Fairy, all of these characters prove themselves to be "brave, truthful, and unselfish" as they come to their personal understandings over the course of their respective films. Other "boy" archetypes may include characters like John Smith (*Pocahontas*) and Quasimodo (*The Hunchback of Notre Dame*).

Finally, Disney's memorable line-up of male villains constitutes another category. More often than not, these villains tend to take on a position of masculine authority—or, in more nuanced terms, hegemonic masculinity (Woloshyn et al. 2013)—until they are defeated, usually by the Hero/Prince who takes on a lesser or more acceptable form of hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity is a type of masculinity where men dominate and subject other men and women. Because of this subjugation, hegemonic masculinity is strongly linked to heterosexuality and a hyper-masculine presence. This depiction of masculinity is classically characterized in Gaston from *Beauty and the Beast*. He is strong, tough, handsome, and dominates every scene he is in, most clearly by subjugating those around him, as evidenced by his treatment of his sidekick LeFou (more on this below). The song "Gaston" (Ashman and Menken 1991) further highlights the hegemonic and masculine features of Gaston the character: He has a thick neck and cleft chin, no one is as "burly and brawny," he has "biceps to spare," and, of course, "every last inch of me's covered with hair." Aside from the song, Gaston narcissistically and readily points out these features to Belle, accented by his suave smile and perfect hair, throughout the movie. The rest of the song notes that he's "intimidating" and "a man

among men" who uses "antlers in all of my decorating." These "manly man" features are associated with traditional—and even stereotypical and dated—aspects of masculinity. In short, "no one says no to Gaston," which is indicative of a typical response to hegemonic masculinity. Similar villains of this type may include Shan Yu (*Mulan*), Jafar (*Aladdin*), Ratcliff (*Pocahontas*), Frollo (*The Hunchback of Notre Dame*), and Dr. Facilier (*The Princess and the Frog*). Though some of these villains may not have many of Gaston's stereotypical, "manly" attributes (like burly, brawny muscle), the way they act and treat others seems indicative of their intention to rule, dominate, or maintain power over others.

Certainly other depictions and versions of masculinity exist in the Disney universe, as postmodern theory acknowledges that masculinity may take many forms and exist in relation to other subject positions (i.e., that which is not masculine), but these versions seem to be outliers rather than recurring representations or tropes. Or, they tend to be overlooked for one of the categories detailed above. For example, Dundes and Streiff (2016) have analyzed the character Chi Fu from Disney's *Mulan* for his masculinity tropes and specifically as the antithesis of hegemonic masculinity—a man who, like LeFou, is indicative of effeminate, homosexual, or even hyposexual masculinity. But I would like to offer another category or model that I argue is recently recurring: That of post-feminist hero, whose features fall somewhere in between these versions of hegemonic masculinity and the effeminate or absence of masculinity. Or, perhaps rather, whose features index the man who fails to perform, inhabit, or actualize a hegemonic masculinity.

More specifically, the postfeminist version of masculinity is a Disney man who experiences some type of crisis or vulnerability, usually in relation to his understanding or performance of masculinity connected to work, family, partner, expectation, etc. In the first *The Incredibles* movie, Mr. Incredible, having been forced to conceal his superhero identity, takes on the trope of the worn-down masculine businessman who hates his job. This portrayal of the struggling Bob Parr (Mr. Incredible's alter-ego) indicates a postfeminist sentimentality, where men are depicted "as clinging on by a thread to their tenuous 'careers.' They are usually doing something boring for which they are overqualified" (Gill 2014, p. 193). In *The Incredibles*, this portrayal is further exaggerated by Bob's relationship with his boss, a literally diminutive but overbearing, strong, and seemingly more successful insurance businessman. Bob's revival comes through a renewal of his "primitive" masculinity (Ashcraft and Flores 2003)—through an invitation from a mysterious stranger to don his Mr. Incredible persona once again, use his super-strength, tone up his physique, and take down a villain. In this sense, his crisis of masculinity is resolved by reverting to a stereotypical, normalized version of manhood and masculinity—brute strength and physicality.

In *Incredibles 2*, Mrs. Incredible—under her previous and un-wedded identity (that is, her identity without a male/masculine attachment) as Elastigirl—accepts an offer from a corporation to fight crime in order to rebuild the public's trust in superheroes. The leaders of the corporation make it clear that they want Elastigirl specifically for this job because she, unlike her husband, creates less of a mess in collateral damage, hence her disassociation from her Mrs. Incredible title—an important post/feminist message, for sure. She, simply put, has not messed up enough or created as much collateral damage (literally and figuratively) as her husband. (On a side note here: The ease with which Elastigirl attains this position—without barriers or structures—and the success and ease with which she carries out the job also speak to the postfeminist nature of the film as a whole.) To support this endeavor, Mr. Incredible takes on the role of stay-at-home dad. In some of the funnier scenes of the movie, Mr. Incredible reaches breaking points when he cannot figure out Dash's new methods for completing his math homework, and the only way he knows how to manage the erratic behavior of his youngest son Jack-Jack, who is in the process of developing his own superpowers, is to feed him cookies. Because of his sheer exhaustion at one point, he quickly and desperately passes off Jack-Jack to a babysitter.

Even from this short description, the postfeminist themes are clear, as Elastigirl, the successful, independent, and empowered woman-at-work, literally saves the day on a daily basis, while Mr. Incredible struggles at home. A simple binary is established between the empowered, successful woman (who succeeds perhaps at the expense of a man/men) and the vulnerable, downtrodden male.

This role reversal marks an important cultural change from the first *Incredibles* movie fourteen years prior, when Mrs. Incredible/Elastigirl gave up her superhero career to care for the house and kids while Mr. Incredible performed his superhero duties to satisfy his mid-life crisis. The difference now, though, is that Mr. Incredible is gently ridiculed for his inability to parent and domesticate whereas Mrs. Incredible handled these duties perfectly fine in the first movie—and even managed to rescue Mr. Incredible at one point.

There are other, recent Disney movies that seem to reify the post-feminist hero. Wooden and Gillam (2014) have noted *Brave*'s "animal to imbecile . . . depiction of men as buffoonish thugs, amid its supposedly bold stride forward toward gender equality in children's film" (p. xii). I have written before about the ways in which both Hans and Kristoff from the enormously popular and critically respected *Frozen* abide by the tropes of postfeminist masculinity (Macaluso 2016). Both characters are portrayed as immature or offer some comic relief in the film in ways similar to Flynn Rider from *Tangled* and Prince Naveen from *The Princess and the Frog*. In fulfilling many of the same postfeminist tropes, Flynn and Naveen are often portrayed as the butt of jokes (with frying pans to the face, in Flynn's case) and as the female protagonists' unwilling and unwittingly travel partners who eventually fall for her charm and charisma. Even Héctor from *Coco*—a film which I admit has mostly positive and generative depictions of its characters overall—seems naïve and hapless, the bumbling victim of a cruel plot, who is only redeemed once the truth about his disappearance is revealed. Upon that reveal, he is welcomed back into his family, which is comprised of many strong women who have largely driven the plot of the movie. Without a postfeminist understanding, these characters may be hastily categorized as a hero or sidelined/passive prince, but Table 2 takes into account this new model of Disney masculinity, which seems to be indicative of Disney films of late (again, perhaps to compensate for its history of passive female heroes).

Table 2. Revised Models of Disney Masculinity.

Boy	Hero/Prince	Post-Feminist Hero	Villain
Pinocchio Miguel	Prince Charming Prince Phillip Prince Eric Tarzan Hercules	Mr. Incredible Kristoff Héctor Prince Naveen Flynn Rider	Gaston Ratcliffe Judge Frollo Shan Yu Jafar Dr. Facilier
	Aladdin Peter Pan John Smith Quasimodo	Prince Hans	
	Ralph Kuzco Maui		
	The Beast		

One interesting exception, as noted in the chart, is the Beast from *Beauty and the Beast.* He could potentially blend across all of these models, as he gains new knowledge and understanding over the course of the film, he makes the ultimate sacrifice in defeating the villain, and he shows authoritative and domineering behaviors, all while being gently ridiculed and chastised for these behaviors in generally comedic ways (e.g., he is groomed with bows and curls, he is shown how to properly eat soup and dance, he is hit with snowballs, etc.). In short, the Beast character "helps to forward the image of unloved and unhappy white men who need kindness and affection, rather than criticism and reform, in order to become their 'true' selves again" (Jeffords 1995, p. 165). This depiction proves that a post-feminist hero need not be confined to its own box or set of traits—just like Ralph (*Wreck-It Ralph*), Kuzco (*The Emperor's New Groove*), and Maui (*Moana*).

While postfeminist masculinity marks a relative change in the overall representations of men and masculinity in Disney films, it should not necessarily be thought of as a new, temporal masculinity that has displaced older or other versions of masculinity. I rely on notions of postfeminist masculinity as a sensibility (Gill 2014, 2007), allowing for an analysis of its discursive constructions and structure of feeling (Gill 2014) as one of many models of masculinity. However, it is interesting that the models of the postfeminist hero tend to come later in the Disney canon (the earliest in 2000 and most after 2009)—perhaps indicative of "the time and place" in which these films were created and produced.

In considering the postfeminist work that these movies, and especially the most recent *Incredibles* movies, do and perform, one must remember that a cultural text like a Disney movie shapes the social imagination and can, thus, "articulate gendered possibilities for social actors" (Rumens 2017, p. 251). Therefore, one must ask about the apparent affect, effect, or uptake of these postfeminist themes—what ideological work around masculinity does this movie and overall sensibility do? On the one hand, this brief analysis of Disney men affirms that "Disney's male characters have been affected and shaped by the discourse surrounding feminism and 'post-feminism' just as much as their female characters" (Davis 2013, p. 13). On the other hand, postfeminist masculinity must also implicitly reinforce or challenge male power or do something else entirely. In other words, ideology indeed "does" something. The next section of this paper considers this point and the potential effects these discourses have on viewers and how those discourses may interpellate male and female subjects. To do this, I briefly examine popular online media—through movies reviews and the social discussion website Reddit—for its popular reception around *Incredibles 2*, specifically, to see how average viewers negotiate the film's messages and postfeminist sensibilities.

4. Postfeminist Uptake of *Incredibles 2*

Naturally, "everyday critics" and average movie-goers alike picked up on the perceived feminist themes of the film, noting the active and independent role Elastigirl carries this time around, and as a result, reviews were and have been mixed (and generally along gendered lines). For example, several critics touted and celebrated its feminist message. Paige (2018) argues, "feel free to yell from the rooftops that *Incredibles 2* is hella feminist . . . It's simply a reflection of our changing times and work . . . " (para. 4). Smith (2018) from *The Guardian* calls the film "a feminist triumph" (para. 1) in the post-Weinstein era. Rey (2018) of the online women's magazine *Bustle* agrees, noting that the film's "premise had a sense of female empowerment [that] couldn't be more timely" (para. 1). Though these soundbites hearken to postfeminist discourses (such as the empowered, feminine yet feminist, white woman), these critics see the elevation of Elastigirl as the featured protagonist as incredibly significant in contemporary times. What seems to be somewhat lost in these reviews is the important—and similarly elevated—role this character played in the first film by actually saving Mr. Incredible from death and a formidable villain—in addition to being a good mom. This is not to say that one film does a better job than the other but to point out how (post)feminism can be easily reduced to simply having a strong female-lead.

Others critics, even while praising the film, expressed their frustrations with the "political" (i.e., perceived feminist) messaging of the film. For example, one critic (Adams 2018) from the online magazine *Slate* notes, "Bob Parr stays at home and plays bumbling househusband, fumbling Violet's adolescent emotional crises, furrowing his brow at Dash's math homework, and frowning at Jack-Jack's superpoopy diapers" (para. 3). Another critic (Knowles 2018) from opinion website *The Daily Wire*, in critiquing this representation, actually compared the film to *Everybody Loves Raymond*, sarcastically noting that Mr. Incredible "hilariously bungles" his parenting duties because "wives are just so much more competent than their idiot husbands" (para. 5). But what he calls "fashionable feminism" (para. 5) is, in actuality, indicative of a postfeminist—and specifically a postfeminist masculinity—sensibility. These reviews that do focus on the portrayal of the male characters see that portrayal as problematic, and rightly so. Fatherhood-on-film has been linked to postfeminist masculinities for decades now (Hamad 2013), and *Incredibles 2* is no exception, as these reviews critique Mr. Incredible's struggles to

juggle and manage the parenting demands of his three children, accounting for much of the movie's comic relief.

But, importantly, the cultural reception around the "feminist" message of the film has extended to "everyday critics" of the internet as well. For example, Reddit can be a good data site for analyzing public reception because it acts as a moderated, digital bulletin board of important topics and discussions for registered users. These users, or members, can post content on various themed pages—or subreddits—of interest to them. One user, KC_weeden (2018) on the "Men Going Their Own Way" subreddit, a forum dedicated to men "forging their own identities and paths to self-defined success," posted the following about *Incredibles 2*: " . . . it was chock full of feminist ideology and tropes that all movies/shows seem to have these days. I swear, it's not hard to make a good movie without a political agenda" (n.p.). Of the 22 comments that follow, 18 of them focus on the "feminist political agenda" of contemporary movies, with comments like, "It seems every movie is really pushing this feminist, misandric, pro woman bullshit" (ConstantChinner 2018, n.p.) or "It's a sad thing that everything nowadays has to be politically driven. Music, movies, videogames, paintings, theatre. everything has to have a 'deep'—i.e., feminism—meaning, or else it's not up to par...". Only two of these comments mention the representation of masculinity. One user only mentioned that "they changed the male characters for no reason, to be dumb assholes, completely different from the first movie, while they kept the female characters the same", while the other commented positively on the portrayal of Mr. Incredible, saying, "it was at least balanced with a father (Mr. Incredible) bonding with his kids and supporting them, and men playing the roles they play anyway, as involved responsible men rather than overgrown children". Aside from the one positive comment, these reviewers overall seemed more frustrated with the—again—strong, female protagonist than with the specific representation of the main male character and the implications for masculinity and fatherhood that come with it. As a result, they blame the "political" construct of feminism.

This backlash appeared on other subreddits as well, though to a lesser degree. For example, similar messages were posted on the "Pixar" subreddit, where user 16coxk (2018) asked, "I've heard people calling The Incredibles 2 [sic] 'feminist propaganda.' What do you think?" (n.p.). Of the ten responses, only one of them seemed to think so, by saying, "To be fair there was a lot more impact by the female characters in this movie. Elasti-girl, Evelyn, Violet, Edna, the Senator. Mr. Incredible, Dash, Frozone and the other males felt like supporting characters" (LajiDwayem 2018, n.p.). In this more generic subreddit (one about all Pixar films compared to one about men and men's issues), the responses seemed more generic and open-ended.

What's interesting to me across all of these cases—from both critics and everyday critics/users—is that the apparent feminism/feminist ideology incurs misguided praise or criticism. On the one hand, some seem to be more angry at the depiction of a strong female lead than at the ridiculed male subject; on the other, some seem to celebrate shallow versions of feminism. In either case, "feminism" is celebrated for portraying "girl power" in the form of a strong female character paired with a weak or foolish male character—the very definition of a postfeminist sensibility. In the end, these Disney cultural texts serve no one because popular reception seems, at most, to reinforce traditional male power as a backlash against perceived feminism, and at the least, to repudiate feminism and further divide the sexes. In either case, postfeminism as a construct or sensibility is reaffirmed and lauded under the guise of feminism.

5. Implications

This paper began by asking: How are Disney men discursively positioned through and by (postfeminist) discourses? How do Disney texts, as important sites of cultural production, reinforce postfeminist masculinity sensibilities? I have attempted to show how recent Disney men, with a particular focus on the recent *Incredibles* films as representative of current examples, have been represented and how that representation has been received or taken-up in popular media with film critics and average consumers of texts (i.e., Redditors). Overall, the striking "finding" here is that

postfeminism exists, and it extends itself across texts and media by men and women. While I agree with Giroux (1999); Giroux and Pollock (2010) that popular texts, and especially Disney texts, act as teaching machines and serve as producers of ideological, cultural knowledge, I also acknowledge that today's abundant digital discourse plays that role as well. Disney is not necessarily solely to blame for the proliferation of these discourses—they did not create them, and they will not be the last to proliferate them. Rather, Disney produces *and* recycles and reinforces the sensibilities that we create and are created by. We, in other words, live in an era of postfeminist discourses because we are the producers of postfeminist sensibilities. Postfeminism—in its various forms, discourses, and sensibilities—is all around us, whether we see it or not.

On a much more practical level, any type of media runs the risk of intentionally or unintentionally, implicitly or explicitly, reifying cultural messages. In the case of some of the most recent Disney films, there seems to be a message that men must be weak in order for women to thrive. This message is dangerous to both sexes, as it subtly suggests that women and men cannot successfully coexist as strong, independent individuals together. Moreover, the *Incredibles* films further imply that two successful working parents simply do not and cannot exist; one parent must sacrifice a career or gendered expectations for the other to thrive. This is the real work of postfeminism. Moving forward, I do wonder if a *positive* postfeminist representation of men and masculinity can exist in the Disney universe or what that model would even look like. For example, could Disney produce a film that portrays positive depictions of men and women in pursuit of common goals and desires, or does that lead to bland storytelling and movie-making? Might a hypothetical *Incredibles 3* feature the family united in their fight against the villain the Underminer, building off of each other's strengths and weaknesses and finding comedic timing in just being a not-so-average family?

Finally, this paper offered a new model of Disney masculinity, the idea or trope of the postfeminist hero, as a potential new norm. The intention in proposing this model is, again, not necessarily to criticize Disney for their representations of men, women, and masculinity—though representations *do* matter, whether fiction or not, and especially those with and from a corporate and cultural producer like Disney, with its emphasis on family and children's entertainment. Rather, I propose the model as a new norm of Disney masculinity, and, thus, as a way to recognize and—importantly—to resist postfeminism in one of its many forms. If we are the cause for the circulation of these postfeminist discourses, then we must be ever present in heading them off and challenging the ways in which they call us to be and believe in the real world.

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