The Real Scares In Scooby-Doo 2

A Feminist Analysis

ŽÔ   ÁÚ   á

W hat's scarier than the looming patriarchy hindering minorities such as women, people of color, and queer individuals from making strides in the world and being adequately represented in modern media? If you said *Ueqqd{/Fqq"4⟨"Oqpwgtu" Unleashed* (2004)[1], you're on the right track. At least, on the right track for this discussion. Some might think of this f lm as a cult classic that rolls into everyone's Net f ix recommendations in late October, but I would argue that it serves as a twenty-year-old time capsule of how visual media portrayed existing ideas of gender, women, feminism, and masculinity. *Scooby-Doo 2* is a f lm that relates to pop culture and feminism through the messages it relates to its audience through 7deas en-USeB/00027o042US

Velma, cater to this objectification of women through their visual appearances. The former struts into frame either with her iconic gaga boots or bell bottom leggings, both of these being in variations of purple and pink. Meanwhile, Velma is the main focus of the film's subplot as she uncharacteristically adorns a skin-tight orange jumpsuit to appeal to her romantic interest. These characters have interactions with other masculine-presenting characters that illuminate their hyperfemininity while being objects of appeal for a masculine audience. With this in mind, it's clear that there is hardly any content in this film that presents women in a positive or powerful position without

that's not our focus here), which shines a light on this movie's lack of diversity. Unfortunately, feminism is not safe from whitewashing as bell hooks' explores "white power feminism" in her book *feminism is for everybody*. She argues that this specific type of feminism is generally more accepted by society and media as it focuses on reforming the patriarchy to allow white women into positions rather than enacting change to allow all minorities, women or otherwise, to obtain the same opportunities (hooks)[9]. It's worth noting that the majority of people in the movie, save for Rubben Studdard at the Faux Ghost bar and Ned the news cameraman, are white. Studdard and the musicians are background characters who contribute little to nothing to the storyline of the movie, and Ned is surprisingly thrusted into the spotlight at the end when the gang reveal that he and Heather were the true villains that are arrested. Ned had less screen time than the 80s jive band at the bar, and he's *somehow* one of the two masterminds behind the movie's entire plot? When the only prominent inclusion of people of ethnicities that are anything besides white or caucasian are in a negative light, it creates a desire for people to not be like Ned and to not associate with people like Ned. The message of equality and empowerment for all can only go so far when it's exclusive to the dominant group, leaving much to be desired from a movie that seemed to have such a vast influence on pop culture and media.

   Let's take a second to take a collective breath and address something that's been echoed by critics and viewers alike about this theatrical iteration: this movie was progressive for its time. One can pull out the argument that the original *Ueqqd{/Fqq⟨" Where Are You?*

Astute observations are being made here, but my only comment is that this argument does not hold up… at all. Let's take this argument into the world of literature by contrasting the works of Mary Shelley and Charlotte Bronte. Shelley's most famous piece, *Frankenstein*, portrays women characters like Elizabeth, Frankenstein's fiance, as submissive creatures who are seen as possessions. As Frankenstein puts it, "[I] looked upon Elizabeth as mine – mine to protect, love, and cherish."[12] In contrast, Bronte's novel *Jane Eyre* follows the named main character as she works to gain control of her life, her destiny, and overcome societal obstacles that stand in her way. Over the course of the novel Jane Eyre learns to balance her taught submissive nature with freedom and expression, and this is all brought together neatly through the balancing of her tray of candles and water to her beloved Rochester in the closing chapters of the novel.[13] Both of these authors are Romantic writers who wrote in the widely popular bildungsroman format and published their respective works in 1818 and 1847, but the misogyny that Shelley writes does not define the capability of growth in women characters that Bronte writes. One piece of media does not define another from the same time period, just as *Scooby-Doo 2* does not define other films made in the 2000s. Not only this, but the "product of its time" argument implies a continuous progression and betterment of society. By suggesting that media in the past was made by those who were less educated, less culturally or socially aware and overall less *than* compared to current day society, we are suggesting that history, that *feminism*, moves in a linear