# Disney's storytelling flaws reveal cracks in its animated magic



As one of the most illustrious production houses in entertainment, Disney carries an expectation of near-perfection in its films. Yet, even the most celebrated stories, rich animations, and intricately developed characters are not immune to missteps. From continuity errors to glaring plot holes, these mistakes permeate various titles from both the Disney and Pixar repositories, steadily becoming part of film lore.

This phenomenon is encapsulated in films like *The Emperor's New Groove*, which, while receiving accolades for its comedic timing and character development, is marred by inaccuracies. A notable example occurs during Kuzco’s theme song, where the singer labels the young emperor as "an enigma in Mesoamerican history." Given that the film is set against the backdrop of the Incan empire, geographically situated well south of Mesoamerica, this lyrical choice not only oversimplifies geography but also invites scrutiny from attentive audiences. Such oversights can significantly detract from viewer immersion and, by extension, the film's legacy.

Continuing on this trajectory, *Finding Dory* showcases the character Hank, an octopus who identifies himself as a "septopus" due to a lost limb. While this quirk adds depth to Hank’s personality, it raises questions about biological consistency, particularly given that many octopus species have the ability to regenerate lost arms. The choice to keep Hank a septopus throughout the film may have stemmed from a desire to maintain character uniqueness, yet it invites critique on how factual accuracy is sometimes sacrificed for narrative cohesion.

In *Tangled*, continuity errors also creep in during a pivotal scene where Flynn Ryder, initially shackled, inexplicably appears free moments later. This inconsistency not only disrupts narrative tension but also poses a question regarding character agency—was Flynn truly imprisoned, or did the animators overlook details that could enhance the drama? Such lapses can dilute the emotional stakes, leaving audiences feeling detached from the narrative’s gravity.

This pattern continues in *Wreck-It Ralph*, where Ralph’s medal becomes a focus during an emotionally charged moment. Despite its sudden visibility, the absence of the medal in earlier scenes detracts from the authenticity of the character's journey. This problem of continuity serves as an unfortunate reminder that even the most engaging plots can stumble over the details.

In *The Princess and the Frog*, the mechanics of the film’s magic introduce inconsistencies that leave audiences querying the rules governing character transformations. Charlotte, having kissed Naveen just after her temporary title as princess lapses, unexpectedly remains human—a narrative choice that arguably prioritises emotional resonance over internal logic. The complexities of these magical transformations further elaborate on how films can inadvertently undermine their own mythologies through oversight.

Despite their apparent successes, Disney's later films like *Frozen* also face scrutiny. Critics note that while Elsa's enchanting powers are a cornerstone of her character, their limits remain nebulous and inadequately explored throughout the franchise. This lack of clarity can disempower both character and narrative, leading audiences to question the logic behind the film's magical elements.

This trend of lapses can also be observed in *Monsters, Inc.* and its prequel *Monsters University*, where Mike's claim about his rivalry with Sulley contradicts their established backstory. Such discrepancies, while potentially benign on their own, accumulate to create a tapestry of confusion that ultimately affects audience enjoyment.

Moreover, Disney's recent forays into live-action remakes have sparked disappointment and backlash, particularly evident with the box office struggles of the latest adaptation of *Snow White*. Once viewed as cherished nostalgia, these remakes are now increasingly scrutinized regarding their creative choices and story fidelity. Numerous factors contribute to the negative reception, including controversies surrounding casting and thematic representation.

The expectations placed upon Disney films seem to have formed a double-edged sword: while the studio’s legacy commands a higher standard, these missteps reveal a more significant underlying issue in contemporary storytelling. Whether through overreliance on nostalgia or an assumed familiarity with audience expectations, Disney appears to grapple with balancing innovation against its storied history. As fans continue to expect a return to their roots, Disney might find it pivotal to reassess how fresher narratives unfold, lest they become haunted by the same mistakes that continue to echo through their animated halls.

Ultimately, these inconsistencies and criticisms lay bare a crucial reality for Disney: in the pursuit of enchantment and storyline depth, the smallest errors can ripple outward, impacting audience perception and leaving an indelible mark upon the kingdom of animated storytelling.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4
2. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
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5. Paragraphs 9, 10
6. Paragraphs 11, 12
7. Paragraph 13

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.cbr.com/mistakes-that-haunt-modern-disney-movies/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.ask.com/tv-movies/unbelievable-disney-movie-mistakes> - This article highlights various mistakes in Disney movies, including Tarzan's American accent despite being raised by apes, the financial improbability of Roger and Anita's 101 Dalmatians, Hank the octopus's missing tentacle in Finding Dory, Pocahontas and John Smith's non-romantic relationship, WALL-E's lack of trash compacting, Nala's changing eye color in The Lion King, and a mysterious poster appearing in Finding Nemo. These examples showcase inconsistencies and errors in Disney's storytelling and animation.
3. <https://www.businessinsider.com/moments-themes-in-disney-movies-that-havent-aged-well-problematic> - This article discusses problematic elements in Disney movies, such as the crows in Dumbo referencing Jim Crow laws and portraying anti-black stereotypes, Dumbo getting drunk in the original 1941 film, the offensive content of Song of the South, and the stereotypical portrayal of Native Americans in Peter Pan. It also addresses the romanticization of Pocahontas's relationship with John Smith and the transformation of lead characters of color into animals in films like The Princess and the Frog and The Emperor's New Groove.
4. <https://www.cbr.com/modern-disney-movies-worst-traits> - This article critiques modern Disney movies for overusing 3D animation styles with large eyes and exaggerated features, heavy plotlines that can feel emotionally burdensome, and a lack of memorable villains. It also discusses the forced female empowerment in recent films, where female characters are often portrayed as perfect from the start without meaningful growth, and the absence of traditional villains, with conflicts arising from internal struggles rather than external forces.
5. <https://www.looper.com/843186/animated-disney-movie-moments-that-havent-aged-well> - This article highlights moments in Disney movies that haven't aged well, including Pocahontas over-simplifying the relationship between Native Americans and English settlers, and the representation of the Arab community in Aladdin. It discusses how these films present false narratives and stereotypes, leading to inaccurate conclusions about real events and minimizing the negative influence of colonialism and the brutal impact of genocide.
6. <https://screenrant.com/mistakes-completely-missed-disney-movies> - This article points out overlooked mistakes in Disney movies, such as Finding Nemo's boat taking off without pulling up anchor, Mulan's medic's tent having a Japanese flag instead of a Chinese flag, and the Great Wall of China in Mulan being depicted incorrectly. These errors highlight inconsistencies and inaccuracies in Disney's storytelling and attention to detail.
7. <https://www.newsweek.com/disney-biggest-mistakes-company-history-1831402> - This article discusses Disney's biggest mistakes in company history, including sugar-coating the life of Pocahontas in the 1995 film, which romanticizes and skirts over the atrocities committed by Europeans against Native Americans. It highlights how the film's fictional romance and clean happy ending effectively erase the historical actions and paint a whitewashed picture of some of the darkest moments in American history.