

Gender in Cartoons

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The representation of genders in popular movies is critical in forming general views on women and men. When all popular television programs, cartoons, and films show the image of a typical male or female in a particular way, most people adopt these views. It is especially vital in the case of cartoons that are initially created for children and aim at teaching them about the surrounding reality. It is possible to hypothesize that the perception of gender roles is formed in early childhood, and the representation of women and men in cartoons is one of the significant factors that determine it.

Even though gender roles have become less rigid in contemporary American culture, many animated movies still depict women and men traditionally compared to recent decades. For instance, *Alice's Wonderland Bakery* (Beyl, 2022) is an animated television series that is the continuation of the Disney cartoon *Alice in Wonderland* based on the children's books by Lewis Carroll. It features the typical representation of genders that correlates with the source of this story.

In this particular animated movie, Alice is the great-granddaughter of the protagonist of Carroll's story, and she lives in modern times. She is a young baker who studies the culinary art and can make everything she bakes magical (Beyl, 2022). From one point of view, Alice's interests are traditional for women's gender because girls were always supposed to learn how to cook. From another point of view, the magical element in the process of her work emphasizes that every girl can become a magician if she wants, and all their hobbies are valuable.

The way women look in *Alice's Wonderland Bakery* is also quite typical. Alice is a young girl with a pleasant appearance and long hair. Her grandmother, who helps her to learn how to bake, corresponds to the image of the typical elderly lady, who is calm and caring (Beyl, 2022). In other words, the animated movie represents the standard images of the

female gender of different ages. It is the part of the instructions that are not articulated directly in the cartoon, but children who watch it understand this message.

The narration in *Alice's Wonderland Bakery* is centered around the girl protagonist, and men do not receive equal attention in this case. Still, there are secondary characters that represent the perception of men. It is also typical, and the male's gender role is described in the behavior of boys who make friends with Alice. Hattie is an active and loud boy who makes fun of everything. Fergie is the White Rabbit and the best friend of Alice. He is supportive, likes the bakery Alice cooks, and reassures her that she has the talent for it (Beyl, 2022). The emphasis is generally on the typical boyish behavior of male characters in the animated movie. These two boys are represented as children, meaning their gender role is not entirely formed.

Summing up, *Alice's Wonderland Bakery* sends children the message that women and men look and behave differently, which is a regular part of social life. At the same time, the emphasis is on the mutual support of people, which means that women and men can be good friends. These differences in gender representations have a considerable psychological impact on the society and on individuals within it because children learn how women and men look and behave from the early childhood. The cartoon creators use cartoon protagonists as examples in this case, which affects their personality formation. In all cases, the way genders are shown in animated movies is part of the most widespread way people consider women and men in contemporary society.

Reference

Beyl, C. (2022). *Alice's wonderland bakery*. Disney Junior.