

Ecological Sensibility Versus Anthropocentrism: An Analysis Of Film Ratatouille

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the animated film Ratatouille as a social document to inspire humans to improve ecological sensibilities. The film illustrates the human -animal relationship through distinctions and similarities between them and establishes the co-existence of both the species. Humans and animals share feelings and contribute strength to maintain the balance of nature. The movie uses anthropomorphism to shift from anthropocentric viewpoints. It ascribes anthropomorphic attributes to Remy, the hero, who saves the human, Linguini from the hands of a villain. The collaborative effort of the inter species turns out to be a successful enterprise. Cooking and food communicate and the kitchen, the platform for sharing the similarities and distinctions between Remy, the rat and the Linguini the human. It questions the human attitude and cultural expressions towards other creatures.

Key Words: Anthropocentrism, Anthropomorphism, Ecological Sensibility.

INTRODUCTION

Anthropomorphism, a method for storytelling whereby human characteristics are applied to non-human characters. This has been criticized for its anthropomorphism and tendency to misinterpret animal behaviors. Anthropocentrism is also known as homo centism which places humans in a dominating position in value and right to other species on earth. In terms of existence and Ratatouille is a Disney animation, directed by Jan Pinkava and Brad Bird and released in 2007. It is a story of a tiny rat. In this movie anthropocentrism is shown as an unfair practice and demands the need to give up inter species prejudice and develop ecological sensibilities. Evidence suggests that anthropomorphism makes an audience more sympathetic and better able to connect with an animal character since they can metaphorically see themselves reflected in said animal. Finding Nemo, Madagascar, Happy Feet, Antz are exceptions of animated movies where ecological sensibilities are highlighted.

ANALYSIS

The hero of the movie, Remy lives with his family in a colony of rats. They live on trash pumped out from the Parisian suburb. "Eat your garbage" is the command given by Remy's father who leads the colony. Remy stands out among them with his refined palate and a sensitive nose. Rats are forced out from their hideout, and Remy gets separated from his family and friends. He was swept through the sewers in torrential floods and washes up near the famous establishment of Auguste Gusteau, his culinary hero. 'Anyone can cook' becomes his magical mantra. Kitchen becomes the setting for the growth of the hero from the gutter to the gourmet kitchen of a Parisian restaurant, where he proves his refined skill. Encounter with Linguini was the turning point, at first, he was like any human, he was averted by the presence of Remy. Linguini and Remy communicate and a bond of trust is established when he saves Linguini from the soup which would have turned into a disaster. The soup brings appreciation and credit to the boy. Gradually the friendship turns out to be a peaceful coexistence. Remy also plays a great role in the revelation of Linguini's actual identity. Remy meets the villain, terse witted food critic, Anton Ego, whose scathing criticism killed Gusteau. His advent with cooking and presentation of the peasant dish, Ratatouille not only materializes his dream but also marks him equal to

human species. Remy uses methods, tools and technology for cooking and aesthetic sense in presenting the dishes. He controls and guides the boy hiding in the hair. The movie establishes the relevance of coexistence with nature by depicting a tiny rat and his endeavors to establish himself as the chef. Remy, a tiny rat with an exceptional sense of cooking, becomes a hero in a world dominated by humans.

Pixar is the name that is synonymous with wonderful stories, adorable characters, profound moments and great social and cultural impact. Brad Bird's *Ratatouille* (2007) is a movie for all ages. It voices the improvement of ecological sensibilities and thereby the unification of man and beast. *Ratatouille* repositions itself from the practice of treating animals as submissive. The movie with its anthropomorphic aspects questions the anthropocentric cultural expressions of the natural world. It decenters "man as the measure of all things" and recognizes the complete range of life with acceptance. *Ratatouille* is revolutionary in its picturing of human -animal relationship and also in its exploration of the limitation of animal and beast. The movie also highlights the necessity and benefits of interdependence among humans and other creatures. Here, Remy, the little rat and Linguini team up, shares trust and communicate and together they set Paris in marvel. The movie seeks emotional sensibility which is never found in the contemporary anthropocentric society which celebrates inter species prejudice. The movie uses anthropomorphic aspects to reflect the necessity of respectful co-existence among species for the betterment of each other.

AGAINST ANTHROPOCENTRISM

The central character is a rat, Remy, and the central subject of the entire film is a rat's love for cooking. Remy's portrayal has an emotional intensity and moral depth that humans fail to find and accept in animals. Like the fictional character Remy, animals in general, might not really have desires to cook or become a chef, but they unequivocally have intense feelings and desires about many other things which the mankind ignores, this movie thereby stands as a proper vehicle to shout to the world the significance of attributes that humans aren't willing to notice in other species. The movie focuses on permitting human beings to identify with the race. With Remy's help, Linguini attains a victory that he couldn't have ever received without the rat's help. Remy also accomplishes things that no animal could have ever done without human help. Ecologically, this message could be considered as the central truth, and one that the backdrop of human culture treats other species as subservient and rule over all other creatures beneath them on a Great Chain of Being. Animals and people interact on the basis of anthropocentric prejudices. Interpreting the movie, we find that most of the characters, even Linguini, find it difficult to accept Remy. All that they tried to do was to kill him for entering their kitchen. Prejudices exist all the time when humans meet any other species. Linguini and Remy become friends only after he realizes his ability to cook and his mentality to help linguini. The bond of trust and friendship between a man, Linguini and a rat, Remy, breaks the conventional evil attitude toward animals. The way they help each other to cook and to learn cooking shows the harmonious interdependence which is supposed to exist among all ranges of species. Interpreting the movie, breaking all stereotypes, it's an animal who untangles the issues of the human. The movie strengthens its disapproval towards anthropocentrism by showing the interdependence among humans and animals to have better lives.

CONCLUSION

The movie *Ratatouille* has great social and cultural significance. It questions the human attitude and cultural expressions towards other creatures. Anthropocentrism is shown as an unfair practice and demands the need to give up inter species prejudice and develop ecological sensibilities. This awareness of human kinship and interdependence with non-human species is necessary to maintain ecological balance, ecological succession and a proper ecological pyramid.

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