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Introduction

The animated movie *Dumbo* produced by Walt Disney and its companion book engages with many serious topics: justice, racism and segregation, exploitation of animals in the circus, a mother's love, and bullying among children. Children learn about the vital aspects of life in society in a way they can grasp, which is helpful in a child's upbringing. Children associate themselves with cute animals who are the protagonists of *Dumbo*, making them experience the same challenges and problems as the characters of the animated movie and the book.

Anthropomorphism is the primary means of visual and narrative expression in *Dumbo*, making complicated topics understandable for children.

But what, exactly, are those complicated lessons? The movie sends off mixed messages for its young viewers, giving them some wonderful models of kindness and courage, but also some appalling and stereotypical depictions of social and political life. Any child watching *Dumbo* will need to learn to view it critically, hopefully with the assistance of a parent, because as troubling as some topics are there are an important part of our history that our children should engage in. This paper tries to show that *Dumbo* has regressive elements that are a product of its time, and yet its interpersonal lessons remain very relevant, and they are shown in the way children can understand them. The movie, like America itself, gives people great opportunities

and is filled with cultural promise, but it also has some horrifying realities. However, *Dumbo* teaches about such positive things as the value of the individual and motherly love.

Discussion and Analysis

Historical Context of *Dumbo*

The story about the baby elephant *Dumbo* with strangely big ears was created at the end of the 1930s by the children's author Helen Aberson. Walt Disney created an animated movie based on this story. The first animated version of *Dumbo* should be analyzed in the social and cultural context of the time. The end of the 1930s was marked by the anticipation of World War II, the Great Depression, and the increase of authoritarian tendencies in world politics. The topics of racial differences with the further exclusion of people of color from social life and their marginalization, the ideologies of individualism, and the idea of self-making were essential to most people in American society (Sammond 148). *Dumbo* reflected this cultural context and registered changes in ideology as well.

The topics of racism and segregation, individualism, self-making, and even sexuality are shown in the animated version of *Dumbo*. The marginalization of Dumbo because his ears are too big can be regarded as the reference to the racist ideology and segregation that followed it. Self-making is seen in Dumbo's path from a strange and lonely child to a star. Being different and acknowledging these differences can be regarded as the hint to the liberation of sexuality. Even though the American society at the end of the 1930s was far from the sexual revolution, a

tendency towards individualism and gaining more freedom from the constraints of traditional society were appearing (Farber, Bailey 134).

Starting from 1928, American organizations like the Payne Fund tried to understand the effect of children's movies on kids. Statistic investigation showed that parents were against showing crime, violence, sex, and horror in children's movies and animations. There was the official Production code that movie studios like Walt Disney Studios used. It regulated how animators should talk about racial integration, sexuality, morality, political issues, and crime in children's movies (Sammond 149). It was assumed that movies had a direct impact on the behaviors of people. Children were especially susceptible to this influence. The Production code that the Payne Fund used supposed that films are not just moving pictures. They represented the cultural code and articulated messages that the audience grasps and analyzes. It was necessary to pay precise attention to popular culture in general and content for children in particular (Fearing 70-71). Therefore, there were strictly defined norms that regulated the way socially important topics were shown in children's movies and animation. As a result, the animated version of *Dumbo* corresponds to the appropriate way of showing these topics and reflects the mainstream position of the American society in the 1930s and 1940s towards children's upbringing and moral formation of kids through cinema. The animated movies of the Walt Disney aimed to create the movies that were "good for children" (149) as Sammond writes. The appeals to classical children's literature and the traditional structure of the tale support this idea (Sammond 148).

The storyline in *Dumbo* reflects the ideas of individualism that started to emerge in the American cultural discourse in the 1930s. It is possible to assume that the animated movie teaches children that even when society is rotten and there are many problems connected with

injustice, the talents of the single individual can make a difference. This message that is promoted in the animated movie reflects the tendencies in education that emerged at the beginning of World War II. There was a discussion between two opposite perspectives on child education: the innovative permissiveness that was characteristic of the neo-Freudian approach and more traditional behaviorism. In both cases, the overall educational discourse before World War II aimed at discovering the personality of every child and helping the kid to achieve their goals using their potential (Sammond 151). Fleming writes that children's literature and movies had an equal didactic function in the 20th century (463). This tendency started in the 18th century, and the genre of children's stories did not change until the 1930s. The researcher claims that content for children is often oversimplified, making its messages vague, but in all cases, it is the moral tale that aims at teaching children about essential topics. It is possible to see examples that support this claim in *Dumbo*.

Most people do not doubt the status of Walt Disney's movies as the primary source of the formation of children's worldview. Scholars call Disney the "teaching machine" that imposes the right views and behavioral patterns on kids. Therefore, the pedagogical effect of children's movies produced by Walt Disney is a fact. It is possible to find the appeals to the appropriate behavior of children in the movies, the perception of "Americanness," the views on the "right" entertainment and pleasures. All details are critical in Disney movies because children use them as the basis for forming their perception of selves, of the surrounding world, society, and culture (Garlen 1-2).

Walt Disney's *Dumbo* shows that even though society does not want to acknowledge the baby elephant with strange ears in the beginning, Dumbo can change this situation. It is an

example of realizing own talents and potential that helps him change the existing reality. The baby elephant becomes self-confident and believes in his talents. For example, Dumbo learns to fly when he understands that he can do it with the help of the magic feather the crows gave him. It turns out that Dumbo could do everything without magic, and this feather gave him self-confidence. Even though people and other animals in the circus are prejudged about Dumbo at the beginning of the story, which is the manifestation of injustice, their opinion can change dramatically because Dumbo shows them that he is not worse than others. In other words, the message of the animated movie and in the book is positive. Therefore, *Dumbo* teaches children that they should fight and oppose injustice to achieve good results and change the reality around them.

The animated movie *Dumbo* also foreshadows the war that might soon begin. It illustrates the assumption that children's movies should reflect the relevant topics that all people in society discuss (Sammond 152). For example, when Dumbo learns how to fly, military planes are named after him. There is the episode when "Dumbombers" fly to defend the country. Even though World War II did not begin at the moment of the movie's release, the war was looming. Seeing such episodes in the animation made children slightly more prepared for the real war that was impossible to avoid. Therefore, *Dumbo* reflected the historical context of the end of the 1930s – the beginning of the 1940s to prepare children for life in the wartime society. It was also part of the educational process of that time.

Anthropomorphism in the Book and Movie

Scholars claim that children's books and animated movies are the means of habituation and socialization of children, making them an integral part of the educational process (Frevert, Eitler, Olsen 2). The animated movie *Dumbo* and the book correspond to the basic principles of pedagogy, making it understandable for children. From the pedagogical perspective, the content for children should correspond to the emotional and cognitive development of the target audience. Anthropomorphism in the books and animated movies for children corresponds to this requirement. The main characters in *Dumbo* are baby animals who are only learning to participate in circus performances; their place in the circus hierarchy is like that of the children in our society. They are cute and make mistakes, and children who watch the animation or read the book associate themselves with these characters because they have much in common. The anthropomorphic characters show by example what is good and what is the bad behavior, and how others perceive these actions, which is the essential step in the enculturation of children and their integration into society (Frevert, Eitler, Olsen 4).

Anthropomorphism allows the creators of the movie to make the fantasy world real. It is the way to make animation engaging for children. Moreover, the combination of realism and fantastic elements makes the images more memorable. For example, in the episode with pink elephants, the animals play on their trunks as if they are horns. The melody they play is strange but funny, making children laugh. It is possible to assume that showing pink elephants who play their trunks as if they are musical instruments is an effective way to develop the imagination of children who watch the movie. Therefore, anthropomorphism has an evident didactic function (Sammond 152).

The authors of children's stories use anthropomorphism for several reasons. The primary function of anthropomorphism is describing the image that is free from additional characteristics. The images of animals are simple, even primitive, and it is easy to interpret them. Human characters, in their turn, are more complicated, making them biased and less suitable for children's literature (Markowsky 460). It is possible to make parallels between these claims and Dumbo. For example, children know that the baby elephant is not an aggressive animal, and they associate Dumbo with kindness.

The animated movie uses the example of animal behavior to teach children in the engaging form. For instance, Dumbo sees pink elephants who perform in the music band after he drinks alcohol that is dissolved in the water and becomes drunk. It shows children that alcohol changes the behavior of the person dramatically. Even though the message that children should avoid drinking alcohol is not articulated in the animated movie, this episode shows kids the effects of drinking spirits realistically.

Sammond describes this episode with drunk Dumbo and singing pink elephants in the following way:

The hallucination is shared by Timothy and Dumbo (hence, by the audience); it is not the solitary delusion of either the mouse or the elephant. Dark, and yet very compelling, the dance of the pink elephants is a collective vision of radical change – the possibility that the stuff of life could be made into anything at all. The chorus of the song that accompanies all of this dynamically potentiated transformation is at turns upbeat and ominous, warning the viewer to “Lookout! Look out!” Yet by the end of the number this

plasmatic primal force is tamed in the service of Disney's narrative, its radically transformative creatures resolving into mere background elements in the tale of Dumbo's awakening to his special talent – a tale in which he will be appreciated for being unique precisely because his talent can be harnessed in service of a less than unique spectacle.

(Sammond 153)

These lines show that anthropomorphism is not only the way to make the animated movie more engaging for children but also to add meaning and coherence to the plot. This episode with pink elephants is different from the storyline and additional simultaneously, making it exceptional (Sammond 153).

Geist supports the hypothesis that *Dumbo* promotes typically American values: hard work, competition, equality of opportunity, self-reliance, individual freedom, and material wealth. These values are the basic principles of the American Family, life in society, and they are even mentioned in the Constitution of the United States. Faith in these values is the distinctive feature of most Americans, and *Dumbo* teaches children about them in an entertaining form (Geist 4).

In general, anthropomorphism in the animated movie helps children who watch it understand the character metaphorically and apply the discussed issues to themselves. Dumbo is alienated from the rest of the animals that personify society in general and his peers in particular. He has only one friend, the mouse, who cannot protect him from the rest of the people with their negative opinions. Dumbo has the hidden potential that is constrained, and he needs time and

motivation to realize it. Many children might feel the same about themselves and they will be inspired by the example of Dumbo.

Human-animal Ethics and Bullying in Children's Literature

The animated movie *Dumbo* addresses the problem of bullying in schools; children and adolescents are often cruel towards those who are different from them. The crows mock Dumbo and sing songs that insult him. Dumbo is different from them, and he cannot oppose bullying. Only his friend Timothy supports him, even though his attempts are not always successful. The mouse tells the crows that they are cruel in their actions, and it is not the decent behavior to laugh at someone different from them. Oddly, the crows acknowledge that their actions are wrong, and they accept Dumbo and support his ability to fly using his ears. They even give him the feather as the magical symbol that should help him to fly. In other words, the behavior of children can change from aggressive bullying to acceptance and support if they understand that bullying is wrong.

Bullying and isolating the weak person is often regarded as an integral part of the American cultural code that is success-oriented (Farber, Bailey 14). From one point of view, there is always the so-called underdog in American society in general and among children in particular. The scorn towards this outcast who is the stranger among the dominant majority is usually rationalized using the historical development of the United States and the American nation as an explanation. Initially, it was the nation of people who did their best to succeed. The concept of the American dream features this desire to overcome challenges and to succeed in the end or to fail (Geist 4). Therefore, bullying is, however disturbingly, part of this "way to success"

that the American culture promotes in all spheres of life even though Americans do not want to emphasize this detail and do not want to see themselves this way. It should go without saying that reality does not change when the problem of bullying is ignored.

We see this cultural trend in *Dumbo*:

Dumbo, of course, is the quintessential underdog, a baby elephant with oversized ears, shunned by his fellow elephants, loved only by his mother and his unlikely friend Timothy, a mouse. Timothy's sense of justice, optimism, and generosity along with cooperation from another unlikely source, some raucous crows, help Dumbo turn his handicap into an asset: he learns to fly, demonstrating faith, determination, and self-reliance. As Dumbo's manager, Timothy is quick to capitalize on his friend's talent, and Dumbo's success translates into material wealth: at the end of the movie he and his mother ride in their own luxury railroad car. (Geist 4-5)

This description shows how Dumbo overcomes isolation. Dumbo made friends with the mouse Timothy and the crows. As Dumbo overcomes the bullying that he is exposed to, he can have a personal transformation. Dumbo is weak because of his isolation, but he increases and recognizes his sense of productivity and turns his hardships into success and wealth.

The formation of the American identity is a complicated and long-term process for many children from immigrant families. Even when their parents live in the United States for some time and they were born in America, they are still brought up in two different cultures. Their parents rarely deny their native culture and educate children to be Americans without remembering their heritage. As a result, these children from the immigrant community feel that

they are alienated from their peers who are not bilingual and bi-cultural. They need time and effort to become part of the American community and start acting like children from completely American families (Perea 1).

This cultural difference and inability to grasp their own identity is a psychological problem for many kids who do not belong to the dominant majority. They feel that they cannot fit into the norms that are convenient to most children; they think they are worse than others. It ruins their self-esteem and makes them feel depressed about their lives (Quillian 402-403). The book *Dumbo* features many images that accompany the text, which allows children to see the anthropomorphous animals who are the protagonists of the story. They see Dumbo with his huge funny ears that he uses like wings, and they understand that being different is not necessarily being worse than others. (Aberson 15-16)

The question is whether this behavior of children is justified or not if it is part of the competitive American culture. *Dumbo* does not give a direct answer to this question. From one point of view, children who watch the animation or who read the book understand that bullying is insulting for everyone, and the victim feels vulnerable in these situations. From another point of view, Dumbo manages to succeed and become famous, which shows that bullying is the impulse and the motivation that makes the outcast try harder to realize their potential and prove to others that they are worthy of respect. Perhaps, every child should make own conclusions after watching or reading *Dumbo*.

Motherhood and Ethics

Dumbo describes the story of the psychological trauma that the baby elephant experiences from his earliest days of life. Nonetheless, his mother also suffers. The book and the movie show that mothers are those who are with their children despite all circumstances and despite all imperfect characteristics their children might have. In the animated movie and the book, Dumbo is taken from his mother, and she is put into a cage because she wanted to protect her child from the bullying and cruelty of others. Because her actions ruined the circus performance, no one wanted to tolerate this inconvenient behavior regardless of all her motherly feelings (Marshall 1).

Therefore, Dumbo is alone in a world that opposes him and laughs at him. His mother is in a cage, and she cannot escape from this prison. She is the only one who loves Dumbo sincerely and regardless of all circumstances, which can be regarded as the manifestation of true parental affection. The situation is dramatic, and it makes the connection between the child and the mother emotionally striking. Children feel for Dumbo and his mother, making them interact with the movie closely.

However, *Dumbo* describes the biggest childhood fear that most kids have. They are afraid of being alone when no one will come to save them and protect them from all difficulties. The use of this element of the narration makes the story of Dumbo striking for children, who are the target audience of the animated movie and the book. They imagine themselves in a similar situation because the fear of being left alone without their mother's support and help is overwhelming. Parental bereavement was not rare in the traditional family in 1930s when parents paid more attention to discipline of their children than their emotional development (Noakes 21). They associate themselves with Dumbo, who has to become stronger because his mother cannot

help him; he needs to survive (Marshall 1). In all cases, the separation from the mother is the essential problem that is discussed in the story and that allows the events to develop.

Losing a loving parent, especially the mother, is a typical element in the children's stories animated by Walt Disney. For example, Simba watches how his father dies, and he is left alone. Cinderella and Snow White are orphans who have cruel stepmothers who do not love them. Pocahontas and Ariel are not protected by their mothers from the authoritarian behavior of their fathers. Dumbo is not the exception. He cannot communicate with his mother and live with her. He visits her once secretly but in fact, he lives as an orphan without his mother's love and protection (Marshall 1).

The animated movie *Dumbo* ends with depicting the success and triumph of the baby elephant with huge ears. He learns how to fly using his strange ears, making him exceptional and gives him public recognition. He becomes famous and rich. His ears are so unique that they are insured for a million dollars. The newest bomber planes are named after Dumbo, which shows his popularity. Though, the key moment in the animation that is the happy ending of the story is the reunion of Dumbo and his mother. They can embrace each other after the struggle they had to overcome, and society is not hostile towards them as it used to be in the past.

The delay of Dumbo's delivery to his mother allows Walt Disney to show how other mothers that are giraffes, tigers, hippos, kangaroos, and bears, greet their children and communicate with them. It is the way of the filmmakers to show the diversity of mothers' love that unites all of them. Anthropomorphism is essential in this case because children can make parallels between watching the love of different mothers who look differently, and the love of

human mothers who also seem to have a distinctive appearance. It is especially evident when all mothers in the animation sing the song “Baby Mine” (Geist 5). It allows us to assume that the animated movie teaches children about diversity in society and the mother’s love that unites all people.

Walt Disney’s *Dumbo* shows in a symbolic way how children are “born.” It can be regarded as the pre-school sex education that shows children that the storks bring kids to their parents. The animation shows how babies are delivered to other couples or single mothers in the circus, and only Dumbo’s mother waits for her child. Dumbo is the last child who arrives at his mother. The episode when the messenger of Western Union brings her the telegram to sign and sings “Happy Birthday” is a funny and easy-to-understand moment for most children. It gives them the answer to the question of how they were born in a humorous manner, which corresponds to the level of cognitive development of these children (Geist 5).

It is necessary to mention that the attitude to motherhood in the American culture was entirely traditionalist in the pre-War United States. It did not change dramatically from the Victorian period and people regarded motherhood as the most vital thing in their lives. The researchers write that all documentaries about the upcoming war or social problems featured the reference to mothers’ love and people’s duty to remember their mothers. In that time, families did not split when children became adults, compared to modern times. These tendencies only started to appear, which lead to the logical decrease of the American cult of mother’s love. Though, before the beginning of World War II mothers were perceived as the most valuable people in human lives (Geist 5).

It is not strange that the story of *Dumbo* shows the relationships between the baby elephant and his mother in this way. The Mother's love for *Dumbo* is not questioned, and it is evident from the beginning that she is eager to sacrifice her own life and well-being to protect her child from others. *Dumbo*, in his turn, makes everything possible to free his mother from the cage and to give her love, support, and material well-being after he becomes successful and rich (Geist 5). Therefore, the topic of relationships between the mother and the child is shown in a culturally appropriate manner in *Dumbo*, which is an effective way of teaching children about integrating into society.

Children are influenced by what they see and read as they learn by imitating and observing. Therefore, there is a need for our kids to know about our American diversity and history. With parental and educator involvement, our children can benefit from discussing the issues that occurred in our history, such as what is seen in *Dumbo*. Kids can learn that by understanding and addressing problems that occurred in the past within our American history, we can observe how solving these crucial changes brought a great richness to our country.

Dumbo and Difference

Disney animated movies have one thing in common: they all develop the idea that good will always defeat evil. Here is one description of the Disney world:

A kingdom unto itself—quite literally. A kingdom all of whose citizens are happy . . . In Disneyland, the land of children's dreams, everything is simple, beautiful, good. There, no one screams at his fellow, no one is exploited by his fellow, no one's fortune derives from

his fellow's misfortune. If children had the right to vote, they would vote Disney their president. And the whole world would look different. (Marshall 1)

Dumbo shows many negative things that are depressing but still children are inspired by this movie. Perhaps, the magic of the story is the miraculous transformation of the baby elephant that make children believe in the fairy tale. Disney allows adult people to recall their childhood years and to preserve the feeling of fairy-tale and hope. Children learn by example how to behave in society and how to distinguish right from wrong. In both cases, Disney animations talk about complex and socially important topics in a metaphorical manner.

Racism is not the exception, and the movie and book *Dumbo* feature this topic. First of all, the difference between Dumbo from other elephants is a key issue. Dumbo has huge ears, and as a result, other elephants do not consider him as part of their community. It is possible to make parallels between the measurement of body and face proportions that was widespread among racists of the previous centuries and the measurement of the ears that is shown in the story. Social Darwinism was among the theories that justified this segregation (Claeys 225). In both cases, the physical distinction becomes the primary factor in segregation and discrimination, which can be regarded as the manifestation of racism in society. So, in a number of ways, *Dumbo* tacitly challenges racist ideas. However, as we will go on to note, the film itself has some problematic representations of race.

Dumbo and the Crows

The animator who created *Dumbo*, Vladimir "Bill" Tylda, did not keep secret that he used his baby son as the inspiration for Dumbo, not a real baby elephant. It is evident in the way

Dumbo is depicted in the animated movie. He looks like a white child with huge blue eyes and human facial expression (Geist 7). In contrast, the crows draw on racist stereotypes: they look like the street gang of African Americans. Even though they teach Dumbo to fly, their behavior is anti-social. They are black, they show aggression towards the stranger, but they do not necessarily behave cruelly.

Geist writes about the racist imagery:

The anthropomorphized crows, who speak a black dialect of English and wear clothes associated with certain black stereotypes of the time: the preacher, the gambling boss, the hipster, and so on. At first, the crows make fun of Dumbo and Timothy, demonstrating yet more stereotyped behavior: singing, dancing, and joking, in the manner of popular African-American entertainers of the time. However, when Timothy tells Dumbo's story, the crows are immediately repentant and sympathetic. As would-be African-Americans, they understand difference and discrimination only too well, and they want to help Dumbo. Although black men and women helping whites, especially children, served as a common theme in movies and literature, such characters were generally slaves or otherwise faithful servants. In contrast, the crows in *Dumbo* are free agents and decide, independent of any imagined obligation, to help another being suffering discrimination.

(Geist 8)

This example shows that the depiction of African Americans in *Dumbo* is biased. Walt Disney did not articulate clearly that racism and segregation were unacceptable in the example of the crows. He simply depicted minority groups stereotypically.

The stereotypical depiction of other races is not the only example of oversimplification in the animated movie and the book. For example, clowns are shown as a crowd of cruel and ignorant people who are irresponsible at work and who consider bullying normal. They mock Dumbo for his huge ears even though he is the child who is nervous on stage. In reality, clowns require much professionalism and artistic talent, and they are not ignorant bullies (Geist 7). In other words, the characterizations in the movie are made in “broad strokes” without nuance, making it easier for children to understand.

Mistreatment of Animals and Circus Exploitation

Capitalism and its ethics affect the relationships in *Dumbo*. Circus exploitation and mistreatment of animals reflect the abusive essence of relationships in the capitalist society. Marshall claims that people or animals adapt to the role of victim in the movie, and they cannot help themselves (Marshall 1). Animals in the circus grow up in abusive surroundings; they get used to the idea that their lives are normal. Cruelty is regarded as an integral part of life in a capitalist society where everyone should prove their usefulness (Marshall 1). *Dumbo* shows the life of animals in the circus where every character has a defined place. The structure of the circus is strict and hierarchical, and Dumbo cannot fit into this system. He fails to be successful in this hierarchy and becomes the victim, at least for a while.

It is necessary to state that the philosophical discussion of animal rights changed the way people perceive the situation with circus performances where animals are involved. The division into human animals and non-human animals shows the change in the attitude to this subject. As a result, more modern people refuse to visit circus performances where animals are exploited

because the methods of animal training always include some aspects of cruelty. Moreover, people oppose the objectification of animals in animations, movies, and books because it promotes the wrong perception of animal life (Stanton 8). It is unlikely that Walt Disney and the author of the story about Dumbo, Helen Aberson, wanted to persuade the audience of the cruelty of circuses. This position was not popular in the 1930s-1940s. Though, the animated movie and the book reflect the situation with animal rights and cruelty in circuses realistically. It allows modern readers and viewers of *Dumbo* to understand the segregation and the attitude to the strange elephant with huge ears from a thoroughly different point of view.

Nonetheless, the circus can be interpreted as a metaphor for life in the community. Before the appearance of big circuses called the “Big Top” all circuses in the United States were traveling on the train from one corner of the country to another. The society is the circus train with many different individuals who travel in it and live in this group, trying to prove to others their value and to show them their uniqueness. Children at the beginning of the 20th century often told their parents that they would run away to join the circus because it was the chance to become free and to show their unique talents to others without being restricted by the norms of society (Geist 6). The anthropomorphism of the circus train increases children’s awareness of the American culture. For example, there was the popular American legend about the driver of the circus train who heroically stopped the train before the crash and saved all passengers (Geist 6). It correlates with the educational function that the movie has because children learn more about history even in this entertaining form.

Conclusion, and the Reflections of a Parent

It is possible to conclude that the original story about the baby elephant with huge ears and the animated movie produced by Walt Disney have the same methods of instructing children about such vital topics as friendship, motherly love, racism, segregation, bullying, attitude towards animals, and justice in general. From a parent's perspective, I agree that all the details that anthropomorphism offers in *Dumbo* are essential for children's literature and animation because they make complicated topics easier for children. I, too, faced some issues trying to explain several biased topics to my son, but I refuse to neglect them. Some parents may ask, why? Although it is complex, it still represents a historical and cultural context of the 1940s. It is vital for parents to explain to children that the stereotypical representation of African Americans, segregation, and bullying are unacceptable in modern society. The movie has a less tolerant message that reflects the reality of the prewar American culture that is different nowadays. *Dumbo* is a children's book and movie that should be taught to our children with the help of a parent or educator as it holds positive life lessons while also holding disturbing social models that should be discussed with our children.

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