

Post Feminism Value In “Tinker Bell” Film (The Pirate Fairy 2014)

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the representation of postfeminist values in the 2014 animated film *Tinker Bell and the Pirate Fairy*. The objective is to explore how the film's dialogues portray postfeminist values through the characters and narrative. Using a descriptive qualitative method and feminist literary criticism, the study applies the postfeminist theoretical framework proposed by Rosalind Gill. The analysis focuses on five key values: empowerment, individualism and choice, redefinition of gender roles, collaboration and solidarity, and resistance to patriarchal structures. The findings reveal that the film presents female characters, especially Zarina and Tinker Bell, as intelligent, independent, and emotionally expressive figures who challenge traditional gender norms. However, the representation of empowerment remains tied to neoliberal ideals, where success is achieved through personal effort rather than structural change. This research contributes to feminist media analysis and offers insight into how children's animated

films embed ideological messages about gender and identity.

INTRODUCTION

Film has long been recognized as a significant cultural artifact that not only entertains but also serves as a medium to reflect and shape societal values, ideologies, and norms. As a form of visual storytelling, film possesses the ability to communicate complex ideas and emotions, making it an influential tool in shaping public perceptions, particularly regarding gender roles and identity (Mulvey, 1975). The representation of women in films has been a recurring subject of scrutiny, as it often mirrors the prevailing societal attitudes toward gender and power dynamics.

Post-feminism is particularly relevant in the context of contemporary media and popular culture, where it often manifests through the portrayal of women as autonomous and empowered individuals who navigate complex social and personal challenges. This perspective does not reject feminist ideals but rather integrates them into a broader narrative of personal choice and self-expression (Tasker & Negra, 2007). Post-feminist values are increasingly evident in the depiction of female characters who embody strength, independence, and agency while embracing their femininity.

Film and feminism share a dynamic relationship, as cinema often serves as both a reflection of and a response to feminist ideals. Feminist film theory, pioneered by scholars such as Laura Mulvey, has critically examined how women are represented in films, particularly in relation to the male gaze a concept that highlights the objectification of women in visual media (Mulvey, 1975). Feminist analyses of film seek to uncover the ways in which cinematic narratives reinforce or challenge traditional gender roles, offering insights into broader cultural and societal dynamics.

Hains (2012) focused on children's media, particularly animated films, analyzing how "girl power" narratives shape young audiences' perceptions of gender roles and identity. Stover (2013) examined the evolution of Disney princesses, tracing the shift from passive and traditional portrayals to active and independent characters that align with post-feminist values. These studies collectively underscore the importance of analyzing animated films as a medium for feminist critique, providing a foundation for examining how *Tinker Bell and the Pirate Fairy* (2014) negotiates and communicates feminist ideals to its audience.

Numerous studies have examined the intersection of feminism and film, offering valuable insights into how feminist values are represented in media. Gill (2007) explored the concept of post-feminist media culture, highlighting how contemporary media blends empowerment narratives with consumerist ideals. Similarly, McRobbie (2009) critiqued post-feminism as both a continuation and a challenge to second-wave

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feminism, arguing that it incorporates feminist ideals while simultaneously undermining them through neoliberal discourses.

METODE

This research employed a qualitative descriptive design using feminist literary criticism approach. The primary data source is the dialogue from *Tinker Bell and the Pirate Fairy* (2014). The analysis was guided by Rosalind Gill's concept of postfeminism, which includes five key themes: empowerment, individualism and choice, redefinition of gender roles, collaboration and solidarity, and resistance to patriarchal structures.

The film was viewed multiple times to identify relevant scenes and dialogues. Notes were categorized based on the five postfeminist themes. The focus was on female characters, particularly Zarina and Tinker Bell, as their character arcs most clearly represent postfeminist traits.

RESULTS

This section presents the findings of the study, focusing on how postfeminist values are represented in the film *Tinker Bell and the Pirate Fairy* (2014). The analysis identified five major themes that reflect postfeminist sensibilities: empowerment, individualism and choice, the redefinition of gender roles, collaboration and solidarity, and resistance to patriarchal structures. These findings are illustrated through key dialogues and scenes involving the characters Tinker Bell and Zarina.

1. Empowerment

Zarina is depicted as a proactive and intellectually curious fairy who seeks to explore new possibilities with pixie dust. Her decision to become the captain of a pirate ship signifies her departure from traditional fairy roles and asserts her independence. She engages in scientific innovation, challenges authority, and ultimately defeats the male antagonist through cleverness rather than brute force. These actions reflect Gill's (2007) notion of postfeminist empowerment that emphasizes personal initiative and competence.

Scene 6: Zarina Experiments With Pixie Dust (09:35-09:50)

Tinker Bell: *"You're bending light, You're bending light? But you're not a light fairy; you're a dust keeper."*

Zarina: *"Amazing, right?"*

Tinker Bell: *"You found orange pixie dust?"*

Zarina: *"No, I made orange pixie dust."*

Zarina takes control of her own learning process, reflecting the post-feminist notion of empowerment through personal achievement rather than collective activism. She is depicted as an innovative and self-sufficient character, aligning with Gill's view of women taking charge of their own destinies.

2. Individualism and Choice

The film underscores Zarina's autonomy in making choices about her future, even if it leads to temporary alienation from her community. Her journey highlights the postfeminist ideal of self-directed development and agency. Zarina's decision to leave Pixie Hollow and return on her own terms reinforces the theme of individualism central to postfeminist discourse.

Scene 5: Zarina Challenges Fairy Gary (06:41-06:49)

Fairy Gary: *"We do not tamper with pixie dust. It is far too powerful."*

Zarina: *"But if we don't, we'll never fully understand what it's capable of."*

Zarina's curiosity and willingness to challenge authority reflect Gill's (2007) idea of post-feminist sensibility, where women assert their agency and intelligence within existing structures rather than seeking to dismantle them entirely. Zarina is not content with just following the rules she wants to innovate, a characteristic often depicted in post-feminist protagonists.

3. Redefinition of Gender Roles

Zarina disrupts conventional gender roles by taking on leadership in a male-dominated space pirate territory. Similarly, the other fairies adapt to new talents and fight alongside each other, demonstrating physical and intellectual competence. These depictions blur the boundaries between masculine and feminine roles, aligning with postfeminist ideas that promote fluid gender identity.

Scene 13: Zarina as a Pirate Captain (29:40-30:10)

James: *"To our cunning captain!"*

Oppen: *"She's going to make the whole ship fly!"*

This moment redefines gender roles, as Zarina takes on a traditionally male leadership position while maintaining her own identity. Post-feminist media often portrays women excelling in male dominated spaces without rejecting femininity (Gill, 2007).

Zarina's ascension to leadership in a male-dominated space aligns with post-feminist narratives where women break barriers while maintaining traditional femininity. According to Gill, media representations

of empowered women often highlight their ability to balance strength with femininity, which is evident in Zarina's character arc.

4. Collaboration and Solidarity

Despite the focus on individualism, the film does not ignore the value of collective support. Tinker Bell and her friends continuously support each other through mutual encouragement and problem-solving. This reflects postfeminist representations of female solidarity, not as political activism, but as emotional and interpersonal bonding.

Scene 23: The Fairies Rescue Zarina (52:46-53:20)

Zarina (weak, inside a drowning lantern): *"Help me!"*

Tinker Bell and the fairies pull her out.

Zarina (crying): *"You saved me... Why?"*

Tinker Bell: *"Let's just say, we're offering you quarter."*

While post-feminism often focuses on individualism, it still acknowledges the importance of female friendships and collaboration. This scene reflects Gill's (2007) argument that women's success is not solely individual but also supported by their peers.

5. Resistance to Patriarchal Structures

Zarina's defiance against institutional rules and her ultimate triumph over James represent symbolic resistance to patriarchal authority. These elements align with Gill's (2007) observation that postfeminist media often portrays resistance as a personal stance rather than a collective political action.

Scene 24: Fairies Take Back the Ship (54:38-55:24)

(All fairies ready to war with swords in their hands)

James: *"You dare to fight the captain?, do you?"*

Zarina: *"Only until I get that dust!"*

This scene represents a direct rejection of patriarchal manipulation. Post-feminism often portrays women recognizing and overcoming deceptive power dynamics (Gill, 2007).

DISCUSSION

Tinker Bell and the Pirate Fairy (2014) as more than just a children's animated fantasy film; it views the film as a cultural text that reflects and reinforces postfeminist sensibilities. Although it belongs to a fictional and cartoon genre, the film offers meaningful insight into the ways postfeminist values are embedded within contemporary media narratives, especially those aimed at young female audiences. By placing empowered female characters at the center of the story, the film challenges traditional gender norms while simultaneously embracing the ideals of self-determination, individual agency, and emotional expression core aspects of postfeminist discourse.

The representation of Zarina, the main character, strongly exemplifies postfeminist ideology. She is portrayed as curious, intelligent, and brave, defying the rules of Pixie Hollow to pursue her own ideas and inventions. Her decision to leave the community and join a pirate crew highlights a central postfeminist theme: the emphasis on personal choice and self-realization. Zarina's journey is not framed by romance or male dependence; instead, it centers on her desire to explore her full potential, even if it means going against social expectations. This reflects Rosalind Gill's (2007) concept of postfeminism as a sensibility, where women are seen as active subjects who make choices and take control of their own lives, often within neoliberal frameworks.

In addition to Zarina, other characters like Tinker Bell and her friends also embody postfeminist traits. They are courageous, resourceful, and involved in problem-solving throughout the narrative. Importantly, they maintain traditionally feminine traits such as kindness, beauty, and emotional sensitivity while also participating in action, leadership, and conflict resolution. This aligns with postfeminism's redefinition of femininity, where being feminine is no longer seen as a sign of weakness, but rather a source of strength. The film celebrates the idea that girls and women can be powerful while still embracing their feminine identities, including fashion, emotions, and aesthetic choices.

The film also contributes to postfeminist ideals by promoting female solidarity. While earlier media often depicted women in competition with one another, Tinker Bell and the Pirate Fairy highlights the importance of friendship, reconciliation, and mutual respect among female characters. The relationship between Tinker Bell and Zarina evolves from misunderstanding to acceptance and forgiveness. This shift away from rivalry to unity is a significant reflection of postfeminist values that emphasize emotional labor and relational strength between women.

However, despite these empowering representations, the film also operates within a neoliberal postfeminist framework that emphasizes individual responsibility and personal success. Zarina's "redemption" and reintegration into Pixie Hollow occur not through collective activism or structural change, but through her own abilities and merit. This reflects one of the key contradictions in postfeminist

media culture: while women are portrayed as empowered individuals, the broader social structures that produce inequality are rarely challenged or even acknowledged. Instead, success is framed as a result of individual choice, talent, and resilience.

Therefore, the film presents a nuanced version of postfeminist values it encourages empowerment, individuality, and self-expression, while simultaneously promoting ideas consistent with neoliberal ideology. As Gill (2007) points out, postfeminism often blends feminist and anti-feminist elements, making it complex and sometimes contradictory. *Tinker Bell and the Pirate Fairy* fits into this framework: it celebrates girl power, but in a way that emphasizes personal achievement over collective empowerment.

In conclusion, this discussion demonstrates that *Tinker Bell and the Pirate Fairy* serves as a meaningful example of how postfeminist ideas are communicated through fictional, animated media. By portraying female characters who are strong, independent, and emotionally intelligent, the film contributes to a broader cultural narrative about what it means to be a girl or woman in the postfeminist era. Despite its fantasy setting, the film offers real ideological content that resonates with contemporary gender politics, making it a significant text for feminist and media analysis.

CONCLUSION

The film is significant for its complex portrayal of female characters, particularly Zarina, who embarks on a journey that defies both societal expectations and traditional gender norms. Zarina's character challenges the stereotypical role of women in fairy tales, where females are often depicted as passive and confined to predetermined paths. Instead, Zarina embodies a modern, post-feminist character who makes choices based on her own desires and ambitions, rather than adhering to the prescribed roles laid out by society or her community.

Empowerment plays a crucial role in the film, particularly in how Zarina takes control of her own story. She moves away from the role of a dust-keeper fairy and pursues her own path, demonstrating that women are not limited by societal constraints. The theme of individualism and choice further supports this idea, as the film emphasizes the importance of personal autonomy. Zarina's decision to steal pixie dust and join the pirates marks a pivotal moment of defiance against the traditional roles assigned to her as a fairy. Her journey reflects the significance of women making their own choices and embracing their individuality, rather than simply conforming to expectations.

The redefinition of gender roles is explored through Zarina's actions, where she assumes leadership roles typically reserved for male characters. By taking control of the pirate crew and challenging the male authority figure, Zarina not only redefines what it means to be a leader but also questions the assumption that leadership and power are inherently tied to masculinity.

The film's portrayal of collaboration and solidarity further reinforces this theme, as the female characters, particularly Tinker Bell and her friends, work together to solve problems and overcome obstacles. This highlights the importance of teamwork and mutual support, even among individuals who may initially appear to have different goals or backgrounds.

In addition, the film portrays resistance to patriarchal structures through Zarina's journey. Her refusal to follow the male pirate captain's orders and her assertion of her own leadership represent a rejection of patriarchal authority. This resistance is not only a personal act but also reflects a broader critique of patriarchal structures that limit women's freedom and opportunities. By challenging these structures, Zarina exemplifies the post-feminist notion of breaking free from the limitations imposed by traditional power dynamics.

Beyond these key themes, *Tinker Bell and the Pirate Fairy* also offers a broader narrative that emphasizes self-discovery, personal growth, and the importance of friendship. The characters' relationships with one another, particularly the dynamic between Tinker Bell and Zarina, highlight the value of understanding and support. This aspect of the film speaks to the idea that personal empowerment is not just about individual achievement, but also about the ways in which people especially women can lift each other up and help one another realize their potential.

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