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## Abstract

Society has a large impact on media, whether it be fashion, activities, or even portrayal of fictional characters. In the first Walt Disney Company princess movies, the princesses were seen as servants and had very little control over their own destinies. They were damsels in distress waiting for their prince charming to save them, much as how real life was at that time. Once the second wave of feminism happened, women gained more rights and had more control over their own lives. This was reflected in the next set of Disney movies as the leading ladies started out rebellious and made their own decisions, most of the time against the will of their fathers. However, in the end, they were married and in what many thought to be their proper place, which was next to a man. The third wave of feminism led to even more freedom for women and the most gender equality in America yet. The princesses of this time were completely in charge of their own destinies. Some of these movies did not feature any romance at all and the princesses were even the ones to save the day, not the prince. As society impacted the media, the media impacted society. Young girls see these characters in their favorite Disney movies and want to be just like them. This can lead to the reinforcement of gender stereotypes and the belief in how they should act, but also to the breaking of these negative gender stereotypes. Overall, images of women have become more positive as the movies begin to feature strong female leads. However, aspects of gender stereotypes still remain, and it will take more major changes in societal norms before these are gone forever.

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