

Disney's 'Little Mermaid' Backlash Has Reached Insane Heights

Disney's latest live-action remake, *The Little Mermaid*, has been engulfed in controversy ever since the casting of singer Halle Bailey was announced.



While Disney's tepid remakes always receive criticism from nostalgic fans, this time, the backlash is transparently racist, with all of the negativity aimed at the casting of a non-white actress to play the titular mermaid. The film's trailer has been flooded with 1.5 million dislikes from angry "fans" - despite YouTube removing the dislike counter.

Comment sections have exploded with absurd talking points, defending the sanctity of the original Danish story (which Disney's original animated adaptation sanitized almost beyond recognition). The discourse peaked when one terminally online Twitter user used an AI to paint over Bailey's face with that of a white redhead, and assured anxious "fans" that he would "correct" the full movie upon release.

One has to wonder, how on earth did we get here? How did we get to the point where thousands of grown men are furious about a movie made for 8 year-old girls? Of all the cultural battlegrounds to fight this war, why choose Disney's damp, lifeless remakes?

There is much to criticize about nostalgia culture, but from Disney's perspective, it makes a lot of sense to relive their glory years - ignoring a few duds, many of their live-action remakes have made a gargantuan amount of money at the box office. Never mind the fact that these films lack the vibrant energy, color and expressiveness of their animated originals - people will happily take their kids to see them in theatres, hoping to feel a fraction of that childhood magic.

Disney is milking its fattest cows again, just like when it pumped out all of those direct-to-video sequels in the 90's. Imagine, if you will, being a child right now, and going online to look for news about your favorite Disney princess, and seeing adults writing unhinged manifestos about how melanin can't develop underwater. What must they think of us?

Is this where nostalgia culture is taking us? Is mining old IP, aimed at pleasing parents, children and "Disney adults" alike exposing something rotten, lurking beneath the surface?

Clearly, lonely and frustrated men are being sucked down propaganda pipelines, to the point where they are "triggered" by the sight of a non-white actress playing a mermaid in a kid's movie; these people desperately need to log off, and go outside.

Thankfully, toxic manchildren haven't managed to dominate all of the discourse. In response to the flood of negativity, parents are pushing back, posting videos of their children excited by the sight of a Disney princess who looks like them.

After all, this movie was made for children, not embittered adults, and I'm not sure why grown men would think otherwise.

By Dani Di Placido, *Forbes*, Sep 14, 2022