

## THE CHARACTER ALTERATION OF CRUELLA FROM *101 DALMATIANS* (1961) INTO *CRUELLA* (2021)

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### Abstract

This *journal* researched Postmodernism from *101 Dalmatian* movie into *Cruella* movie. Specifically, the study examined how the movie challenges traditional gender roles, deconstructs stereotypes associated with female characters, explores the fluidity of identities, and critiques cultural conventions through the use of irony and parody. These postmodern aspects were explored to gain a deeper understanding of the movie's engagement with contemporary cultural issues and its subversion of established norms and narratives. The researchers are interested in evaluating the differences between *101 Dalmatians* (1961) and *Cruella* (2021). The popularity of character transformation and the diverse eras introduced by these two movies is the cause why these movies must be studied. The study's goal was to examine Cruella's transformation in both movies. The researchers used the descriptive comparative approach to perform the research. The note-taking approach was employed in conjunction with Linda Hutcheon's postmodernism theory. The researchers found that the differences lay in historical representation, including their nature, relationship, and goal in the movies.

## INTRODUCTION

A movie is an artistic medium, just as other literary works. It tries to explain the universe in which humans lived or to portray a particular cosmos experience. It could be from everyday life or something else entirely. A movie is a complicated story containing grammatical, structural, and visual codes combined to give a certain meaning, claims Johnstone in *Nikmah* (2008). A movie differs from other types of literature, like books, which take a long time to understand, and poetry, which requires analysis to understand the meaning behind these many lines. Movies come in various genres, such as romance, humor, action, and fantasy which unlike novels, movies depend on its visual to be able to successfully deliver the story genre.

Walt Disney produced the animated feature *101 Dalmatians* in 1961. The movie



features two London Dalmatians and their human owners, whom they call *pets*, as well as a villain named Cruella De Vil, who intends to purchase all the Dalmatian pups she can locate and convert them into fur coats. Cruella's appetite is piqued when the hero and heroine have 15 puppies, so she hires a pair of goons to abduct them. The plot develops in her run-down country mansion, where 99 puppies are eventually imprisoned for a fate worse than death (Ebert, 1991).

Related to *101 Dalmatians (1961)*, *Cruella (2021)* is a movie that focuses on the villainess herself, Cruella. As the title suggests, the movie features Cruella de Vil as she seeks vengeance against Baroness von Hellman. She teams up with thieves Jasper and Horace, with Artie joining them for her final scheme of wrecking the Baroness' charity ball.

Several pieces of research that discuss similar issues have been done before. In 2018, Tania Sharmin titled *Gender Politics in the Projection of Disney Villains* addressed the same concern about how Disney Villains in their movies being projected. Sharmin's research examines how the evil characters have an uneven reflection of their gender roles. Then, an article from Alejandra Martinez in 2015 titled *Cruella de Vil and the Fairy Godmother: Watching Disney with My Students* aims to consider the significance of critically examining children's cultural products using Cruella characters to reconstruct the characters in the movies. The third is an article from Nurhalidasia et al. (2016) titled *The Character Alteration of Maleficent from Sleeping Beauty into Maleficent Movie* to examine how Maleficent has altered in the two movies. Nuhaidisa's research found the difference between Sleeping Beauty movie and the *Maleficent* movie and how it depicted the Maleficent characters using the postmodern theory by Linda Hutcheon.

From the description of previous studies above, there are still no studies on the character alteration of Cruella De Vil from *101 Dalmatians (1961)* into *Cruella (2021)* Movie. The difference between this article from the previous researches is that the researchers will discover how Cruella de Vil's character is depicted differently from earlier in the *101 Dalmatians (1961)* to *Cruella (2021)*. According to the phenomenon above, the researchers are keen to assess the character changes made in the *101 Dalmatians (1961)* and the movie *Cruella (2021)*. These movies need to be analyzed due to the general popularization of character alteration and the diverse historical periods they introduced.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Observing a work altered into a different form demands paying close attention. According to a review of the literature, displacement indicates a limit modification. The study's

guiding concept is that cultural creation will always change in age and time. A work that emerges in one period and then subsequently appears in another era will alter and be modified. The growth of public thought in a period is constantly reflected in literary works. Changes are occurring in the shape of a children's literary work becoming an adult movie later, significantly contributing to gaining greater attention. As said, the plot of this movie is around the transformation of the evil character Cruella De Vil in *101 Dalmatians (1961)* into *Cruella (2021)* movie.

If the format changes, the content does as well, and vice versa. Cruella becomes the good character in this narrative by connecting the changes observed in the contained change. Therefore, this research topic concentrates on how the author justifies Cruella's modification of the format shown to various characters in both movies. The theory of adaptation proposed by Linda Hutcheon in her book *A Theory of Adaptation (2006)* can be relevant and helpful for this study as it compares the previous and later versions of the Cruella De Vil character in different movies. Hutcheon's theory explores the process of adaptation, where a work of art, such as a novel or a movie, is transformed into another medium or reimagined in a different context. Her theory provides a framework for analyzing and understanding the reasons behind these alterations. She explores how adaptations engage with and transform their source material while creating something new and unique. The key aspects of her theory include:

#### *Intertextuality*

Hutcheon emphasizes the intertextual nature of adaptations, which means that they are inherently connected to and influenced by other texts. Adaptations engage in a dialogue with the source material, incorporating, reimagining, and transforming it in the process. This intertextuality creates a complex network of references, allusions, and connections between the original work and the adaptation.

#### *Transformation and Interpretation*

According to Hutcheon, adaptations are not mere replicas or imitations of the source material. Instead, they involve a process of transformation and interpretation. Adaptations can alter the narrative, characters, setting, themes, or style of the original work, bringing a new perspective or adding layers of meaning. This transformation allows for a fresh interpretation and understanding of the story and its themes.

#### *Fidelity and Creativity*

Hutcheon challenges the notion of strict fidelity to the source material. She argues that adaptations should not be judged solely based on their faithfulness to the original work but

should be evaluated for their creative and interpretive choices. Adaptations have the potential to offer new insights, perspectives, and experiences that go beyond what the source material provides.

### *Dialogic Relationship*

Hutcheon highlights the importance of understanding adaptations as part of a larger cultural conversation. Adaptations are influenced by the social, historical, and cultural contexts in which they are created. They reflect and respond to the concerns and issues of their time, engaging in a dialogic relationship with the original work and the society in which they are produced.

**Adaptation as a Form of Critique:** Hutcheon argues that adaptations can function as a form of critique. They have the power to challenge, question, and subvert the ideologies, conventions, and norms present in the source material or the culture at large. Adaptations can offer alternative perspectives, challenge dominant narratives, and open up new possibilities for interpretation and understanding.

This study also demonstrates how deconstruction occurs due to the format change, changing the content. It lays out this character and focuses on change to assess the format shift. The Linda Hutcheon theory, which contends that postmodern authors articulate their perspectives within the context of history to reconcile the past and the present, serves as the foundation for this study (Hutcheon, 1988). According to Cornell, the aim of history is an occurrence in the past employed as a fact in the structural narrative, not merely as a cause (Connell, 2003). Postmodernism claims that history is a discursive medium but also a narrative that creates. The movie's representations of Cruella's origins that was not there in the *101 Dalmatians* movie develop into a suitable field for analysis in the study.

Pauline Rosenau claims that Postmodernism is a critique of modern society and its failure to live up to its promises (Rosenau, 1992). Postmodernism is likely to reject everything related to the accumulation of modern understanding. Postmodern theorists typically criticize concepts such as worldview, metanarrative, totality, and so on. According to Appignanesi, Garrat, Sardar, and Curry (2004), postmodernism involves denial that it is no longer current. Postmodernism combines some or all meanings of the outcomes of modernism's growth, denial, and rejection. Based on Richard's (2004) book, the following are Postmodernism's characteristics:

1. A growing backlash against the modernization initiative, a decline in faith in a religion as a transcendent force, and acceptance of pluralism and relativism concerning truth.

2. Due to the mass media industry's expansion, the world has become much smaller by acting as an extension of our sensory system, organs, and nerves. Additionally, the influence of media on "religion" or "god" has become more secularized because media, like television, now unintentionally controls people's behavior rather than traditional beliefs.
3. Religious and racial extremism are both on the rise. This tendency allegedly develops as a reaction to or substitute for people's growing skepticism against philosophy, science, and technology, which have failed to deliver on their promise to free man from oppression.
4. The emergence of a new need for identity, rationality, dignity, and history commitment.
5. The conversion of rural areas into suburbs and metropolitan areas into cultural hubs. This pattern also relates to the growing sway of rich nations over developing countries as the "central point" that determines movements on the "periphery" of developed countries.
6. Expanding avenues for people from different socioeconomic categories or levels to voice their opinions openly. In other words, the development of democracy has profited from the postmodern era.
7. The language used in Postmodernism is sometimes notable for its ambiguity of meaning and inconsistencies, and it may contain multiple paradoxes.

An ideology known as Postmodernism came into being after modernism in the contemporary era. The beliefs that make-up Postmodernism are not all related; they are separated and complicated as a coherent system. Many people consider Postmodernism to be a continuation of modernism. However, the course of events has been fairly variable.

Linda's observations in her book *The Politics of Postmodernism* (2003) concerning significant references, particularly on historical metafiction, are as follows:

### *Representation*

Represents what has truly created meaning or something inherent in the represented object. A representation might be a visual, textual, or audio image. It can also be a tale or a collection of images and thoughts. On the other hand, a representation may be the consequence of ideology, that massive blueprint for displaying the world and explaining underlying transactions.

### *Consciousness*

The consciousness that makes sense of and generates order from the cultural experience. However, by reinserting representation as a problem, Postmodernism undercuts our imitation awareness of representation, knowledge about its openness, and common realism. It challenges the realist concept of representation, which implies medium clarity and, as a result, a direct and natural link between signs and reference of the word and the world (Hutcheon, 2003).

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

Qualitative research is a method for finding and understanding meanings that some people or groups think stem from social or human problems (Creswell 2013). Qualitative research focuses on in-depth analysis, interpretation, and understanding of phenomena within their natural context, making it suitable for examining complex social and cultural aspects such as character development in movies. By utilizing qualitative research methods, the study can delve into the nuanced aspects of Cruella's character, including her motivations, relationships, and personal journey. This approach allows for a comprehensive exploration of the alterations made to her character and the underlying reasons behind these changes.

According to Kothari (2004:5), Qualitative approach to research is concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behavior. The main instrument is the researchers itself. The importance of this research is the researcher's ability to understand character alternation based on watching the movie and reading the scripts.

The data source for a study is a subject from which data may be collected for research purposes (Arikunto, 2010: 129). The data sources in this research are *101 Dalmatians (1961)* and *Cruella (2021)* movies and their scripts. The researcher uses the screenshots image from *101 Dalmatians (1961)* and *Cruella (2021)* movies to represent how the visual is used as a tool to help the researcher comprehend the alteration and deconstruction of the character Cruella.

The research data consist of screenshots of the character's actions and dialogue lines. Then, it was collected using Linda Hutcheon's theory of descriptive comparative method to examine the alteration deconstruction of the character Cruella in both movies. The dialogue helps the researcher comprehends the differences in the character presentation in both movies. The collecting of data is done by watching *101 Dalmatians (1961)* and *Cruella (2021)* movies and repeatedly reading the script of *101 Dalmatians (1961)* and *Cruella (2021)* movies.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Finding

#### *Narrative Representation*

Narrative representation is a condition of narrative capacities which change the present into the fulfillment of the past from the people who wish to have descended. The table below shows some findings of the narrative representation in the film *Cruella* (2021) and its comparison to the predecessor, *101 Dalmatians* (1961). This shows six examples of scenes and quotations in the movie, divided into table A, which is for *101 Dalmatian* movie, and table B, for *Cruella* movie.

*Table 1. Narrative Representation in Cruella (2021) and its comparison to 101 Dalmatians (1961)*

No	Extracts	
	<i>A. 101 Dalmatians (1961)</i>	<i>B. Cruella (2021)</i>
1.	<p>The story begins by showing the London neighborhood skyline through the perspective of Pongo, the dalmatian, as the narrator. Then, it focused on him and Roger Radcliffe, Pongo's owner. They live in a flat. He then proceeds to set up a date for Roger, and only after the marriage happens Cruella was introduced.</p> <p><b>Narrator:</b> <i>"My story starts in London . . . I had a pet at the time, and I lived in a bachelor flat near Regents Park. It was a lovely spring day, which is a difficult season for bachelors."</i></p>	<p>The story begins from the perspective of Cruella. She tells the audience her way of thinking as the scenes show how she was born and her life as a child. The others would bully her because of her appearance and further escalate it since Cruella fights back.</p> <p><b>Narrator:</b> <i>"From an early age, I realized I saw the world differently than everyone else."</i></p>

#### *Historical Representation*

Historical representation is a collection of historical events that must be documented and explained. The table below shows some findings of the historical representation in the film *Cruella* (2021) and its comparison to the predecessor, *101 Dalmatians* (1961).

*Table 1. Historical Representation in Cruella (2021) and its comparison to 101 Dalmatians (1961)*

No	Extracts	
	<i>A. 101 Dalmatians (1961)</i>	<i>B. Cruella (2021)</i>
1.	When Cruella made her first appearance, there seemed not to be	There seem to be an extension in the movie as Cruella is depicted as a nice

	<p>any character background about her except when Roger said that Cruella was Anita's friend in school</p> <p><b>Roger:</b> <i>"That must be Cruella, your dear devoted old schoolmate, Cruella DeVil" [Cruella appears in front of Roger and Anita's house]</i></p>	<p>young girl who always listens to her mother, but as the movie going, turned out that Cruella is struggling to make friends in school due to her white and black hair.</p> <p><b>Cruella:</b> <i>"You could say I'm pretty much roar through all of my primary school"</i></p>
2.	<p>Cruella is depicted as having white and black hair, really white skin, and bold red lipstick. She also smokes using a long cigarette holder</p> <p><b>Cruella:</b> <i>Anita, darling!"</i></p>	<p>Cruella still sticks to her bold make-up, but the long cigarette holder did not appear this time.</p> <p><b>Cruella:</b> <i>"Do you have a light?" [proceed to burn her coat]</i></p>
3.	<p>The movie implies that the meeting between Cruella and the duo Jasper and Horace is only for a business deal. That is to steal puppies.</p> <p><b>Narration:</b> <i>(Soon, the camera fades to the streets of London, where Roger, Anita, Pongo, and Perdita are out for their evening stroll to Regent's Park. Their human owners look refined in their raincoats and trilby hats, as both couples pass by a truck. However, the truck belongs to two shady crooks, Horace and Jasper Badun, who lower their newspapers and watch them pass by.)</i> (E./M.26/S.46)</p>	<p>Cruella sees Jasper and Horace when she is a child. Jasper notices her sitting over a fountain and takes pity, thus admitting her as his family.</p> <p><b>Narration:</b> <i>But a new day brings new opportunities or at least a couple of petty thieves. Horace...</i></p> <p><b>BOY:</b> <i>Sir, please could you spare some change?</i></p> <p><i>No, sorry.</i></p> <p><b>CRUELLA:</b> <i>...and Jasper.</i></p>
4.	<p>Jasper and Horace do not care about Cruella's circumstances since they are business partners. Cruella also does not mind her manners talking to her partners, as she regards them below her.</p> <p><b>Cruella de Vil:</b> <i>"Hello?" (Becomes angry) "Jasper! Jasper, you idiot! How dare you call here!"</i></p>	<p>Jasper and Horace congratulate Cruella on her birthday. It means they care for her and regard them as their equal.</p> <p><b>JASPER AND HORACE:</b> <i>(SINGING) Happy birthday to you! Happy birthday to you! Happy birthday, dear Estell-la-la-la!</i></p>



	<p><i>(Jasper and Horace are back at their apartment, as they are aware of the newspaper headlines, too.)</i>  <b>Jasper:</b> <i>(protesting) "But, we don't want no more of this here! We want our boodle!"</i></p>	
5.	<p>Cruella does not change her attitude or change because of the time they have been through. Hence, she becomes more aggressive. Jasper and Horace still obey Cruella solely for the money.  <b>Cruella:</b> <i>"Well, any sign of them?"</i>  <b>Jasper:</b> <i>"Not so much as one bloomin' footprint, and we've been up and down every blinkin' road in the whole county."</i>  <b>Horace:</b> <i>"We're froze stiff. We're givin' up."</i>  <b>Cruella:</b> <i>(angrily) "Oh, no, you don't!" (She violently grabs Horace.) "We'll find the little mongrels if it takes 'til next Christmas. Now, get going!"</i></p>	<p>When Cruella asks Jasper and Horace for help, she realizes her mistake and apologizes. They agree to help because they still regard her as their family.  <b>Cruella:</b> <i>I went a bit mad. I'm sorry. You're my family. You're all I have.</i>  <b>Jasper:</b> <i>She used the family card.</i>  <b>Horace:</b> <i>Yeah, she did. It's working.</i></p>
6.	<p>Her incredible fashion talent and skills, while she was beginning from this low, were pretty obvious.  <b>Cruella:</b> <i>I live for furs. I worship first.</i></p>	<p>Cruella's fashion design is on view for all of us to admire Cruella's talent.  <b>Cruella:</b> <i>I'm Cruella, who did actually 1965 collection.</i></p>

## Discussion

### *Narrative Representation*

Extract 1.A shows that the movie's main character is Pongo, as implied by the title. It begins by showing his place using his perspective and even his way of thinking in human language. He wishes Roger to have a partner, and he succeeds. Moreover, to top it off, he also gets a partner. After Pongo's partner is pregnant, Cruella is introduced. Roger sings a song about her evilness, preparing the audience on what kind of person Cruella is. When she comes, she directly bombards Roger's wife about the puppy and does not care about her supposedly old school friend, showing her selfish and evil nature.

Extract 1.B shows that the main character is Cruella. Not only is her name in the title, but the narrator is also her. Unlike in *101 Dalmatians* (1961), which does not let the audience know what she might be thinking about, in *Cruella* (2021), the audience is directly told what is

in her thought and what made her have so many bullies after her. Thus, the audience got a good grasp on what kind of person Cruella is. Instead of evil, she is an active kid, does not like rules, and does not want to bow down to others when mistreated, thus escalating her problem.

### *Historical Representation*

Extract 2.A showed that Cruella had no character background except when another character must explain a bit about her as an introduction. Whereas extract 2.B shows an extension of Cruella's character background when the movie talks about her elementary school's life and how she was a nice girl until her elementary experience changed her. This change further states that in *Cruella* (2021), there is a representation of Cruella's character background in the form of extension.

Extract 3.A has Cruella has iconic make-up, such as white and black hair, white skin, and bold red lipstick. She is also depicted as a smoker who brings a long cigarette holder. Extract 3.B has the scene where Cruella still uses the same make-up and hairstyle but the cigarette holder's disappearance. Therefore, in this movie, Cruella's representation becomes trimmed.

Extract 4.A explains what Jasper and Horace's existence meant to Cruella as mere business subordinates. Both of them do not hold any friendly feelings. They only use each other. Cruella used Jasper and Horace as she pleased, and the duos were more than happy to follow it as long as they were paid with money.

Meanwhile, in 4.B, Cruella meets the duo when she is at her lowest. She lost her mother, her home, and her precious necklace. As a result, the duos take her out of pity. Their relationship thus progressed into that great of family.

Extract 5.A shows how toxic the relationship between Cruella and the duos is. Just because they call her and ask for money, she screams at them and does not want to be disturbed. She also ignores them when they want to pull out of her plan because it seems too dangerous. While in 5.B, the relationship between Cruella and the duos is healthy familial. Not only do they often talk and work with each other, they're also going as far as remembering her birthday and fetching her a cake to celebrate.

Extract 6.A shows the audience how selfish nature Cruella is. Even when Jasper and Horace were freezing cold, she kept asking them to look out for puppies. She does not feel sorry nor feel the need to consider their circumstances. Jasper and Horace are upset but cannot reject her when the reward money is still there. As for 6.B, Jasper and Horace still help her because she is genuinely felt sorry and willing to bring herself down to try asking them

politely. Showing how she treated them as family and as equals.

Extract 5.A shows that Cruella was so proud of wearing her fur coat when she came to Anita's home. Since Cruella is depicted as a successful lady when the movie starts, she is not hesitant to show her arrogance. She is also selfish and does not care for the feelings of others because she is shamelessly asking for the puppies. However, in extract 5.B, Cruella still shows herself on the leather couch. It means her taste in fashion is similar to the original one. Cruella is not yet obsessed with a puppy since she still considers it wrong. Hence, she is only joking when she means to make one. Meaning she still has her moral compass.

Furthermore, although they are both described as liking the fashion world, in *Cruella (2021)*, Cruella is still in the treading stage of her career. She still being shown to have passion when working to show her talent. They also share different motivations. The Cruella in *101 Dalmatians (1961)* is chasing after the puppy for her own pleasure, while in *Cruella (2021)*, she chases after revenge.

The comparison of Cruella De Vil's character in *Cruella (2021)* with her portrayal in *101 Dalmatians (1961)* offers an opportunity to explore the postmodern aspects present in the study. Postmodernism is a cultural and artistic movement that emerged in the mid-20th century and is characterized by a self-conscious and skeptical attitude towards established conventions and traditional narratives. There are some points of discussion regarding the postmodern aspects in relation to the study, including:

#### *Deconstruction of the Original Narrative*

*Cruella (2021)* can be seen as a postmodern reinterpretation of the original *101 Dalmatians (1961)* narrative. The movie deconstructs and reimagines Cruella De Vil's character, delving into her background story and motivations. This deconstruction challenges the conventional image of Cruella as a one-dimensional villain and offers a more complex and nuanced portrayal. By delving into Cruella's past, the movie humanizes her character and provides a better understanding of her actions and motivations. This departure from the original narrative challenges the established perception of Cruella, adding depth and complexity to her portrayal.

#### *Metafiction and Self-Reflexivity*

Postmodernism often incorporates metafiction and self-reflexive elements, blurring the boundaries between reality and fiction. In *Cruella (2021)*, the movie acknowledges its status as an adaptation and engages in a dialogue with the audience's familiarity with the original story. This metafictional aspect is evident through various elements in the movie, such as explicit

references to the events and characters of *101 Dalmatians* (1961) and the inclusion of moments that evoke nostalgia for the original movie. These references create a self-awareness within the movie and establish a dialogue between the current adaptation and its source material.

Furthermore, in *Cruella* (2021), self-reflexivity is present through moments that highlight the audience's expectations and assumptions about the character of Cruella De Vil. The movie knows that viewers are familiar with Cruella's iconic portrayal in *101 Dalmatians* (1961) and uses this knowledge to create tension, surprises, and subversions. For instance, the movie deliberately subverts expectations by exploring Cruella's background story and providing a more sympathetic portrayal of her character. It challenges the audience to question their preconceived notions about Cruella and encourages them to reevaluate their understanding of her motivations and actions.

Thus, the metafictional and self-reflexive elements in *Cruella* (2021) create a dialogue between the movie and its audience. By referencing and engaging with the original material, the movie invites the audience to actively participate in the interpretation and analysis of the adaptation. The audience's familiarity with *101 Dalmatians* (1961) becomes an integral part of their engagement with *Cruella* (2021). They are encouraged to compare and contrast the two portrayals of Cruella De Vil, to recognize the intertextual references, and to reflect on how the new movie reinterprets and subverts the established narrative and character traits. By doing all of that, *Cruella* (2021) self-consciously plays with the audience's expectations and assumptions about the character, adding layers of meaning and intertextual references.

#### *Intertextuality and Intertextual Play*

The intertextual elements present in *Cruella* (2021) contribute to its postmodern nature. The movie references and remixes various cultural texts, including the original *101 Dalmatians* (1961) movie. This intertextual play allows *Cruella* (2021) to exist in conversation with its predecessor while simultaneously subverting and reimagining the character and her narrative.

In the case of *Cruella* (2021), intertextuality is present through the movie's references to the original *101 Dalmatians* (1961) movie. The new movie draws on the audience's familiarity with the original story and characters, creating a network of connections between the two movies. Intertextuality is seen through visual cues, dialogues, and character portrayals. For example, *Cruella* (2021) showcases iconic elements associated with Cruella De Vil, such as her black and white hairstyle, her love for fur, and her obsession with Dalmatians. These

references establish a connection to the original movie and evoke a sense of nostalgia or recognition in the audience.

*Cruella* (2021) engages in intertextual play by taking the established elements from the original *101 Dalmatians* (1961) story and reimagining them in a different context. The movie subverts expectations and adds layers of complexity to the character of Cruella De Vil. For instance, *Cruella* (2021) explores Cruella's background story, her motivations, and her relationships with other characters. It presents a more sympathetic and multi-dimensional portrayal of Cruella, challenging the simplistic villainous image established in the original movie. Additionally, the movie expands on the characters of Jasper and Horace, who were originally portrayed as henchmen in *101 Dalmatians* (1961). In *Cruella* (2021), they are depicted as caring for Cruella as family, adding depth to their relationships and deviating from the boss-subordinate dynamic seen in the original movie.

Through intertextual play, *Cruella* (2021) deconstructs and reimagines the narrative of the original *101 Dalmatians* (1961) story. It presents a fresh perspective on the character of Cruella De Vil and offers a reinterpretation of her motivations, actions, and relationships. By incorporating intertextual references and remixing elements from the original movie, *Cruella* (2021) engages in a dialogue with its predecessor. It subverts and challenges the established narrative, providing a new lens through which to view the character and her story. This deconstruction and reimagining of the narrative contribute to the postmodern nature of the movie, as it questions and explores the boundaries of storytelling and the possibilities of adaptation.

#### *Subversion of Gender Roles and Stereotypes*

Postmodernism often challenges and subverts traditional gender roles and stereotypes. In *Cruella* (2021), the character of Cruella De Vil defies conventional expectations by showcasing her talent, ambition, and complexities. The movie portrays her as a strong and empowered woman, capable of taking charge and pursuing her goals, while also highlighting the fluidity and performative nature of gender identities. The movie moves beyond the conventional depiction of women as solely passive or villainous characters like in the original movie.

Cruella is portrayed as talented, ambitious, and driven. She defies societal expectations and takes charge of her own destiny. This subversion of traditional gender roles allows for a more complex and multi-dimensional portrayal of her character. By challenging traditional gender roles, *Cruella* aligns with the postmodern tendency to question and critique established

norms and expectations surrounding femininity.

*Cruella* (2021) also explores the fluidity and performative nature of gender identities. It presents gender as a construct that can be experimented with, challenged, and performed in various ways. It showcases Cruella's flamboyant fashion style, which blurs traditional gender boundaries. She challenges the notion that fashion is solely for women or men, presenting a more inclusive and boundary-breaking approach. This exploration of the fluidity and performative nature of gender identities aligns with the postmodern perspective that views gender as a social construct that can be deconstructed and reimagined.

In summary, the subversion of traditional gender roles and stereotypes in *Cruella* (2021) adds a postmodern dimension to the study. By presenting Cruella as an empowered and complex female protagonist, the movie challenges traditional gender expectations and explores the fluidity and performative nature of gender identities. It breaks stereotypes associated with female characters, offering a more nuanced and inclusive portrayal. This subversion aligns with the postmodern tendency to question and critique established norms and narratives surrounding gender.

#### *Irony and Parody*

Postmodernism frequently employs irony and parody to critique and comment on established norms and cultural conventions. In the original movie, *101 Dalmatians* (1961), irony is present in the contrast between Cruella De Vil's elegant appearance and her malevolent intentions. She presents herself as a sophisticated and refined woman, yet her desire to harm innocent puppies for their fur coats reveals her true nature. This irony underscores the deceptive and sinister qualities of her character. Whereas in *Cruella* (2021), elements of irony can be observed in the juxtaposition of Cruella's eccentric and flamboyant fashion style with the societal norms of the time. The movie satirizes the upper-class society depicted in the 1960s and critiques the superficiality and hypocrisy often associated with the fashion industry.

Meanwhile in the aspect of the parody, while the original movie does not heavily employ parody, it does feature some lighthearted moments that playfully satirize certain aspects of society. For example, the portrayal of the bumbling and comedic henchmen, Jasper and Horace, can be seen as a subtle form of parody that pokes fun at the archetype of the incompetent sidekick or henchman. While *Cruella* (2021) employs parody more prominently than its predecessor. The movie satirizes the fashion industry, showcasing exaggerated characters that embody the stereotypes associated with the industry. These characters are

eccentric, demanding, and self-absorbed, highlighting the superficiality and cutthroat nature of the fashion world. The use of parody in *Cruella* (2021) offers a critical lens through which to view the industry and its excesses.

In summary, while both *101 Dalmatians* (1961) and *Cruella* (2021) utilize irony and to a lesser extent parody, *Cruella* (2021) delves deeper into these techniques to provide social commentary and critique. The movie employs irony to challenge societal expectations and conformity, especially in the context of fashion, and uses parody to satirize and critique the fashion industry. This emphasis on irony and parody adds depth, complexity, and social commentary to the narrative of *Cruella* (2021) in comparison to the original *101 Dalmatians* (1961) movie.

## **CONCLUSION**

The character alteration of Cruella in the movie *Cruella* (2021) compared to the original movie, *101 Dalmatians* (1961), demonstrates several postmodern aspects. In the narrative representation, *Cruella* (2021) provides a more complex and introspective portrayal of Cruella's character. Unlike in *101 Dalmatians* (1961) where the audience is primarily introduced to Cruella through the perspective of other characters like Pongo, *Cruella* (2021) directly delves into her thoughts and motivations. This direct access allows the audience to gain a deeper understanding of her personality, showcasing postmodern tendencies to explore complex subjectivities and challenge traditional characterizations.

Furthermore, *Cruella* (2021) expands on the historical representation of Cruella's character. While *101 Dalmatians* (1961) offers limited insight into Cruella's background, *Cruella* (2021) delves into her elementary school experiences, providing a more nuanced understanding of her transformation and the factors that shaped her. This expansion of character background reflects a postmodern approach to storytelling, which seeks to revisit and reinterpret familiar narratives. The relationships portrayed in both movies also differ significantly. In *101 Dalmatians* (1961), Cruella's interactions with characters like Jasper and Horace are transactional and devoid of familial connections. However, in *Cruella* (2021), the dynamics between Cruella, Jasper, and Horace evolve into a genuine familial bond. This shift challenges traditional character relationships and demonstrates a postmodern tendency to subvert established expectations and explore alternative dynamics.

Additionally, the representation of Cruella's identity in *Cruella* (2021) showcases postmodern elements of irony and parody. While the original movie presents Cruella with her iconic appearance and exaggerated evil traits, *Cruella* (2021) introduces a more nuanced and

multifaceted depiction. Through irony and parody, the movie plays with audience expectations and subverts traditional character archetypes, aligning with postmodern tendencies to challenge and deconstruct established conventions.

Lastly, the motivations driving Cruella differ between the two movies. In "101 Dalmatians," Cruella's pursuit of the puppies is driven by personal pleasure and the desire for a fur coat. However, in "Cruella," her motivations shift towards revenge, reflecting a more complex and layered character development. This alteration in motivations reflects a postmodern approach to character reimagining, where traditional motivations are reevaluated and new narrative possibilities are explored.

In conclusion, the character alteration of Cruella in *Cruella* (2021) compared to the original movie, *101 Dalmatians* (1961), incorporates postmodern elements by challenging narrative conventions, expanding character backgrounds, transforming relationships, utilizing irony and parody, and redefining motivations. This adaptation embraces postmodernist themes, offering a reinterpretation of the character that subverts traditional expectations and engages with contemporary cultural issues.

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