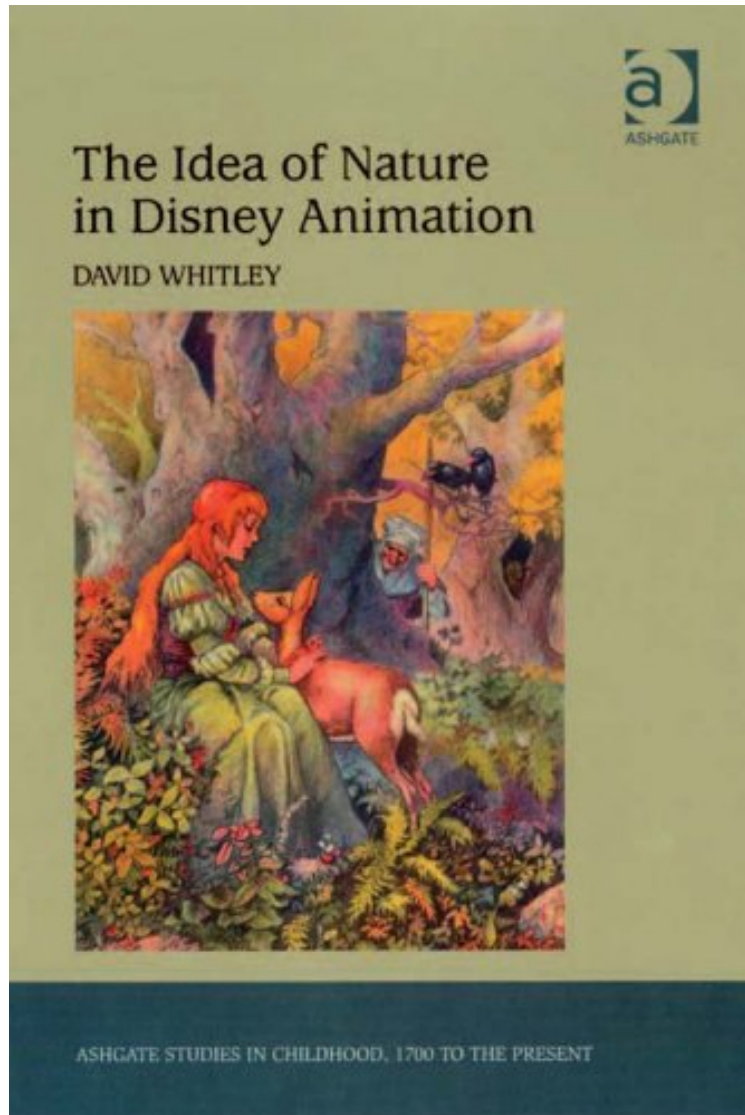


[Library ebook] The Idea of Nature in Disney Animation (Ashgate Studies in Childhood, 1700 to the Present)

The Idea of Nature in Disney Animation (Ashgate Studies in Childhood, 1700 to the Present)

David Whitley

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David Whitley : The Idea of Nature in Disney Animation (Ashgate Studies in Childhood, 1700 to the Present) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Idea of Nature in Disney Animation (Ashgate Studies in Childhood, 1700 to the Present):

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. An important and engaging study. By Allan G. Hunter David Whitley's excellent book is remarkable for many reasons, chief among which is that he is supremely sensitive to the way Disney-made animated movies (and he usefully differentiates between later movies made by the Disney studios and

those overseen by Walt Disney himself) have shaped our ways of seeing nature. He takes the trouble to observe not only what the movies present but precisely how they do so - and in the process reveals some fascinating insights into the ways we have seen and continue to conceive what 'Nature' might be. It's not a small point - as Whitley remarks, Bambi was in 1990 the third highest grossing movie of all time, having had a run of nearly 50 years at that point, and it has shaped attitudes in adults and in children alike. As those children became adults they carried their prejudices into a modern world that has been less than sympathetic towards nature in any guise. Whitley's analysis is especially illuminating when he comes to look at Pocahontas and to untangle for us the cultural evasions that the movie embodies on both sides of the arguments about colonization. While the Europeans tended to see America as a place to gather wealth so they could return home, the attitudes of the Native Americans were hardly as simple or as naive as they have been presented to us over the centuries, and so in Pocahontas we see an attitude critical of the colonists but also surprisingly unquestioning of the peoples they discovered. Gently, Whitley brings us into contact with our own blind-spots about what we imagine our history to be and how we tend to look at the natural world, shaping it in ways that say a great deal about our human capacities for delusion. If we're to come to some realistic understanding about what our relationship to the natural world might be - and as we destroy more and more forest and ransack unspoiled land in our economic rapacity for raw materials it's a good question to pose - then we'll need such sensitive and intelligent assessments of our world as Whitley supplies. Whitley's admirable close readings, his extensive and eye-opening research, and his lightness of touch when dealing with these movies reveal them in a whole new way. This is a book to own, to re-read, and to treasure. Allan Hunter[...]

Whitley's compelling study complicates our understanding of the classic Disney canon by focusing on the way images of the natural world are mediated within popular art for children. He examines a range of Disney's feature animations, from Snow White to Finding Nemo to show that, even as the films communicate the central ideologies of their times, they also express the ambiguities and tensions that underlie these dominant values.

About the Author David Whitley is Lecturer in English in the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, UK.