Disney has become the most influential corporate of all time in that its movies are appreciated from all around the globe, of various age groups. So it is natural that it receives strong criticism and sharp feedbacks from the general public as well as the critics. As an attempt to cope with the criticisms it received, Disney has produced movies with politically correct themes lately. Frozen shows sisterhood over love, and Moana points out that not every female character is a princess, which implies feminist elements. Disney has also developed more culturally diverse characters in the revival era, such as the first African American princess Tiana. Zootopia can also be identified with the same context because it deals with social prejudices and racism. I would like to point out several ways in which Disney has effectively tackled the topic.

First and foremost, it handles discriminations of everyday life. The part where Nick tries to buy a jumbo popsicle is where discrimination is depicted very explicitly. The elephant says, “we reserve the right to refuse service to anyone,” clearly expressing his hate toward the fox even though Nick has not done any harm. (1m 31sec) Also, hate speech is consistently presented throughout the movie. A notable aspect of Zootopia was that it doesn’t settle there. Instead, it argues that the hate speech is wrong. For instance, when Judy is called “Carrots,” she expresses her dislike for such names. Also, when Benjamin Clawhauser, a cheetah tells Judy that she is cute, Judy says that it’s okay for bunnies to call her cute, but its not okay when animals of other species do the same. This is the same in real life, because when an African American person calls another a “nigger” or “black” it is okay, but it would be offensive if a Caucasian person did the same. To add, Nick says “sly fox, dumb bunny” numerous times within the movie, but at the very end, he says “sly bunny, dumb fox” which corrects the implicit hate speech.

Secondly, Zootopia shows references to discrimination that took place in the past. Along with the obvious metaphor of discrimination against the African American, it also hints the hatred Muslim Americans faced and is still facing in the States. Ever since the 911 attacks in 2001, the US government has been accused of using fear as a way to aggravate hate against the Muslims. By making the outgroup a scary opponent, the ingroup is able to tighten the bonds within. Prejudice and discrimination is developed during this process, and Zootopia effectively handles this sensitive issue.

Last but not least, Zootopia suggests an ideal world and course of action. Zootopia gets its name from the word Eutopia, which is a place of ideal well-being. Despite its deep-rooted racism and discrimination, animals of Zootopia aims for a place where anyone can be anything. The movie tries to depict a world of differences, not discrimination. This theme is reinforced with the theme song “Try Everything” which is sung by Gazelle. At the very end, Judy makes a speech that acknowledges such mistakes, but that also implores for improvements. This is a shout out to the audience as well. Zootopia hopes to arouse the attention of its audience.