Disney Dilemmas

Audience Negotiations of Media Globalization[1]

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What follows is an intervention into what may be termed an increasing globalization of audience studies. Prompted by technological, economic and legal changes in media and ICT production, more media scholars frame even local audience studies within a global framework of understanding, a framing that serves to refract familiar theoretical issues within new empirical sets of realities.

My empirical focus is on the ways in which young and adult audiences articulate and try to understand the complex universe of the Walt Disney Company, one of the oldest media giants and still one of the largest.[2] More specifically, the article addresses some of the most obvious aspects of globalization in the Disney universe as seen from the perspective of audiences in Denmark. Here, along with the rest of Northern Europe, since the early 1990s animated film and tv have taken priortity over print media, here a theme park in 1992 first came within geographical and financial reach of many people (Euro Disney, renamed Disneyland Paris in 1994 and Disneyland Resort Paris in 2002), and here promotion and merchandising strategies have been drastically intensified as is the case with other affluent global markets within the potential reach of the Disney corporation. This transformation is centrally due to the drastic reorganization of the Walt Disney Company, a reorganization that took place from the mid-1980s on when the socalled "team Disney", led by CEO Michael Eisner, initiated an explicitly global synergy in production, distribution and promotion (Wasko 2001).

One can rarely ask audiences directly about media globalization, especially when audiences are very young. Analytical issues have to be transformed into empirical questions. Among those to be answered in the following are: How do children and adults, respectively, articulate the narrative aspects of the Disney universe in terms of their possible global traits? How do they lay claim to the Disney universe as a a range of imported, material objects? Does language play a part in these negotiations as a discursive identity marker given that Disney's animated film are among the only media and ICT products in Denmark which are dubbed rather than subtitled? What about audiences' take on Disneyland Paris as a very tangible example of Disney's more global extension into lucrative markets?

The data set, on which my analysis is based, encompasses interviews with 24 children, aged 6-7, who belong to Disney's key audience, along with 24 children, aged 11-12, who are "growing out" of Disney, and with their respective parents.[3] So, comparisons between

young and adults invite obvious discussions in terms of age, but they equally invite discussions in terms of audience perspectives on the Walt Disney Company's change of marketing and distribution strategies in view of intensified media globalization.

Perspectives on Media Globalization

While the concept of globalization has for long been a nearly global catch-phrase in economic and political sciences, it is only within the last decade or so that media and ICT scholars have impacted on those wider debates arguing successfully for the constitutive role played by media and ICTs in the formation of globalization processes. Satellite television and the internet, transborder mergers and acquistions in media and ICT corporations, deregulation and increased commodification of media production, cross-selling and cross-promotion; these are just some of the most obvious catalysts of the renewed academic interest in media globalization.

Not unnaturally, it is researchers withing political economy of communication who have marked the discussion from early on posing familiar and thorny questions in media and ICT studies such as the distribution of information flows, the regulation of media ownership, and the impact of media on collective identities. Yet they have also provided more contradictory answers than those offered in the media imperialism discussions of the 1960s and 1970s, and, quite often, they have been more self-consciously guarded in their claims to universal explanations. More recently, the top-down approach of political economy has been offset by more bottom-up, culturalist approaches to media globalization, many of which heed the calls made for more empirically-based studies of globalizing processes (e.g. Tomlinson 1991, Ferguson 1992).

Most of these empirical investigations may be seen as a continuation of audience studies that developed in the 1980s and carrying with them some familiar problematics from that tradition such as a focus on audiences defined by distinct lifestyles, and texts that invite discussions of interpretive power struggles (Cunningham & Jacka 1994, Allen 1995, Baym 1999). A number of the more recent audience studies go beyond the local nature of most earlier audience studies in taking a comparative approach, which media globalization both invites and enforces. These studies serve as important levers of more reflexive audience analyses of media globalization in general not least in a methodological sense (Jensen 1998, Richardson & Meinhof 1999, Livingstone & Bovill 2001). Thus, my initial claim to a globalization of audience studies does not merely concern an observable, empirical trend; it equally signals an increased methodological, and even theoretical, awareness that it is necessary to relate particular positions and results to wider socio-cultural frames also in audience studies that focus on a single group, locality or medium (Schrøder et al. 2003).

The top-down approach of political economy as well as the bottom-up approach of audience studies are framed by the complexity of the globalization concept itself. Like many other grand concepts, it operates in a contradictory discursive field as is evidenced in the difficulties scholars have in providing inclusive definitions. For example, David Held and Anthony McGrew speak of two theoretical camps, which they term the globalists and the skeptics: the globalists acknowledge the empirical existence of global trends in economy, technology and, more modestly, culture, while the skeptics identify the term as a largely ideological construct and a lever of neo-liberal politics (Held & McGrew 2000). Jonathan Friedman makes a distinction between a political-economy approach and a cultural approach to globalization (Friedman 1994), a distinction which the globalization trend in

media studies seems to confirm. And Screberny-Mohammadi et al. (1997), focusing more directly on media globalization, refrain from providing any definition, calling for an inter-disciplinary dialogue (Screberny-Mohammadi et al. 1997: ix).

Situating Disney Audiences in the Academy

The present study follows the call for a dialogic approach in the sense that is disbands with an initial definition of media globalization in favour of a more bottom-up, induc-tive analysis of informants' articulations and understandings of the term as a conceptual lever. As such it follows a standard approach in audience studies whereby concept-build-ing emanates from informants while conceptual analysis and theoretical understanding is the researcher's task (Schrøder et al. 2003). Still, the study also differs from most empirical audience studies of media and ICT globalization in a number of important ways. I approach Disney as a complex universe encompassing figures, narratives (ani-mation), merchandise and theme parks, not singling out a particular programme, format or genre beforehand; I study children, not adults; and I focus on ordinary users, not dedi-cated fans or distinct diasporic cultures.

These choices result from my object of study: the unifying feature of the Walt Disney Company is its complexity, and as such it is an epitome of a global media conglomerate. To study such a phenomenon, one has to incorporate its complexity into the analytical framework. Moreover, the primary target group for the corporation is children (or, in-deed, the child in all of us, as Disney's promotion logic has it). And so it seems natural to focus on young users. This became all the more relevant as I realised, during my early stages of research, that no major, academic study existed on young audiences' reception of the Disney phenomenon.[4] The few audience studies in existence focus on adults' memories of Disney products and narratives, either in the USA (Real 1973, Stone 1975, May 1981) or more globally (Wasko et al. 2001), just as there is a minor investigation on users of theme parks in the USA (Willlis 1993). As director of the Danish team in the comparative Disney project, which comprised 18 countries, I became acutely aware of the discrepancy between academic disinterest in studying young audiences in a global perspective and the central role played in the global media economy of children's ani-mated films which are among the most exported media products (but see e.g. Drotner 2001a, Lemish & Tidhar 2001, Feilitzen & Carlsson 2002, Tobin 2004). The relation between the complex Disney universe and young audiences epitomises that discrepancy.

Apart from these empirical ramifications, my choice of research object also results from my epistemological approach which harbours a critique of the focus on diaspora cultures found in many audience studies of media globalization (e.g. Gilroy 1995, Morley & Robins 1995, Gillespie 1995). Such a focus has the unfortunate and unintended result that less conspicuous groups are left at the margins of intellectual interest and concept-building. At least within the context of Europe, whose history over the last two hundred years has been framed by official discourses of homogeneous national identities, is it vital to question what possible mundane and banal diversities and differences may be found through questioning the perceived unities and the seeming ordinarinesses.[5]

Global Disney Discourses: An Analytical Framework

In line with much audience research, I focus on informants' discourses about their media experiences without hoping to unravel the possible inner "substance" of these experi-

ences. Acknowledging that audience research is interpretation in the second degree in that our objects of study are themselves socio-cultural siginification processes is to disband with epistemological distinctions between surface (signification) and deep structure (experience). Still, this does not necessarily lead to a conflation of all analytical distinctions. Rather, it may lead to a more explicit definition of one's analytical framework.

I am inspired by cognitivist theories that illuminate how sensemaking is a continuous adjustment of existing schemata to new encounters, sites and settings. Making distinctions between the familiar and the unfamiliar is a basic exercise in categorisation and it forms an integral part of everyday activities. Still, my recourse to analysing such processes is the various ways in which informants articulate such comparisons as socially situated practices. My main analytical frame is therefore discourse analysis which foregrounds socio-cultural location and differentiation.[6]

Issues concerning media globalization offer a particularly rich analytical inventory for studying articulations of discursive boundaries between the familiar and the unfamiliar. For if media use in general may be said to invite constant comparisons between familiar narrative schemata and new media expressions, then global media – be it news on CNN, globally distributed computer games and films or virtual encounters on the internet – serves to radicalise these processes. An appropriation of global media involves processual assesments of boundaries between the familiar and the unfamiliar. My empirical questions concerning audiences' modes of explaining Disney's global traits are therefore framed by the following analytical questions: What is taken to be familiar in the Disney universe? Which elements do informants lay claim to as being unfamiliar, foreign? As is evident, to answer such questions is to prise open for analysis just how, and to what extent, audiences' boundaries between familiarity and unfamiliarity match global forms of production and modes of expression.

For example, since the intensified globalization of The Walt Disney Company was initiated in the mid-1980s, the firm has extended its narrative repertoire to include more or less distinct locations further from the US or European mainlands in animated films such as *Aladdin* 1992 (Middle East), *The Lion King* 1994 (Africa), *Mulan* 1998 (China), *The Rescuers Down Under* 1990 and *Finding Nemo* 2003 (Australia).[7] Viewed from a production perspective, this exension may be seen as a marketing stunt aimed at capturing the imagination of more diverse audiences, while viewed from an audience perspective it is an open question how this diversification of settings and sites is appropriated.

Disney for Me

The youngest age group, aged 6-7, are all keen Disney users. The animated figures are their entry into the Disney universe and their collection of video casettes form their key points of reference to the array of Disney toys, booklets, posters, clothes and figurines from McDonald's, since 1996 one of the Walt Disney Company's strategic partners. Nine out of ten young Danes, aged 3-7, watching television on Friday nights tune in to the one-hour *Disney sjov* [Disney Fun], which is a showcase for old and new animation shorts and is broadcast by the domestic public-service channel one. The show is nearly as popular with children aged 8-12, where eight out of ten viewers watch the proramme.[8] In addition to national tv channels, featuring Disney, many Danish children have easy access to Swedish and German tv channels, while the Disney Channel was only made available to Danes in the spring of 2003 after data was collected for the present study.

Like other children of their age, the youngest informants focus on function when it comes to Disney figures and animated narratives: what are particular items good for? Figures enter a complicated and shifting repertoire of roleplaying either performed with friends or siblings, but also alone in their rooms. And the popularity of merchandise follows the ebbs and flows of the Walt Disney Company's promotion strategies so that old figurines and toys are put under the bed or at the back of shelves when new items enter the Disney circuit. Few of the youngest children remember the names of figures or film titles. But most demonstrate a solid interest in narrative elements that have affinity to their own immediate circumstances (Drotner 2002a, Drotner 2002b), and they are discerning practioners when it comes to making drawings and other objects that are inspired by their favourite figures.

With such a functional approach to Disney it makes little sense to the young informants to distinguish between familiar and unfamiliar traits in terms of production, language or narrative conventions. Indeed, what may seem foreign at first is readily incorporated as part of familiar schemata or it is simply disregarded. All elements in the Disney universe are appropriated from a subjective perspective: Disney is for me. This process is most evident in relation to origin of production, settings and language. When asked to point out some favourite Disney items and then explain where they come from, many informants find such a question irrelevant or incomprehensible. Others – perhaps trying to please the interviewer – answer that items are "bought by the shop" (Sascha, 6 years old), "made on a machine" (William, 7 years old) or "sewn by somebody" (Lina, 6 years old). They make sense of the question by relating it to well-known frames of reference.

None of the youngest informants demonstrate any interest in settings and geographical locations. Tarzan is said to return to the USA and Mulan is called Japanese and "someone from a foreign country". It is not that unfamiliar sites and characters are not recognised, it is simply that such traits do not matter to the children's priorities. Similarly, when asked about what Disneyland is, the children infer that it must be an entertainment site along the lines of domestic theme parks they know, namely Legoland or Bonbon-land.[9] A few associate Disneyland with Copenhagen, since they know this to be the location of the Tivoli Garden, and Martin, aged six, insists that Paris is part of Disneyland.

Among the young children who watch Disney animated films on satelllite tv, some comment on figures talking "funny". Joachim, aged six, says:

> *Joachim:* In the morning when I have to be up, I watch [Disney] on Sweden. On the day when it comes in the morning, that is. Then I watch Sweden One, and there is Disney sjov – only in Swedish.
>
> *Int.:* Do you understand it then?
>
> *Joachim:* Nope.
>
> *Int.:* You just watch it?
>
> *Joachim:* It is funny anyway.

As is the case with unfamiliar settings and characters, languages other than Danish are recognised but they play no part in the children's enjoyment. To make distinctions between e.g. domestic tv programmes and foreign formats is simply not an issue.

In general, analytical issues of globalization have little explanatory power in relation to the young children's priorities. They are what may be termed inclusive users both in terms of narratives, toys and their application. This is not to say that issues of media

globalization do not affect this age group, but it a process beyond the confines of their sphere of interest.

Making Distinctions

The older group of children, aged 11-12, is rapidly growing out of the Disney universe as an important lever of playful activities. To them media use is part of an intricate web of identity processes where taste becomes an important mark of individual distintion. As a result, they make differentiation within the complex Disney universe. They articulate a disregard for the material aspects of Disney such as the toys, merchandise, clothes and posters, all of which they recognise and write off as being all too familiar "imports" associated with naive childhood activities – boys being somewhat more adamant than girls. But at the same time they lay claim to a selective upgrading of the more symbolic aspects of Disney, not least the long animated films and old Donald Duck shorts shown as part of *Disney sjov*.

12-year-old Bjoern, whose parents bring home Disney films in English from their business trips, offers this explanation concerning the origin of production: "The [animated] films originate in America. You see this from the names of artists – all American names. And the films are always launched first in the USA, so they obviously come from America".[10] Like other children of well-educated parents, Bjoern applauds the USA as a country of innovation. These children also find it an attainment to watch Disney films if in the original; and, in general, many older children apply media entertainment in English as a taste marker of quality (Drotner 2001b).

In terms of media globalization, the older children's differentiation between material and symbolic Disney is equally a differentiation between a discursive downgrading of familiar imported objects which the children do not care to locate geographically, and a partial upgrading of narratives in English whose unfamiliarity and precarious mastery makes it an obvious taste marker.

This process of differentiation is further illuminated in the ways in which older children explain the location of theme parks. Many have been to Disneyland Paris, one has visited the Walt Disney World Resort in Florida, and during the interviews informants readily provide souvenirs and photos as "proofs" of their visits. With the exception of one 12-year-old boy, who prefers the Tivoli Garden to any other theme park, even children, who have not been to a Disney theme park, want to go. Quite a few of them are rather vague about the geographical location of the parks, while they are much more precise in making distinctions concerning quality. Amanda, aged 11, wants to visit a Disney theme park "either the one in England, or the one in America somewhere. I think this is the right one. There is definitely two, one is the wrong one and the other is the right one." To grow up with global Disney, then, is an exercise in the selective articulation of what counts a legitimate markers of globalization.

Passing Parental Judgements

As may be expected, no adult informants harbour any doubts about the origins of Disney, since both the material and symbolic aspects of the universe are readily associated with the USA. More importantly, parents articulate the differentiation between the two aspects as a way of passing taste judgements – and they do so to a larger degree than the older children, but the unfamiliarity of the English language plays no part for parents as

a mark of distinction. Rather they remark on what they take to be familiar Disney traits, which they wish to be preserved. When upgrading the Disney narratives, the adult informants focus on their superior aesthetic qualities, the dubbing being made by "high-grade" domestic actors, and the music being real "ear hangers". Moreover, these modes of explanation almost invariably involve comparison with and criticism of other animated films including domestic products (Drotner 2004). Peter makes this distinction:

> *Peter:*   [Disney] is quality film and quality narratives.
>
> *Int.:*   Compared to other output?
>
> *Peter:*   Yes, compared to Cartoon Network and so on – we had that for a while. Strange, violent cartoons ... that are irritatingly bad, and bad pictures. So, Disney is much more quality-like.

While all parents upgrade the Disney narratives, especially the long animated films and, above all, the classics that parents remember from their own childhood, they are more differentiated in their articulations about the Disney merchandise and marketing. A few parents with little education praise the increased access also to the material aspects of the Disney universe. Pia, aged 30 and working in catering, says:

> You can't say there is no Disney today, can you. Well, they haven't built Disney houses and we don't see Disney cars driving around. But there is everything else in Disney. There are even Disney seat covers [for cars], did you know that?

Most parents remark that the Disney corporation has intensified its marketing strategies and has ever-shorter spells between new releases, many express some reservations about this, and about half the parents deplore this development as a wrong way of widening the Disney empire and an undermining of what is seen as intrinsic qualities. Vita, aged 40 and holding a job as a social worker, claims:

> Well, I think that [Disney] has become far too dominating within the last – well how long – five, ten years. It is a very dominant corporation, and they simply overflow the market constantly with one thing or another. And I think this is somehow too much.

While none of the adult informants speak directly about globalization, many clearly link the unfamiliar new corporate developments to globals flows of capital and commodities ("overflow the market constantly"). Most parents lay claim to a selective appreciation of the Disney universe. They upgrade the symbolic aspects, the animated films, by incoporating them into a familiar aesthetic and narrative framework. What falls outside of this matrix is deemed poor taste. Conversely, they downgrade the material aspects of Disney which are also the aspects where economic and organizational globalization has made its strongest, or at least most explicit, mark. This split is also found with adults in other cultural settings (Buckingham 2001, Phillips 2001), and it may be explained as a way in which adults may preserve their fond childhood memories about Disney animation while expressing their contemporary concerns about "the way the world goes". Still, what the above analysis illuminates, is that this split is also a result of media globalization whose intensification may even have served to deepen the split. Drawing boundaries between the familiar and unfamiliar aspects of Disney has clearly become a more difficult exercise in recent years.

The clearest indication of this is the way in which parents express themselves about the Disney theme parks. Since it is only from the early 1990s on that a visit has come within realistic reach of most Europeans, adults clearly link Disneyland Paris to the corporation's more global reach. As such, one might expect parents to articulate similar reservations about the theme park as they do with other material aspects of the Disney universe. Still, this is far from the case, and that has to do with the ease with which the theme parks can be located as very real sites beyond the mundane realities of everyday life. Unfamiliarity is linked to the exoticism of holiday-making.

For some adults, particularly women with little education, this seems an unwholesome mixture. Heidi, who is in her early thirties and works as a janitor's assistent, has it this way:

> *Heidi:* I think they should build a Disneyland in each country. Then it would be a bit easier to get to. I would really like to visit Disneyland, but it is – it is a very long journey.
>
> *Int.:* Do you think there would be a basis for a Disneyland in Denmark, then?
>
> *Heidi:* Of course there is! For if there was s Disneyland here, then – I think the only thing that would not be dished would be the Tivoli Garden in Copenhagen. But Bonbon-land and Legoland and all the other "lands" could be closed down immediately.

Heidi clearly wants to domesticate the exotic aspects of Disneyland, not in order to make it less intersting, but indeed to make it intersting because it is within her familiar frame of reference. To her Disneyland Paris seems to imply that the drawing of boundaries between familiarity and unfamiliarity thrown into relief by globalization are best exercised close to home. The foreign is not far away.

Most adults, however, are at pains to express their enthusiasm for Disneyland Paris as a site of exploration and cultural encounter. This is particularly true for well-educated parents in general and fathers in particular:

> *Vibeke:* There is something international about [Disneyland Paris]. It is fun to stay at such a hotel with the kids, right, where there are so many different people from all over Europe, and you get a sense of something other than Danish [laughs].
>
> *Jens:* Well, you may say it is quite strange that precisely Disney – the French are usually keen to promote their own language and so on and so on. But then, all of a sudden, all this American stuff became very popular.

This well-educated couple express themselves as true globalists for whom Disneyland Paris is clearly associated with the positive aspects of globalization: multicultural encounters and exchanges ("so many different people") and eye-opening perspectives on one's domestic culture ("something other than Danish"). To them the drawing of boundaries between the familiar and the unfamiliar is expressed as a challenge readily taken up since they are certain to be in a position where they may influence how boundaries are defined in the first place.

A small minority of adults express an explicit reflection on their changing notions of Disney as a global corporation. These informants have either lived in the USA or have personal contacts to the country. Kristin, a teacher in her mid-30s, worked in the USA as an au-pair after finishing school. During her stay she realized that "[the Walt Disney Company] bought land, but it was not Disney as entertainment, or stuff like that. It was

an investment, right (...) Well ok, was that Disney, too? My idea of Disney from Denmark was something completely different". Unlike older children and parents who differentiate between symbolic and material aspects of the Disney universe, Kristin and a few other parents seem to reflect on and rework their entire perception of that universe when confronted unfamiliar aspects of the company.

Beyond Dichotomies of Media Globalization

An audience take on media globalization, such as the one offered above, yields no neat analytical dichotomies such as is the case when globalization is conceptualized as grand theory. Rather, an audience perspective may serve to nuance the theoretical framework within which globalization processes are conceived and conceptualised. As such, the perspective invites middle-range investigations posed at the intersection of grand theory and empirical exemplar.

   What stands out from the above analysis is not a simple image of informants being globalists or localists *tout court*, nor is it a normative for or against media globalization.Rather, the analysis illuminates a patterned range of articulations on media globalization, a pattern that result from the various ways in which informants articulate their negotiations of boundaries between familiar and unfamiliar aspects of the Disney universe. The range may be seen to comprise four positions, namely:

Incorporation: Unfamiliar aspects are addressed and appropriated *as* familiar aspects

Differentiation: Unfamiliar and familiar aspects are articulated as discrete dimensions

Exotism: Unfamiliar aspects are idealised, e.g. by being associated with quality or exception

Reflexivity: An expressed discrepancy between familiar and unfamiliar aspects gives room for the formation of a new perspetive.

Apart from the youngest ageband, all of whom demonstrate a position of inclusion, informants combine positions dependent on age, issue and to some degree gender. Most articulate a "main" postion of differentiation that may be mixed with e.g. a position of incorporation. This is seen most clearly with ill-educated parents who incorporate or "domesticate" Disney theme parks as a way of overcoming the perceived threats of cultural globalization. Others combine a main position of differentiation with a position of exotism. Thus, many older children express a predilection for English as a mark of quality, while well-educated parents will readily define Disneyland Paris as an exceptional and invigorating encounter with global culture.

   Interestingly, older children and adults express different claims to quality. The children, as we have seen, associate quality with the still somewhat unfamiliar English language, while parents insist that the unique quality of Disney is its narrative familiarity. This difference may easily be explained as a result of age differences and also differences in linguistic competence. But it is not simply that. For even parents with a proficiency similar to that of older children, associate Disney quality with the well-known. A likely explanation is that Disney operates for parents as an important and acknowledged "memory bridge", a willed catalyst to remembering – perhaps even reviving – past joys appreciated a time when Disney was a rare ritual.

   If this is the case, then the Walt Disney Company faces a serious challenge as a global corporation of entertainment. In order to remain at the cutting edge on that competitive

market, the company has to extend its range of investments, innovate its product lines and intensify its marketing strategies – in short increase its overt, perhaps even aggressive, economic and organizational globalization. But, in doing so, the company risks jeopardising the very qualities that audiences, at least the adult ones, hold dear, namely familiarity and recognition – in short no or only covert globalization. Whatever the solution will be, it is the "for-me" generation who will be in a position to judge the outcome.

Notes

1. The article is a revised version of a paper presented at the 16th Nordic Media Research Conference, Kristiansand, 14th-17th August 2003. The author wishes to acknowledge the financial support of the Danish Ministry of Research to the study on which the article is based. Data collection and coding was performed in 2000 by research assistants Heidi Jørgensen and Nanna Berger Munk, Dept. of Film and Media Studies, University of Copenhagen, both of whom contributed centrally to the initial phases of analysis.
2. The Walt Disney Company itself speaks of the "Disney universe". In the present context, the concept is applied to denote that the corporation is not merely one of the largest, and most diversified, entertainment conglomorates in quantitative terms; its financial and organizational structure also represents a convoluted interlacing of strategic partnerships, cross-selling and cross-promotion that in qualitative terms merits the word complex.
3. The full study is published in Drotner 2002a. Of the 48 young informants, 24 live in the greater Copenhagen area (half in each ageband), 24 live in a provincial town of c. 20.000 inhabitants. Both areas are mixed in terms of class and ethnic bacground. Girls and boys are evenly distributed within each ageband. The young informants were selected upon observation at their schools, all were interviewed at home, parents in the living room or kitchen, children in their own rooms – some sharing space there with siblings. Transcripts have been coded and analysed with the use of the qualitative data analysis programme Nudist.
4. The Walt Disney Company has been a pioneer in carrying out systematic, inhouse audience studies. Indeed, the firm was among the first to apply qualitative pretests and later on quantitative surveys developed from 1932 on by George Gallup's Audience Research Institute (Ohmer 1991).
5. My mundane, bottom-up approach to media globalization shares its knowledge interest with Michael Billig's focus on "banal" nationalism without sharing his empirical focus (Billig 1995).
6. For a sound critique of cognitivist theories as applied to children, see Buckingham 1993: 156-62. Among the various forms of discourse analysis, Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis is the most widely used in audience studies (e.g. Fairclough 1995. See also overview in Schrøder 2000). In the present analysis, I do not follow Fairclough's model in any strict sense since it harbours distint problems of relating textual and contextual dimensions of analysis.
7. Already in the 1940s, Disney incorporated Latin America as a narrative location in the (in)famous animated films *Saludos Amigos* 1942 and *The Three Caballeros* 1944. See Burton-Carvajal 1994, Cartwright & Goldfarb 1994.
8. The weekly tv show is viewed by 32 per cent of all children within the ageband 3-7 and 25 per cent of all children within the age band 8-12 (DR TV Media Research 2002).
9. Bonbon-land is a family theme park constructed by a hugely successful Danish company producing sweets carrying "naughty" names which appeal to young children.
10. At the time of data collection, the uptake of DVDs was still limited in Denmark. Hence, watching e.g. an animated Disney film in English depended on having access to an imported video casette or to watching the film in a cinema offering a choice between an original and a dubbed version. This choice only exists in large towns and cities and just for new releases of long animated films.

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