

Inside Our Films: Zootopia (2016)

By Jim Bryson

Although it certainly took its time, summer is finally upon us here in Western Oregon. With the summer season here you most likely have kids that are home from school and needing some entertainment. Fortunately, we have a wonderful library here in Vernonia with lots of options for summertime entertainment.

My son, Tyler, insisted on borrowing Disney's *Zootopia (2016)* from our local Vernonia library, under my protest. I have found that I have an adult aversion to current Disney projects. Of course, these feelings are entirely the product of a lack of exposure. I have not seen the bulk of the last several decades of Disney animation. I, pretty much, moved on after *Robin Hood (1973)* (an exceptional and entirely relevant movie by the way) into more live action interests. With the advent of modern computer technology and the introduction of new media giants such as Pixar there are new and fascinating animated film options.

This month I watched *Zootopia (2016)*. This animated film follows the adventure of the lead character, Judy Hopps (Ginnifer Goodwin), a bunny rabbit and aspiring police officer for the Zootopia Police Force. *Zootopia*, of course this is a Disney film, is populated by all the familiar animal species with the exception that these animals walk and talk just like us. Being evolved animals does not take away from the very familiar societal interactions that we see in our day to day lives.

Judy, as a new Police recruit, finds herself embroiled in a conspiracy and cover-up involving the apparently random re-wilding of certain (formerly) predatory species



members. In her investigation she ends up teaming up with Nick Wilde (Jason Bateman) a "shudder" fox, of all species, and a "reformed" conman at that! *Zootopia* makes full use of the implicit racial divide in our own society to show an initially rocky buddy-cop relationship between "predator" and "prey" and in that way is very approachable. One of the beauties of this film is that it finds a way of being very clear with its messages of tolerance and pre-conception without being

"preachy" for either a child or an adult audience.

Zootopia is the latest in a long string of animated films cleverly intended for both an adult and child audience. A good comparison example would be *SpongeBob* which has forged a new path of childrens entertainment where the makers clearly recognize that children are not their only captive audience. As an adult watching a "childrens" movie I was very pleasantly surprised by the wealth of meat and reference that this film brings to the adult watcher. Specifically, watch for a third act *Breaking Bad* reference!

With this film and many other wonderful childrens titles there is very little reason for you and your family to not be making use of our exceptional Vernonia Public Library.



Vernonia 4-H kids spent the week of July 19-23 at the Columbia County Fair. Kaitlyn Eyrrikk shows off her bunny and Lauren Ely shows off her sheep.

Donation to Vernonia Cares



Members of the Pacific Northwest District of Kiwanis International delivered food to Vernonia Cares Food Bank, including cheese, sausage, ham, eggs, assorted dry and canned goods, and bread, totaling 395 pounds. Added to 423 pounds the Kiwanis delivered earlier in the year, it brought the total donated to over 700 pounds.

Pictured left to right are Cares Director Sandy Welch, Kiwanis members Jewell Bailey and Oscar Domingo, and Cares volunteer Randal Harvey.

"This nutritious food will be wonderfully enjoyed by our clients," said Welch.

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