

The Disney Formula Fails the Hunchback

Disney has successfully created many endearing animated films from oral traditions and legends, often resulting in the over-simplification and alteration of the original material. However, when does Disney fail to create a magical classic despite the application of the Disney Formula to the tale? Through my research, I hope to discover why Victor Hugo's The Hunchback of Notre Dame did not morph well into the 1996 Disney animated film. Hugo's classic does not lend itself to "Disney-fication" with the depth of its characters, an uncomfortable didactic presence, and intimidating settings. These elements lack the Disney magic but correlate well with the dark subject matter of the original novel. Ironically, Disney's attempts to inject the typical formula into the animated film prevent the movie from fairly representing the work for which it is named. In the end, Disney's *Hunchback of Notre Dame* will satisfy neither Hugo nor Disney fans.