

# Final Paper: Encanto

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# Encanto

- Disney's *Encanto* follows a Colombian family, the Madrigals, whose children are magically gifted powers except for Mirabel. When the magic and their family are at risk, it is up to her to save them. Besides being celebrated for its music and story, the movie, filmmakers, and cast all detail and share much about Colombian and Latino culture.



# *Encanto* :



Had important members involved in writing and casting



Shows values & creates meaning through magical realism and cultural symbols



Adds political commentary on U.S. Immigration laws

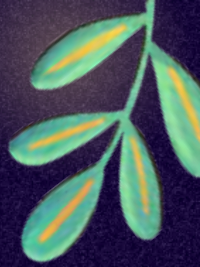


# Directing and Writing

American animator and screenwriter Byron Howard and Jared Bush are the directors of *Encanto*. Their collaboration with the Latin American community played a significant role in the perspectives shown in the film.

Their cultural consultant team:

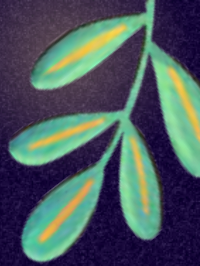
- Alejandra Espinosa
- Team of ten consultants
- La Familia, all of Disney's Latin American workers



# Directing and Writing

According to an article by El País, “It was an open, collective process with “very receptive” directors”(Santaeulalia).

Howard and Bush listened to the Latin American community when creating the film. Their cultural backgrounds are not Colombian or Latin American; however, including those communities in writing molded *Encanto's* story.



# Casting

The majority of the cast for *Encanto* has a heritage in Columbia, and that created authentic characters and mirror books. The voice actors were able to create a personal connection to their characters but also discussed how seeing their family and culture was essential to them.



# Casting

John Leguizamo, the voice of Bruno, stated, “I mean, it looked like my family, it looked like the way I grew up. And to see that, you just feel like, ‘Oh, my God, we've arrived” (Koeppel Disney News Contributor).



# Casting

Authentic representation in a major film held great value to the actors. It influenced how they performed for the characters. As Module Five and Lesson Four stated, a mirror book “reflect back to people who they are, so they can see themselves in what they are reading and watching.”

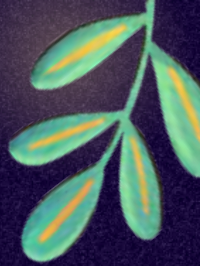




# Values & Magical Realism

The values of *Encanto* are displayed through magical realism. Each member of the Madrigal's biggest value is family, even if they all contribute and express it differently.

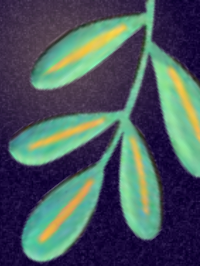
The stability of their family and home is shown through supernatural elements, such as the characters' powers and the Miracle candle that connect them all.



# Values & Magical Realism

The candle dims in moments of disparity between family members, such as Mirabel's isolation and her sisters' anxieties. Then when they reconcile and are vulnerable, the candle glows again.

The magical elements of *Encanto* emphasize the idea of healthy family connections.



# Symbols & Meaning

The use of magical realism extends to the symbolism used within the film. Butterflies are a strong motif throughout the story as they are present in designs and important scenes.

Screenrant states, “The yellow butterflies are also a reference to García Márquez’s novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*”(Tyler).



# Symbols & Meaning

The symbol is from a famous writer who influenced the magical realism genre prominent in Latin America's literature.

In the novel, the golden butterflies mean magic, and *Encanto* uses it.



# Symbols & Meaning

The symbol is expanded within the story as Mirabel has sewn multi-colored butterflies on her skirt instead of being represented by the golden one.

This implies that her magic is one of her makings than the way her family has.

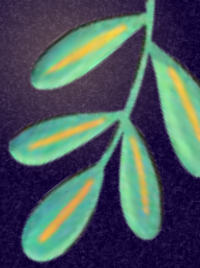
*Encanto* created meaning through symbolism by taking a cultural symbol and expanding upon it.



# Political Commentary

Besides family, *Encanto* also adds commentary on flawed U.S. immigration policies.

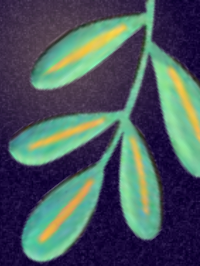
Following Mirabel's story, one can learn that someone does not need to be extraordinary to be valued.



# Political Commentary

This is the opposite of how U.S. immigration laws, like the temporary protected status (TPS), treat others.

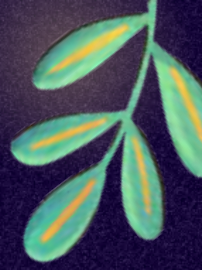
An article from Northwestern states, "TPS is not the only immigration policy centered around deservingness – the notion that people who are not citizens need to prove themselves to deserve rights, being exceptional not in spite of but because of their vulnerability" (Justo).



# Political Commentary

The requirements of TPS are incredibly taxing, and it expects immigrants to be special despite their struggles.

Mirabel doing great things despite not having a 'talent' displayed how this thought process for U.S. immigration laws is flawed and unfair.





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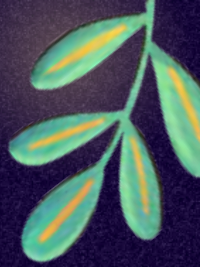
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