

Anti-American Propaganda

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The Flintstones was a popular animated television show for children that began in the 1960s. Eventually in 1994 the globally famous and popular director Steven Spielberg turned this into a live action movie as an executive producer.¹ This happened to be a continuation or even possibly the beginning of a certain character trope. Just like many other father figures in American television Fred Flinstone represents an obese American who is portrayed as a sexist, selfish and unintelligent man. Throughout the story most of the comedy around the movie is based on degrading the man who is Fred Flinstone. Interestingly today with the riots breaking out in 2020, this movie has been reaching popularity on Netflix lately. This movie's problems are all solved by violence by multiple characters in several scenarios. Society finds this okay but it's a comedy movie but we are seeing these opinions prevalent in our society now.² The movie's antagonists do get caught and go to jail near the end of the movie which implies that the story of the movie was positive somehow for Fred. Our protagonists are quite clearly depicted as the traditional American family that was developing out of the Baby Boomer era that was encouraged by the government.³ What the end of the movie is, is a faux enlightenment of Fred Flintstone. A mob riot is chasing him and literally wanting to lynch both him and his friend he betrayed earlier in the movie. Just before they are hung he has an opportunity to have justice brought upon him; all he has to do is apologize for his actions- what he was stubbornly refusing to do earlier in the movie. What he is actually doing here is revealing that he was just a propped up piece of garbage who got taken advantage of. Manipulated by money he got shown that he 'doesn't care' about his friendship. The end lines directly imply now that he does, and willingly accepts that his 'friend' is superior to him and shows him as a secret advisor of Fred who encourages *good* policies for the workers of Fred's company, which of course is the opposite intentions of the man who directly manipulated Fred.

As most people in Western society can tell, every single movie that comes out of Hollywood is also completely glorifying the capitalistic idea of America's economic system that was finding them much success. It seems very natural and as people we

¹ B. Cohen, Spielberg, S. - *The Flintstones*

² Chappell, B. "Fort Worth Police Drop Rioting Charges Against Protesters" - For some reason not just people but governments are starting to allow violence

³ Schwellenbach, L. B. (1945). *Family Allowances in Various Countries* (pp. 17-20)

openly accept it because we get told 'that's how they make these movies'. Although it's actually an extremely important part of the plot line that is shown. What this entire story is about is criticizing the commonly perceived evil that is produced in this capitalistic society in positions of power. A very clear direct comparison of the American dream and how people pursue it so gullibly they deceive themselves of acting in a proper, respectable manner. Not only that- the movie is literally revolving around how the famous American styled family home was being invented. They portrayed these men as erratic cavemen, literally, who didn't even like the idea of these homes. Fred Flintstone said this in the first boardroom meeting when he saw the idea, then eventually was the reason for the creation of them. We are told that this process was evil because of the damage it caused to the workers of Flint. Also finally, that they caused it upon themselves out of their own idiocracy and ignorance.

Figuring out the root of evil in this movie was no hard task. It's directly shown in how the antagonists continually flood Fred with money to provide him the idea of success when he was actually doing quite poorly and on a different path than he suspected. This is displaying two traits that have been developed by the human emotion in capitalism that they are critiquing. The first is lustful greed, a known sin to Christians- which the American society was. The second of course was another negative portrayal to Christians, against what Christ taught- to not value possessions over people. Which Fred clearly did when his wife confronted him about how she emotionally needs their lost friends, he simply does not care and acts indifferent about the situation. In fact now in society we have Catholic theologians describing valuing possessions over people as "throwaway culture".⁴ They are theorizing these ideas on the idea that part of the problem was a lost value of the teachings of Christ that has caused our society to break apart from one another and be fractured. The claims that the morals our children are growing with are developing all the problems in our Western civilization that the Roman Empire brought to the World. In-fact this capitalistic greed is why the Roman's declared war on the Judaic state and destroyed their temple that some believe was the 'second-coming' that Jesus spoke upon causing the demise of the current Judaic system.⁵ The reasons for this war was given upon a quote from Caesar in a document where he stated they were using money to wage war on the Roman empire directly by funding their enemies while they only profited because of the Romans free society. This was the very beginning of the *Pax Romana* that is known in history as the longest period of global peace.⁶

⁴ C. Camosy How a consistent life ethic can unite a fractured people (pp. 25-50)

⁵ Cartwright, M. *The Arch of Titus*

⁶ D. Wasson, *Pax Romana*

What this movie seems to be about is a very common trope in American film. This is about a silly dumb American father who learns the value of spiritual relationships after being forcefully taught. To be more explicit, this is the destruction of propped up evil. Fred is portraying the commonly known and hated idea of a corrupt business who rose to power only because of selfishness. We can see how this short-fused individual gullibly believes that he genuinely has creative ideas when he doesn't appear to be socially liked in the only interactions he has with his bosses, for instance his boss does not call him by his real name despite promotions throughout the movie. The propped up evil of Fred comes down and he gives up all the opinionated beliefs he had that were brought on by his perspective of the situation. Just before being saved from the lynching, Fred's mate as well reassured Fred that everyone (besides this mob killing him) loves him. Another clear lie. Also again, this is just faux destruction of evil. Fred was not an evil man, he was misled and ignorant. Yes, a sin for certain but not evil. The Catholic Church separates sins distinctively between Mortal and Venial sins with the distinction clearly being the repetition in committing them. Another part of the equation is based on the situation you are given when you made such a decision, venial sins, which was committed by Fred Flintstone throughout can be forgiven without any doubt- these can turn into 'unforgivable' sins with repeated repetition which we know does not happen.⁷ The one sin that's committed and repeated to the end however is how Fred's friend was the first start of a butterfly effect that caused the problems. However, the final scene is him whispering to Fred to give him advice to look better to the people, this being the suggestion of forcing his boss who for some reason now adores Fred (capitalistic ignorance on the causes of suffering) for another reason. So Barney - his friend suggests that he force the head of the company to give all the employees two weeks vacation and this is celebrated as a good idea, despite the entire people being upset they lost their jobs because of Fred! Continually pulling the strings for Fred thinking that he knows best for our society.

The famous ideals of Karl Marx seem to be adored and cherished in this movie. When I say this I mean his purposeful ideal of worker uprising against the Proletariat.⁸ The worker class begins to realize how they are being mistreated by their upper class. Very much a position of privilege, as many people today would recognize it as. Karl Marx, too, is actually the beginning of the term 'woke'. He would ravisly demand that people wake up to the manipulation and abuse of the common man by their elite overlords. The attention of this movie though portrays Fred's boss as someone who

⁷ Vatican, *Catechism of The Catholic Church* - This describes the history of the meaning of different sort of sins defined by the Catholic Church

⁸ J. H. Billington, *Schism: Marx vs. Proudhon to The French Awakening*

seems reasonable, this is why he didn't question the demands Fred made at the end for the workers. He completely adored him and would do anything to keep him at the company because he believes Fred was responsible for the profit, although he wasn't. This man has the exact same ignorance of sin that was portrayed with Fred Flintstone throughout said movie. Except he is never truly a source of hate because when he disrespected Fred earlier throughout, he was demeaning someone who the audience is told deserves it, if anything he is portrayed as a Dark Knight. Very clearly there are layers of manipulation that make it impossible to place the entirety of blame on a single person. Confusion causes confusion which causes the destruction of a society. Although, for some reason, it's a happy ending when all is forgiven by Barney, and Fred's boss in the end scene. They finish the story up by returning to their traditional modern American housing that Fred himself declared a stupid idea earlier. Now, happy as ever despite not wanting the end result. Completely deceived and manipulated by the secret rich man of 'Slate industries'. Who sent this man? What was happening with him and the head boss behind the scenes?

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