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Once Upon a Time to Happily Ever After: Enduring Themes and Life Lessons of Fairy Tales in “Snow White” and “Beauty and the Beast”

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TRINITY COLLEGE

Senior Thesis

Once Upon a Time to Happily Ever After:

Enduring Themes and Life Lessons of Fairy Tales in “Snow White” and “Beauty and the Beast”

submitted by

Alexandra Deluse 2015

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Introduction:

Once Upon A Time

When I was young, I fell in love with fairy tales, as many children do. They created an imaginative world with daring heroes and terrifying villains that I could get lost in, escaping the worries of everyday life. As I grew up, my love of fairy tales did not disappear. Instead, I sought out new variations on my favorite tales in short stories, novels, television shows, movies, and more. Even though I was aware that many people looked upon them disparagingly, and I knew they were not without their flaws, I still saw fairy tales as sources of optimism and hope. At the end of a tale, problems were resolved and characters found their happy endings. The fact that I was so readily able to find adaptations of tales for my own enjoyment confirmed that I was not the only one interested in what fairy tales have to say.

Fairy tales also seem to exist in every culture. Even tales from different cultures appear to resemble each other. For example, in a class I took my sophomore year, we read an Indian story called “Princess Aubergine” (1894) by Flora Annie Steel. In this tale, a Brahman comes across an eggplant one day, which happens to be a maiden, whom they call Princess Aubergine. One day, a servant to the palace sees the girl and tells of how beautiful Aubergine is, inciting jealous rage in the Queen, who sets out to destroy the girl. The Queen tries to use her magic to determine how to kill Aubergine. Based on Aubergine’s answers about how to kill her, the Queen kills all seven of her sons. After the Queen has killed all of her own sons, Aubergine finally answers that

the Queen must find a specific necklace and put it on in order for the Queen to kill her. When the Queen finds the necklace, Aubergine knows she must die and tells her family to carry her into the woods. One day the King finds Aubergine, who simply looks as though she is sleeping. He then continues to visit her every day. After a year of visiting her, the King finds Aubergine's son lying next to her. The boy tells the King that the every time the Queen puts on her necklace, she kills Aubergine. The boy also tells the King that the Queen killed his sons. The King decides he wants to marry Aubergine, but cannot do so while the evil Queen is alive, so he decides to throw the Queen into a pit of snakes and scorpions. The story ends with Aubergine and the King living 'happily ever after'.

While reading "Princess Aubergine", I could not help but notice that, even though the story comes from a culture that I am relatively unfamiliar with, it shares many similarities with tales I am very familiar with, such as "Sleeping Beauty" and "Snow White". Beyond this, my class also connected the tale to the subject of women and empire, looking at how texts like *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë and *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys seem to use elements similar to those found in the fairy tale genre. With this type of literary study, I became curious about how fairy tales persevere in literature throughout time and across cultures. For these reasons, I wanted to investigate why fairy tales had and continue to have such a profound impact on our society and, more specifically, literature.

Fairy tales seem to pervade mass culture. It seems as though each year, a multitude of different mediums adapt tales in order to continue the tradition and draw on their messages. The prevalence of fairy tales in our society seemingly demonstrates that they still speak to a wide variety of people. Many authors incorporate various elements of fairy tales into their novels. Scholars have pointed out that several canonical works, including *Northanger Abbey* (1818) by

Jane Austen, *Jane Eyre* (1847) by Charlotte Brontë, *Animal Farm* (1945) by George Orwell, and *A Handmaid's Tale* (1985) by Margaret Atwood, draw on fairy tale themes and motifs.

Additionally, fairy tales are also big business at the box office. For example, Disney's *Frozen* (2013), an animated musical adaptation of "The Snow Queen" by Hans Christian Anderson, was the "fifth-highest grossing movie of all time, making nearly \$1.22 billion at the box office" as of June 2014 (Goodman).

Fairy tales communicate complex messages to audiences young enough that they may not fully grasp the underlying meaning of the subject matter. However, children are not the only intended recipients of fairy tales and authors also encase complex messages for adult audiences in fairy tales. For these reasons, it seems as though the fairy tale genre shapes both our childhoods and the texts we know best, and study, in adulthood. This thesis seeks to both understand the appeal of older stories, from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and assess the purpose and value of more recent reinterpretations.

Therefore, my investigation of fairy tales takes into account both the traditional tales of the past as well as the contemporary tales that continue to pervade culture today in order to understand both their social and literary value. In my first chapter, I discuss some of the complications of the fairy tale genre and introduce the literary critical lenses used to analyze fairy tales. In my second chapter, I analyze two versions of "Snow White", one by the Brothers Grimm and the other by The Merseyside Fairy Story Collective, in order to explore the way in which the tale speaks to coping with oppressive power dynamics. Finally, in my third chapter, I investigate Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont's "Beauty and the Beast" and Angela Carter's two rewritings of the tale, "The Courtship of Mr Lyon" and "The Tiger's Bride", in order to demonstrate the way in which authors complicate the messages contained in tales meant for adult

audiences. In doing this, I aim to demonstrate that the fairy tale genre is inherently flexible, as authors can adapt tales to encompass new meanings in order to speak to different audiences and times. This means that tales can be rewritten in remarkable new ways, even in ways that make them explicitly political. This very flexibility ensures that fairy tales will continue to be read and written for generations to come.

Chapter 1

In a Land Not Too Far Away:

The Scholarly Study of Fairy Tales

Why Study Fairy Tales?

The fairy tale genre is often associated with children and children's literature, yet, as this thesis will demonstrate in further detail in chapters two and three, children are not the only consumers of fairy tales. Scholar Roger Sale points out that "children's literature includes many books that older people, well past childhood, read and enjoy even when they are not reading with or for children" (Sale 1). That being said, many authors purposefully write tales for adult audiences.¹ Whether intended for children or adult readers, the sheer number of tales that exist across nations and cultures demonstrate the widespread popularity and influence of the tradition.² However, "although fairy tales are... arguably the most powerfully formative tales of childhood and permeate mass media for children and adults, it is not unusual to find them deemed of

¹ In his book *Fairy Tales and After: From Snow White to E.B. White* (1979) Roger Sale also points out that "fairy tales *became* children's literature but were nothing of the sort for most of their long years of existence" because the idea of childhood itself was invented (Sale 26). Thus, he suggests that fairy tales were originally intended for adult audiences.

² In "Grimms' Remembered" (1993), author Margaret Atwood suggests that her childhood readings of fairy tales profoundly affected her life and career when she asks the rhetorical question "and where else could I have gotten the idea, so early in life, that words can change you" (Atwood 292).

marginal cultural importance and dismissed as unworthy of critical attention” (*The Classic Fairy Tales* xi). That is, many scholars from a variety of disciplines tend to ignore the fairy tale tradition in their studies of culture and literature. Yet, a number of key contemporary writers have appropriated fairy tales for their own purposes, resulting in the need to try to explain the value of fairy tales. Scholar Jack Zipes suggests that authors continue to rewrite fairy tales because “the transformative and utopian qualities of the fairy tale appeal to young and older audiences and make it both stable and flexible as a literary form” (*Why Fairy Tales Stick: The Evolution and Relevance of a Genre* 100). In retelling fairy tales, these authors shape the fictional landscape for both children and adults in order to help their audiences work through real life situations and anxieties.

Given the continued popularity and prevalence of fairy tales across time and cultures, to marginalize the fairy tale tradition as a whole does the genre a disservice.³ For this reason, several critical fields have engaged and continue to engage with the analysis of fairy tales. As Maria Tatar points out in the introduction to her book *The Classic Fairy Tales* (1999), “the stories themselves have attracted the attention of scholars in disciplinary corners ranging from psychology and anthropology through religion and history to cultural studies and literary theory” (*The Classic Fairy Tales* xii). The wide range of academic areas that study fairy tales speaks to the numerous factors that are taken into consideration when an author constructs a tale. These multivariable analyses seem to occur because “few fairy tales dictate a single, univocal, uncontested meaning; most are so elastic as to accommodate a wide variety of interpretations,

³ In the introduction to *The Classic Fairy Tales* (1999), Maria Tatar makes the claim that, “like the devaluation of fairy tales, the overvaluation of fairy tales promotes a suspension of critical faculties and prevents us from taking a good, hard look at stories that are so obviously instrumental in shaping our values, moral codes, and aspirations” (*The Classic Fairy Tales* xii). Thus, it is important to find a middle ground in the assessment of fairy tales in order to understand how they affect their audiences.

they derive their meaning through a process of engaged negotiation on the part of the reader” (*The Classic Fairy Tales* xiv). That is, each reader, no matter what their academic background is, constructs their own understanding of each tale. In terms of the literary field, which serves as my main focus in this thesis, the three seemingly largest fields are sociohistorical, psychoanalytic, and feminist readings.

What Are Fairy Tales?

Defining the term “fairy tale” accurately and concisely proves difficult. In many ways, this relates to the issue of distinguishing fairy tales from folk tales, as fairy tales generally have origins in folk tales, but not all folk tales are fairy tales. Jack Zipes states that, “originally the folk tale was (and still is) an oral narrative form cultivated by non-literate and literate people to express the manner in which they perceived and perceive nature and their social order and their wish to satisfy their needs and wants” (*Breaking the Magic Spell: Radical Theories of Folk and Fairy Tales* 7). That is, folk tales, and therefore, fairy tales are fundamentally flexible because they give the storytellers or authors the ability to coopt a tale based on their personal circumstances and the circumstances of their audiences. For this reason, the fairy tale genre encompasses many versions of what seem to be the same story.

Scholar Elizabeth Harries states that “nothing is more difficult than to try to define the fairy tale in twenty-five words or less, and all dictionaries fail miserably” (*Twice upon a Time: Women Writers and the History of the Fairy Tale* 6). The Oxford English Dictionary defines a fairy tale as: “a tale about fairies; a tale set in fairyland; esp. any of various short tales having folkloric elements and featuring fantastic or magical events or characters. Also as a mass noun:

such stories collectively or as a genre” (“Fairy Tale”). Even though this definition encompasses the fairy tale’s folkloric background and explains that fairy tales can encompass an entire genre, it still does not fully explain what fairy tales are. Considering the fact that many fairy tales do not actually feature fairies or take place in a fairyland, this definition seems to lack clarity.

Nonetheless, when people hear the phrase “fairy tales”, they seemingly know what stories do and do not fit into this genre. Elizabeth Harries suggests that occurs because people tend to classify a story as a “fairy tale” when it follows the basic plot sequence of “stability, disruption, intervention, and stability regained, ‘once upon a time’ to ‘happily ever after’” (*Twice upon a Time: Women Writers and the History of the Fairy Tale* 10).

Another complication in the study of fairy tales, which may also result from their folkloric background, concerns the “difficulty of composing any kind of firm chronology or origin” for any given tale (Warner XXI). Although “some versions of the tales are simpler and more familiar... than others, and therefore may seem more authentic... [scholars] have no access to any original versions or texts” (*Twice upon a Time: Women Writers and the History of the Fairy Tale* 3-4). For this reason, it becomes difficult to determine a starting point or truly “original” version of a tale. However, whether or not we start with the “original” version of a tale may not be of importance. Fairy tales seem to exist universally.⁴

This, however, does not mean that an individual tale is universally known, which makes specificity particularly important when discussing tales. Scholar Aaron Smuts states that “although it seems plausible to say the same stories are often retold, it is difficult to say exactly

⁴ Elizabeth Harries also addresses the universality of fairy tales in her introduction to *Twice upon a Time: Women Writers and the History of the Fairy Tale*, “Once, Not Long Ago” (2001). She states that, “in spite of their varied national origins and the varied ways in which they have been written and published, they seem to be evidence for common human experience, hopes, and fears that transcend nation and class” (*Twice upon a Time: Women Writers and the History of the Fairy Tale* 3).

what this means” (Smuts 12). This concept is hard to flesh out because while each culture has its own version of a tale, if not more than one version, there remain similarities.⁵ These similarities occur because of the idea that each tale can be classified as a specific “type” of story, made possible by the work of scholars Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson. In 1910, Antti Aarne published *Verzeichnis der Märchentypen*, which outlined a classification system of folktales for scholars (Dundes 195). After Aarne established this standard, Stith Thompson revised the system first in 1928, and then again in 1961, making it an internationally known standard (Dundes 195). Their tale-type index outlines the different basic types of folktales and fairy tales that exist, based on certain plot points and characteristics of a tale. For example, Aarne and Thompson’s classification system states that “Beauty and the Beast” is tale type AT425C, where the “father stays overnight in a mysterious palace and takes rose. Must promise daughter to animal (or she goes voluntarily). Tabu: overstaying at home. She finds the husband almost dead. Disenchants him by embrace” (Aarne and Thompson 376).⁶ Maria Tatar states that “the tale-type index is a convenient tool for defining the stable core of a story and for identifying those features subject to local variation” (*The Classic Fairy Tales* x).⁷

The idea of local variation relates to the way in which storytellers and authors craft fairy tales. Jack Zipes claims “[fairy] tales are culturally marked: they are informed by the languages that the writers employed, their respective cultures, and the sociohistorical context in which

⁵ In “Story Identity and Story Type” (2009), Aaron Smuts discusses the difference between the story and its performance. He thinks the actual story’s contents must be separated from the way in which the story is told, as how it is told may change more than what is told, depending on the culture.

⁶ For more information on the different tale type classifications and descriptions, see “From The Types of the Folktale: A Classification and Bibliography” (1964) by Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson in *The Classic Fairy Tales* (1999) by Maria Tatar.

⁷ In his article “The Motif-Index and the Tale Type Index: A Critique” (1997), Alan Dundes criticizes the *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature* as well as the Aarne-Thompson tale-type indices for several reasons. He claims their Eurocentric approach, overlapping of tales and motifs, and censorship of tales leads to an incomplete, or at least unclear, list of tales.

[they] were created” (*Why Fairy Tales Stick: The Evolution and Relevance of a Genre* 41). That is, every culture seems to infuse their own set of values and norms into the fairy tales they tell, which I will discuss more in detail later in this chapter. For this reason, “virtually every element of a tale, from the name of the hero or heroine through the nature of the beloved to the depiction of the villain seems subject to change” (*The Classic Fairy Tales* ix). For example, Cinderella’s name changes based on the setting of her tale. In China she is Yeh-hsien, in France she is Cendrillon, and in Germany she is Aschenputtel, but no matter what her name is, the story maintains the same basic elements (*The Classic Fairy Tales* ix).

Literary Fairy Tale Scholarship

As mentioned earlier, in the field of literary studies, three major critical lenses for fairy tales have developed: sociohistorical, psychoanalytic, and feminist readings. Although some scholars read fairy tales through only one of these lenses, others combine readings in their analyses. I will briefly discuss each type of reading in the literary field now, as my analyses of “Snow White” and “Beauty and the Beast” in the following two chapters draw and expand on these traditions.

Sociohistorical readings compose one of the major categories in the literary study of fairy tales. As mentioned earlier, scholars who take this type of approach look at the social and historical situation at the time of publication. In other words, sociohistorical readings of tales attempt to explain how an author’s cultural and social backgrounds influence the stories they write. By reading in this manner, the tales become inherently connected to the place and time in which they were written and the people they were written for. Sociohistorical scholars have

found that the influences on an author's writing can range from political events at the time of publication to the author's own personal beliefs. For example, sociohistorical scholars looking at the Brothers Grimm find evidence that the Brothers infused their own religious beliefs into their stories. When looking at this type of literary scholarship compared to the other two categories, Marina Warner argues:

the historical interpretation of fairy tale holds out more hope to the listener or the reader than psychoanalytic...approaches because it reveals how human behaviour is embedded in material circumstance, in the laws of dowry, land tenure, feudal obedience, domestic hierarchies and marital dispositions, and that when these pass and change, behaviour may change with them. (Warner XXII-XXIII)

That is, scholars who interpret tales in this manner see the stories as speaking about the customs of a specific time and context. However, customs change, becoming irrelevant over time, while new values take their place. Thus, sociohistorical scholars see the fairy tale genre as having the ability to adapt to behavioral changes as time passes, reflecting the specific issues that are pertinent at the time of publication. For this reason, sociohistorical understandings of fairy tales continually change in accordance to social and material situations.

Unlike sociohistorical interpretation, psychoanalytic readings tend focus less on social and material conditions in favor of explaining universal meanings. Psychoanalytic readings address the way in which the text helps readers work through inner problems and anxieties. Many of the psychoanalytic readings of fairy tales address the manner in which tales help young children handle the anxieties of maturation. Within this area of fairy tale study, scholar Bruno Bettelheim stands as a prominent figure. His originary book, *The Uses of Enchantment* (1976), provides a basis for psychoanalytically reading fairy tales. Bettelheim explores the psychological

reasons why children must imaginatively experience what exists in fairy tales. Bettelheim suggests that:

in order to master the psychological problems of growing up—overcoming narcissistic disappointments, oedipal dilemmas, sibling rivalries; becoming able to relinquish childhood dependencies; gaining a feeling of selfhood and self-worth, and a sense of moral obligation—a child needs to understand what is going on within [their] conscious self so that [they] can also cope with that which goes on in [their] unconscious. [They] can achieve this understanding...by becoming familiar with it through spinning out daydreams...fit[ting] the unconscious content into conscious fantasies, which then enable [them] to deal with that content. (Bettelheim 6-7)

He then goes on to demonstrate how these issues are worked through by providing psychoanalytic readings of numerous fairy tales including “Hansel and Gretel”, “Snow White”, “Cinderella”, and “Beauty and the Beast”. Many scholars followed in Bettelheim’s footsteps, including many feminist scholars, such as Sandra M. Gilbert, Susan Gubar, Vanessa Joosen, and Ellen Cronan Rose, who have engaged deeply with Bettelheim’s work and his principles about child development.

Feminism is the third major track for fairy tale scholarship. Donald Haase states that “scholarly research explicitly devoted to feminist issues in fairy-tale studies began in earnest in 1970 and was propelled by the feminist movement’s second wave” (“Preface” vii).⁸ However, not all feminist fairy tale scholars agree on the impact or meanings of traditional tales. Within

⁸ For more information on feminist scholarship beyond fairy tales in short story form, see “Feminist Fairy-Tale Scholarship” (2004) by Donald Haase. He explains that “feminist scholarship has focused frequently on women novelists who rely on classic fairy tales as intertexts to inform their adult novels and critically engage the tradition” (“Feminist Fairy-Tale Scholarship” 20).

feminist scholarship, “the fairy tale [has been] alternately criticized for its stereotypical gender patterns and praised for its emancipatory force and possibly subversive power” (Joosen 7). On one hand, some scholars see fairy tales as creating restrictive and harmful guidelines by which women must live. On the other hand, other scholars, like Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, “detect a model for feminine rebellion” (Joosen 7). Additionally, many feminist scholars were influenced by reader-response critics, like Judith Fetterly. Fetterly claims “the first act of the feminist critic must be to become a resisting rather than an assenting reader and, by this refusal to assent, to begin the process of exorcizing the male mind that has been implanted in us” (Fetterly XXII). Thus, feminist scholars of fairy tales began to ponder the ways in which readers can resist the lessons that fairy tales attempt to impart.

Much of the feminist criticism of fairy tales stems from the perceived social conditioning the tales promote. These critics believe that the fairy tale tradition “reflects how women are oppressed and allow themselves to be oppressed” because tale after tale, the lead female character lacks agency (*Don't Bet on the Prince: Contemporary Feminist Fairy Tales in North America and England* 8-9). As children and adolescents are the target audience for most traditional tales, many see the submissive nature of the female characters as affecting the way young girls think they must behave to find happiness. Additionally, some feminist critics argue that the model set up by the passive princess becomes reinforced by “the wicked stepmothers, witches, and fairies [that] have come to represent the dangers older, powerful women seem to pose in our culture” (*Twice upon a Time: Women Writers and the History of the Fairy Tale* 13). In this view, by making older women evil because of their power, fairy tales further suggest to readers that power makes women dangerous, and, as the evil character is always punished, that powerful women must be punished.

And yet, while some feminist scholars view fairy tales as problematic, others see them as beneficial—or at least as more complex than earlier scholars suggested. Some feminist supporters of the fairy tale tradition see the stories as showcasing a diverse representation of women. Rather than seeing fairy tales as harmful to women, they see them as promoting strong women. In her introduction to *The Classic Fairy Tales* (1999), Maria Tatar endorses fairy tales because:

these stories suggest a society in which women are as competent and active as men, at every age and in every class. The contrast is greatest in maturity where women are often more powerful than men. Real help for the hero or heroine comes most frequently from a fairy godmother or wise woman, and real trouble from a witch or wicked stepmother.

(The Classic Fairy Tales xiii-xiv)

In this viewpoint, whether young or old, good or evil, women control the story, wielding great power. They are usually central, and their actions propel the events of the tale. For example, in “Cinderella” the fairy godmother provides real help to the titular character, while in “Snow White”, which I will explore further in the second chapter, the Queen initiates real trouble for the protagonist.

Additionally, some feminist scholars may follow the model developed by Judith Fetterly, as mentioned earlier, and act as “resisting” readers. That is, they might, quite purposefully, question, rearrange, skip, or even ignore the messages that the texts attempt to advance about female behavior. These readers demonstrate the flexibility of the interpretation of tales as they may not fully reject or fully accept the messages encoded within fairy tales. Many critics following this reader-response model claim that the central role of women is a source of power for readers. Some readers may even identify with or celebrate the evil character in the same

manner that many identify with or celebrate the protagonist. These readers see the villain as a culturally significant figure, and may even be fascinated with this figure, as demonstrated by the cultural fascination with the character of Maleficent, the evil Queen in “Sleeping Beauty”. This type of analysis demonstrates one way in which “resisting” readers can rearrange and/or reassess the messages contained within fairy tales.

Feminist-inspired fairy tales began to appear soon after the rise in feminist minded scholarship of fairy tales during the second wave of feminism, as discussed above.⁹ Although some may question the practice of retelling a problematic story, the ability to take ownership of the story motivates many authors to do so. Elizabeth Harries states that when retelling a familiar tale, “contemporary writers fill in gaps, reverse traditional situations, and imagine ways the stories could have been otherwise” (*Twice upon a Time: Women Writers and the History of the Fairy Tale* 163). In other words, rewriting the classical fairy tales gives these contemporary authors the ability to change what they find problematic.¹⁰ This chance allows them to return to a powerful story, and to explore how it could have evolved within the tradition. It is the chance to rethink what the female characters could have said, or done, differently; to explore and expand upon the idea that women control these stories. However, rewriting a tale does not necessarily mean imitating the previous versions of the tale. Maria Tatar argues that “feminist writers have resisted the temptation to move in the imitative mode, choosing instead the route of critique and

⁹ That being said, in his preface to *Fairy Tales and Feminism: New Approaches* (2004), Donald Haase points out that “women have—for three hundred years at least—quite intentionally used the fairy tale to engage in questions of gender and to create tales spoken or written differently from those told or penned by men” (“Preface” viii-ix). However, even though women have been writing fairy tales for such a long period, they did not fall into the category of “feminist-inspired” tales.

¹⁰ I will focus on The Merseyside Fairy Story Collective and Angela Carter’s rewritings in the following two chapters, but for more information about feminist inspired fairy tale authors, look at the introduction to *Don’t Bet on the Prince: Contemporary Feminist Fairy Tales in North America and England* (1986) by Jack Zipes. Zipes provides a brief overview of authors of feminist-inspired fairy tales including Anne Sexton, Olga Broumas, Margaret Atwood, and Tanith Lee.

parody in their recastings of tales” (*The Classic Fairy Tales* xv).¹¹ For example, many of author Angela Carter’s stories, two of which I will discuss more in depth in my third chapter, parody the tale they are retelling. Carter’s writing clearly demonstrates that feminist studies of fairy tales influenced her as she “had no interest in presenting a one-dimensional view of women—let alone women without sexuality” (“Feminist Fairy-Tale Scholarship” 8). Additionally, her stories seem to support Maria Tatar’s positive view of fairy tales. Much like the quote mentioned earlier, Carter specifically wrote “[that her tales] ‘all centre around a female protagonist; be she clever, or brave, or good, or silly, or cruel, or sinister, or awesomely unfortunate, she is centre stage, as large as life’” (“Feminist Fairy-Tale Scholarship” 8-9).

By looking at stories through one of these critical lenses, or a combination of lenses, scholars uncover the intricacies of the fairy tale genre. In order to construct these complex meanings, one must look at the factors influencing the composition of a tale. The multiple critical lenses and influencing factors of composition discussed above demonstrate that the fairy tale genre at large is extremely flexible and endlessly capable of adaptation. Due to the very nature of fairy tales—their history in oral tradition, lack of clear origin, and the way in which they are composed—they are seemingly unfixed in meaning. Therefore, individual fairy tales are constantly open to new interpretations. That is, every author who adapts or rewrites a fairy tale can infuse new messages into the tale’s basic framework and each new audience can interpret the tale in their own way, allowing the genre to have an enduring value in society. Having set up the inherent flexibility of fairy tales and the critical fields I am drawing on, I will now demonstrate

¹¹ In “Yours, Mine, or Ours? Perrault, The Brothers Grimm, and the Ownership of Fairy Tales” (1993), Donald Haase provides another potential reasoning for the approaches authors take in their rewritings of fairy tales. He states that “the removal of the fairy tale from the service of nationalism and universalism requires the subversion of traditional tales” (“Yours, Mine, or Ours? Perrault, The Brothers Grimm, and the Ownership of Fairy Tales” 395).

the applications of the critical fields in the following two chapters through the analysis of “Snow White” and “Beauty and the Beast”.

Chapter 2

Snow White and the Miners:

Fairy Tales, Politics, and Social Power Dynamics

Introduction

Many important twentieth century critics have argued that fairy tales contain lessons that young audiences are able to take from the story and apply to everyday life. Bruno Bettelheim's work, *The Uses of Enchantment*, introduces psychoanalytic readings of "Schneewittchen" by the Brothers Grimm, which have been expanded upon since its publication in 1976. Bettelheim explains that children "[need] to be given suggestions in symbolic form about how [they] may deal with these issues and grow safely into maturity" and "the fairy tale is future-oriented and guides the child" (Bettelheim 8 & 11). Bettelheim's psychoanalytic readings suggest that the tale teaches children lessons concerning maturation, mapping out or providing guidelines to successfully complete the process. Yet, modern rewritings of fairy tales seem to be aimed at older audiences and engage textual strategies to narrate the particular anxieties of an adult population.¹² This type of reading is readily applied to The 1972 Merseyside Fairy Story Collective version of "Snow White", a little read story which reflects the tension surrounding the

¹² Jack Zipes explores the idea that the function of the fairy tale for both children and adults shifted during the twentieth century in "The Evolution and Dissemination of the Classical Fairy Tale" in *Why Fairy Tales Stick: The Evolution and Relevance of a Gender* (2006). Jack Zipes has also expanded on the reflection of social and political issues in "The Potential of Liberating Fairy Tales for Children" (1982), *Don't Bet on the Prince: Contemporary Feminist Fairy Tales in North America and England* (1986).

controversial mining situation in the United Kingdom at the time of publication. By analyzing the ways in which the authors coopt “Snow White”, I show how the story lends itself to rewriting and adaption, particularly because of its key power conflict between weak and strong figures. This is one of the reasons literary, and even political groups, find “Snow White” useful in promulgating specific economic and political agendas.

Throughout time, volatile and violent figures have been popular fixtures within texts, from the sinister villain Iago, of Shakespeare’s *Othello*, to the more modern psychotic serial killer Freddy Kruger. This repetition of an archetype demonstrates a certain level of cultural fascination with, and fear of, these figures. Bettelheim suggests that the danger in fairy tales, and, more specifically the fear of this figure, represents the “deep inner conflicts” and “existential anxieties and dilemmas” that a child experiences (Bettelheim 10). He argues that fairy tales demonstrate to children that “a struggle against severe difficulties in life is unavoidable...but that if one does not shy away, but steadfastly meets unexpected and often unjust hardships, one masters all obstacles and at the end emerges victorious” (Bettelheim 8).¹³ That is to say, the process of facing fear eventually eradicates it, or at least can keep it under control; fairy tales provide a low stakes, imaginative way of practicing and experiencing survival. By addressing real fears with fantastical ones, fairy tales provide a child the guidelines to help them overcome dark fears in a safe way, or at least a way to control them.

Bettelheim states that the powerful evil figure can be enticing at first because “in many fairy tales a usurper succeeds for a time in seizing the place which rightfully belongs to the hero” (Bettelheim 9). However, this success is relatively short lived. In order to maintain power, the

¹³ Vanessa Joosen in “Bruno Bettelheim’s The Use of Enchantment” from *Critical and Creative Perspectives on Fairy Tales: An Intertextual Dialogue Between Fairy-Tale Scholarship and Postmodern Retellings* (2011) points out that Bettelheim has been criticized for “his disregard of age, class, and the child’s individual personality” and for reducing the “wide range of possible functions” (Joosen 184-6).

usurper must commit some type of crime. In the case of the evil Queen, her crime is the extreme jealousy and violence she exhibits towards Snow White. Bettelheim also suggests that the difference between good and evil in fairy tales is a simple dichotomy because children see things in black and white (Bettelheim 9). Due to this polarization, fairy tales show how “the conviction that crime does not pay [serves as] a much more effective deterrent [than punishment itself, which] is why in fairy tales the bad person always loses out” (Bettelheim 9). That is to say, the Queen must fall from power because of the crimes that she has committed and the fact that she possesses no redeeming quality. Thus, readers are intrigued and compelled by the way in which the ‘evil’ character will be brought down, knowing that the evil figure’s fall from power is inevitable. Attractions to the characters are thus ultimately policed; readers may find the evil character alluring, but the story ends with their defeat.

Although Bettelheim only focuses on the effect of fairy tales on children, recent stories suggest that fairy tales aimed at adult audiences draw on similar dynamics. The fascination of watching an evil figure fall is not reserved for children alone. The Merseyside Fairy Story Collective demonstrates this idea by using the framework of “Snow White” to present a battle between good and evil, but in political, rather than maturational, terms. Thus, I suggest that just as the Brothers Grimm version of the tale provides children with the instructions they need to overcome adversity and defeat dark powers and threats, the Merseyside story provides the same directives for adult readers to overcome a political enemy.

Where It All Began: The History of the Tale

In order to evaluate how authors coopt and reuse the dynamics of “Snow White”, as Bettelheim sees them, it is important to first set up a basic history of the tale. One of the earliest

versions of the tale, Giambattista Basile's "The Young Slave", dates back to 1634. Since its publication, there have been numerous retellings and adaptations of the tale from various cultures. In 1819 Germany, The Brothers Grimm published a variation on the tale entitled "Schneewittchen". In 1891, "Lasair Gheug, the King of Ireland's Daughter" was published in Ireland.¹⁴ Even the filmmakers at Disney had a hand in transforming the tale when they made the film "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" in 1937 in the United States.¹⁵ In 1972, a group of women in Merseyside, England published their own version of the tale, suggesting that the tale of "Snow White" has proved significant around the world and across time.

Basile's "The Young Slave" tells the story of a young girl, Lisa, who dies when a comb sticks in her hair when she is seven. Her mother places her in several crystal caskets and asks her brother, the Baron, to keep Lisa when she passes away. When the Baron travels, Lisa is awoken when the Baroness unlocks all of the caskets and dislodges the comb. The Baroness is extremely jealous of Lisa and abuses her. When the Baron speaks to Lisa, she recounts her story and he realizes that she is his niece. Upon this realization, the Baron sends his wife back to her parents as punishment and arranges his niece's wedding. Although this tale does not sound similar to the tale that is familiar now, it served as a starting point for many storytellers and authors and contains key elements of victimization.

Even though "Snow White" continues to be reworked and rewritten, there are certain features that remain the same over time. Maria Tatar argues that most versions of the tale "[emphasize] nine episodes: origin (birth of the heroine), jealousy, expulsion, adoption, renewed jealousy, death, exhibition, resuscitation, and resolution" ("Introduction: Snow White." 74). This

¹⁴ I will not be looking at this version of the story in depth, but it can be found in Maria Tatar's *The Classic Fairy Tales* (1999) along with her comments about the tale in her introduction.

¹⁵ Jack Zipes discusses the influence of Disney on fairy tales in general and the Disney version of "Snow White" in "Breaking the Disney Tale" (1995).

pattern is important as it provides a structural foundation for the tale. However, the similarities extend beyond simple structure of narrative. In the different versions of the tale, there is always a sense of betrayal, pain, and emotional distance. The Queen feels betrayed by her mirror and Snow White feels betrayed by the Queen, and the betrayal they feel causes each of them a significant amount of pain. Finally, the Queen always remains at a distance from the situation, using the mirror and other agents to communicate with Snow White and complete her brutal tasks. The Brothers Grimm used the earlier versions of the tale as a starting point for their story, “Schneewittchen”.

Psychoanalytic Readings of “Snow White”

Bruno Bettelheim’s *The Uses of Enchantment* provides one of, if not the most famous twentieth-century readings of “Snow White” by the Brothers Grimm.¹⁶ [This tale is described in detail in appendix 1.] He argues that when a child listens to or reads the tale, the story provides a set of suggestions for maturation. Bettelheim’s analysis suggests that the tale helps children work through the psychological problems they are facing in a nonthreatening way. Since the tale allows the child to look at a situation from a distance, they are able to work through their problems without facing any true danger. Yet, subsequent psychoanalytic and feminist readings, like those of Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar in “Snow White and Her Wicked Stepmother” (1979) see the guidelines for maturation as problematic because they reinforce the patriarchy and the weakness of women.¹⁷ Gilbert and Gubar find problems with the social lessons presented in the tale, though they still acknowledge its psychological impact.

¹⁶ Bettelheim’s *The Uses of Enchantment* (1976) also applies these psychoanalytic readings to a variety of fairy tales including, but not limited to “Beauty and the Beast”, “Hansel and Gretel”, and “Little Red Riding Hood”.

¹⁷ This is an excerpt of *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (1979) which discusses the idea that authors must characterize their women as either “angels” or

Bettelheim considers the relationship between children and parents to be the main problem presented in the tale (Bettelheim 194). Although the Grimms place a stepmother into the role of the evil Queen, she still serves as a parental figure to the young Snow White. Thus, the story presents children with the idea of parental jealousy. This is particularly important because the Queen is the only parental figure in the tale as the king, the Queen's husband and Snow White's father, "never actually appears in this story at all" (Gilbert and Gubar 292).¹⁸ Bettelheim emphasizes that the Queen only begins feeling jealous of Snow White when she turns seven and begins to mature (Bettelheim 202). Given this, it is clear that the idea of Snow White becoming an adult is the catalyst for the Queen's jealousy. Bettelheim suggests that the oedipal desires of Snow White and the king are the cause of the Queen's jealousy, although he admits this is unclear in "common versions" of the tale (Bettelheim 200). Another understanding of this jealousy is that "Snow White is destined to replace the Queen" because she is the younger, and thus, better, meaning more manageable and yet, virginal, version of the female (Gilbert and Gubar 293). Therefore, the Queen is jealous of her stepdaughter because as soon as Snow White becomes an adult, she is a threat.

Snow White's relation to the Queen is not the only relationship in the tale with symbolic meaning for maturation. Bettelheim argues that Snow White's time with the dwarfs could "stand for her time of troubles, of working through her problems, [and] her period of growth" (Bettelheim 201). In this way, children are able to understand that maturation is a process and this process takes time. Gilbert and Gubar, however, suggest that the dwarves "represent [Snow

monsters". This text connects the tale of "Snow White" to many famous nineteenth century texts including *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë.

¹⁸ Maria Tatar also discusses the importance of the absence of the father in her introduction to "Snow White" in *The Classic Fairy Tales* (1999).

White's] own dwarfed powers, her stunted selfhood" and the time she spends with them is when she receives her "education in submissive femininity" (Gilbert and Gubar 295).

Additionally, the story can be used to show the desires of the children reading the story. Given that Snow White allows the Queen to trick her repeatedly, it is clear that the Queen's temptations are very close to Snow White's desires (Bettelheim 211). The accuracy of her temptations is clarified by Gilbert and Gubar, however, when they suggest "the Queen and Snow White are in some sense one" (Gilbert and Gubar 295). Even if the two females are "one", since Snow White is the young protagonist of the tale, audiences of children are likely to identify with her. Bettelheim suggests that the poisonous apple the Queen gives to Snow White "stands for love and sex" (Bettelheim 212). If this is what the apple represents, the implication is that the audience is also trying to deal with similar desires. The Queen possesses the apple, Snow White desires it.

By having Snow White succumb to the temptation of the apple and fall into a deep sleep, the story appears to offer a clear lesson. According to Bettelheim, this situation demonstrates that "just because one has reached physical maturity, one is by no means intellectually and emotionally ready for adulthood" (Bettelheim 213). Given the way Bettelheim sees Snow White's time with the dwarves, this suggests that the time that Snow White spends asleep in the glass coffin prepares her for marriage. This is problematic, however, because as Gilbert and Gubar point out, "dead and self-less in her glass coffin, she is an object, to be displayed and desired" (Gilbert and Gubar 296). When read this way, the lesson of the story is that girls must allow themselves to be objectified silently in order to get married, thus losing themselves not once, but twice.

Even though “Snow White” presents a traumatic situation for a child, psychoanalytic readings view the tale as providing guidelines for children. Although the Queen attempts to murder her stepdaughter, in the end, her plotting is unsuccessful. Bettelheim proposes that because of this, the child reading the story “need not be afraid of parental jealousy where it may exist, because [they] will survive successfully”; the story shows this feeling is only temporary (Bettelheim 195). Thus, the story presents the child with the solution for the problems they are facing or may potentially face. Gilbert and Gubar acknowledge that the tales provide lessons, however, they see these lessons as problematic because they train female children that they “must learn the arts of silence” and defeat the desiring self (Gilbert and Gubar 297).¹⁹

Putting Their Own Twist on “Snow White”: The Brothers Grimm

Analysis of “Schneewittchen” by The Brothers Grimm demonstrates the ways in which the brothers added aspects of German cultural, social, and political norms into the story. Some of the incorporation of customs may have been a result of the way in which their stories were crafted. For the most part, “the tales did not come from the ‘simple folk,’ but from educated aristocratic and middle-class informants familiar with oral tradition” (*Why Fairytales Stick: The Evolution and Relevance of a Gender* 81).²⁰ This way of gathering information meant that those who were well-versed in the social norms were the ones adding to the Grimms’ synthesis of stories.

¹⁹ For further information about the problematic lessons for women contained in fairy tales, see “The Mirror Broken: Women’s Autobiography and Fairy Tales” by Elizabeth W. Harries in *Fairy Tales and Feminism: New Approaches* (2004).

²⁰ Donald Haase expands on the way in which the Grimms collected their information and who they relied on as informants in “Feminist Fairy-Tale Scholarship”, a chapter in his book, *Fairy Tales and Feminism: New Approaches* (2004).

However, this also meant that the Brothers Grimm heavily edited stories. Many scholars have noted the “significant editorial interventions in the texts [the Grimms] selected to publish... [and] built on [these findings] to show how the two brothers had revised tales so that they reflected or shaped the sociocultural values of their time” (“Feminist Fairy-Tale Scholarship” 10). For example, Wilhelm Grimm was known for “infusing the new editions with his Christian fervour, emboldening the moral strokes of the plot, meting out penalties to the wicked and rewards to the just, to conform with prevailing Christian and social values” (Warner 211). The strong Christian values come across very clearly in “Schneewittchen”, as the wicked Queen suffers tremendously in iron hot shoes before dying.

This focus on German norms and values may explain the reason why the Grimms decided to change the character of the Queen from Snow White’s mother to stepmother. Their earlier manuscripts of the tale, from 1810 and 1812, are radically different from the tale published in 1819 (Warner 211).²¹ The most glaring difference between the manuscripts is the identity of the Queen. Marina Warner suggests that, “for them, the bad mother had to disappear in order for the ideal to survive and allow Mother to flourish as a symbol of the eternal feminine, the motherland, and the family itself as the highest social desideratum” (Warner 212). The emphasis and value of family in German culture, therefore, influenced the way that the Grimms wanted to depict family in their tale. By doing this, the Grimms were able to further the connection between the intended audience and the characters and events of the story. Importantly, the tale the Grimms wrote, and the one that has been widely read in the twentieth century, characterized the Queen as an

²¹ For further information about the differences between the 1810, 1812, and 1819 versions of the manuscript, see “The Moral Strains of Fairy Tales and Fantasy” in *Why Fairy Tales Stick: The Evolution and Relevance of a Gender* by Jack Zipes (2006).

extremely powerful, yet distant figure that Snow White has to defeat. As we shall see, it is this figure here, and the power dynamic that she creates, that unifies the two stories under discussion.

An Added Layer of Politics: The Merseyside Fairy Story Collective

The Merseyside Fairy Story Collective version of “Snow White” has received little critical analysis. [This tale is described in detail in appendix 2.] In this chapter, I will uncover the way the authors coopted the story and its power dynamic, as developed by the Grimms over one hundred and fifty years earlier, for political purposes. The story was crafted by “four women of the Merseyside Women’s Liberation Movement in Liverpool, England”, but there is little information available on the text’s authors (“The Potential of Liberating Fairy Tales for Children.” 317). This lack of information is intriguing. There are a few reasons that might have motivated their anonymity. It may be that they did not want to reveal their specific identities because they wanted to represent the people of England as a whole or the people, more particularly, of Merseyside. Another potential reason for the scarcity of information may have been that, given the political nature of their tale, the women wanted to protect their identities to avoid any type of punishment. If this is the case, it gives insight into how high the stakes were for them, as they believed that their political statements could get them into trouble in a time of upheaval and unrest. Jack Zipes chose to include the 1972 Merseyside Collective version of “Snow White”, in his book *Don't Bet on the Prince: Contemporary Feminist Fairy Tales in North America and England*, which, at least theoretically, allowed the tale to reach a broader audience.

The reason for the Merseyside version’s focus on the mines, the happiness of the people, and the depiction of a distanced power lies in the social, political, and economic circumstances in

the United Kingdom during the late 1960s and early 1970s. This was a time of turmoil in the United Kingdom because of the growing tension surrounding the potential closure of coal mines.²² On January 9, 1972, coal miners went on strike for the first time in around fifty years because of an ongoing battle to receive more money for the work they were completing ("1972: Miners Strike"). A major motivation for strike was the result of "the combined effects of technological change...and a declining demand for coal, [which] served to reduce the number of mines in operation from 822 to 289 and employment in the industry from 710,000 to 280,000 between 1957 and the first month of 1972" (Handy 539). At this point in time, seventy five percent of the United Kingdom's electricity was powered by burning coal ("1972: Miners Strike").

Coal, and those that mined it, played a large role in the nation politically and socially. However, at the same time, the miners often faced great economic and social hardships. A contemporary article from *Economic and Political Weekly* pointed out:

the average hourly pay of miners has risen at approximately one per cent less per annum, than that of all other industrial workers taken as a group, despite the fact that productivity in mining during this period has, if anything, risen at a faster rate than in industry generally and the miners' average pay is now surpassed by that of many occupational groups what at one time received much less than the mine. (Handy 539)

Despite the fact that mining was an integral part of society, the treatment of miners was far worse, at least financially, than other industrial groups. Moreover, miners were located geographically far away from London, the center of political power in England. For this reason,

²² For a more in depth look at the historical events of this time period, see pages 411-412 in "Changes in the Mode of Production and the Growth of 'Mass Militancy' in the British Mining Industry, 1954-1974" by Ian Rutledge (1977).

the miners frequently felt that government officials overlooked their interests when it came to political decisions. When the government cracked down on wage inflation, “it [was] seen as deliberate discrimination against workers in the public sector” and miners started to lose “faith in the freedom of their employer representatives to negotiate” on their behalf (Handy 540).

Due to the high dependence on coal for electricity in the nation at the time, the lack of production due to the strike caused severe issues for the country. In order to cope with power shortages at their factories, managers started to lay off workers ("1972: Miners Strike"). On February 9, 1972, the government declared a state of emergency ("1972: Miners Strike"). On February 16, 1972, six weeks after the strike began, the Central Electricity Generating Board announced that domestic electricity would be rotated during the day, leaving customers without electricity for six to nine hours throughout the day ("1972: Turns off the Lights"). This shortage in electricity only put more pressure on the government from the people.

On February 25, 1972, the seven week strike finally ended after an agreement between the miners and the government was finally reached (Handy 539). A group of miners met with the Prime Minister, Edward Heath, and the Employment Secretary, Robert Carr, and a 95 million pound payment deal was settled ("1972: Crippling Coal Strike"). Still, the people in the north of England felt the consequences of the strikes painfully and powerfully. Rutledge points out that “pit closures resulted in the virtual elimination of busy mining communities as the miners left to get jobs in other industries” (Rutledge 421). In addition, those who went on strike “received no strike benefit from their union to alleviate hardship during the stoppage” (Handy 539). Due to the lack of income, families struggled to make ends meet and it became apparent that a traditional and proud means of survival, and industry, was gradually coming to an end.

Guidelines for Political Protest and Success

There are important parallels between the events that occurred in the United Kingdom in 1972 and The Merseyside Fairy Story Collective “Snow White”. In “Snow White”, the Queen functions in a similar manner to a distant political figures and acts as a symbol for the government. Another major similarity, of course, is that the fairy tale is set in the mines. The introduction of people dissatisfied with the Queen toward the end of the story parallels the people in the United Kingdom who were dissatisfied with their government. Furthermore, the story indicates that the Queen, and therefore the government, is not only unreasonable, but also completely uninterested in the happiness of the people.

The story seems to be set in a near-totalitarian regime. The text opens with a heavy emphasis on the fact that the Queen, who lives in castle, is far away from the people that she governs. The text states that when the Queen “saw any of her subjects doing things which displeased her she sent soldiers to punish them” (The Merseyside Fairy Story Collective 74). This abuse of power and personal use of soldiers is a hallmark of dictators. Additionally, the fact that she watches her subjects through her mirror, instead of actually interacting with them, emphasizes the distance between the Queen and her people. The idea that the ruling power is constantly watching over the people, but that the people are unable to tell who is being watched at any given moment, evokes Jeremy Bentham’s idea of the panopticon. The panopticon is an infrastructural design; a circular prison in which a single guard can monitor prisoners from a tower located in the center. However, “the greatest innovation of [the] circular prison was not architectural, but psychological” (Rosen and Santesso 4). The panopticon evokes a feeling of constant surveillance without the traditional physical structure of the prison.

The psychological effects of panopticism and the way in which governments use these effects has been explored by many scholars. Philosopher Michel Foucault “describes how surveillance and the psychology of internalization can permeate an entire society” (Rosen and Santesso 9). The psychology of internalization means that “although at first [the prisoner] might conform out of self-preservation, eventually his mind is over written by his captors: his feelings of being watched, and the rules of behavior expected of him, become, permanently part of his identity” (Rosen and Santesso 5). Foucault’s findings have served as the starting point for many political scientists who expand on the theory in an attempt to describe tactics of specific authoritarian regimes.²³

By having the Queen constantly watch over her people, the Merseyside “Snow White” suggests that she maintains power over her land by instilling this “panoptic” internalized fear in her subjects. The mirror, rather than the physical structure of the prison, is the tool that allows for constant surveillance. This is particularly interesting, given the fact that leading up to the strike, miners had become frustrated “with [the] increased supervision” they were faced with on the job (Rutledge 419). By establishing this on the first page of the story, the writers already strongly suggest that the people of the land are being actively oppressed, and hint, moreover, that the people of Northern England were being similarly abused.

A key part of this version of “Snow White” is its setting in the mines. While the Grimm version mentions them as the work place of the dwarfs, this version makes the mines an integral part of the plot and action. Early, the story shows us that, “[in the mines], far underground,

²³ Examples of the way in which authoritative leaders use increased visibility to control their people can be found in Takashi Fujitani’s “Fabricating Imperial Ceremonies” in *Splendid Monarchy: Power and Pageantry in Modern Japan* and Lisa Weeden’s “Believing in Spectacles” in *Ambiguities of Domination: Politics, Rhetoric, and Symbols in Contemporary Syria*. Fujitani discusses how the Japanese emperor used “the anonymous gaze” to establish dominance over his people (Fujitani 143). Weeden builds off of Fujitani’s studies and uses Syria as a way to show that sovereign power can be combined with the panoptic, internalized disciplinary technologies of the West to produce new variants of the modern” (Weeden 19).

[Snow White and the dwarfs] and many other men, women and children worked long and weary hours” in order to mine diamonds to give to the Queen (The Merseyside Fairy Story Collective 75). The emphasis on the terrible working conditions highlights the idea that there is very little reward for the work. After Snow White is imprisoned by the Queen, one of the soldiers tells her “you are very lucky...you will no longer be poor and lead a hard life toiling underground in the mine” (The Merseyside Fairy Story Collective 75). The miners in the United Kingdom, just as those in the tale, mined for the benefit of a government that both recognized that the work was hard, but limited remuneration.

The sense of unrest and dissatisfaction with the Queen grows throughout the tale, hinting at the revolution that occurs at the end of the story. This unrest parallels that of the miners in the United Kingdom as more and more people were laid off, as demonstrated by the pit closure statistics presented earlier, and the fact that the government “intend[ed] to close a further [thirty two] pits in the financial year of 1972-73 at the cost of some 30,000 jobs” (Handy 539). In the tale, Snow White is the first to challenge the Queen’s ways when she requests that she “take only what you need from the people of the kingdom and let them keep the rest so that they will no longer be cold and hungry and miserable” (The Merseyside Fairy Story Collective 76). The fact that Snow White mentions that the people are cold is particularly interesting given the electricity problems the United Kingdom was facing. Snow White, however, is not the only one who expresses her discontent.

When Snow White and the dwarfs are trapped in the mine, a protest begins as a crowd of people forms around the sealed entrance. The 1972 rewriting thus provides more textual room for the people and gives them agency. The people acting as a force is perhaps one of the biggest differences between the Grimm version and the Merseyside rewriting. After Snow White and the

dwarf's escape, the story takes on a much more serious tone; whereas Snow White initially requested the Queen only take what she needs from the people earlier in the story, she now demands of the people "everyone will keep the things they make and send nothing to the Queen of the Mountains" (The Merseyside Fairy Story Collective 79). As she speaks, she gains the approval of the people; she becomes a leader, but not the same kind of leader as the dictatorial Queen. When she is told that if she does not return to the castle she will be killed, she responds, "you may kill some of us...but in the end you will lose for there are far more people than there are soldiers" (The Merseyside Fairy Story Collective 79). It is in that moment that Snow White becomes a revolutionary leader, as this serves as a call to action. In much the same way, Arthur Scargill, president of the National Union of Miners, became the revolutionary leader for the miners who went on strike in 1984 (Saville 301).²⁴

This serves as a major divergence from the Grimm version, because while the Grimms tell the story of a girl and a queen, the Merseyside version tells the story of a community rising against its government.²⁵ When the Queen sees the protesting, and tells the mirror to "make [the people] bow to my command", it tells her: "Queen who was so rich and grand the people cast you from their land" (The Merseyside Fairy Story Collective 80). After hearing this, the Queen tries to throw the mirror away, and ends up falling from her tower. The Queen's failure to maintain authority begins when Snow White enters the Queen's castle and is imprisoned. Snow White's presence eliminates the distance between the Queen and her people, therefore

²⁴ For more information about the leadership and events leading up to the 1984 mining strike, see John Salville's "An Open Conspiracy: Conservative Politics and the Miners' Strike 1984-5" in *Socialist Register 1985/86: Social Democracy and After* (1985).

²⁵ Vanessa Joosen analyzes Marcia K. Lieberman's "Someday My Prince Will Come" and discusses how Lieberman's reading can be used to explain the influence of Marxism on fairy tale adaptations. Joosen points out how the large scale regime change is a replacement for the stereotypical marriage at the end of tales in "Marcia K. Lieberman's "Someday My Prince Will Come" from *Critical and Creative Perspectives on Fairy Tales: An Intertextual Dialogue between Fairy-tale Scholarship and Postmodern Retelling* (2011).

eliminating her control over them as well. Thus, in this version of the story, the Queen's reign ends when the mirror ultimately joins not just Snow White's cause, as in the Grimm tale, but also the cause of the people.

The way in which the Merseyside story ends, with the success of the people, mirrors the way in which the Grimm version ends with the success of Snow White. However, the differences between the two versions are clear. Where the Grimm version gives children a set of guidelines for overcoming adversity, the Merseyside version gives adults a set of guidelines for overcoming political adversity and defeating, not a dangerously appealing alter ego, but a horrifying tyrant. The Merseyside story dignifies the struggle of the people and suggests that, just as children will overcome their fears, so too an angry people will overcome an oppressive government.

Snow White: Lessons to Live By

"Snow White" has been rewritten and continues to be rewritten because it can be used in related ways for both children and adult audiences. Where the Grimm version provides suggestions for maturation, the Merseyside version provides a vision of political struggle. "Snow White" allows authors the ability to lay out a theoretical guide for success against oppression, continuing the story's relevance today. The way that authors coopt the basic plot of "Snow White" allows readers to cast themselves into the tale in order to learn how to cope with their specific struggle against authority. This type of cooption seems to come from the story's history in the oral tradition.

In the oral tradition, story tellers adapt the tale to the circumstances of the audience members. Marina Warner suggests that "stories depend on their tellers and those to whom they are told who might later tell them again" (Warner 25). That is to say, a tale's intended meaning is

contingent upon the person telling it and who exactly that tale is being told to. As Jack Zipes points out, oral tales were “generally transformed by the narrator and audience in an active manner through improvisation and interchange to produce a version which would relate to the social conditions of the time” (*Breaking the Magic Spell: Radical Theories of Folk and Fairy Tales* 33).

It seems as though in this situation, The Merseyside Fairy Story Collective was simply following the traditions of oral storytelling. These women adapted the story of Snow White in such a way that it became particularly pertinent to their audience by integrating messages about current events into the plot. When authors evoke cultural norms and reference current events at the time of publication, the intended reader is able to connect not only to the characters, but also to their path. Through this connection to the characters, a reader is able to learn lessons of endurance and survival, even battling and overcoming, regardless of age.

Chapter 3

Beauty is a Beast:

Embracing the Inner Animal

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I addressed how the tale of “Snow White” offers authors opportunities to explore the ways in which both child and adult readers may overcome struggles successfully. The two tales discussed in the previous chapter focus on providing a protagonist the ability to overcome a tyrannical and powerful villain. However, rewritings and adaptations of fairy tales do not always follow or reproduce the basic power dynamic introduced in earlier versions. Contemporary authors often enjoy fundamentally disrupting the dynamics of the older tales in order to reflect, and even question, cultural, societal, and gender norms at the time of publication. For instance, Angela Carter’s rewritings of “Beauty and the Beast”, found in her collection of fairy tales *The Bloody Chamber* (1979), profoundly change the original plot shape, where a woman tames and civilizes a wild beast, in order to explore the pleasures of wilderness. In order to understand Carter’s changes, it is helpful to look at how much her tales differ from Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont’s story, which is the version most widely known by Anglo-Americans (“Introduction: Beauty and the Beast” 26).²⁶ Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont

²⁶Both Maria Tatar in “Introduction: Beauty and the Beast” in *The Classic Fairy Tales* (1999) and Betsy Hearne in *Beauty and the Beast: Visions and Revisions* (1989) discuss how the myth “Cupid and Psyche” is one of the first versions of “Beauty and the Beast”.

wrote “La Belle and La Bête” as a way for children, specifically young upper-class women, to learn their social roles.²⁷ Thus, Beaumont’s version of the story “reflects a desire to transform fairy tales into what Angela Carter has called ‘parables of instruction,’ vehicles for indoctrinating and enlightening children about the virtues of good manners, good breeding, and good behavior” (“Introduction: Beauty and the Beast” 26). Keeping Carter’s criticism of Beaumont in mind, I claim that when Carter crafted her two versions of the tale, “The Courtship of Mr Lyon” and “The Tiger’s Bride”, she consciously worked against this didactic trend by creating complex explorations and deconstructions of the themes and motifs presented in earlier versions. Therefore, I argue that while Beaumont focuses on demonstrating to young readers how to conform to gender norms, Angela Carter shows adults how to contest and problematize contemporary visions of gender in a playfully whimsical manner.²⁸

Scholar Jerry Griswold points out, “one measure of the power and endurance of ‘Beauty and the Beast’ is its omnipresence” (Griswold 162). That is, people continue to reincarnate the tale through short stories, novels, movies, television shows, musicals, and even more, suggesting that the tale continues to speak to creative forces and audiences.²⁹ The basic plot of “Beauty and the Beast” has traditionally been seen as depicting social expectations of women, or as Jack Zipes puts it, “the molding and grooming of a young woman so that she can (despite danger to

²⁷ In *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (1976), psychoanalyst Bruno Bettelheim reads this story as a way for children to learn that “oedipal attachment to a parent is natural, desirable, and has the most positive consequences for all, if during the process of maturation it is transferred and transformed as it becomes detached from the parent and concentrated on the lover” (Bettelheim 307). His reading, therefore, can be applied to both male and female children.

²⁸ In the introduction to *The Classic Fairy Tales* (1999), Maria Tatar further discusses Angela Carter’s general approach to rewriting fairy tales. Tatar states that “Carter aims above all to demystify these sacred cultural texts, to show that we can break their magical spells and that social change is possible once we become aware of the stories that have guided our social, moral, and personal development” (*The Classic Fairy Tales* xvii).

²⁹ In terms of contemporary representations of “Beauty and the Beast”, some examples include the 2007 novel *Beastly* by Alex Flinn, the CBS television series *Beauty and the Beast* (1987) and its reboot on The CW *Beauty & The Beast* (2012). Additionally, it was recently announced that a live-action film version of the Broadway musical will be released to theaters in March 2017.

herself) pursue a proper mate of quality who will guarantee her reproduction of her species” (*Why Fairy Tales Stick: The Evolution and Relevance of a Genre* 132). However, at the same time, the tale “stands as a model for a plot rich in opportunities for expressing a woman’s anxieties about marriage” (“Introduction: Beauty and the Beast” 29). Many scholars see Beaumont’s tale, in particular, in this light as it was published at a time when arranged marriages were being hotly debated. However, more recently, adaptations of the tale have shifted their focus away from Beauty and toward the Beast. Marina Warner points out that one reason for this shift may be that “the threat of animals was a real and frightening one in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries”, but during the post-Freudian twentieth century “the attraction to the wild” became prevalent (Warner 299&307). Additionally, Maria Tatar points out that “while eighteenth- and nineteenth-century versions of the tale celebrated the civilizing power of feminine virtue and its triumph over crude animal desire, [today’s] culture hails Beast’s heroic defiance of civilization, with all its discontents” (“Introduction: Beauty and the Beast” 29). Angela Carter’s “The Courtship of Mr Lyon” and “The Tiger’s Bride” represent this desire to focus more on the Beast. Together, both the stories explore the way in which women may defy civilization or embrace their beastliness by questioning female virtue and conformity.³⁰

The Nature of the Beast

As my chapter will focus mainly on the representations of Beauty, I will briefly discuss the representation of the Beast throughout time before truly delving into the investigation of

³⁰ In *Don’t Bet on the Prince: Contemporary Feminist Fairy Tales in North America and England* (1986), Jack Zipes further discusses how Angela Carter, and fellow feminist-inspired fairy tale author Tanith Lee, wrote stories expressing how women should “be proud of animalistic ties to nature” (*Don’t Bet on the Prince: Contemporary Feminist Fairy Tales in North America and England* 25).

Beaumont and Carter's tales. The name Beast suggests an animalistic quality, or at least a certain level of disfigurement. However, the name Beast does not provide specific details as to his appearance, and many authors purposefully leave his exact beastliness up for debate. In fact, versions of "Beauty and the Beast", "frequently avoid giving precise indications of the Beast's horrible features, and generally describe his enchanted shape in the vaguest terms" (Warner 299).³¹ In the Beaumont version of the tale, the Beast's descriptors include "this horrible figure" and "the monster" (Beaumont 37). The Beast of "The Courtship of Mr Lyon" has the "head of a lion; mane and mighty paws of a lion" and stands on "his hind legs", but wears human clothing ("The Courtship of Mr Lyon" 44). In "The Tiger's Bride" the Beast wears "a mask with a man's face painted beautifully on it" and a wig ("The Tiger's Bride" 52-3). Although the Beast of "The Courtship of Mr Lyon" receives a more defined description comparatively, the physical nature of the Beast remains vague in the three versions explored in this chapter. This lack of detail invites readers to allow their imagination to craft their own version of the Beast. In a way, this allows for each version of the Beast to represent whatever fear seems most prevalent at the time of publication.

"La Belle et la Bête": Beaumont's Instruction for Socialization

Early versions of the tale, particularly Beaumont's "Beauty and the Beast", present the story as a way of showing young women how to adapt to and navigate contemporary social norms and expectations placed on them.³² Through the characteristics and actions of the

³¹ Jerry Griswold further discusses the generally vague nature of physical descriptions in many versions of "Beauty and the Beast" and includes a variety of illustrated representations of the Beast in his chapter "Illustrations" from the book *The Meanings of "Beauty and the Beast": A Handbook* (2004).

³² Karen E. Rowe draws parallels between Beaumont's "Beauty and the Beast" and Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, comparing Jane to Beauty and Mr. Rochester to The Beast in her chapter "'Fairy-born and Human-bred': Jane

protagonist, Beauty, Beaumont seems to provide a role model for young women to look up to. Maria Tatar argues that Beaumont's version of the tale "not only endorses the importance of obedience and self-denial, but also uses the tale to preach the transformative power of love, more specifically the importance of valuing essences over appearances" ("Introduction: Beauty and the Beast" 27). Given this, it appears Beaumont uses her own life experiences, as a woman who served as a governess and had an arranged marriage, to create this instruction manual.

Beaumont's version of "Beauty and the Beast" was first published in French in 1756.³³ [This tale is described in detail in appendix 3.] She then translated it to English in 1759 for "The Young Misses Magazine, Containing Dialogues between a Governess and Several Young Ladies of Quality, Her Scholars" (Griswold 27). The influence of Beaumont's work as a governess becomes clear in the way the story functions as an instruction manual for "'Young Ladies of Quality'—aristocrats between the ages of five and thirteen" (Griswold 50). For this reason, it becomes easy to think Beaumont imposes her beliefs, or the beliefs of society at large, on readers through her writing.³⁴ Vanessa Joosen points out that Beaumont's tale teaches children that according to societal norms "the exterior features of a man may be secondary, [but] in a woman beauty does matter" (Joosen 75). That is, the character of Beauty must maintain her exterior

Eyre's Education in Romance" found in *The Voyage In: Fictions of Female Development* (1983). Rowe points out that Brontë's "fiction shares the same fascination with conflicts between virtue and bestiality, deceptive appearances and underlying realities, and focuses comparably on the 'release' of a bewitched hero and education of an innocent maiden" (Rowe 79).

³³ In her chapter "The Fairy Tale in Britain" from *Twice upon a Time: Women Writers and the History of the Fairy Tale* (2001), Elizabeth Harries points out that Beaumont's version of the tale itself "revises and transforms the first version of the story published in 1740 by Mme de Villeneuve", making Beaumont's version of the tale an adaptation (*Twice upon a Time: Women Writers and the History of the Fairy Tale* 87). However, since Beaumont's version is more widely known, I use it as my starting point.

³⁴ In "The Evolution and Dissemination of the Classical Fairy Tale" in *Why Fairy Tales Stick: The Evolution and Relevance of a Genre* (2006), Jack Zipes further discusses Beaumont's personal opinions. He points out that Beaumont's representation of women is complicated when considering the fact that "although [Beaumont] advocated more equality and autonomy for women in society, her tales are contradictory insofar as they depict how girls should domesticate themselves, support men, and prove their worth by demonstrating industriousness and good manners" (*Why Fairy Tales Stick: The Evolution and Relevance of a Genre* 77).

beauty throughout the tale even though the attractiveness of the Beast, and thus, men in general, does not matter.

In addition to the lessons concerning appearance, Beaumont seems to encourage female submissiveness through the character of Beauty. Throughout the tale, Beauty's actions are seemingly motivated by the needs of her father and the Beast. Jack Zipes states:

the name Belle or Beauty assumes meaning through the behavior traits that the young woman displays as a good housekeeper and domesticated woman: industrious, diligent, loyal, submissive, gentle, self-sacrificial. Not all of these traits are necessarily bad, but in the context of the plot, Beauty's behavior leads to the denial of her own desires. In fact, [the reader] never really knows her desires, but [they] certainly know what her father and the Beast want. (*Why Fairy Tales Stick: The Evolution and Relevance of a Genre* 140)

Beauty sacrifices herself at the beginning of the tale in order to save her father's life and at the end returns to the castle to save the Beast's life. Rather than developing her own path, she simply transfers her submissive behavior from her father to the Beast. By crafting Beauty with this specific set of traits and focusing on her service to male desire, Beaumont seems to suggest to her young female readers that in order to be an ideal woman, they must sacrifice their own desires.

Beaumont seems to further emphasize these ideals with the appearance of the fairy at the end of the tale. Jerry Griswold argues that, "ultimately, behind th[e] fairy judge (as well as the censorious gossips and the righteous narrator) [readers] may detect the presence of Madame Beaumont, governess" (Griswold 46). In a way, the fairy's speech at the end of the tale comes across as a clear statement of the moral of the story, stating what children should take away from the tale. The fairy tells Beauty "come and receive the reward for your wise choice. You preferred

virtue to looks and intelligence, and so you deserve to see those qualities united in a single person” (Beaumont 42). Since Beaumont spent a great deal of time teaching children, it makes sense that the literature she published might work to do the same thing.

Moreover, although Beauty chooses to take the place of her father in the Beast’s house, “the story seems to present something like an arranged marriage”; in this way, the story also seems to reflect Beaumont’s experience as a woman whose marriage was arranged (Griswold 48). This proves particularly interesting not only because arranged marriages were the custom of the time, but also because the story seems to address the debate over marriage that occurred when the story was published. However, instead of taking a clear stance on the debate, Beaumont seems to take a middle ground position. Beauty’s situation is not quite that of an arranged marriage, but it does not completely represent romantic marriage either, and since the union is ultimately happy, the author is not clearly critiquing enforced relationships.

Angela Carter

When speaking about her rewritten fairytales, Angela Carter stated: “I’m making a conscious critique of the culture I was born to” (Bryant 85). Carter emphasizes her desire to critique the traditional tale and challenge contemporary cultural norms, specifically concerning adult women, by writing two different versions of “Beauty and the Beast” in *The Bloody Chamber* (1979).³⁵ [These two versions of Carter’s tales are described in detail in appendices 4 and 5.] In Marina Warner’s chapter “Go! Be a Beast: Beauty and the Beast II”, the critic states that Carter “dare[s] to look at women’s waywardness, and especially at their attraction to the

³⁵In “Through the Looking Glass: When Women Tell Fairy Tales” from *The Voyage In: Fictions of Female Development* (1983), Ellen Cronan Rose discusses how Carter’s rewritings of the tale differ from her contemporaries. Rose states, “Carter’s sense of possibilities for a woman’s growth toward healthy adult identity is more optimistic than Sexton’s and more complicated than Brouma’s” (Rose 222).

Beast in the very midst of repulsion” which in turn “excites contradictory and powerful feelings in [the] audience” (Warner 308&310). In doing this, Carter leaves readers with multiple messages, participating in what Jerry Griswold calls a “two-part methodology” (Griswold 181). The two tales work together; “The Courtship of Mr Lyon” “lays the groundwork for the desirability for beastly passion over domestication fulfilled by the ‘The Tiger’s Bride’” (Brooke 76). In this way, although the two tales can be read separately, Carter’s overall message is better understood by reading both. Although “The Courtship of Mr Lyon” seems to present a more traditional version of “Beauty and the Beast”, both rewritings, whether analyzed separately or together, change the state of the traditional tale, demonstrating the general fluidity of the tale type. When examined together, it becomes clear that the two versions of the tale work to “destabilize the artificially restrictive categories of ‘Beauty’ and ‘the Beast’, disrupting the binary ‘Beauty/Beast’ to undermine the lingering presence in contemporary cultural presumptions” (Brooke 69). By breaking this binary, Carter creates dynamic and complicated characters.³⁶

In both rewritings, Carter “construct[s]...a feminist subjectivity defined as active rather than passive” (Brooke 68). This alone represents a dramatic shift away from the traditional fairy tale heroine who usually gets rewarded for being “entirely passive, submissive, and helpless” (Lieberman 191 &194). Carter’s women, although facing sexist norms, try to develop agency in their own lives. However, while Carter’s Beauties are stronger and have more agency than earlier Beauties, they still have weaknesses, making them less archetypal and more realistic. Carter’s rewritings also profoundly change other key characteristics present in the traditional tale,

³⁶Anny Crunelle- Vanrigh addresses further ways in which Carter “pull[s] down the binary structuring of Beaumont’s tale” in “The Logic of Same and Différance: “The Courtship of Mr Lyon”” found in Angela *Carter and the Fairy Tale* (2001) (Crunelle-Vanrigh 136).

however, the two tales create this change in opposite manners. In “The Courtship of Mr Lyon” “Carter largely removes fantasy and flattens Beaumont’s story in a realistic way” while in “The Tiger’s Bride” she makes the tale far more “extravagant and fantastical” than Beaumont (Griswold 182&183). By presenting both a realistic story and a chimerical one, Carter asks readers to draw comparisons and find contradictions. In other words, Carter encourages readers to actively participate in the construction of meaning. This, in turn, allows each individual reader the ability to determine the messages that they will take away from the stories.

“The Courtship of Mr Lyon”

“The Courtship of Mr Lyon” is the first rewriting of “Beauty and the Beast” in Angela Carter’s collection, *The Bloody Chamber* (1979). This version contains many parallels, like its third person narration, but also foregrounds its modernity and distance from the Beaumont tale. “The Courtship of Mr Lyon” presents a version of “Beauty and the Beast” that, on the surface, seems to follow the same conventions as traditional versions. For instance, at first, the characterization of Beauty makes her seem like the pure and virtuous Beauty presented in Beaumont’s version. She is described as a “lovely girl, whose skin possesses that same, inner light so you would have thought she... was made all of snow” (“The Courtship of Mr Lyon” 41). By making this Beauty “so pure that she is made ‘of all snow’, without flaws and ready for the bridal altar” Carter’s language seems excessive, “making it difficult to read the above description straightforwardly or sincerely” (Brooke 71). In addition, much like the traditional vagueness of the appearance of the Beast, although her name is Beauty, Carter does not provide much information about her physical appearance. When The Beast sees her picture, the story notes “the camera had captured a certain look she had...of absolute sweetness and absolute gravity, as if her

eyes might piece appearances and see your soul” (“The Courtship of Mr Lyon” 44). Once again, the language used to describe Beauty seems excessive, but beyond this, it does not provide any specific physical characteristics. In fact, Betsy Hearne points out that “the reader is aware only of [Beauty’s] inner beauty until she begins to be corrupted by empty society and sees in the mirror a ‘lacquer of prettiness’” (Hearne 112). By providing the first real physical description of Beauty here, Carter seems to suggest that Beauty’s outer appearance only matters when her focus on surface level appearance corrupts her inner virtue. Carter’s extensive focus on Beauty’s inner beauty exaggerates all of her ‘virtuous’ qualities to the point that the character does not seem genuine or plausible. In this way, this Beauty serves as a parody of Beaumont’s Beauty.

Although Carter emphasizes Beauty’s virtuousness throughout the story, her purity comes into question with Mr Lyon’s transformation at the end of the tale. Unlike the end of Beaumont’s tale, “Beauty seems hardly surprised at [Mr Lyon’s] transformation, suggesting that it may exist more in her perception than in external circumstances” (Brooke 75). That is to say that, it is possible that the “Beast” character in this version of the tale does not actually transform physically, but rather, Beauty’s internal perception of him does. If this is the case, it further points to the insincerity of Carter’s description of Beauty’s inner goodness because it means that, until this point, she was unable to see past his physical appearance to his inner beauty. In this way, the tale becomes less concerned with Beauty’s need to tame “the Beast”, as is the message in Beaumont’s version, and more about Beauty learning to accept Mr Lyon’s differences. In a way, the entire tale, not just Beauty, becomes a parody of traditional versions of “Beauty and the Beast”. Thus, the marriage at the end represents “a sterilized union sanctioned by social regulations”, which is not necessarily something to strive for (Brooke 84). That is, the marriage

at the end of “The Courtship of Mr Lyon” is not idealized in the same manner as it is at the end of Beaumont’s tale.

“The Tiger’s Bride”

Angela Carter’s “The Tiger’s Bride” is the second adaption of “Beauty and the Beast” featured in *The Bloody Chamber*, the next tale in the series, and consequently a story in obvious dialog with “The Courtship of Mr Lyon”. Carter’s “The Tiger’s Bride” “turns Beaumont’s story on its head” (Griswold 183). The story is wildly fanciful and over-the-top, almost unrecognizable as a version of “Beauty and the Beast” at first. The shift from third person to first person narration stands out as one of many significant changes Carter makes in “The Tiger’s Bride”. Instead of employing an omniscient narrator, as so many fairy tales do, Carter gives the female heroine the authority to tell her own story. The character never receives a name, and the fact that she tells her own story aids in her ability to remain nameless. Scholar Patricia Brooke argues that she remains “unnamed because [she is] disallowed self-identification or signification by her father and his society... [allowing her to] mak[e] explicit the predicament of women’s existence by highlighting her condition” (Brooke 77). In this way, the character that would otherwise be named Beauty stands in as a representative for all women struggling to break free from patriarchal norms of female submissiveness. Another way to look at the nameless heroine is that she “has shaken both the name...and the consequent sexually-specific images that are intertwined with it” (Bryant 90-1). When seen in this light, it seems Carter has crafted a ‘Beauty’ that does not conform to the ideals promoted by the ‘Beauties’ that came before her. This breaking from the typical characterization also allows for the heroine to break free from the didactic role she plays in tales like Beaumont’s. By existing outside of the confines of

Beaumont's Beauty, Carter's heroine aids in the tale's ambiguous message because she no longer stands in as a clear-cut role model for readers. However, this is simply one of the many ways in which this character, and the story at large, differs from its predecessors.

From the very first line, "my father lost me to The Beast at cards", it is clear that this tale dramatically differs from most of its predecessors ("The Tiger's Bride" 50).³⁷ Many of the features of Beaumont's tale disappear completely, while the ones that Carter keeps seem out of place. Patricia Brooke points out that the features of the traditional story that remain in "The Tiger's Bride" are "resolutely foreign in this setting... [and] a sense of the uncanny permeates the narrative, heightening the tone of dis-ease and alienation, pervading both character and reader" (Brooke 78). For example, the Beast's manor and magical qualities in this tale are not intriguing, but rather, unsettling. Additionally, the change of setting from France to Italy adds to the feeling of alienation because it not only distances the reader from the traditional tale, but also makes Beauty a foreigner in her own setting. The culture and language barrier that she faces 'other' her, just as the Beast's appearance 'others' him.

Finally, the biggest change in the story is, of course, that Beauty becomes a Beast. For Carter's tale is ultimately less about civilizing the brutish—which was Beaumont's intended aim—and more about embracing it. If this story has a message for its female readers, it is about releasing, and indulging in, our sensual side, which "The Courtship of Mr Lyon" prepares readers for. Although the Beauty from "The Courtship of Mr Lyon" does not physically transform, her transformation of opinion sets up the idea that the Beast may not be the one that must change. Carter then furthers this idea by physically transforming the Beauty from "The

³⁷ In her introduction to *From the Beast to the Blonde* (1995), Marina Warner suggests that Beauty being lost in a game of cards is "a modern variation on the ancient memory locked into the plot of 'Beauty and the Beast', that daughters were given in marriage by their fathers without being consulted on the matter (Warner XXIII).

Tiger's Bride". By turning Beauty into a Beast, Carter suggests a manner in which women can break free from the gender stereotypes and expectations pushed on them by society. However, "Carter refuses to designate nature or 'beastliness' as sanctified or secure, or as unproblematically liberating [because] the couple retreat[s] from society, to an alternative, yet unstable realm that proffers freedom but not protection or refuge" (Brooke 84). Thus, although Beauty feels a sense of liberty, she has no way of knowing that it can be sustained.

Challenging Societal Norms

By looking at Angela Carter's two versions of "Beauty and the Beast" in depth, it becomes clear just how ambiguous her overall message is. Although the "conclusions [of both of Carter's stories] share an ultimate union between Beauty and the Beast, neither proffers an unproblematically happy ending" (Brooke 84). Both stories look at the societal expectations that women will maintain their virtue and be submissive to men. "The Courtship of Mr Lyon" ends with the protagonist confined to these societal norms while "The Tiger's Bride" ends with the protagonist breaking free from these norms, and yet neither story suggests one choice is superior to the other. Much like the binary of beauty and beast enforced by Beaumont, Carter sets up another nonsensical binary between conformity and nonconformity through her two versions of "Beauty and the Beast". As she already encourages readers to question black and white classifications by breaking the beauty/beast binary, readers should know to question her conformity/nonconformity binary. Thus, her stories allow readers to think about conformity and nonconformity as a spectrum, in which one can choose the options that fall between conformity and nonconformity. Unlike Beaumont's seemingly straightforward, didactic instructions for

children, it appears as though Carter's ultimate goal may be to inspire adult readers to truly think about how they choose to live their lives, rather than blindly following societal expectations.

Following Carter's Model for Constructing Meaning: Disney's "Beauty and the Beast"

Although the 1991 Disney film version of "Beauty and the Beast" is traditionally considered as intended for only children, many scholars see it as a film that can speak to adults because it also addresses the problematic nature of social norms concerning gender roles and the expectation that women will be subservient to men. This film seems to ask its audience to construct meaning in the same way that Carter's tales call for its readers to construct meaning. Given individual constructions of meaning, some scholars see the film as following tradition, or even bolstering the male position in the tale, while other scholars see it as potentially progressive, or at least as a text that provokes an active response by the viewer.

Jack Zipes argues that this film does "nothing new in the exploration of narration, animation, and signification", suggesting that the film reinforces the same traditional messages as Beaumont's tale ("Breaking the Disney Spell" 352). However, most scholars agree that the Disney film shifts its focus away from the Beauty character, Belle, toward the Beast. There are even some scholars who take this one step further, arguing that the film makes Belle's role even more superficial than previous versions. They see the film as "devoted almost exclusively to the development of the male figure in the story", in which Belle's sole function is to help tell the Beast's story ("Introduction: Beauty and the Beast" 30). By analyzing the film in this manner, the tale seems to promote the message that women should sacrifice agency to serve male desire. Susan Jeffords suggests that one of the reasons why the Disney Corporation gravitated to the tale is that it "helps to forward the image of unloved unhappy white men who need kindness and

affection, rather than criticism and reform, in order to become their ‘true’ selves again” (Jeffords 165).

On the other hand, there are other scholars who believe that while this version shifts the focus even further away from Beauty and towards the Beast, it still explores the way in which women may eventually break free from societal expectations by placing the responsibility for change on men. The focus on the Beast is obvious, as the film opens with the story of the Beast’s curse, rather than on Belle and her family. This focus becomes reinforced with the introduction of “a second beast”, the new character of Gaston (Warner 316).³⁸ In a similar manner to the way Carter focuses on the fear of sexist norms and the struggle of conformity versus nonconformity, the film demonstrates the fear of “a man who endorses rigid, self-destructive logic of western civilization and sanctions ecological devastation” (“Introduction: Beauty and the Beast” 30). Thus, the film can be read through a sociohistorical lens as representing the fear, not the promotion, of hyper-masculinity that rose to prominence around the time the film was produced.

Gaston represents the traditional patriarchal logic that men are dominant to women and, in a way, represents internally what the Beast represents externally. While the Beast must transform to expunge his beastliness, “the penalty for Gaston’s brutishness is death” (Warner 316). Susan Jeffords proposes that by eliminating both versions of the Beast, one through transformation and the other through death, the film suggests that “no one can be free until men are released from the curse of living under the burdens of traditional masculinities” (Jeffords 171). Therefore, one can argue that the film promotes the idea that these “traditional masculinities” are a burden on society and that they should and must be broken.

³⁸ For more information about changes made in the Disney film version of “Beauty and the Beast” see Susan Jeffords’ chapter “The Curse of Masculinity: Disney’s *Beauty and the Beast*” in *From Mouse to Mermaid: The Politics of Film, Gender, and Culture* (1995).

However, like Carter's tales, this version does not provide a clear solution to the problem, as it does not give a realistic way for men to break free from "the burdens of traditional masculinities" (Jeffords 171). That is, the solution that the film provides seems to be that men must radically change or be magically transformed in order for their problematic masculinity to be eliminated. When read in this way, the film seems to call for change from the male population in order to create a larger change in society. It seems to ask audiences to think of more realistic ways in which society can break free from patriarchal norms that reinforce the expectation that women will be submissive to men. Thus, in a similar manner to Carter's tales, audiences can construct their own meanings of the Disney film version of "Beauty and the Beast". Whereas one audience member can view the film as promoting patriarchal norms, another can see it as working against confining patriarchal norms. Given these two contradictory interpretations of the film, it seems only to provide ambiguous messages.

Beauty Has Choices

While versions of "Beauty and the Beast" have been written for both children and adult audiences, they often serve different purposes depending on the age, and even gender, of the audience. Beaumont's version provides a didactic instruction manual for young girls to learn how to successfully navigate societal expectations, although, as Judith Fetterly's work suggests, even younger audiences may resist or question these messages. Angela Carter, however, takes the most basic features of the tale and uses them as a way to explore adult female anxiety concerning societal norms. Carter writes two tales, providing two options on each extreme of the spectrum. In doing so, Carter renders the possibilities in the middle of the spectrum visible, providing readers a multiplicity of ways by which they can live their lives and explicitly showing

that multiple readings are possible. Thus, rather than dictating what her readers must do to overcome their anxieties, as Beaumont attempts to do, Carter encourages her readers to construct their own meaning and apply changes to their lives as they see fit.

Although achieved in a different manner than the rewriting of “Snow White”, the rewritings of “Beauty and the Beast” demonstrate the way that fairy tales can be adapted to fit the needs of the audience. As the social, cultural, and gender conditions had changed since the eighteenth century, Angela Carter saw the need to craft fairy tales that speak to contemporary adult women in a way that the traditional tale could not. Rather than instructing readers how to conform to societal norms, Carter presents the potentiality of defiance. Both Carter’s “fairy tales and [her] heroines refuse externally imposed categorization by foregrounding the multiple and contradictory sexualized imagery and symbolism generated by the traditional tales through their performance in different social contexts” (Brooke 86). That is, Carter takes components from the traditional tale and alters them by placing them in her social context, and therefore, the social context of her audience. Thus, the pliability of the fairy tale genre, and more specifically, the “Beauty and the Beast” tale type, allows Carter to make the story her own, providing women with the option to forge their own paths.

Conclusion:

Happily Ever After?

Fairy tales have played and continue to play a large role in society. While some tales are more popular than others, and thus retold more often, each year, new versions of fairy tales find their way onto bookshelves, into movie theaters, and even into song lyrics, as people of all ages continue to return to fairy tales. Novels written for children, like *Ella Enchanted* (1997) by Gail Carson Levine, and ones written for adults, like *Mirror, Mirror* (2003) by Gregory McGuire continue to captivate readers. Within the past five years, television stations introduced shows like *Grimm* (2011), *Once Upon a Time* (2011), and *Beauty & the Beast* (2012), each of which draw from and incorporate fairy tale components. Several movies released in the past year alone including *Maleficent* (2014), *Into the Woods* (2014), and *Cinderella* (2015) continue the fairy tale tradition as well. These are merely a few examples of contemporary fairy tale adaptations. In addition, there are many original pieces of work that have been inspired by fairy tale themes, motifs, and story lines, such as *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900) by L. Frank Baum or the X-Men comic books, among many more.³⁹⁴⁰

³⁹ In *Fairy Tales and After: From Snow White to E. B. White* (1978), Roger Sale points out that in the introduction to *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, “L. Frank Baum writes: ‘for the time has come for a series of newer ‘wonder tales’ ...’” suggesting that Baum was expanding on the fairy tale tradition (Sale 223).

⁴⁰ Jack Zipes discusses the influence of fairy tales on comic books, specifically the X-Men tradition in his book *Why Fairy Tales Stick: The Evolution and Relevance of a Genre* (2006).

So why is it that people continue to rewrite, adapt, and transform fairy tales? Fairy tales appeal to the masses; they “are the stories we still have in common, stories we know others know” (*Twice upon a Time: Women Writers and the History of the Fairy Tale* 163). Namely, they are the stories that we grew up with. We first encounter fairy tales as children, but we continue to keep them in our lives, even as adults. Many people have the tendency to write off fairy tales as trivial because of this pop culture appeal, but just because something is popular in culture does not mean that it is not worthy of studying. It is perhaps, because of their popularity, that it is so important to study fairy tales, as popular culture reflects that which the people are receiving. Thus, the genre’s very persistence suggests its appeal.

Many of the recent adaptations of fairy tales attempt to give women greater agency. For example, Cinderella from this year’s theatrical release, *Cinderella*, is far more empowered than traditional fairy tale female characters. As the director of the film, Kenneth Branagh says, “the structure of the story responded very well to making time allow [Cinderella] to become strong, empowered, and intelligent” (Jacobs). Additionally the actress who plays the titular character, Lily James, says this Cinderella is “not waiting around for a prince to rescue her” (Jacobs). Slight changes to the plot line in this version allow Cinderella and the Prince to meet long before the ball, in the woods, where neither is aware of the other’s true identity. Additionally, “some basic dialogue choices...lend the mistreated heroine slightly more agency” (Jacobs). These small changes do not alter the basic storyline or tale type, but they do significantly change the overall message that audiences can take away. Rather than simply praising Cinderella for her dutiful submission, this film addresses the struggle to achieve female empowerment and overcome restrictive circumstances with grace in a similar manner to the tales I have investigated.

Even though some feel an inclination to ignore fairy tales in scholarly work, there are many scholars who analyze fairy tales, and who point out their complexity as social, cultural, psychological, and literary documents. The wide variety of academic areas that study fairy tales demonstrates their complexity. This complexity comes from the way that authors use fairy tales to help us work through fears, by providing us with the options we have to make it through our anxieties. As Maria Tatar says, “fairy tales register an effort on the part of both women and men to develop maps for coping with personal anxieties, family conflicts, social frictions, and the myriad frustrations of everyday life” (*The Classic Fairy Tales* xi). Additionally, Donald Haase suggests that “by actively selecting, discussing, enacting, illustrating, adapting, and retelling the tales they experience, both adults and children can assert their own proprietary rights to meaning” (“Yours, Mine, or Ours? Perrault, The Brothers Grimm, and the Ownership of Fairy Tales” 399). Specifically, readers have the capability, and even the responsibility, to construct their own meanings of the tales they read, just as tellers have the power to adapt and change the texts themselves. In a way, fairy tales are unusually pliable, as they are texts that challenge our ideas about ‘fixed meanings’. Unlike many other stories, the meaning of a fairy tale is dependent on circumstance, rather than remaining the same throughout time.

Over time our societal and personal fears change, but whether or not the fears change does not matter; we are always afraid of something. In fairy tales, the monsters and villains represent our fears, no matter what they are, including anxieties concerning maturation, oppressive governments, or even constricting societal norms. These authors incorporate changes as the times change because even though they “are retelling old stories... each retelling is both a new version of an old tale and, simultaneously, a new beginning” (*Twice upon a Time: Women*

Writers and the History of the Fairy Tale 161). These new beginnings allow for new audiences to construct new interpretations of fairy tales.

As my thesis illustrates, no matter which literary lens one uses when reading a fairy tale—sociohistorical, psychoanalytic, and/or feminist—one finds that the story represents some form of anxiety and a manner in which the audience can cope with these anxieties. By reading and analyzing traditional tales, it becomes possible to see how the minor changes that contemporary authors make to the tales change the fears the tale represents. Fears change, and fairy tales change with them, opening up new spaces to explore the hidden needs of new generations. Therefore, investigating fairy tales in a scholarly manner allows us to better understand our fears and anxieties.

My analysis of the versions of “Snow White” and “Beauty and the Beast” has demonstrated the way in which the application of these critical lenses offers deeper meaning to fairy tales. A psychoanalytic reading of The Brothers Grimm version of “Snow White” reveals a map to maturation, including ways to deal with the anxieties associated with the fear of parental jealousy children feel as they grow up. By using this traditional tale as starting point, The Merseyside Fairy Story Collective made small changes to the overall plot, resulting in very large changes in both the intended audience and meaning of the tale. That is, rather than dealing with the anxiety of maturation, a sociohistorical reading of the Merseyside version of “Snow White” exposes guidelines for overcoming political tribulations present at the time of publication. It is at the center of my argument that this is not a misuse of the fairy tale, but absolutely at the core of what fairy tales are: documents that can be changed.

Additionally, a sociohistoric and feminist lens allows for a reading of Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont’s version of “Beauty and the Beast” as an instruction manual for young

girls to adapt to social norms, like arranged marriage. By overemphasizing certain plot points found in the traditional tale, Angela Carter creates a parody of “Beauty and the Beast”. In doing this, Carter subverts the didactic nature of the traditional tale. Thus, reading through the same lenses used to analyze the traditional tale—the sociohistoric and feminist lenses—both Carter’s “The Courtship of Mr Lyon” and “The Tiger’s Bride” provide suggestions for overcoming confining patriarchal norms, such as the expectation that women will give up their own desires in order to satisfy a man’s desire or generally act submissively to men. In other words, the two tales work together to reject the unthinking adaption to social norms taught in the traditional version of the tale, in favor of giving readers options for behavior. Again, this is entirely appropriate because just as women have changed the stories they told their children for generations, women writers change fairy tales in order to suit a modern, feminist-aware audience.

While sometimes the suggested manner with which to cope with anxiety is highly didactic, other times the suggested solutions are ambiguous. However, even if the coping mechanisms provided to audiences may not be clear, they still provide the audience with options. In doing this, fairy tales try to reassure us that everything will work out in the end, or that we are capable of making everything work out in the end. In a sense, fairy tales—in particular the more contemporary ones—call for audiences to take control of their own lives by assessing their options when faced with a difficult situation and forge their own destinies. In doing this, fairy tales force us to take our ‘happily ever after’ into our own hands.

While I have looked at versions of “Snow White” and “Beauty and the Beast” in depth, the sheer number of tales in existence, and their different adaptations, indicates that there is still more research to be done. By looking at more tales and interpretations, we could gather more information about the ways in which authors have coopted traditional fairy tales to express

contemporary fears. In particular, since I have looked at the differences between stories aimed at children versus adults, further research could look at the difference between how fairy tales speak to anxieties for men versus women. This could come in the form of looking at more stories by the authors I have already explored or by looking at variations of the same tales by different authors. Additionally, investigating cultural interpretations from outside of the Western viewpoint could prove beneficial to understanding the impact of fairy tales in other countries.

By closely investigating the manner in which The Merseyside Fairy Story Collective and Angela Carter adapted and rewrote “Snow White” and “Beauty and the Beast”, I speak to the general nature of the fairy tale genre. Since each fairy tale provides a basic tale type framework, with unfixed meanings and symbols capable of representing fear, new generations of storytellers can retell and rewrite fairy tales in order to speak to new audiences with new anxieties. Just as common anxieties and fears change over time, so do the tales meant to help people cope with them. Thus, the fundamental possibility for change that the fairy tale genre offers seems to be endless. For this reason, fairy tales will continue to be adapted, retold, rewritten, and consumed for generations.

The further opportunities for research I present in addition to my specific case studies serve to demonstrate how the study of fairy tales will never truly be complete. That is, my work reveals how the basic structure of the genre resists closure because there are always multiple ways to interpret individual stories. Every time a fairy tale is told, it changes, because tales are not and will never be static. Once a tale is told it will likely never be told in the same way again. Thus, fairy tales are constantly growing and shifting in both intended meaning and manner in which they are received. They are never set in stone and cannot even be contained within the binding of a book. Fairy tales invite new tellings, new writings, and new interpretations.

There is no single defining feature or characteristic of fairy tales that makes them open to adaptation, but rather, the fluidity of the genre and each tale's ability to be interpreted in multiple ways makes them so open to retelling. In my case studies, I have shown that, in their adaptations, authors may pick up on particular power dynamics, as is the case with Snow White and the evil Queen, or characterizations, as demonstrated in the adaptations of "Beauty and the Beast". However, in the end, what allows fairy tales to survive and thrive in society is not these specific elements, but rather the way that they refuse to be clearly defined or categorized. The tradition expands far beyond confining classifications because fairy tales are the stories that we share and take individual ownership of, and like anything else that is shared, they change with each owner. It is a tale's connection to its teller and audience that makes the fairy tale genre a living, and ever-changing, form of art.

Fairy tales withstand the tests of time because they have the rare ability to live and develop through relationships between people—between storytellers and audiences, writers and readers, parents and children. When parents tell their children fairy tales, they introduce the tradition to a new generation and, as time passes, those children grow up, take ownership of the tales, and pass them on again. Sometimes the process of passing them down generationally means that they simply tell the tales to their children, but other times they write them into brand new texts, adjusting the tales in such a way as to speak to the author's circumstances or even the reader's desires. For these reasons, the genre has the rare ability to be continuously, and seemingly, endlessly flexible and adaptable. Due to this, fairy tale research can continue on, as we will always have new content to analyze.

Appendix:

My thesis deals with some unfamiliar texts. Here in the appendix, I outline the plotlines of these fairy tales in detail. Within these summaries, I not only explain what occurs in the stories, but also the way in which each story connects to the theme of the chapter they are discussed in. In the summaries of “Schneewittchen” by Brothers Grimm and “Snow White” by The Merseyside Fairy Story Collective, I focus on key power dynamics. In the summaries of “La Belle et la Bête” by Jeanne-Marie Leprince De Beaumont and “The Courtship of Mr Lyon” and “The Tiger’s Bride” by Angela Carter, I focus on the relationship dynamics. These detailed outlines are on the following pages.

Appendix 1:

“Schneewittchen” by The Brothers Grimm

“Schneewittchen” by The Brothers Grimm tells the story of a young girl, Snow White, whose mother dies soon after her birth. A year after, Snow White’s father remarries and the stepmother, better known as the evil Queen, is introduced to the tale. Throughout the story, the Queen will ask her magical mirror who is the “fairest” in the land. Until Snow White turns seven, the mirror answers that the Queen is the fairest, but after she turns seven, the mirror informs the Queen that Snow White is the fairest. Enraged with jealousy, the Queen instructs a huntsman to take Snow White into the woods and kill her. The huntsman spares her life because he feels badly for her and thinks that something in the forest is bound to kill her anyway. So, the

hunter kills a boar and brings back its lungs and liver in order to trick the Queen into thinking he has killed Snow White.

When the Queen asks the mirror about the fairest in the land, she learns that Snow White is living in a house in the middle of the woods with seven dwarfs. Angry that the hunters lied to her, the Queen takes matters into her own hands. On three occasions, the Queen transforms herself into an old woman selling enchanted staylaces, combs, and apples in an attempt to kill Snow White. The Queen is unsuccessful the first and second attempts because the dwarfs find and save Snow White, but after the third attempt, the dwarfs are unable to save her. The dwarfs put her body into a glass coffin because they do not want to bury her. One day, a prince comes along and wants to buy Snow White's body because of how beautiful she is. When the dwarfs move her body, the piece of apple stuck in her throat dislodges. When Snow White awakens, the prince asks her to marry him. As the Queen prepares to go to the wedding, she once again asks the mirror who the fairest in the land is, and the mirror responds that "the young Queen" is most fair (Brothers Grimm 89). The Queen is upset, but still goes to the wedding. The story concludes when the Queen dies after Snow White forces her to dance in hot iron shoes.

Appendix 2:

“Snow White” by The Merseyside Fairy Story Collective

In this version of the tale, Snow White is a little girl who lives in the “Queen of the Mountains” land with seven dwarfs. The story opens with a scene featuring the Queen, who lives in a faraway castle and commands her army. Through her magic mirror, she is watching her subjects as they bring her all of the material goods in the kingdom. The Queen asks her magical mirror who is the “happiest” in the land, and the mirror responds that she is the happiest. One day Snow White and the dwarfs approach her castle carrying diamonds that they have mined. When they present them to the Queen, she tells Snow White that she must stay in the castle as jewelry maker. Despite Snow White’s refusal, the soldiers lock her away in a tower with all of the jewels. When the dwarfs leave Snow White, a soldier tells her how lucky she is because she will no longer have to suffer from poverty. Snow White, however, does not see this as lucky and is upset that her friends remain in the mines without her. In other words, the beginning of this version of the tale remains fairly close to the Grimm version, with a queen, a young girl, and dwarves, but with more of an emphasis on the mines, happiness, and poverty.

Snow White makes jewelry for a few days before the Queen calls upon her. Snow White’s work pleases the Queen and she asks what Snow White wants as a reward. Snow White asks to go home, enraging the Queen, because she does not understand why anyone would want to return to a life of labor and misery when they can live in luxury. The Queen orders Snow White back to her tower where she resolves to make a jeweled belt in order to be called before the Queen again. This time when the Queen calls for Snow White she asks that the Queen only take what she needs from the people of the kingdom. Again, the angry Queen decides to show

Snow White, through the magic mirror, that she could be a princess before sending her away again. The Merseyside tale shows readers a series of interactions between the Queen and Snow White, setting up a relationship that does not exist in the Grimm version. Furthermore, Snow White serves a useful role in society as a mineworker and producer of diamonds, rather than simply being a passive princess.

The third time that the Queen calls for Snow White, when she is asked what she wants, she responds that she wants nothing. The Queen sends her to her tower, telling her that unless she decides to become a princess, she will be trapped in the tower forever. After a year of imprisonment, the dwarfs return to the castle to deliver a chest of diamonds from the mines. Snow White is informed that the Queen will be watching through her mirror to ensure that she does not see her friends. Snow White tells the guards to leave her alone and that she will fill jars with the diamonds and leave the chest outside her door. As the dwarfs head back to the mine that day, the Queen asks her mirror who is the happiest in the land, and it responds that it is Snow White. The Queen then watches Snow White, emerge from the chest in which the dwarfs had carried the diamonds. Upon this discovery, she instructs the soldiers to seal the entrance to the mine in order to kill Snow White and the dwarfs.

The dwarfs remember that the mine has a second entrance and shortly after the Queen's decree, the dwarfs and Snow White dig their way back out. A large crowd that is celebrating greets them and when a soldier tries to bring her back to the castle to face punishment, the people prevent the soldier from doing so. All the while, the Queen is watching the event through her mirror, realizing that a rebellion is beginning. She asks the mirror one last time who the happiest in the land is, and this time the answer is "the people". The mirror then simply reflects the Queen's face and the Queen attempts to throw it off the top of her castle. When she does this, the

mirror will not leave her hand, resulting in her death as she falls from the tower with the mirror.

While both the Grimm and Merseyside versions of the tale prominently feature a magical mirror, the Merseyside version focuses not only on the idea of happiness, rather than fairness, but also, importantly, the needs of the people.

Appendix 3 :

“La Belle et la Bête” by Jeanne-Marie Leprince De Beaumont

Jeanne-Marie Leprince De Beaumont’s “La Belle et la Bête” tells the story of a wealthy merchant’s family, consisting of the merchant, three sons, and three daughters. While all of his daughters are pretty, the youngest daughter stands out above the other two. Many refer to her as “the beautiful child” when she was younger, which is how she receives the name “Beauty” (Beaumont 32). The two older daughters are extremely jealous of Beauty. They are also vain and try to spend time with those from a higher class than themselves. The two older sisters often receive marriage proposals, but refuse to marry anyone less than a count. Beauty, on the other hand, refuses marriage proposals because she feels she is too young and wants to keep her father company for quite some time.

One day, the merchant loses all of his money and the family is forced to move to the countryside. The two older sisters do not want to leave the town and their admirers quickly disappear. While very few people feel badly for the older daughters, many feel badly for Beauty. At the country house, Beauty works hard every day. While she cleans and cooks for the family, her sisters make fun of her. After a year, the merchant receives notice that he must go into town because a shipment has come in. The older daughters think this shipment will make them wealthy again, so they ask their father for all sorts of luxuries. Beauty cannot think of anything to ask for, but does not want to “make her sisters look bad”, so she asks her father for a rose (Beaumont 34). However, when the merchant goes to town, he finds that there is an issue with his merchandise, and is forced to leave without any money.

On his trip home, he gets lost in the woods during a terrible snowstorm. He happens upon a castle in the woods and decides to enter, thinking that someone will be inside. He waits a while, but when no one shows up, he decides to eat the food and drink the wine on the table before finding a room to stay the night. The next morning he finds breakfast on the table and eats it. As he leaves the castle, he sees a rose bush and, remembering that Beauty had asked for a rose, decides to take one. However, the moment the merchant takes it, Beast approaches him and tells him that he has been ungrateful and now must pay for his actions with his life. The merchant tells Beast that he stole the rose for his daughter. Beast decides that one of the merchant's daughters may die in his place. So, he sends the merchant home to retrieve one of his daughters, but allows him to fill a trunk with gold from the castle. The merchant heads home, planning to use the trip as a way to say goodbye to his children before returning to the castle himself.

When the merchant returns home, he tells his family what happened with Beast. His older daughters become very angry with Beauty, blaming her for their father's fate, because she wanted the rose. Despite her father and brothers' protests, Beauty decides that she will go to the castle in her father's place, saying "I feel fortunate to be able to sacrifice myself for him, since I will have the pleasure of saving my father and proving my feelings of tenderness for him", which makes her sisters very happy (Beaumont 36). Even though Beauty's sisters are awful to her, she still forgives them before she leaves and asks her father to let them get married. Then, Beauty and her father go back to Beast's castle. Beast greets them and allows the merchant to stay the night. After the merchant leaves the next morning, Beauty starts to cry thinking that the Beast will eat her soon. She rethinks this, however, when she discovers a room, with her name written on the door, which is filled with a harpsichord, books, and more.

When Beauty enters the room, she finds a wish-granting book and thinks about how she wants to see her father. Upon thinking this, she looks in a large mirror and sees her father returning home. That night, Beast asks her if she can watch him dine and he says that even though he lacks attractiveness and intelligence, he just wants to make her happy. At the end of their conversation, he asks her if she will marry him and she says no. Beauty fears that this answer will anger him; however, Beast simply leaves the room.

For the next three months, Beast visits Beauty every night, ending each visit with the same marriage proposal, which bothers Beauty. One night, she tells him she will never marry him, but she will always be his friend. In response, he says “promise me that you will never leave” (Beaumont 39). Beauty agrees to the promise, but asks to visit her father, who she has seen is sick through the mirror. He grants her wish and she promises to return in one week. The next morning Beauty wakes up in her father’s house and he is excited to see her. Her sisters come to the house with their husbands, but become quickly upset because Beauty is in a beautiful dress from Beast. So, they plot to keep Beauty at the house for more than a week to break her promise with Beast.

After ten days at home, Beauty dreams that Beast is dying back at the castle. When she wakes, she feels terrible for causing him so much pain. She thinks about how unhappy her sisters are and wonders why she has not wanted to marry Beast, as he is so kind. Beauty decides to return to the castle, but when she gets there, she cannot find Beast and fears that she may be responsible for his death. She finds him unconscious in the garden and pours water on him to wake him up. Upon seeing her, Beast tells her “the thought of having lost you made me decide to starve myself” (Beaumont 41). Beauty becomes very upset and tells him “you will live and

become my husband. From this moment on, I give you my hand in marriage, and I swear that I belong only to you” (Beaumont 41).

Immediately after she says this, the castle lights up. When Beauty looks down, she finds an extremely attractive prince where Beast had been laying. He tells her that he was cursed by a fairy to be a beast until a “beautiful girl” agreed to marry him (Beaumont 41). Beauty and the prince return inside and she is elated to find her family inside. A fairy arrives and tells Beauty that she will become Queen as a reward for her virtuous life. The fairy also tells Beauty’s sisters that they will be turned into statues outside of the castle forced to watch Beauty’s happiness, as punishment for their wickedness. Then, the fairy waves her hands, bringing them to “the great hall of the prince’s realm” where Beauty and the prince get married and live happily ever after—or so the story says.

Appendix 4:

“The Courtship of Mr Lyon” by Angela Carter

The story starts with Beauty’s father’s car breaking down in a snow storm as he returns from a meeting with his lawyers. He has just been told that his fortune is gone. In his search for help, he comes across a large house and when he knocks on the door, it simply swings open. Just as in Beaumont’s version, he does not find any human occupants. However, a dog welcomes Beauty’s father, and the table has food and drink for him. Beauty’s father also finds a business card for a garage where his car has already been sent to be fixed.

After the storm passes, the dog brings Beauty’s father his hat, signaling that he must leave. As he leaves, he walks past a rose bush that has one white rose alive despite the fact that it is winter. Motivated by the love for his daughter, Beauty’s father steals the rose. As soon as he does so, the Beast appears to chastise him. This beast has the characteristics of a lion, but wears “a smoking jacket of dull red brocade” (“The Courtship of Mr Lyon” 44). Beauty’s father explains why he stole the rose and presents the Beast with a picture of Beauty. Upon seeing Beauty, the Beast tells her father that he may take the rose, but he must also bring Beauty to his house for dinner.

When Beauty and her father attend the dinner at the Beast’s house, all she can think about is how strange the Beast is and how much she wishes to leave. Despite this, she politely stays, motivated by loyalty and obligation to her father and the Beast’s promise to help restore their fortune. The story makes a point to emphasize Beauty’s free will stating, “do not think she had no will of her own; only, she was possessed by a sense of obligation to an unusual degree” (“The Courtship of Mr Lyon” 45). The Beast provides her extravagant accommodations, and yet,

during her stay, she still does not see any humans. One night, the dog retrieves her and brings her to the Beast. They end up talking and at the end of the night, he licks her hands and then leaves “on all fours” (“The Courtship of Mr Lyon” 47). During her stay with the Beast, she grows more and more comfortable talking with him, but cannot seem to adjust to his “strangeness” (“The Courtship of Mr Lyon” 47).

One day, her father calls with the news that his fortune has been restored. Although he is devastated, the Beast allows her to leave. She promises to return before the end of winter, but when she arrives in London, she is overwhelmed by the luxurious lifestyle. In just a short period of time, Beauty becomes extremely spoiled and begins to lose her outer beauty, as “her face [acquired]...a lacquer of the invincible prettiness that characterizes certain pampered, exquisite, expensive cats” (“The Courtship of Mr Lyon” 49). She loses track of time and almost completely forgets about the Beast, sending him white roses only once. One night, the Beast’s dog arrives at her house and “her trance before the mirror broke; all at once, she remembered everything perfectly. Spring was here and she had broken her promise” (“The Courtship of Mr Lyon” 49). Due to the dog’s appearance and apparent distress, Beauty knows the Beast’s life is in danger. So, she quickly writes a note to her father and follows the dog back to the Beast’s house.

When she arrives, the house is in utter disarray. She finds the Beast in the attic, almost dead, with the flowers she sent him next to his bed, also dead. He explains that he is dying of hunger because he has not been able to hunt since she left. However, he tells her “I shall die happy because you have come to say good-bye to me” (“The Courtship of Mr Lyon” 50). Beauty becomes distraught and throws herself on the ground kissing his paws, begging him to live. As she cries, her tears transform the Beast into a human again and he asks her to join him for

breakfast. At the end, the story reveals that “Mr and Mrs Lyon walk in the garden” with the dog, suggesting that they now live ‘happily ever after’ (“The Courtship of Mr Lyon” 51).

Appendix 5:

“The Tiger’s Bride” by Angela Carter

“The Tiger’s Bride” also tells the story of Beauty, who has been known for her looks since the day she was born. This time, Beauty serves as the tale’s narrator and tells the story in a disjointed manner. Beauty explains that her mother died very young, blaming her father’s gambling addiction and infidelity as the cause. Since then, Beauty has been alone with her father as he squanders away their possessions. When the story begins, they have just travelled from their home in Russia to a small town in Italy. Beauty says that she chose the location because there is no casino, but that even this cannot prevent her father from gambling. When they arrive, they are told “everyone who comes to this city must play a hand [of cards] with the grand signeur”, which is how Beauty and her father end up at The Beast’s parlor (“The Tiger’s Bride” 51). Over the course of the night, her father loses all of his money and ends up betting Beauty. He loses, and only after the game ends, becomes upset when he realizes what he has done. The Beast tells him coolly “If you are so careless of your treasures, you should expect them to be taken from you” (“The Tiger’s Bride” 54).

The next morning, The Beast sends a carriage to retrieve Beauty. As she travels to his house, she wonders what “the exact nature of his ‘beastliness’” is (“The Tiger’s Bride” 55). At the game the night before she noted that he moves clumsily and awkwardly. He also wears a mask with a face painted onto it, a wig, very old-fashioned clothing, and excessive amounts of cologne. In addition to his odd physical appearance, The Beast must speak through his valet because of a “growling impediment” (“The Tiger’s Bride” 53). As she thinks about The Beast,

she gets upset because she remembers terrifying stories of beast-men that her nanny told her when she was younger.

When she arrives at The Beast's house, she notices that he has chosen to live a life of seclusion over a life of luxury, despite his money. The house is in shambles, with horses in the living room, dust-sheet covered furniture, and broken windows. The valet brings Beauty to The Beast and explains that his master's one wish is to see her naked once and after that he will return her to her father along with everything else he lost. Defiant, Beauty laughs and tells him that she will pull her skirt up for him if she can be in a windowless room with a sheet over her head. She then sees a tear fall from The Beast's mask and is very happy to see that she has hurt and humiliated him.

The valet then takes her to a room like a jail cell where she threatens to hang herself. The valet becomes upset and tells her that she will not because she is "a woman of honour" ("The Tiger's Bride" 58). He then introduces Beauty to her companion, a windup soubrette, explaining that "nothing human lives here" ("The Tiger's Bride" 59). The soubrette holds a mirror in her hands and when Beauty looks into it, she sees her drunken father. The valet leaves her in the room for a while before bringing her a diamond earring that she throws into the corner of the room. The valet then brings her back to see The Beast, who upon seeing her so upset, cries another single tear. The valet returns Beauty to her room and, for hours after, she hears The Beast pacing back and forth outside her door.

The valet returns to Beauty's room to give her another diamond earring, which she throws in the corner with the first one, and offers her an invitation to go riding with The Beast. She threatens to run away and the valet questions "are you not a woman on honour?" ("The Tiger's Bride" 60) Following this question, the valet summons the soubrette, who comes out of

the closet with Beauty's personal riding gear, as Beauty loves horse riding. Beauty reluctantly complies, wanting to get out of confinement. So, she, the valet, and The Beast head out on their horses into the cold morning. As they ride, Beauty feels strangely similar to her companions as she thinks "I was a young girl, a virgin, and therefore men denied me rationality just as they denied it to all those who were not exactly like themselves, in all their unreason" ("The Tiger's Bride" 62).

After a while, they reach a river where the valet tells Beauty "if you will not let him see you without your clothes...you must, then, prepare yourself for the sight of my master, naked" ("The Tiger's Bride" 62). She fears what will happen if she refuses, so she consents. She then sees that The Beast is a tiger and she becomes very upset and takes off her own shirt to demonstrate that she does not want to hurt him. The Beast becomes embarrassed, so she does not continue removing her clothing. The Beast and the valet leave her alone while they hunt, before they all return home.

When they get back, the valet brings Beauty to a new, extravagant room. She looks into the soubrette's mirror and sees her father with all of his possessions and a note about her return. Beauty knows The Beast has kept his promise and plans to send her home. However, Beauty looks in the mirror and sees "a pale, hollow-eyed girl whom [she] scarcely recognized" ("The Tiger's Bride" 64). In that moment, she realizes that she does not want to leave. So, she puts on the diamond earrings the valet had given her and removes her clothing, which feels extremely unnatural to her. She covers herself in a set of furs The Beast gave her and goes to his room. The valet opens the door, revealing that he is also an animal. Beauty thinks it must look strange that she is in fur and jewels and decides to let the fur fall. It subsequently becomes a pack of rats.

The valet allows her to enter the chambers where she sees The Beast pacing. When he sees her, he stops moving and she realizes that she frightens him. However, when she reaches her hand out to him, he realizes that she accepts him and begins moving toward her. He begins purring very loudly, making the walls shake and the windows break. When he reaches her, he licks her hand with his rough tongue. As he continues to lick her, “each stroke of his tongue ripped off skin after successive skin, all the skins of a life in the world, and left behind a nascent patina of shining hairs” (“The Tiger’s Bride” 66). Then, the earrings that she was wearing turn to drops of water and she shakes them off her beautiful fur.

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