

East Tennessee State University
Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University

Undergraduate Honors Theses

Student Works

12-2013

Fantasy Versus Fairy Tale: How Modern Fairy Tale Variants Measure up to One of the Greatest Literary Traditions of All Time.

Cheryl Lee

East Tennessee State University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.etsu.edu/honors>

 Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Lee, Cheryl, "Fantasy Versus Fairy Tale: How Modern Fairy Tale Variants Measure up to One of the Greatest Literary Traditions of All Time." (2013). *Undergraduate Honors Theses*. Paper 87. <https://dc.etsu.edu/honors/87>

This Honors Thesis - Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Works at Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Undergraduate Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University. For more information, please contact digilib@etsu.edu.

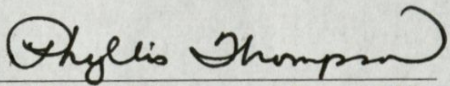
FANTASY VERSUS FAIRY TALE:
HOW MODERN FAIRY TALE VARIANTS MEASURE UP TO
ONE OF THE GREATEST LITERARY TRADITIONS OF ALL TIME

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of Honors

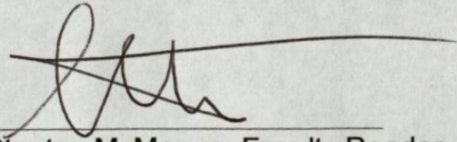
By

Cheryl Lee
The Honors College
Honors in Discipline
East Tennessee State University

August 21, 2013



Dr. Phyllis Thompson, Faculty Mentor



Dr. Stanton McManus, Faculty Reader

Dr. Joseph Sobol, Faculty Reader

[Note: Signature of mentor **is required**; listing and signatures of faculty readers are suggested, since they like to be included, but optional at the discretion of the student]

Introduction

Fairy tales have always had a life of their own. For centuries, they have grown, evolved, and reshaped; they have taken many different forms and projected many different messages across a vast number of cultures. It is because of this growth and adaptability that the fairy tale has become one of the world's most important literary traditions. But fairy tales have become so engrained in today's society that we often fail to appreciate them. We see them everywhere and pass them off as children's stories, failing to revisit them as adults. They have become synonymous with the myth of simpler times, where good and evil were always black and white and the hero always lives happily ever after. We see white knights and princesses and fairies and witches, but how often do we really think about them? How often do we question them and try to see them as they are—as something so much more than childhood memories?

The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales defines the genre as “a long, fictitious narrative...[that] includes fantasy and is told as a means of...entertainment.” The stories are “episodic” in nature, contain “supernatural challenges” and “magical motifs,” and “end happily.”¹ Although all of these criteria are true, the term “fairy tale” encompasses so much more than this definition. Fairy tales are childhood memories of adventure and imagination. They are abstract and adaptable, somehow seemingly simple and complex at the same time. To some, like fairy tale critic Maria Tatar, fairy tales tell us “about the quest for romance and riches, for power and privilege, and, most important, for a way out of the woods back to the safety and

security of home.”² To others, they offer a magical retreat from the harshness of life.³ But no matter what fairy tales mean to us individually, they are special because they have always meant *something*. The purpose of them is not that we get a single, specified meaning or moral or value from the tales, but that we see them as worthwhile stories that we can read and appreciate just like any other piece of literature but that we can also modify and pass down to future generations. This tradition helps us make sense of our environment and our imaginations, both as children and as adults. And it is these many traits and opportunities that have made the fairy tale tradition one of the longest and most important literary traditions of all time. These traits are why, as A.S. Bryant suggests, “human beings in all sorts of societies, ancient and modern, have needed these untrue stories.”⁴ And this need is why we should not ever have to do without these stories. It is this importance which has allowed the fairy tale to survive for centuries. It is why we still return to the works of Charles Perrault and the Brothers Grimm hundreds of years after the authors themselves have passed on. And it is why we have continued to modify the stories and to make them our own in recent years.

In the past decade, the number of modern fairy tale adaptations has risen drastically, even more so than in the past. These versions are everywhere in stores and on TV, but they are somehow different from their predecessors. They blur the lines between the fairy tale and other types of literature. The result is an array of adaptations which can only partially be called fairy tales due to their lack of certain necessary elements.

This thesis will examine both the history of the fairy tale and the modern adaptations of these popular stories in order to illustrate how fairy tales have evolved into their modern counterparts. In doing so, I will question the implications of the recent variants as well as their success and discuss whether or not these tales are detrimental to the idea of the fairy tale.

The Origin of Fairy Tales as We Know Them

Today, we know shockingly little about how fairy tales originated before they were written down. We do not know what the first fairy tale was, or where it came from, or why it was told, although we assume the tales originated hundreds, if not thousands of years before the genre was officially created. We know that common themes and motifs found in fairy tales date back to at least the 2nd century and can be found in works such as Apuleius's *Cupid & Psyche* (the moral that love and kindness are more important than appearance)⁵ and Egbert of Liege's *The Richly Laden Ship* (the motif of a young girl wearing a red cloak).⁶ But these texts certainly do not mean that Apuleius, Egbert, and other early authors created these motifs, and, in all likelihood, they probably did not. In his article "Breaking the Disney Spell," well-known fairy tale scholar Jack Zipes claims that these tales could be older than true civilization itself, originating in small tribes, told by master storytellers around campfires. Zipes suggests that these stories probably remained in individual tribes for centuries, changing and evolving as the societies did, eventually merging

into tales that vaguely resemble the ones we know today.⁷ Whether Zipes's theory is correct or not may never be known. What we do know comes much later in history.

During the 1600s, the telling of oral fairy tales⁸ was a popular form of entertainment in the courts and salons of France. It was these tales that French aristocrat Charles Perrault would have heard all his life.⁹ These tales became a heavy influence for many of his published fairy tales, though he certainly didn't write them verbatim. While his versions drew on the popular motifs and style of the oral tales, Perrault worked hard to add social and political issues and "ironic verse morals"¹⁰ to better "suit the taste of the salon sophisticates" and "appeal to children... [as well as] adults."¹¹

Perrault's stories are an example of what, in 1697, Madame D'Aulnoy termed *contes de fées* or "fairy tales." Probably, she had in mind the stories Perrault adapted, as well as others written by herself and many other French female authors of the time. This term was the first to distinguish them from other folk tales, myths, and legends.¹² Perrault's fairy tales were the first to be written down, published, and circulated, and thus they were set apart from the traditional folk versions of the story. Although it is regrettable that we do not have access to the popular oral versions of that time, Perrault's stories still survive today. Perrault began the written tradition of these tales, and while his stories were certainly not exact replicas of the oral tales he was able to preserve them for centuries to come, making them static in a way they never had been before and ultimately allowing us a glimpse into what the previous tales might have been. And although Perrault's version of the tales remained popular among the aristocracy for over a hundred

years, his work certainly didn't stop the circulation of oral tales. In fact, because many lower class citizens could not read the written texts, the tradition of oral fairy tales continued to flourish, and the oral stories even began to build from the literary tales and vice versa. For the first time ever, the oral tales were influenced and expanded by written text,¹³ eventually inspiring and culminating in the work of the Brothers Grimm.

By the nineteenth century when Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm set out to collect and preserve "German" fairy tales, such stories were widely known, and a multitude of versions could have been heard or read almost anywhere. The brothers sought to "restore the tales' natural authenticity"¹⁴ and "preserve storytelling traditions threatened by industrialization and urbanization"¹⁵ by cataloguing, researching, and editing over 200 tales from both oral and literary sources.¹⁶ In doing so, the Grimms provided the world with valuable tales that, while not "authentic" in the way the Grimms meant,¹⁷ were infused with a new moral character and were preserved for centuries to come.

The brothers, particularly Wilhelm, are often accused of having edited the stories to suit their own views and morals,¹⁸ and most of the tales recorded were based on literary tradition rather than oral. The brothers' notes clearly state that many of the tales within their collection were adapted from published, literary sources.¹⁹ But those that were heard orally did not necessarily derive from oral tradition. In his article "Peasants Tell tales: The Meaning of Mother Goose," renowned French historian Robert Darnton points out that several of the Grimms' most popular stories, including "Little Red Cap," "Puss 'n Boots," and "Bluebeard,"

were told to the brothers by their neighbor and friend, Jeannette Hassenpflug. Jeannette would have heard them from her mother, a former French aristocrat, who would have read them from Perrault's storybook.²⁰ Thus, even the oral stories Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm recorded were probably closely linked to early literary versions.

The stories the Brothers Grimm recorded were, understandably, neither representations of original stories nor were they truly German. By the time the Brothers Grimm heard these tales, the stories had been changed and adapted so many times that there would have been no way for anyone to truly scribe what the brothers would have considered "authentic" or "real" versions of the tales. What the brothers did do was collect hundreds of stories from various sources, both nationally and internationally, orally and literary, and edit them into something they could call their own, based on their own values and the values of the culture in which they lived. And, despite the lack of "authenticity," the stories were, and still are, no less valuable to the world. Ultimately this variety of sources and tales and the lack of authenticity worked in the brothers' favor, helping them create a valuable collection of popular tales that just so happened to contain something that Germany—and the world—wanted to read about.

The Grimms' tales spoke to readers in ways that no other fairy tale adaptation had managed to. To begin with, the brothers gathered stories that were familiar to the general public and kept common story elements and motifs that reflected that familiarity. But more than that, the Grimms collected their tales from all over; while some tales were German, many others originated from France, Italy,

Greece, Russia, and several other cultures across Europe. The result was an anthology that did not limit itself to a single country or even a single continent, allowing for worldwide appeal. Furthermore, as in previous fairy tale variants, the Grimms' stories provided metaphors for real life problems, like child abandonment in "Hansel and Gretel," which were usually resolved in a happy, moralistic manner. The vast cultural value and the relevancy to real life combined with the fact that the Grimms took public criticism into account while they made their many revisions of their collection,²¹ resulting in a medley of stories that was both valuable and entertaining. And the more family friendly the Grimms made their stories, the more popular and widespread they became.

By the mid-1800s, the Grimms' stories had become the most widely publicized and popular fairy tale variants to ever exist. *Children's Stories and Household Tales* became the first collection of fairy tales marketed exclusively for children,²² and though the material was not necessarily child-friendly at first, the brothers gradually edited their collection to make it more so. The Grimms' tales quickly became a staple for any literate family. Although the stories themselves were still technically restricted to those who could read, they were often presented as folk plays, vaudevilles, and public readings of the tales—ways that even lower class families could easily experience.²³ And with printed stories becoming more affordable and accessible to the average family, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's fairy tales became the most widely distributed and popularized variants of the tales in history. It was not long before the stories found within *Children's Stories and*

Household Tales overshadowed the strictly oral versions, eventually replacing them with the Grimms' "authentic" variants.

The Grimms' popularity was not short-lived. Even today their stories are the most well-known written versions of the tales, and it is no secret that, whatever their intentions, the brothers did the world a great service by recording and preserving many of the commonly known fairy tales of the time. However, the fact remains that those variants are certainly not word-for-word accounts of how the tales existed in early nineteenth century Germany, and, whether the brothers intended to gain such fame from their stories or not, their variants eventually completely overshadowed the other oral and written versions of their time. For better or worse, the necessity of oral tradition was diminished, and maybe for a time displaced by the wide popularity of the Grimms' print version.²⁴ This version, though certainly adaptable, still exist in print today exactly as it did 200 years ago. Ultimately, the brothers began the tradition of preserving the tales for the general public's enjoyment—a tradition which would be revolutionized less than a century later by film.

The Twentieth Century Transition to Film

At the end of the nineteenth century, the new storytelling medium of film was created, and over the next decade, filmmakers all over the world would experiment with this new medium. However, these filmmakers faced multiple problems. For one thing, film was just getting started, and it was almost impossible

for early motion pictures to last for more than a couple minutes at a time. But length was only part of the problem. Film was expensive, it was difficult to shoot live action, and sound and color were impossible. As a result, many films of the late 1890s and early 1900s had to choose between displaying written words to narrate the story or pictures to “show rather than tell.”²⁵ Since many early filmmakers considered film to be visual rather than literary, quite a few early films ignored any kind of plot or narration and instead focused on telling their story through pictures. A film of the time would consist of a single scene of some kind of authentic, common life event—a passing train, a sporting event, a picnic, and so on.²⁶ The idea was to present an obvious story and let the audience fill in the blanks themselves since lack of cinematic technique and length made telling a full story impossible. The films were novel and sometimes amusing, but they were too heavily reliant on the audience’s interpretation to experiment with full stories. And so filmmakers began to have a great need for fictional stories that were well-known enough to be adapted into film and still capture an audience’s interest. That is where fairy tales entered the scene.

At the time, the Grimms’ stories had been popular for little under a century, and were still commonly known throughout Europe and America. Because the tales were still so popular, they were the perfect solution for early filmmakers. The stories’ subjects and motifs were well-known, and the tales were relatively short. They could, therefore, be told in short film from beginning to end and required no exposition or dialogue. Assistant Professor of Film and Literary Studies at Leiden

University in France, Peter Verstraten, writes about Georges Méliés's 1899 film *Cinderella* as an example:

For a spectator unfamiliar with the fairy tale, the film might have been peculiar and might be qualified as a bizarre array of strange transformations. In the very first shot a fairy appears on the screen out of the blue. With her magic wand she conjures up mice that in the blink of an eye are transformed into a cabman and two valets. A huge pumpkin changes into a coach. These peculiar tricks only make sense because the title is an indication for the plot. The Cinderella tale was so well-known among the audience that practically any spectator could understand the reason for the sudden transformations and could discern a story in the rather random selection of tableaux.²⁷

Films like Méliés's were very popular in the early twentieth century, and the fairy tale became the preferred story type for motion pictures. In addition to the well-known stories, they provided an opportunity to create a marvelous spectacle. Méliés's *Cinderella*, for example, used "extravagant sets [and costumes]," as well as entertaining transformation sequences that captivated his audience's attention.²⁸ For the first time, people could watch the Grimms' beloved stories while fully visualizing the magic that is so common in fairy tales.

As film evolved, however, live-action filmmakers quickly dropped the fairy tale and moved on to other, more extravagant stories. And as soon as the stories lost popularity in live film, they were adopted by early animators. By the early 1920s, the animation company Laugh-'O-Gram was producing short "skewed" versions of the tales, such as "Little Red Riding Hood," "Puss n' Boots," and "Cinderella," all of which were released in 1922.²⁹ One of the chief animators on these films was Walt

Disney himself, the man who would once again revolutionize the way the world looked at fairy tales.³⁰

Disney was a skilled animator even then, but he didn't gain real popularity until he started his own company in 1928 and produced *Steamboat Willie* and the *Silly Symphonies* series. These shorts may have earned him a good reputation, but it was not until his first full length feature that Disney really grabbed the public's attention.

In 1934, Disney announced that he would make the first ever feature length animated film: *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves*. Disney was already familiar with fairy tale animation, of course. He had worked on several short cartoons based on Grimm tales for Laugh-'O-Gram, and had even created a few of his own adaptations for his *Silly Symphonies* series. But his familiarity with the tales was not his only reason for choosing the story of "Snow White." Despite his successes in the past with his animated characters, Disney had never "created screen personalities strong enough to sustain a feature."³¹ Thus, he turned to fairy tales—stories in which the characters already existed and simply needed to be developed.

Disney remembered seeing Marguerite Clark in a silent film of *Snow White* in 1917 and he "thought it was the perfect story."³² He knew without a doubt after seeing the film that the story of "Snow White" could be adapted into an entertaining feature film.³³ As a result, this particular version of Snow White greatly influenced Disney's film, maybe even more so than the Grimm version did. It gave him the idea that a film about such a well-known story could deviate from the traditional, more well-known version of the tale and still be appreciated.

By the time Disney approached his team about making *Snow White*, he had clearly been thinking about the story for years, and he had a vast number of ideas, from the Grimms' story, from the Clark film, and from his own imagination. The production team discussed at length the possibility of adding well-known pieces of previous versions of the tale, such as the Queen killing Snow White three times (rather than once) and the Queen dancing herself to death in red-hot shoes, just as she does in the Grimms' version. Eventually, perhaps in part because of the Clark version,³⁴ Disney decided to cut these elements and the scenes were removed from the discussion.³⁵

But after vetoing many of the well-known elements of the Grimm version, Disney was left with an amalgam of his own ideas and those of the Clark film. Yet he still faced the problem of turning the story into a full-length feature. Disney, who was used to making slapstick cartoons, had wanted to make his version of the story just as funny as his previous animations, and he spent many of his early meetings with his team discussing ways to make the film funnier and more light-hearted. One of Disney's first meetings about the film discussed his main goal with the film: to characterize the dwarves through slapstick comedy and catchy names, just as the Clark version had. The dwarves were clearly meant to be humorous, especially considering some of their early name possibilities, like "Hoppy-Jumpy" and "Sneezy-Wheezy."³⁶ Of course, it didn't take long for Disney to decide that too much comedy would not work within the story itself. He quickly learned that too many comedic moments in the film would ruin the seriousness of the story and would keep Snow White's death from moving the audience. But at the same time, Disney had to add

something to make the story lengthy enough to entertain an audience for an hour. His solution was to expand most of the characters in the Grimms' "Snow White"—primarily the seven dwarves, who were difficult to expand without making the film seem more trivial than it should have been.³⁷

In the end, it took Disney over 3 years to plan, write, and direct *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves*. But the frustrating years of constant editing finally paid off, and Disney was able to create a film that was an excellent blend of the Grimms' story and Disney's vibrant and comedic imagination. The resulting film was magnificent, and by the time it opened in December 1937, it was "perhaps the most widely anticipated film ever;"³⁸ *Snow White* became an "overnight success,"³⁹ and proved that fairy tales were just as open for adaptation as they had ever been, though now in a static medium that, like the Grimms' stories, would survive for generations to come.

During his lifetime, Disney only made two more feature films based on fairy tales: *Cinderella* (1950) and *Sleeping Beauty* (1959),⁴⁰ but his legacy lives on. In the past three decades, Disney Studios has continued to adapt fairy tales from Perrault and the Grimms, and even, occasionally, from Anderson (*The Little Mermaid*) and de Beaumont (*Beauty and the Beast*). These films, especially the more recent ones, are usually well-received by the public,⁴¹ but several fairy tale critics criticize his "light-hearted" approach to adapting fairy tales.

Zipes, for example, claims that, in Disney's films, "it did not matter what story was projected as long as the images astounded the audience."⁴² Zipes clearly believes that Disney chose entertainment value over actual substance; to Zipes,

these elements are negative when compared to earlier versions of the tales, at least in part because of Disney's unique storytelling style. Furthermore, Zipes feels that "[Disney] robs the literary tale of its voice and changes its form and meaning...the fairy tale is practically infantilized."⁴³ This statement is even more powerful, claiming outright that Disney stole the tales from others who came before him, turning them into something "infantilized" or baby-like, something unimportant in the scheme of fairy tale literature. Zipes ridiculous suggestion is that, by making the tales more childlike, Disney somehow devalues the fairy tale as a form of literature.

Perhaps to some, Zipes's statements would seem valid. Disney certainly "astounded" his audience, and he did make the stories slightly more imaginative and entertaining through animation and music. But Zipes's statements seem to be lacking in argument. First of all, Disney made every effort to ensure that *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves* did not contain the overemphasized spectacles that were so common in Hollywood at the time, and he cut multiple scenes from the film so that it would not be too comedic or too tragic.⁴⁴ Although he created comical dwarves and catchy songs and he did away with all but one of Snow White's deaths, he also chose to keep certain elements as well. In both versions, the main plot points remain intact, as does the Queen's motive for wanting her step-daughter dead. The changes Disney did make to the story were based on Disney's own taste as well as his influence by the Clark film rather than any kind of censorship for a younger audience. In fact, Disney himself claimed that he did not make his fairy tale films for young children. He stated, "Before seven or eight a child shouldn't be in a theater at all...I didn't make the picture for children. I made it for adults—for the child that

exists in all adults.”⁴⁵ But even if Disney did “infantilize” the tales despite his intentions, the word is not justified as an insult. After all, children’s literature certainly holds literary value,⁴⁶ and making something more childish does not necessarily devalue the meaning or purpose of the story itself. Not to mention the claim hardly holds argumentative value in Zipes’s context, seeing as the Grimm brothers (with whom Zipes finds no problem) also changed the stories to appeal more to children.

Ultimately, Disney did exactly what the Grimms did—he took well-known, popular, public tales and adapted them to fit his audience.⁴⁷ He did not steal them, because they did not belong to the Grimms, just as they did not belong to Perrault or any other fairy tale author or teller. Disney simply borrowed them from the public and modified them. Just as Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm added illustrations and changed elements they felt were inappropriate for children, Disney added movement, color, and sound. Just as the Grimms edited the tales to include Christian values for children, Disney edited them to make them more visually entertaining. Just as the Grimms turned wicked mothers into wicked *step*mothers, Disney characterized the seven dwarves. Although Disney’s fairy tale adaptations may have overshadowed the Grimms’ tales for nearly a century, his success is not unjustified.

But apart from the flashy medium of animation, Disney had one other major advantage over the Brothers Grimm: he could release his stories over the course of a century, instead of all at once. Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm collected their tales and wrote them all into one primary collection. Throughout their lives, they edited the collection multiple times, making their own, personal changes and even adding or

removing tales. But Disney released his tales one at a time over the course of many years. There were nearly 15 years between the releases of *Snow White* and *Cinderella*, and another 10 before *Sleeping Beauty* was released. That is just three stories in sixty-five years, where the Grimms produced hundreds. It was not until the late 1980s that Disney Studios began making fairy tale films on a regular basis. These films have the advantage over the Grimms' tales: they can fit a rapidly changing culture much more efficiently than 200-year-old short stories can. Over the years, Disney's films have progressed greatly from the 1930s "housewife" Snow White. Now in Disney's fairy tale adaptations there are arguably strong female characters such as Belle and Ariel, who are at least more driven and independent than their predecessors, as well as multicultural characters like Tiana. The animation style has changed to fit more modern technology, and the characters' costumes have changed to fit more modern styles and stereotypes of beauty. And as Disney Studios provides young people with these more capable and diverse roll models, the films in turn work toward changing society. The result is a collection of Disney fairy tales that are as well-received today as *Snow White* was over seventy-five years ago.

But Disney Studios hasn't become the most well-known fairy tale adaptors of all time completely unscathed. Although Disney himself was an honest, hard working man who generally loved his work,⁴⁸ his studio has been corrupted by capitalism since his death. Part of the studio's massive modern popularity stems from the vast publicity it is able to afford, including its various theme parks, Broadway productions, sequels, costumes, toys, and collectables. And more so,

critics and moviegoers seem to care more about animation technique than actual story. Seventy-five years ago, Disney's *Snow White* was received as "an authentic masterpiece" and "as exciting as a Western, as funny as a haywire comedy...[combining] the classic idiom of folklore with rollicking comic strip humor."⁴⁹ But today, Disney Studios films are almost always reviewed based on art and style, and phrases like "Eye-popping animation,"⁵⁰ "ravishing beauty," and "exquisite detail"⁵¹ are much more common than story commentary. Disney may not have begun this way, but between the cultural demand for merchandise and the increasing desire to see astounding animation, his legacy is quickly turning to the sensationalism which plagues other modern fairy tale variants. Thanks to the Grimms and Disney, fairy tales are as much a part of pop culture today as they ever have been, if not more so. With society's infatuation with these tales becoming more and more marketable, it is no wonder that more recent fairy tale variants are quick to choose entertainment and marketability over value and substance.

A Case Study of Fairy Tale Variants In the Twenty-First Century

Over the past 150 years, fairy tales have solidified themselves in pop culture in multiple ways. As previously mentioned public readings and vaudeville plays based on the Grimms' adaptations dominated the nineteenth century, and Disney's animated films did the same in the twentieth. It is no wonder, then, that modern authors, artists, and filmmakers strive to continue the fairy tale tradition by making

it even more mainstream. Unlike in the past, however, we find ourselves dominated not by one author, but many.

Over the past thirteen years, fairy tale adaptations and their popularity have spiked once again. This public interest has encouraged all types of media to revisit common childhood tales in ways that previously would have been unheard of. Live action films take advantage of the rapidly expanding filmic technology to create 3D fantasy worlds; young adult novelists and poets spin romantic tales of “happily ever after” in the midst of hardship and realism; graphic novels turn beloved characters into voluptuous heroes; and TV shows turn the stories into lengthy soap-opera dramas. Each of the various adaptations have received either excellent or terrible reviews, and are either greatly loved or abhorred by moviegoers and film critics. While *San Francisco Chronicle*'s David Wiegand calls the TV drama *Once Upon a Time* (2011) “great, fluffy fun” and “smart,”⁵² others are not so lucky. The film *Red Riding Hood* (2011) has been called an “utterly ludicrous,”⁵³ and the more recent *Hansel and Gretel Witch Hunters* (2013) “settles for showers of gore with intermittent moments of spoofiness.”⁵⁴ These newer versions, almost as a rule, seem to choose entertainment and sensationalism over morality and substance; the educational context of the stories is replaced with more gore, more sex, and more sensationalism.

Of course, fairy tales have always had a sense of pop culture within them. No one can argue that Disney, the Grimms, and even Perrault changed the previous versions of the tales to better suit the popular culture of their time. In theory at least, all fairy tale adaptations have merged themselves with the “new” and the

“sensational” in order to achieve their popularity. In doing so, they adopt violence, religion, morality, sex, and various other traits in order to appeal to a changing society. So how are the modern stories different from the previous ones?

Short answer: they are not. At least not in theory. Just like the more traditional fairy tales at one time merged an older story with pop culture, so do ours. The authors, artists, and filmmakers who are modifying these stories today are doing the same thing. They are taking a well-known story and merging it with something else—horror, action, romance, the supernatural—in order to make a more “entertaining” story for modern audiences. But in making a classic story more of a hybrid with each passing adaptation, at what point do we cease to have a “fairy tale” and instead have something else? How far is “too far,” and are the current modern versions there?

To answer these questions, I will first return to the *Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales*'s general definition of a fairy tale. In order for a story to be a fairy tale, it must be fictional, include fantasy, be told for entertainment, be episodic, contain “supernatural challenges” and “magical motifs,” and end happily. So, assuming that these criteria are what define a fairy tale (and, at least for the time being, overlooking the plethora of arguments about the definition), we can, in a simple sense, determine whether the modern variants are fairy tales or not. To explore this idea, I will examine several modern variations of common fairy tales in order to determine whether or not they fit these criteria.

The first of the four stories I will discuss is also the oldest of my selection, and is also one of the more well known modern variations, Alex Flinn's *Beastly*. In

this novel, Flinn reimagines the classic “Beauty and the Beast” by modernizing the story and inverting the point of view. Now, not only is the story written in first person in modern New York City, but readers also see through the eyes of Kyle—“the beast”—a typical high school boy with a famous news anchor father and all the money he could ever dream of. Kyle is sure of himself, his good looks, and his popularity, and continually puts down other students, claiming that he is superior. It is no wonder, then, that the resident “Goth” girl (who happens to be a witch) decides to put a curse on him, turning him into a beast—literally. Kyle’s father locks him in a mansion across town and leaves him to sort out the cure to the curse himself, finding somebody to love him before his time runs out. Kyle blackmails the father of the girl he likes, Lindy, into letting her live in the mansion with him where, just like Beauty in the classic tale, she realizes he is actually a nice guy and falls in love with him.

Although the events of the classic tale are much the same, Flinn changes the story in several ways. The modern, big-city setting causes a few problems, like how Lindy should come to live with the beast in the first place, though Flinn manages the twist well enough. The whole blackmail thing is a little underhanded, but it’s no stranger than the classic idea of a father trading his daughter’s freedom for his own life. But a couple things change beyond the obvious. The longer story and the point of view change causes several shifts in development. For one thing, there is more time to develop the characters and their story. Flinn spends several chapters simply explaining how and why Kyle was turned into a beast, while de Beaumont’s story provides about two sentences on the matter. Flinn’s version also elaborates on the

love story aspect, showing great detail in the development of Kyle and Lindy's relationship with each other over the course of her "captivity."

Most importantly, though, Flinn uses the point of view shift and the lengthy narration to change the way the reader sees the beast. Kyle's character is very sympathetic in the novelization, inserting the reader right into his mind where you see first hand his motivation to act the way he does as well as the shift in his character that comes gradually with living as a monster. The result, of course, is a beast who is entirely sympathetic—one whose actions were influenced by the way he was raised and whose outlook on life and the world around him changed drastically in the course of several months.

Although Flinn's novel does not come out and say a particular moral, her lesson is implied throughout the course of the story, and does not change all that much from de Beaumont's and Disney's morals of "it's what's on the inside that counts." This similarity is most likely due to the fact that Flinn quite clearly did her research on the tale before she wrote her version. In her author's note at the end of the novel, she discusses at length the various stories she read, and claims she was most influenced by de Beaumont's version of the tale as well as Jean Cocteau's film *La Belle et la bête*.⁵⁵ The result of this research is an adaptation that is startlingly similar to the classic version, despite the many setting and character changes.

Consider, now, *Beastly* in the context of the fairy tale definition previously mentioned. The story is, of course, fictional, contains fantasy, and is meant to be entertaining. Kyle faces the supernatural challenge of his curse, and the story contains the motif of a magical tree tattooed on his arm (similar to the enchanted

rose from the Disney version of the tale). And just like the traditional story, Kyle and Lindy live happily ever after once she has broken the curse and he turns back to normal. In fact, the only criterion that *Beastly* does not fit is the episodic nature—a trait which is hard to incorporate into a novel-length story based on a single event. Therefore, despite the changes in setting and length that Flinn made to “Beauty and the Beast,” the story does still fit the definition of a fairy tale.

The second story I will discuss is probably the least known modern adaptation—Heather Dixon’s *Entwined*. This story, published in 2011, is a variant of the Grimms’ story “The Worn Out Dancing Shoes” (also called “The Twelve Dancing Princesses” in some publications). The fairy tale is a lesser known tale about twelve princesses who sneak into a magical realm every night and dance all night long, until their shoes are worn through. The king offers the reward of marrying one of his daughters to any man who can expose the girls’ nightly activities, an honor which is won by a young, injured veteran. This tale is one of the more underdeveloped fairy tales, probably due to the fact that there are fourteen main characters to cover in such a short story.

Dixon’s novel is very similar to the Grimm version in story, although its length adds greatly to the character development. Although the eldest princess, Azalea, is the main character, her many sisters are all given identities and personalities over the course of the story. The girls’ mother, the queen, loved dancing and taught them all from the time they could walk. But when their mother dies, the castle must go into mourning, and the king will not allow any dancing for a year. But just when the girls cannot take it anymore, they discover a secret passage

leading out of their bedroom and into an enchanted grove. There, a mysterious and handsome man invites them to dance all night long in his pavilion, so long as they swear through magic not to tell anyone. The girls return night after night, but the more they dance, the more they realize that the debonair young man is not who they thought he was. He's trapped in the castle walls...and is trying to trick the girls into releasing him.

Of all the stories I will discuss, *Entwined* is probably the most similar to the traditional story, if only because the Grimms' tale is so short and undetailed. Dixon's novel is a lengthy, developed version of the Grimm version, and, just like *Beastly*, fits all of the "fairy tale" criteria except for the episodic nature.

The third modern adaptation is unique from the others in that it *is* episodic—TV episodes, that is. ABC's *Once Upon a Time* is probably the most popular variant I will discuss, and it is certainly one of the more original adaptations. The show presents itself in two different settings, but follows the same characters. In the show, all fairy tale characters come from the same realm, the Enchanted Forest. There they live side by side, each involved in their own story but occasionally crossing over into another. That is, until the evil queen from Snow White's story decides she will curse the entire forest by sending them to live in the "real" world. The catch is that only the queen herself knows the curse exists; all the other fairy tale characters are condemned to live a never-changing life in Storybrooke, a typical American small town. The characters live this way for twenty years, until Snow White and Prince Charming's daughter, Emma, who was transported to the real world as a baby un-cursed, finds her way to the town and begins to unlock the

secrets. Slowly, the characters remember their stories, and must work toward breaking the curse and transporting themselves back to the Enchanted Forest.

The uniqueness of the show lies in its length and the fact that the episodes tell the story of most well-known fairy tale characters, from Belle and Snow to Rumpelstiltskin and Little Red Riding Hood. The show even goes beyond Grimm and Perrault versions, including characters like the Mad Hatter, Pinocchio and Jiminy Cricket, and Captain Hook. Throw all of these characters into the same world, and the stories collide in imaginative ways with very few extra characters. Consider the character of Rumpelstiltskin as an example: a human-turned-imp who enjoys granting wishes for the right price. Instead of a fairy, Rumpel is the one who grants Cinderella's wish to go to the ball, and in exchange, she promises her first child to him. She and her prince manage to imprison him (she keeps the child, but the prince disappears), where Rumpel is visited by the evil queen, whom he gives the spell to curse the forest. This type of combination is intriguing, but the stories become complex very quickly. Then, the Storybrooke stories start mixing with the Enchanted Forest stories, the curse is broken, and then things just get weird.

One might think that the logical conclusion to the story would be the broken curse. But in true TV drama fashion, this is unfortunately not the case. As the story gets longer, the interesting and unique elements vanish, making way for some major drama and not much else. Despite the drama, however, the story still fits many of *Oxford's* criteria, containing abundant magical challenges and unique spins on classic motifs. It even manages to be episodic in nature, explaining each character's story as a single entity within a vast network of other stories. The only criterion it

does not meet is the happy ending...this being simply because the show is currently ongoing. Since the show has no ending yet, we cannot tell if it is a happy ending. Though judging by the producers (Edward Kitsis and Adam Horowitz, the same duo that produced *Lost*), hope for a happy ending may be asking too much.

The final adaptation I will discuss at length is another ongoing series, this time in novel form. Marissa Meyer's *Lunar Chronicles* series is, like most other stories I have discussed, a unique take on well-known tales. The first novel, *Cinder*, is a Cinderella story...sort of. The story is a science fiction representation of the tale in which Cinder (Cinderella) is a cyborg alien princess living in the futuristic town of New Beijing. She is a mechanic who works at the market to help support her adoptive mother and two sisters, one of whom is her best friend. It is at the market where she meets Prince Kai, whom she couldn't really care less about. When Cinder's beloved sister dies of the plague, Cinder's mother sells her as a test subject to help find the cure for the disease. It is there she discovers that she is the princess of an alien colony living on the moon, and both Earth and Luna are convinced that she was killed by her step mother, Queen Levana, who is plotting to take over the Earth, starting with New Beijing. Cinder goes the ball in a rusty orange car to warn Prince Kai, dressed in rain soaked clothes, muddy gloves, and high heeled shoes. Levana knows instantly that Cinder is the escaped princess and orders Kai to imprison her, which is easy, considering Cinder trips in her shoes and breaks her animatronic foot. Although Cinder's story continues in the second novel, *Scarlet*, the "Cinderella" parallels end with the first book.

Meyer's story is the least like its original fairy tale, mixing small, recognizable events and motifs into a much larger, almost unrelated story. The orange car Cinder drives to the ball, for example, is reminiscent of a pumpkin carriage, though there is nothing magic about Cinder's own mechanical skills. And while the shoe does help the Prince find Cinder, it leads toward a much more negative ending. In terms of the definition, though, the story still seems to fit to an extent. The story does take place in a fantasy world, and contains a small amount of magic. The challenges are supernatural, given that the protagonist and antagonist are both aliens, but the motifs are not really magical, and are only vaguely reminiscent of the classic story's. *Cinder* itself is not episodic, though the second novel is more so, and it is easily assumed that the future novels will become more so as more fairy tales are introduced.

Of course, there are many more modern adaptations of fairy tales in a wide variety of literary types and genres. Many of these adaptations are longer and more complex than the older versions of the tales, and many are combined with other genres of stories, becoming hybrids with those other genres and moving farther away from the traditional stories. And yet, despite their apparent differences from the originals, most of the adaptations still fit *Oxford's* given definition. In theory, then, the adaptations still count as fairy tales, as long as we accept *Oxford's* definition. But are they really? How far can we really stretch this definition?

Consider, first off, that not all fairy tale critics agree on *Oxford's* definition of a fairy tale, probably because it is so simplistic. Fairy tale is a complicated genre, and over the past several centuries, the term has evolved just as the stories have.

Certainly, the amalgam of stories we call fairy tales is not what d'Aulnoy was thinking of when she first used the phrase. Over the years, the genre has grown to include much more than just magic and fairies, and now, it seems, many critics have trouble distinguishing between fantasy and fairy tale, causing many scholars to write extremely lengthy discussions on what fairy tales are and are not. And, of course, there is no true right or wrong answer to the question. So does the *Oxford* definition do a good job of summing up the nature of fairy tales? Sure. But is it all-inclusive? Probably not.

Perhaps the definition provides an “all fairy tales are *episodic, fantasy stories that include magical challenges and motifs and end happily*, but not all tales that are *episodic, fantasy stories that include magical challenges and motifs and end happily* are fairy tales” situation. If the latter were true, we could probably attribute the definition to half of the novels in the fantasy section of a bookstore, thereby making about half of the fictional novels in existence “fairy tales.” So does the fact that the modern adaptations fit most of these characteristics really mean anything, or are we merely seeing patterns where none exist? The answer is simpler than it might seem.

Qualifying the Definition

Fairy tales themselves do contain all of the attributes that the *Oxford Companion* suggests. However, they generally include two more things, the first of which is simplicity. At most, Perrault's and the Grimms' tales are only a couple pages long, and could be told aloud in under half an hour. But that is not due to a lack of

substance on the authors' part; it is merely that the stories are simple. Critic Steven Swan Jones is one of the scholars who suggests that this simplicity is, in fact, a defining characteristic. Jones states, as an example, that "Little Red Riding Hood" contains a "protagonist [who] is a young girl, not particularly a peasant. Her interactions are entirely with family relations and a wolf; the picture of society is essentially absent."⁵⁶ Essentially, Little Red is about a very nondescript little girl who might be poor and who might live in Europe, but the readers do not know because there are no details. Nothing in the story tells the reader that the forest Little Red walks through is a specific forest; it could just as easily be the forest in the reader's backyard as it could be half way across the world. And, at least in part, that lack of detail is what makes the fairy tale so relatable to all kinds of readers.

But what happens when an author gives detail where none previously existed? Perhaps they tell a longer, more entertaining story, but is it still a fairy tale? Jones does not think so, and neither does fairy tale critic Vanessa Joosen, who claims that in becoming more specific, "the fairy tale drops some of its defining characteristics...and the retellings blur the boundaries between fairy tales and novels."⁵⁷ Considering that the modern popularity of fairy tales originates with their ability to relate to almost anyone, anywhere, and the reason they do so is due to their lack of specificity, this makes sense. After all, Alex Flinn's setting of a townhouse in New York City is a lot more specific than de Beaumont's version of a castle in the woods in probably-France (the specific setting of which is not actually mentioned in the tale). Even the Disney versions contain much more character and

setting detail than the earlier tales, simply because the films are so lengthy and are visual in nature rather than solely literary.

Similar instances happen in all of the modern adaptations, simply because it is not possible to write a novel or lengthy story in which the author does not specify setting and does not develop the characters in detail. Recall that the Grimms' "The Worn Out Dancing Shoes" is about twelve very undetailed princesses who have very little motive to dance every night or to keep their escapades a secret from their father beyond pure speculation. But in Dixon's novel, each of the princesses has a face and a name in the reader's eye. Dixon tells what they look like, how old they are, and even what each of their personalities are, not to mention her description of the King, the girls' late mother, and the multitude of men who come to help solve the riddle. The story is long and expressive and entertaining, sure, but it is too detailed to be a fairy tale.

This lack of simplicity also leads into the second aspect of fairy tales which is relatively lacking in the modern versions: adaptability. Perhaps Perrault or the Grimms would not have considered the extent to which their tales were modifiable, but nonetheless they are. The lack of detail makes it easy to take a sequence of events like those which happen in "The Worn Out Dancing Shoes" or "Cinderella" or "Little Red Riding Hood" and change them into a different, yet very similar, story. The very fact that these stories are able to evolve across time and culture is what makes them special and necessary to us. But can you really adapt a full-fledged novel or TV show? An author who tries to modify Dixon's *Entwined* could probably go about it in one of two ways. She could change the plot at its core, in which case it

is no longer based on a fairy tale and one would find it difficult to even relate it to Dixon's story, or the author could change the details and keep the plot, in which case why would she not just start from the Grimm version? Either version is not really an adaptation of Dixon's novel, and if it remains an adaptation of anything, it is of the Grimm version. The same can be seen even with the Disney adaptations—certain Disney motifs or events may have influenced the modern versions (the enchanted rose from *Beauty and the Beast* clearly influences the tree tattoo in *Beastly*), but the stories and themes of the modern versions are based much more on the classic stories than they are on Disney. In theory, then, the lengthening and novelization of the tale is the end of the line, so to speak. But that certainly does not make them less valuable to the world. There is no where to go but back for the fairy tale, but these new hybrids can only move forward, creating the path for whatever comes next.

Conclusion:

The good news is that the classic versions of fairy tales are still as essential to us today as they ever were, and will probably remain so for the foreseeable future. That is, anyway, until someone else comes along who can write a series of short, nondescript stories modified from past versions that also contain all of the *Oxford* criteria. Of course, this may or may not ever happen.

But just because the modern variants can only partially be called fairy tales does not make them unnecessary or negative. Disney is evidence enough of that, providing us with films that are as treasured today as they were decades ago that

would be difficult, if not impossible, to replace or ignore. These adaptations—both Disney’s and the various others—fit into a society where entertainment is valuable. And these stories certainly entertain. Perhaps not all of the adaptations can be considered “good literature,” but that is up to each individual reader to decide. Critic and theorist Terry Eagleton said, “difference must pass through identity if it is to come into its own.”⁵⁸ So while these stories may be a dead end to the fairy tale—mimicking them but never replacing—they may very well be the start of something else that will one day be respected and enjoyed throughout the world.

¹ “Fairy Tale” in *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales: The Western Fairy Tale Tradition from Medieval to Modern* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 201.

² Maria Tatar, “Introduction” in *The Annotated Classic Fairy Tales*, ed. Maria Tatar (New York: Norton, 2004), xii.

³ A.S. Bryant, “Introduction,” in *The Annotated Brothers Grimm*, ed. Maria Tatar (New York: Norton, 2004) xvii.

⁴ *Ibid*, xviii.

⁵ Maria Tatar, ed., “Introduction: Beauty and the Beast” in *The Classic Fairy Tales* (New York: Norton, 1999), 25.

⁶ Jan M. Ziolkowski, *Fairy Tales from Before Fairy Tales: The Medieval Latin Past of Wonderful Lies* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2008), 93-124.

⁷ Jack Zipes, “Breaking the Disney Spell” in *The Classic Fairy Tales*, ed. Maria Tatar (New York: Norton, 1999), 333-34.

⁸ The term “oral fairy tale” used here does not necessarily refer to commonly known stories in modern day. The term includes episodic-like short stories which contain some kind of magical occurrence and/or motif, some of which are unknown in modern times. These kinds of tales were popular among the French aristocracy in

the 1600s. It is these oral tales that d'Aulnoy was referring to when she first wrote the term *contes de fées* (or "fairy tale") in 1697.

⁹ *Encyclopedia of Folklore and Literature*, s.v. "Charles Perrault."

¹⁰ "Charles Perrault" in *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales: The Western Fairy Tale Tradition from Medieval to Modern* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 501-4.

¹¹ Robert Darnton, "Peasants Tell Tales: The Meaning of Mother Goose" in *The Classic Fairy Tales*, ed. Maria Tatar (New York: Norton, 1999), 282.

¹² The difference between fairy tales, folktales, myths, and legends is highly debatable, and no clear definition for any of them have been set. My own understanding and interpretation is that the term *contes de fées* refers to magical short stories that were told in the French courts. They would not have contained divine beings or explained natural phenomena like myths and legends would have, and they were separated from the traditional folk tale which, at the time, would have been accessible to the common people and would not have contained magical elements.

¹³ Zipes, "Breaking the Disney Spell," 334.

¹⁴ "Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm" in *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales: The Western Fairy Tale Tradition from Medieval to Modern* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 274-8.

¹⁵ Maria Tatar, "Reading the Grimms' *Children's Stories and Household Tales: Origins and Cultural Effects of the Collection*" in *The Annotated Brothers Grimm*, ed. Maria Tatar (New York: Norton, 2004), xxxii.

¹⁶ *Encyclopedia of Folklore and Literature*, s.v. "Brothers Grimm."

¹⁷ I use the term "authenticity" here because that is what the Grimms intended to restore when they set out to compile their fairy tales. The term is not meant to undermine the value of their stories. The Grimms did not understand that there is no "authentic" fairy tale. Even in their time, the history of the tales was so muddled and had evolved so slowly over several centuries that it would be impossible to recreate the original versions. However, regardless of authenticity, the tales are just as valuable today as they were when they were first published.

¹⁸ "Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm," 276

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 276-7.

²⁰ Darnton, "Peasants Tell Tales: The Meaning of Mother Goose," 282.

²¹ Chris Gaylord, "Brothers Grimm Saved Classic Fairy Tales by Changing them Forever," *The Christian Science Monitor*, December 20, 2012, <http://www.csmonitor.com/Innovation/Tech-Culture/2012/1220/Brothers-Grimm-saved-classic-fairy-tales-by-changing-them-forever> (accessed July 22, 2013).

²² *Encyclopedia of Folklore and Literature*, s.v. "Grimm, Brothers."

²³ Zipes, "Breaking the Disney Spell," 337-8.

²⁴ The Grimm tales were the first written fairy tales to become so popular that they almost completely overpowered the oral tradition of the stories. Their tales both solidified the well-known stories in written form and re-popularized them, encouraging other genres of storytelling, such as theater and film. Although not all of the different mediums that reproduced or modified the Grimms' stories can be considered static and unchangeable, many of them were and still are. The Grimms were the first to show the general public the potential, value, and convenience of static fairy tales. Their success with the stories is what encouraged future authors and filmmakers to continue making static versions of these well-known tales, thus overshadowing (though never deleting) the oral and theatrical versions of the stories.

²⁵ Peter Verstraten, "Between Attraction and Narration: Early Film Adaptations of Fairy Tales," *Revue Electronique de Litterature Francaise* 4, no. 1 (2010): 241, accessed February 12, 2013.

²⁶ "Movie History," *Filmbug*. <http://filmbug.com/dictionary/moviehistory.php> (accessed July 31, 2013).

²⁷ Verstraten, "Between Attraction and Narration: Early Film Adaptations of Fairy Tales," 243.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 247.

²⁹ Neal Gabler, *Walt Disney* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 68.

³⁰ Although Disney was certainly not the only filmmaker, or even animator, to create filmic adaptations of fairy tales, he is the one I will focus on in this thesis. My purpose in this section, as in the previous section, is to detail the most well-known adapters of fairy tales. It is certain that, of all the filmmakers who visited fairy tales as potential subject matter, Disney is the one the general public is the most familiar with, and he (and his company) is without a doubt the most well-known and popular fairy tale adapter of the 20th century.

³¹ Michael Barrier, *The Animated Man: A Life of Walt Disney* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007), 101.

³² Ibid,102.

³³ Ibid,102.

³⁴ J. Searle Dawley's 1916 production of *Snow White* left out the dancing shoes completely, and only included two of the three "death" scenes present in the Grimms' tale. The "missing" death was the lace bodice, which may have been removed simply to fit the costuming of the production.

³⁵ Gabler, *Walt Disney*, 219-20.

³⁶ Christopher Finch, *The Art of Walt Disney* (Burbank: Walt Disney, 1973), 167-8.

³⁷ Barrier, *The Animated Man: A Life of Walt Disney*, 121.

³⁸ Ibid,131.

³⁹ Finch, *The Art of Walt Disney*, 197.

⁴⁰ Disney, of course, made dozens of films between *Snow White* and the time of his death in 1966, including several like *Pinocchio* (1940), *Alice in Wonderland* (1951), and *Peter Pan* (1953), which are sometimes considered to be fairy tales. It is, therefore, important to note that when I say "Disney fairy tales," I mean films that he specifically adapted from tales written by the Grimm brothers, Perrault, Hans Christian Anderson, or Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont rather than children's literature in general.

⁴¹ According to *The Numbers* Box Office Data, Disney's fairy tale adaptations have consistently made more than \$100 million in the box office. *The Little Mermaid* (1989) received over \$111 million, and *Beauty and the Beast* (1991) received almost \$219 million. *The Numbers* projects these movies at \$206 and \$340 million respectively with inflation. More recent films have also done well. *The Princess and the Frog* (2009) received over \$104 million and *Tangled* (2010) received over \$200 million. When compared to the first release of *Snow White* (1937), which made a projected \$185 million (considering inflation), it is clear that Disney's popularity is substantial and has remained consistent since his debut.

⁴² Zipes, "Breaking the Disney Spell," 342

⁴³ Ibid, 344.

⁴⁴ Barrier, *The Animated Man: A Life of Walt Disney*, 127.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 131

⁴⁶ In fact, some of the most cherished literary works like Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* and J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* fall into the category of Children's literature.

⁴⁷ Disney and the Grimm brothers are certainly not the only famous authors to follow this pattern. Consider that Shakespeare, Homer, and many other great storytellers also took their stories from well-known tales and myths. Thus the fact that Disney modified the Grimms' tales does not make him any less of a great storyteller.

⁴⁸ Despite Zipes's claims that Disney was a narcissistic and self-projecting villain, I believe he was mistaken. Disney was a self-made man, true, and his work ethic and artistic visions caused him to be critical of his team and ruthless in his editing, but he did not underappreciate his crew. By 1934, as soon as he could afford it, Disney began paying semiannual bonuses to most of his employees, and it was his idea to cut down on negativity in the studio, encourage animators to work because they enjoyed it, not because they had to (103). Disney may have been critical in finalizing his projects, but so were his employees; everyone wanted to fulfill Disney's visions on screen (112).

⁴⁹ "Snow White and the Seven Dwarves Original Theatrical Trailer #1," YouTube video, 1:37, posted by "DisneyPlatinumDVDsTV," July 21, 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5kWr9e4JN5I>.

⁵⁰ Janet Maslin, "Beauty and the Beast (1991)," review of *Beauty and the Beast*, dir. Gary Trousdale and Kirk Wise, *New York Times*, November 13, 1991, <http://movies.nytimes.com/movie/review?res=9D0CE2DF1330F930A25752C1A967958260> (accessed July 23, 2013).

⁵¹ A.O. Scott, "Tangled (2010): Back to the Castle Where it's all About the Hair," review of *Tangled*, dir. Nathan Greno and Byron Howard, *New York Times*, November 23 2010, <http://movies.nytimes.com/2010/11/24/movies/24tangled.html?pagewanted=all&r=1> (accessed July 23, 2013).

⁵² David Wiegand, "'Grimm' and 'Once Upon a Time' Reviews," review of *Grimm* and *Once Upon a Time*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 21, 2011, <http://www.sfgate.com/tv/article/Grimm-and-Once-Upon-a-Time-reviews-2326641.php> (accessed July 23, 2013).

⁵³ Ann Hornaday, "Red Riding Hood: A Tale Cloaked in Pretension," review of *Red Riding Hood*, dir. Catherine Hardwicke, *The Washington Post*, March 11, 2011, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/gog/movies/red-riding-hood,1163413/critic-review.html> (accessed July 23, 2013).

⁵⁴ Liam Lacey, "Hansel & Gretel: Witch Hunters—Brisk and Disposable (in 3D, no less)," review of *Hansel & Gretel: Witch Hunters*, dir. Tommy Wirkola, *The Globe and Mail*, January 25, 2013, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/film/film-reviews/hansel-gretel-witch-hunters-brisk-and-disposable-in-3-d-no-less/article7872214/> (accessed July 23, 2013).

⁵⁵ Alex Flinn, "Author's Note," in *Beastly* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007) 301-4.

⁵⁶ Steven Swan Jones, "On Analyzing Fairy Tales: 'Little Red Riding Hood' Revisited," in *Western Folklore*, 46, no. 2 (Apr. 1987): 101 (accessed Nov. 4, 2013).

⁵⁷ Vanessa Joosen, "Disenchanting the Fairy Tale: Retellings of 'Snow White' Between Magic and Realism," *Marvels & Tales: Journal of Fairy Tale Studies*, 21, no. 2 (2007): 238 (accessed Nov. 4, 2013).

⁵⁸ Terry Eagleton, "From the Polis to the Postmodern," in *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1990) 414.