



Peer Reviewed Syllabus

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English 1310 Modern Fairy Tale: Contemporary Retellings of “Once Upon a Time...”

Developer: Stephanie Couey

“Ours is a highly individualized culture, with a great faith in the work of art as a unique one-off, and the artist as an original, a godlike and inspired creator of unique one-offs. But fairy tales are not like that, nor are their makers. Who first invented meatballs? In what country? Is there a definitive recipe for potato soup? Think in terms of the domestic arts. “This is how I make potato soup.”

– Angela Carter

Course Description:

In this course, we will read some of the original (as far as we know) written versions of well-known fairy tales, examine their origins and historical contexts, and investigate their ongoing social impacts. We will unpack how fairy tale adaptations across cultures both reflect and inform the values adherent to distinct time periods, places, and/or communities. We will also reflect upon the personal impacts that fairy tales and their modern adaptations have had on our own lives and understandings of the world.

Some themes and topics you can expect to engage with at length include but are not limited to: human-animal relationships; magic, witchcraft, spells, and charms; enchanted objects; nature and the environment; bodily transformation; coming of age; marriage; consent; romantic love; familial love and conflict; wealth, class, and society; and “good” and “evil.”

To assist in our inquiries and to learn to critically read fairy tales, we will engage with scholarly texts across fields of literary history, gender and sexuality studies, critical race theory, ethnic studies, disability studies, and media studies. We will consider how “classic” fairy tales and their modern adaptations can uphold and/or resist oppressive representations and belief systems.

As a class, we will continuously ask: What do the tales that pervade contemporary fiction and poetry—as well as movies, pop songs, music videos, theme parks, and so on—reveal about significant moments in history? How do they relate to the historical and cultural moments of which we are a part? How might certain fairy tale adaptations influence how we see and interact with our surroundings? How do they shape our principles, desires, fears, and beliefs? Fairy tales are (arguably) always with us, but what are the costs and benefits of their magic on the “real” world, and on ourselves?

Objectives:

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Define “fairy tale” and name the characteristics of the genre.
2. Identify contemporary adaptations of “classic” fairy tales.
3. Demonstrate comprehension of the historical, cultural, and social circumstances in which each fairy tale and its variants were produced.
4. Apply a vocabulary of the literary forms, devices, themes, and archetypes that characterize fairy tales across space and time.
5. Identify archetypes, themes, characters, plots, and significant passages in selected works.
6. Compare different adaptations of the same fairy tale.
7. Analyze literary and scholarly texts and media using the process of close reading.
8. Critique major scholarship on fairy tales.
9. Formulate an interpretive thesis.
10. Defend your interpretive thesis with analysis of textual evidence.
11. Develop rhetorical and visual presentation skills.
12. Create an original creative final project in the form of your choice OR compose a final paper.

Required Texts:

- Norton Second Critical Edition of *The Classic Fairy Tales*, edited by Maria Tatar, 2017.
- Selected PDFs provided on Canvas.

Optional Texts:

(PDFs provided)

- *My Mother She Killed Me, My Father He Ate Me: Forty New Fairy Tales*, edited by Kate Bernheimer with Carmen Giménez Smith, 2010.
- *The Rose and the Beast: Fairy Tales Retold* by Francesca Lia Block, 2001.

Grading (out of 100 percentage points):

| Assignment | Grade Percentages |
|---|--------------------------|
| Syllabus Quiz, Getting-to-Know-You-Survey, and Presentation Sign-Up | 6% |
| Perusall Readings (10 sets; 3 percentage points each) | 30% |
| Discussion Posts (8 posts; 3 percentage points each) | 24% |
| Presentation | 10% |
| Presentation Participation | 5% |

Final Paper OR Project Proposal 5%

Final Project: Creative Project & Reflection Paper OR Final Paper 20%

Assignments:

Syllabus Quiz: This quiz will be easy if you watch the Course Introduction video and familiarize yourself with the syllabus.

Getting-to-Know-You Survey: Please fill this out in full detail, so I can learn a bit about you going forward! I try to engage my students' interests and learning styles in each course, and filling this out will help me do so.

Readings: Get started on all readings the Monday of each week (or earlier) to give yourself ample time to read them closely as well as watch any of the listed films.

You will notice that the readings are organized as a “**cafeteria menu.**”

Each week, you are expected to read all readings from “Column A” and 2 readings from “Column B.”

Alternatively, you may read all of “Column A” and just 1 reading from “Column B,” plus watch 1 of the films listed for the week.

We will complete a Perusall reading each Tuesday, and the remainder of the readings are your responsibility to read on your own, by Thursday, and to synthesize into your weekly Discussion Post.

Perusall Readings: Each Tuesday, we will use Canvas's Perusall tool as a class to perform interactive in-depth close readings. We will go over how to use this tool at the beginning of the semester. You will be expected to write 5 detailed annotations on the text. Responses on your classmates' annotations can also be counted toward this amount.

Discussion Posts plus Comment: Most Thursdays, a 500-word “discussion post” is due to a collaborative Discussion Board to synthesize the content from that week.

Rather than speaking in general terms, use specifics (e.g., quotations from the readings, specific moments from filmic representations,). These posts should include a thesis statement, or an argument, about some aspect of the material you engaged with that week that interests you. **Up to twice per semester, you have the additional option to use the Discussion Post to write your own adaptation of the fairy tale we read for the week.** The 500-word minimum still applies.

- Posts must be free of grammatical and spelling errors.

- Please submit to the designated Discussion Board in the textbox (not as an attachment).

You are also required to comment on two classmates' discussion posts in 3-5 sentences minimum. In your comment, contribute substantially to their observations, arguments, or insights; engage directly with what they are saying and also bring your own insights to the discussion.

Presentation: Working individually, you will be required to create an online presentation **once** during the semester, due on a Wednesday. Using Canvas Studio, create a **5-minute**-long (minimum) instructional video (PowerPoint with a voice-over) on one piece of reading or visual media from that week, keeping your focus on a specific theme from that text. **Conclude the presentation with 2-3 discussion questions.**

Some examples of potential themes: magic, witchcraft, animals, femininity, masculinity, gender more broadly, (dis)ability, bodily transformation, race, ethnicity, nationality, wealth/poverty, royalty, illness, sleep, clothing, mothers, fathers, romantic love, beauty, storytelling, forests/the woods, nature...

Feel free to draw from your major for your presentation!

Another possibility would be to see if your chosen fairy tale appears in any news stories or any recent music, art, film, or television.

Presentation Participation and Comments: You are required to watch and comment on each of your classmates' presentations. As with the comments on Discussion Posts, generally supportive remarks such as "Great work!" "This is really interesting," "I liked this presentation a lot," or "I found this presentation really helpful" are all nice things to say, but they don't constitute constructive engagement. Consider answering a question posed at the end of the presentation and/or asking an additional follow-up question or digging deeper into something that was brought up in the presentation that interests you.

*If there are no presentations posted for that week, you aren't responsible for commenting.

Final: Creative Project or Paper: For your final, you may complete either a **creative project** of your choosing, or write a **4-6 page academic paper** (minimum) on the topic of your choice from this semester.

If you choose a paper, you must engage with **2 outside critical sources** (minimum).

If you choose a creative project, you will be required to submit a **1-2 page reflection piece** about your project. I've seen anything from podcasts, to short films, to original raps/songs, to videographic essays, to paintings, to board games, to fiction stories, to original homemade poetry books, to personal essays, etc. Perhaps you want to use this assignment to compose an adaptation of your favorite (or least favorite) tale in any form you choose! You are required to approve your project before proceeding.

Classroom Culture: Inclusivity, Awareness, Generosity, and Respect

Much of what makes the literature classroom so valuable is the diverse array of experiences that each one of us brings to the space. To maintain an all-inclusive atmosphere where we celebrate and learn from one another's unique worldviews and differences, I ask that we all come to the classroom

with rigorous self-awareness of our own subject positions, and that we consistently display respect and graciousness toward one another. In order for the online classroom to be a welcoming and successful learning space, we are all responsible for ensuring that each participant can learn, contribute, and grow in a supportive environment.

Considering that much of the work we engage with throughout the semester may be unsettling or contentious, it is especially important that we move through this course with attitudes of openness, respectfulness, kindness, and curiosity. In addition to sharing, you are expected to listen to and engage with your classmates' insights. You are encouraged to respectfully challenge ideas put forth by your instructor or classmates, without dismissing their differing viewpoints, as it is by sharing our differing perspectives that we can critically examine them. You are also always encouraged to think critically on your own viewpoints.

Something to remember: tone can sometimes get lost in the online space, so try and remain generous in your interpretations of what your classmates put forth. However, I ask that we recognize the difference between "freedom of speech" and hate speech, knowing that the latter will not be tolerated in any form. Racist, classist, ableist, homophobic, transphobic, sexist, xenophobic, or otherwise discriminatory or hurtful language or images are impermissible.

Class Schedule

Week 1: Course Introduction

M Jan 17 – No Class – Martin Luther King Jr. Day

T Jan 18 – Watch Course Navigation Video; Watch Syllabus Overview Video; Watch Introduction to Perusall: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ODE6v4YOooE>)

Th Jan 20 – Self-Introduction Discussion Post Due

F Jan 21 – Getting-to-Know-You Survey Due; Syllabus Quiz Due; Presentation Sign-Up Due

Week 2: Discourse on Fairy Tales

Weekly Readings and Media:

Column A: (all)

- Maria Tatar, Introduction to The Classic Fairy Tales, Norton Second Critical Edition, pp. xi-xxvi
- Neil Gaiman “Instructions,” The Classic Fairy Tales, Norton Second Critical Edition, pp. 3-4

Column B: (choose 1)

- Michelle Anya Anjirbag, “Enter the Castle: Reiterating Medievalism in the Framing of Disney’s Fantasylscapes,” PDF
- Donald Haase, “From Yours, Mine, or Ours? Perrault, the Brothers Grimm, and the Ownership of Fairy Tales,” The Classic Fairy Tales, Norton Second Critical Edition, pp. 435-446
- Amanda Leduc, “The Child Whose Head Was Bathed in Darkness,”
- Disfigured: on Fairy Tales, Disability, and Making Space, pp. 17-34, PDF
- Jack Zipes “Fairy Tale Discourse: Toward a Social History of the Genre,” PDF

T Jan 25 – Perusall Readings Due

W Jan 26 – Post Presentation (if presenting)

Th Jan 28 – Discussion Post Due

F Jan 29 – Comments on Discussion Posts and Presentations Due

Week 3: Beauty and the Beast

Weekly Readings and Media:

Column A: (all)

- Introduction to “Beauty and the Beast,” The Classic Fairy Tales Second Norton Critical Edition, pp. 30-39
- Jeanne-Marie Leprince De Beaumont, “Beauty and the Beast” (1756),
- The Classic Fairy Tales Second Norton Critical Edition, pp. 39-50
- Emma Donoghue, “The Tale of the Rose,” Kissing the Witch (1997), PDF

Column B (choose 1 film):

- La Belle et la Bête (1946)

- Beauty and the Beast, Disney, animated (1991)
- La Belle et la Bête (2014)
- Beauty and the Beast, Disney, live action (2017)

T Feb 1– Perusall Readings Due

W Feb 2 – Post Presentations (if presenting)

F Feb 4 – Comments on Presentations Due

Week 4: Beauty and the Beast cont'd

Weekly Readings and Media (just “Column B” options this week)

Column B (choose 2 readings and 1 film)

- Francesca Lia Block, “Beast,” PDF
- Angela Carter, “The Tiger’s Bride” (1993), *The Classic Fairy Tales* Second Norton Critical Edition, pp. 58-74
- Adrion Dula, “B(e)aring the Beast: Deformity, Animality, and the Ableist Gaze in French Literary Variants of ‘Beauty and the Beast,’” pp. 197-206, PDF

Films:

- La Belle et la Bête (1946)
- Beauty and the Beast, Disney, animated (1991)
- La Belle et la Bête (2014)
- Beauty and the Beast, Disney, live action (2017)

T Feb 8 – Perusall Reading

W Feb 9 – Post Presentations (if presenting)

Th Feb 10 – Discussion Post Due

F Feb 11 – Comments on Discussion Posts and Presentations Due

Week 5: The Princess and the Frog

Weekly Readings and Media:

Column A: (all)

- Watch: *The Princess and the Frog* (2009)
- Brothers Grimm, “The Frog King, or Iron Heinrich” (1812), *The Classic Fairy Tales* Second Norton Critical Edition, pp. 55-58
- Kimberly R. Moffitt, “Sculpting the Way for the 21st-Century Disney Princess in *The Princess and the Frog*,” PDF

Column B: (choose 1)

- Elizabeth Pérez, “‘I Got Voodoo, I Got Hoodoo’: Ethnography and Its Objects in Disney’s *The Princess and the Frog*,” PDF
- Neal A. Lester, “Disney’s *The Princess and the Frog*: The Pride, the Pressure, and the Politics of Being a First,” PDF
- Victoria Tedeschi, “The Image of Faithful Frogs and Titillated Toads: The Human and Animal Hierarchy in Victorian Fairy Tale Adaptations” (PDF)

T Feb 15 – Perusall Reading
W Feb 16 – Post Presentations (if presenting)
Th Feb 17 – Discussion Post Due
F Feb 18 – Comments on Discussion Posts and Presentations Due

Week 6: The Little Mermaid
Weekly Readings and Media:

Column A: (all)

- Introduction to Hans Christian Andersen, *The Classic Fairy Tales* Second Norton Critical Edition, pp. 278-283
- “The Little Mermaid” (1837), *The Classic Fairy Tales* Second Norton Critical Edition, pp. 283-300
- Lori Yamato, “Surgical Humanization in H.C. Andersen’s ‘The Little Mermaid,’” PDF

Column B: (choose 1 film)

Films:

- The Little Mermaid (1989)
- Ponyo (2009)
- The Lure (2015)
- The Shape of Water (2017)

T Feb 22 – Perusall Reading
W Feb 23 – Post Presentations (if presenting)
F Feb 25 – Comments on Presentations Due

Week 7: The Little Mermaid cont’d
Weekly Readings and Media:

Column A: (all)

- Emma Donoghue, “The Tale of the Voice,” *Kissing the Witch* (1997), PDF Column B: (choose 1 film)

Films:

- The Little Mermaid (1989)
- Ponyo (2009)
- The Lure (2015)
- The Shape of Water (2017)

T Mar 1 – Perusall Reading
W Mar 2 – Post Presentations (if presenting)
Th Mar 3 – Discussion Post Due
F Mar 4 – Comments on Discussion Posts and Presentations Due

Week 8: Cinderella

Weekly Readings and Media:

Column A: (all)

- Introduction to “Cinderella,” The Classic Fairy Tales Second Norton Critical Edition, pp. 139-145
- Brothers Grimm, “Cinderella” (1812), The Classic Fairy Tales Second Norton Critical Edition, pp. 148-153

Column B: (choose 2, or choose 2 films, or choose 1 and 1 film)

- Francesca Lia Block, “Glass,” PDF
- Anne Sexton, “Cinderella,” PDF
- “Yeh-hsien,” The Classic Fairy Tales Second Norton Critical Edition, pp. 148-153, “The Chinese Cinderella Story” from Folk-Lore
- “The Three Gowns,” The Classic Fairy Tales Second Norton Critical Edition, pp. 162-166, from Latin American Folktales: Stories from Hispanic and Indian Traditions
- “The Princess in the Suit of Leather,” The Classic Fairy Tales Second Norton Critical Edition, pp. 175-181, from Arab Folktales

Films:

- Cinderella (1950)
- Cinderella (1997)
- Ever After (1998)
- A Cinderella Story (2004)

T Mar 8 – Perusall Reading

W Mar 9 – Post Presentations (if presenting)

F Mar 11 – Comments on Presentations Due

Week 9: Cinderella cont'd

Weekly Readings and Media:

Column A: (all)

- Virginia Hamilton, “Catskinella,” Her stories: African American folktales, fairy tales, and true tales, PDF
- Robert D. San Souci, illustrated by Brian Pinkney, Cendrillon: A Caribbean Cinderella, PDF
- Deborah Thompson, “Not All Cinderellas Wear Glass Slippers: A Critical Analysis of Selected Cinderella Variants from the Black Perspective,” PDF

Column B: (choose 1 film) Films:

- Cinderella (1950)
- Cinderella (1997)
- Ever After (1998)
- A Cinderella Story (2004)

T Mar 15 – Perusall Reading
W Mar 16 – Post Presentations (if presenting)
Th Mar 17 – Discussion Post Due
F Mar 18 – Comments on Discussion Posts and Presentations Due

*** M March 21 – F March 25 SPRING BREAK (No Classes) ***

Week 10: Sleeping Beauty
Weekly Readings and Media:

Column A: (all)

- Introduction to “Sleeping Beauty,” The Classic Fairy Tales Second Norton Critical Edition, pp. 117-122
- Charles Perrault, “The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood” (1697), The Classic Fairy Tales Second Norton Critical Edition, pp. 123-130
- Francesca Lia Block, “Charm,” PDF Column B: (choose 1 or choose 1 film)
- The Brothers Grimm, “Briar Rose” (1812), The Classic Fairy Tales Second Norton Critical Edition, pp. 130-133
- Gabriel Garcia Marquez, “Sleeping Beauty and the Airplane” (1992), The Classic Fairy Tales Second Norton Critical Edition, pp. 133-137
- Rabih Alameddine, “A Kiss to Wake the Sleeper,” My Mother She Killed Me, My Father He Ate Me, pp. 411-422 – “Sleeping Beauty,” Charles Perrault, France, PDF
- Janine Engelbrecht, “Magical Mothers: The Representation of Witches and Motherhood in Contemporary Fantasy Cinema,” PDF

Films:

- Sleeping Beauty (1959)
- Maleficent (2014)

T Mar 29 – Perusall Reading
W Mar 30 – Post Presentations (if presenting)
Th Mar 31 – Discussion Post Due; *Final Proposal DUE*
F Apr 1 – Comments on Presentations Due

Week 11: Snow White
Weekly Readings and Media:

Column A: (all)

- Introduction to “Snow White,” The Classic Fairy Tales Second Norton Critical Edition, pp. 84-92
- The Brothers Grimm, “Snow White” (1812), The Classic Fairy Tales Second Norton Critical Edition, pp. 95-102 Column B: (choose 2 or choose 1 and 1 film)
- Francesca Lia Block, “Snow,” PDF

- Kim Addonizio, “Ever After,” *My Mother She Killed Me, My Father He Ate Me*, pp. 512-526 – “Snow White and the seven Dwarfs,” Walt Disney, United States, PDF
- Neil Gaiman, “Snow, Glass, Apples” (1994), *The Classic Fairy Tales Second Norton Critical Edition*, pp. 106-116
- Laura Mattoon D’Amore, “Vigilante Feminism: Revising Trauma, Abduction, and Assault in American Fairy-Tale Revisions,” PDF

Films:

- *Snow White* (1937)
- *Snow White and the Huntsman* (2012)
- *Mirror Mirror* (2012)

T Apr 5 – Perusall Reading

W Apr 6 – Post Presentations (if presenting)

Th Apr 7 – Discussion Post Due

F Apr 8– Comments on Discussion Posts and Presentations Due

Week 12: Bluebeard

Weekly Readings and Media:

Column A: (all)

- Introduction to “Bluebeard,” *The Classic Fairy Tales Second Norton Critical Edition*, pp. 182-188
- Charles Perrault, “Bluebeard” (1697), *The Classic Fairy Tales Second Norton Critical Edition*, pp. 188-193

Column B: (choose 2, or choose 1 and 1 film)

- Angela Carter, “The Bloody Chamber,” PDF
- Francesca Lia Block, “Bones,” PDF
- Joyce Carol Oates, “Blue-Bearded Lover,” *My Mother She Killed Me, My Father He Ate Me*, pp. 390-393 – “Bluebeard,” Charles Perrault, France, PDF
- Margaret Atwood, “Bluebeard’s Egg” (1983), *The Classic Fairy Tales Second Norton Critical Edition*, pp. 205-227, *The Classic Fairy Tales Second Norton Critical Edition*

Films:

- *Crimson Peak* (2015)

T Apr 12 – Perusall Reading

W Apr 13 – Post Presentations (if presenting)

Th Apr 14 – Discussion Post Due

F Apr 15 – Comments on Discussion Posts and Presentations Due

Week 13: Hayao Miyazaki and Guillermo Del Toro

Weekly Readings and Media [All Column B this week]

Films [Choose 1]:

- Spirited Away (2001)
- Pan's Labyrinth (2006)

Readings [Choose 1]

- Roger Clark and Keith McDonald, "A Constant Transit of Finding': Fantasy as Realisation in Pan's Labyrinth"
- Ligaya Mishan, "Hayao Miyazaki Prepares to Cast One Last Spell"

Week 14: FINALS WEEK
Weekly Readings and Media

Films:

- Shrek (2001)

Thursday April 28 FINAL DUE