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Why are Grimms' Fairy Tales so Mysteriously Enchanting?

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Why are Grimms' Fairy Tales so Mysteriously Enchanting?
An Analysis of Grimms' Fairy Tales from Three Critical Perspectives

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts of
the City College of the City University of New York.

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Introduction

How the Literary Fairy Tale Got its Start

Once upon a time there were two brothers that were born in Germany. These brothers wanted to demonstrate how cultivated literature in Germany evolved out of traditional folk material. They went out in search of old German tales, songs, poems, legends and literature and developed several collections, the most well-known being *Children's and Household Tales (Kinder- und Hausmarchen)* by the brothers Grimm.

Jacob Ludwig Grimm (1785-1863) and Wilhelm Carl Grimm (1786-1859) were the eldest of six siblings. Their research in philology and literature was geared towards informing and teaching Germans of the influence that old Germanic folklore had during that era. Beginning 1806, the Grimms set about collecting a variety of folktales. Between 1809 and 1813 the Grimm brothers began to publish their research as several different books. In 1810, Jacob and Wilhelm agreed to collect folktales for German poet and novelist Clemens Brentano, who hoped to publish these tales in an anthology. The Grimms sent forty-nine texts to Brentano, having kept copies of each tale for themselves. They feared Brentano would turn them into substantially different tales, whereas they were intent on keeping them in their original condition in order to properly document the customs and traditions of the Germans.¹ Brentano at the time however was dealing with personal difficulties and was not organized enough to work on the tales himself, leading the brothers to publish the tales themselves.

In 1812, the brothers Grimm published *Children's and Household Tales (Kinder - und Hausmarchen)*, which was the book that would establish their international fame. In 1815, they went on to publish a second volume of the original book, adding more tales to the original collection. In 1819, they published yet a third, revised version of all the stories. By this time, the brothers agreed that they wanted all their tales to follow a specific format and went forth editing the tales to fit within their model narrative guidelines. Jacob set the tone, while Wilhelm worked to edit the tales.

The editing of Jacob and Wilhelm exhibits the same tendencies from the beginning to the end of their project: the endeavor to make the tales stylistically smoother; the concern for clear sequential structure; the desire to make the stories more lively and pictorial by adding adjectives, old proverbs, and direct dialogue; the reinforcement of motives for action in the plot; the infusion of psychological motifs; and the elimination of elements that might detract from a rustic tone.²

The specific way in which they edited their tales is what created their fame and recognition worldwide: by creating a distinct style of presentation, they set the standard for all future fairy tale authors.

Fairy tales have developed into a unique literary art form. Scholars and critics have had a difficult time categorizing fairy tales as a genre.³ Although readers may be curious about the magic contained within fairy tales, they are not aware of the differences nor do most of them care. The fairy tale's magic is ultimately what sets it apart from other literary genres and places it in a genre of its own. One might even expect that some readers would be concerned that by analyzing and dissecting fairy tales they will lose

their enchanting qualities; fairy tales in certain cultures, specifically the West, are considered sacred material and by tampering with them, the tales are stripped of their innocence and enchantment. In an essay titled "On Fairy Stories," J.R.R. Tolkien claims that fairy tales are not particularly about fairies but rather, they are about *Faerie*, which he determines to be "the realm or state in which fairies have their being." This other realm he discusses accommodates not only fairies, elves, dwarves and witches but it also contains the moon, sun, stars, water and earth; it is an enchanted and magical world. Tolkien argues that fairy tales must not be limited to just tales about fairies; a fairy tale is about the perilous journey that a hero must endure.

The magic contained in fairy tales leaves some readers wishing to know more about why fairy tales have a mysterious hold on them. For this reason, scholars and critics focus on distinguishing the oral folk tale from the literary fairy tale. Literary critics often confuse the oral folk tale with the literary fairy tale. In order to avoid such confusions, and in order to properly understand fairy tales, we must define them clearly. German scholar Jens Tismar, was the first to define the literary fairy tale as separate from the oral folk tale using four principles:

- (1) it distinguishes itself from the oral folk tale in so far as it is *written* by a single identifiable author; (2) it is thus synthetic artificial, and elaborate in comparison to the indigenous formation of the folk tale that emanates from communities and tends to be simple and anonymous; (3) the differences between the literary fairy tale and the oral folk tale do not imply that one genre is better than the other; (4) in fact, the literary fairy tale is not an independent genre but can only be understood and defined by

its relationship to the oral tales as well as to the legend, novella, novel, and other literary fairy tales that it uses, adapts, and remodels during the narrative conception of the author.⁴

These principles serve as a guideline for making the distinction however, they do not accurately define the literary fairy tale and all of its features.

Following Tismar's principles, the literary fairy tale can be further differentiated from other folkloric genres which are considered to comply primarily to the oral tradition. First and foremost, the fairy tale differs greatly from the myth and legend. The term myth generally refers to narratives about gods and supernatural beings which are believed to be true. Legends are traditional stories of extraordinary events happening to ordinary humans some of which are also believed to have happened historically. Myths and legends are grandiose and insinuate that such events will never occur in the life of a mortal. Fairy tales differ from these genres in the sense that they are narratives of magic and fantasy and are in no way tied to reality. Although it is quite clear that fairy tales are unrealistic, the events that occur are presented as ordinary events that could happen to just about anyone.⁵ Let's take for example the tale "Little Red Riding Hood." Little Red Riding Hood meets a wolf while on her way to grandmother's house. The wolf speaks to her, then runs off to grandmother's house where he devours grandmother and then devours Little Red Riding Hood when she shows up. It is unrealistic that a wolf will speak to a little girl, yet it is realistic that a little girl will encounter a stranger who will harm her. The fairy tale therefore, portrays a realistic event with unrealistic details.

Distinctions must also be made between the folktale and fairy tale which are often used interchangeably. A folktale is an oral narrative that circulated amongst folk of a

specific culture. Oral narratives were transmitted by means of verbal communication. Additionally, tales from the oral tradition "exhibit patterns of stability and variation over time and space."⁶ Each culture subsequently, had its own well-known folktales that were passed around. Folktales primarily take place in a realistic setting with naturalistic details which allow for them to exist within reality. Folklorists have argued that the fairy tale label "has been associated with both oral and literary traditions but is above all reserved for narratives set in a fictional world where preternatural events and supernatural intervention are taken wholly for granted."⁷ The distinguishing feature which sets fairy tales apart from any other type of folklore is the fact that they are completely detached from reality and exist within a time period that is beyond reach.

Folklore scholars have had a difficult time categorizing Grimms' tales and determining if they belong to the oral or literary tradition. The Grimms' tales were said to have been collected orally however, critics argue that some of the tales were altered by the authors which would lead to them being categorized as literary fairy tales. "Literary fairy tales were defined as the conscious creations of a single author of middle- or upper-class background, as opposed to fairy tales from oral tradition, which were considered to be the natural and spontaneous expression of illiterate or semi-literate peasants."⁸ For the purpose of this thesis, I have combined the different traditions and will refer to the Grimms' tales as literary fairy tales. Considering that the tales were circulated and promoted after they were written down in a book, they should not be categorized as belonging to the oral tradition.⁹ Furthermore, even though the majority of the tales do not mention fairies per se, they do still prove to belong in the *Fairie* realm that Tolkien defines. Distinguishing between the literary and oral traditions is not the only problem

scholars have encountered; there has also been debate over which approach is the right approach to analyzing fairy tales. In my thesis, I give an overview of the most relevant approaches used by scholars to explore the fairy tale. As I will show, each approach reveals a different aspect of the genre, while obscuring others. A full understanding of the fairy tale requires that we make use of several perspectives, each complementing the others.

Scholars began to study the fairy tale as part of a nationalist and cultural project to preserve and revive the German national spirit.¹⁰ As fairy tale research began to expand, folklorists and theorists each developed their own definition of the fairy tale. The structuralist and literary approaches have proved to be two of the most dominant approaches to studying and analyzing fairy tales. Structuralists focus on analyzing the underlying structural components of fairy tales while literary theorists focus on analyzing the formal stylistic features which characterize the genre and allow for it to function thematically. Structuralist Vladimir Propp and author of *Morphology of the Folktale*, breaks down fairy tales and defines the tale's motifs in terms of their functions. Propp argues that the functions remain more or less the same despite the content of the tale. Structuralists however, tend to ignore the content of the tales; structuralist analysis, simply put, is an empirical description of a tale. Paired with literary research, these two approaches seek to analyze the tale further. Literary scholar Max Lüthi, wrote several books including *The European Folktale: Form and Nature* and *Once Upon a Time on the Nature of Fairy Tales*. Similar to the functions that remain the same in most tales, there are elements and motifs that remain stable despite the various updates and retellings.

Both approaches avoid imposing specific meanings to individual tales. This allows for the tale to remain "timeless."

Psychoanalysts study fairy tales using a very different approach. Unlike the structuralist and literary approaches, the psychoanalytic approach is occupied with each fairy tale's morals and meanings which can only be derived from a close reading. Fairy tales have led to many psychological studies and have proven to influence young children drastically. Freudian psychologist Bruno Bettelheim, in his book titled *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*, argues that fairy tales are important in understanding childhood development. The fantastical, cruel but always significant narratives can help one find meaning in their lives. The psychological meanings of the tales also exist independently of their form and structure. Jungian psychologist Marie-Louise von Franz in her book *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales*, argues that fairy tales help people achieve a personal wholeness.

One of the main criticisms of the structuralist, literary and psychoanalytic approaches to studying the literary fairy tale is their lack of acknowledging the social and historical contexts in which the tales exist. Historicist scholars and cultural sociologists argue that fairy tales reflect historical and social conditions. John M. Ellis author of *One Fairy Story Too Many* and Ruth B. Bottigheimer author of *Fairy Tales: A New History*, discuss the social upbringing of the Grimm brothers and the conditions from which the stories were derived. Jack Zipes, historicist and author of *The Brothers Grimm, The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales, Why Fairy Tales Stick* and *When Dreams Come True*, argues that fairy tales "preserve traces of vanished forms of social life." The meanings of the tales have been re-shaped depending on which culture and social institution was

analyzing and recreating them at the time. Zipes argues that tales have a formative socializing function within each society. In *Why Fairy Tales Stick*, he writes about why and how fairy tales have survived and evolved. Zipes introduces the study of memetics (a meme is an informational pattern similar to the gene) and proves that this is a solid, empirical explanation for why fairy tales have such an extreme hold on their readers.

Folklorists and scholars have broken down the Grimm's fairy tales in an attempt to find out why they have developed, evolved and remained such integral parts of society. The structuralist, literary, psychoanalytic and socio-historical approaches present four various ways of analyzing literary fairy tales. Studied alone, each approach does not provide enough reason as to why they have been appreciated and loved for countless years. However when paired together, these approaches explain why fairy tales have had such a mysterious and enchanting hold on us.

Chapter One

Structure and Form of the Literary Fairy Tale

Structuralist theory developed in Europe in the early twentieth century and was based on the structure of linguistics. Literary theorist, Terry Eagleton states, "Structuralism, as the term suggests, is concerned with structures, and more particularly with examining the general laws by which they work"¹¹. In their study of literature, structuralists focus on establishing the basic structure of each genre of literature. Structuralists separate the content of the story from its form and attempt to prove that each image has a relational meaning as opposed to a substantial one. In 1927, folklorist Vladimir Propp wrote *Morphology of the Folktale*, a structuralist approach to reading and understanding literary fairy tales. In the foreword to *Morphology of the Folktale*, Propp defines the word morphology as the study of forms. He then goes on to question what the morphology of the folktale would mean for folkloric and literary studies. Propp analyzed hundreds of Russian folk tales and determined that all tales are written using fundamental structure. He identified the basic narrative elements in terms of their motifs and the motifs in terms of their functions. Propp states, "function is understood as an act of a character, defined from the point of view of its significance for the course of an action" (21). Further on, "functions of characters serve as stable, constant elements in a tale, independent of how and by whom they are fulfilled. They constitute the fundamental components of a tale" (21). Propp determined that there are thirty-one functions that structure each fairy tale.

Propp argues that the functions begin after the initial situation is presented. The initial situation varies; the members of a family are listed or a future hero is introduced. This starting element allows for the following functions to occur. The thirty-one functions are: (1) absentation, (2) interdiction, (3) violation of interdiction, (4) reconnaissance, (5) delivery, (6) trickery, (7) complicity, (8) villainy or lack, (9) mediation, (10) beginning counter-action, (11) departure, (12) first function of the donor, (13) hero's reaction, (14) receipt of a magical agent, (15) guidance, (16) struggle, (17) branding, (18) victory, (19) liquidation, (20) return, (21) pursuit, (22) rescue, (23) unrecognized arrival, (24) unfounded claims, (25) difficult task, (26) solution, (27) recognition, (28) exposure, (29) transfiguration, (30) punishment, (31) wedding.

While Propp focuses on analyzing Russian folktales, after careful consideration, it appears that German fairy tales, specifically those of the brothers Grimm comply with Propp's structural analyzations. In order to understand the complexity of the functions Propp lists, they must be further discussed and defined within the context of a fairy tale. In what follows, I am applying Propp's structural analysis to the brothers Grimm tale "Little Red Riding Hood" which contains almost all of the thirty-one functions.

"Little Red Riding Hood" begins with the introduction of a dear little girl loved by everyone especially her grandmother. The introductory sentences serve as the tale's initial situation. The first function (1) absentation, is when a member of a family leaves home. In this tale, Red Riding Hood's mother sends her to her grandmother's house. Next, an (2) interdiction is addressed to the hero; Red Riding Hood's mother demands "walk nicely and quietly and do not run off the path ... and when you go into her room, don't forget to say, 'Good-morning,' and don't peep into every corner before you do it." While on her

journey, Red Riding Hood encounters a wolf. At this moment the villain, the wolf, enters the tale and causes Red Riding Hood to (3) violate her interdiction. She converses with the wolf who questions where her grandmother lives leading to function (4) reconnaissance. In function (5) delivery, the villain receives information about his victim; Red Riding Hood tells the wolf where her grandmother lives. Next is (6) trickery; the wolf tricks Red Riding Hood saying, "how pretty the flowers are about here - why do you not look around?" Red Riding Hood frolics around and starts to pick flowers to take to her grandmother leading to (7) complicity. While Red Riding Hood is picking flowers the wolf rushes to grandmother's house, tricks her into believing it is Red Riding Hood at the door and in an act of (8) villainy enters the house and eats the grandmother. When Red Riding Hood arrives, the wolf devours her as well and lays down to sleep. The following functions appear rather vaguely with the arrival of the hero.

Function (9) mediation occurs when the hero learns of the villain's acts. The hero in this tale is a huntsman who passes by grandmother's house and goes in to check on her. The hero (10) begins counter-action and decides he will attack the wolf. He cuts the wolf's stomach open and the grandmother and Red Riding Hood jump out. Functions (11) departure and (12) first function of the donor are not included in this tale. Propp defines (11) departure as the hero leaving home to seek out the villain. The (12) first function of the donor is defined as the hero being tested or interrogated by the donor before receiving a magical agent or helper. Propp lists several different ways in which this function can be interpreted. It could be argued that (12) first function of the donor in this tale is not an interrogation but rather the huntsman's realization that the wolf devoured the grandmother which leads to his decision to cut open the wolf rather than

shoot him. Cutting open the wolf also serves as (13) hero's reaction. Red Riding Hood becomes the donor for the next function (14) receipt of a magical agent. Propp determines that a magical agent is one of four things: an animal, an object from which magical helpers appear, an object such as a sword or cudgel, or a quality that allows for a transformation. In this tale however, the magical agent proves to be the stones that Red Riding Hood (the donor) collects to place inside the wolf in order to weigh him down and lead to his death.

Functions (15) guidance and (16) struggle also do not appear within the context of this tale. Propp defines (15) guidance as "the hero is transferred, delivered, or led to the whereabouts of an object of search." (16) Struggle would implicate the hero and villain in direct combat. Since the huntsman already defeated the wolf, there is no need for these two functions to occur within this tale.

Functions (17) branding, (18) victory, (19) liquidation, and (20) return all occur within the same moment and action. The huntsman takes the wolf's skin and returns home with it; grandmother and Red Riding Hood enjoy the cake and wine. Propp defines (17) branding as the hero receiving a wound or an object from the villain; (18) victory as the villain being defeated, (19) liquidation as resolving the initial misfortune; (20) return as the hero's return home.

Function (21) pursuit, occurs when Red Riding Hood, again on the way to her grandmother's house is approached by another wolf. Propp defines this function as the hero being pursued. In this context, Red Riding Hood becomes the hero for the remainder of the tale. She runs to (22) rescue her grandmother and warns her that a wolf was crossing her path. The next function (23) unrecognized arrival implies that the hero

returns home or in another country and no one recognizes him. In "Little Red Riding Hood" there is no (23) unrecognized arrival and the tale continues with the false (24) unfounded claims of the wolf. The wolf knocks on the door and claims to be Red Riding Hood. Red Riding Hood, being the hero, is faced with the (25) difficult task of defeating the wolf. She does so by tricking him which leads to his drowning and the completion of function (26) solution. The tale ends with the functions (27) recognition, (28) exposure, and (30) punishment. Red Riding Hood is recognized as the hero and the wolf is punished and exposed as the villain.

The following two functions which do not appear in "Little Red Riding Hood" are defined as follows: (29) transfiguration occurs when the hero is given a new appearance; (31) wedding occurs with the hero getting married.

Propp declares that while the number of functions a fairy tale can contain are limited to these aforementioned thirty-one, some fairy tales might not display all of the listed functions. The sequence of functions however, is always identical and the absence of certain functions does not change the order of the rest.¹² It is important to note that certain functions join together to form spheres of action which correspond to their respective performers. Performers are essential in understanding the degree to which the functions are exerted. Each character within the fairy tale is considered to be a performer. Propp lists seven performers individually with their spheres of action. The first character Propp lists is the villain whom is inserted into the tale with the sole purpose of disturbing the peace of the family. The sphere of action of the villain would contain the functions of (8) villainy, (16) struggle and (21) pursuit. Next is the donor, also known as the provider which enters the tale to provide the hero with helpful information. The donor's sphere of

action includes (12) first function of the donor and (14) receipt of magical agent. Third, is the helper who aids the hero in his quest and his sphere of action includes, (15) guidance, (19) liquidation, (22) rescue, (26) solution, (29) transfiguration. Next is the princess who is a sought after character and usually appears with her father and their sphere of action include, (25) difficult task, (17) branding, (28) exposure, (27) recognition, (30) punishment, (31) wedding. The dispatcher is not always present but when he is, he is responsible for dispatching the hero into his quest and his sphere of action is (9) mediation. The hero follows however, it is important to realize that there are two types of heroes; the victim-hero who is both the victim and the hero and the seeker-hero who is a separate being from the victim and his sole purpose is to rescue the victim. The hero's sphere of action includes, (11) departure, (13) hero's reaction, (31) wedding. Lastly is the false hero who appears in the tale pretending to be the hero in order to claim his rewards and his sphere of action includes (11) departure, (13) hero's reaction, and (24) unfounded claims.

Propp's structural analysis disregards any meaning that can be found within the context of the fairy tale. This is an important challenge to the structuralist approach.

Folklorist Jack Zipes argues:

The conception of structuralism as a 'science' of narrative dictates a methodological rigor which excludes from analysis those narrative components, such as discourse and signification, which are variable, but which also shape form and meaning. Propp acknowledges the cultural context of the folk tale, but he is more concerned with its non-variable structural elements and excludes social and historical aspects and

variations of form and content from his analysis. However, in focusing exclusively on stable narrative components, structuralist analysis is frequently reduced to empirical description and observation of manifest content of tales.¹³

Propp's concern with structure does not allow for even the slightest interpretation of the narrative. He does not regard the components of the fairy tale that do contribute to the meaning. Fairy tales cannot be simplified to a basic evaluation of structure. Literary scholar Max Lüthi acknowledges Propp's structural work and expands on his theory by analyzing fairy tales using a literary approach. Unlike Propp, Lüthi examines forms and structures and focuses on the stylistic features and thematic significance of fairy tales.¹⁴ Lüthi enhances fairy tale analysis and approaches European fairy tales from a very different perspective than Propp. Lüthi argues that the power of the fairy tale lies within its form, not in its motifs. In his book *The European Folktale: Form and Nature*, originally written in 1909, Lüthi outlines the five principal formal traits of European fairy tales. In my analyses of each of these traits, I have applied fairy tales from the Grimms collection and proved that Lüthi's traits work just as well with their literary fairy tales.

The first fairy tale trait Lüthi analyzes is *one-dimensionality*. Lüthi argues that everything within the fairy tale belongs to a single dimension. I used the fairy tale "The Three Feathers" to expand on Lüthi's analyzation of *one-dimensionality*. The tale begins with a King and his three sons "of whom two were clever and wise, but the third did not speak much, and was simple, and was called the Simpleton." He sets them out on three separate adventures in order to determine who would best succeed him to the throne. Simpleton, while on his first task discovers a trap door in the ground and nonchalantly

opens it and enters. He is greeted by a large, fat toad and a crowd of little toads. Lüthi claims that fairy tale characters are never curious about anything and they do not fear the uncanny. Marvelous events and miracles require no explanation. Simpleton was not at all curious about the trap door; he entered as if it was part of his task. He also showed no reaction when he saw or heard the toad talking. These are rendered to be normal happenings in a fairy tale. Lüthi goes on to say that heroes often times receive magic objects and treat them as an everyday object of use, only using the object when it is necessary; when the object serves its purpose it disappears from the tale and it is of no more interest. Simpleton receives objects from the toad that help him defeat his brothers in each task. At his first encounter with the toad, the toad gives him a beautiful carpet that surpasses the linens his brothers picked out. Once he shows the carpet to his father, the carpet is no longer an object of use and it disappears from the tale. Moreover, the trait of *one-dimensionality* continues with the discussion of otherworldly creatures and geographical barriers.

Lüthi states that the fairy tale expresses spiritual otherness only through geographical separation. The fairy tale's hero is able to interact with otherworldly creatures nonchalantly however, the hero will only encounter an otherworldly creature in an unknown forest, not in his familiar surroundings. The spatial barrier between the hero's familiar world and the creature's otherworld is the only exception to the one-dimensional world of the fairy tale. This is the only way Simpleton can encounter the toad; they exist in different worlds and are therefore able to coexist and help one another. Within a one-dimensional world, the characters lack depth which leads to the second fairy tale trait.

Following *one-dimensionality* is the fairy tales *depthlessness*. "In its essence and in every sense, it lacks the dimension of depth. Its characters are figures without substance, without inner life, without an environment; they lack any relation to past and future, to time altogether" (Lüthi 11). Lüthi argues that the people and animals depicted in fairy tales lack any physical and psychological depth. There is no realm of sentiment; characters make their decisions without hesitation, they endure injuries without a single flinch and their diseases and ailments are never made known. I have used the tale "The Seven Ravens" to describe depthlessness further. A man and his wife had seven sons and desired to have a girl. When they were blessed with a baby girl, "the child was sickly and small, and had to be privately baptized on account of its weakness." The little girl's illness is never made known; it is just clearly noted that she is sick. The father sent his sons to fetch water for the baptism and when they took too long, the father grew impatient and wished for them to turn into ravens. The father did not stop to think before he cried out his wishes; he did not think about the repercussions or about the sons that he raised. There is no indication as to how time passed; the events that plagued this family happened within a few sentences.

The fairy tale world lacks the dimension of time. There are characters of all ages however, there are no aging persons and no aging creatures. In "The Seven Ravens," the passage of time is depicted when the girl ages a few years but her age is never stated; very simply put, "their dear little daughter, soon grew strong and every day became more beautiful." She travels out to find her brothers and there is no mention of how long she looks for them. While the brothers are ravens, they also do not age. Adding to the *depthlessness* of the fairy tale is the lack of a character environment. Lüthi argues that

this is due in part to the fairy tale author's ability to transform a world with a certain uniqueness rather than recreate an existing concrete world with its many dimensions. The young girl travels far and wide and experiences different environments, none of which are similar to the real world.

This ultimately leads to the next trait, *abstract style* which I have applied to the fairy tale "Rumpelstiltskin." Lüthi claims that "individual figures are physically set off from each other by sharp outlines and pure colors." Further on, "The sharp contours are evident at once in the way that it does not describe particular objects but only names them. Action-oriented as it is, it leads its figures on from point to point without pausing to describe anything at length" (24). Lüthi believes that elaborate descriptions are not necessary because they add depth to the plot. However, a simple name can transform "things into simple, motionless images. The world is captured in the word." Nouns are attributed with a single adjective giving them the only description they need. The characters in "Rumpelstiltskin" are not given proper names; they are set apart by a single adjective and noun. The poor miller has a beautiful daughter who meets a little manikin who not until the very end is revealed to be Rumpelstiltskin. The characters do not need any further descriptions in order for the tale to be conveyed. The miller takes his daughter to the King and states that she can spin straw into gold "in order to make himself appear important." There is no reason to the miller's actions beyond this brief explanation and they would not enhance the plot any further. Every time Rumpelstiltskin offers help to the miller's daughter he does so with a single stated intention, nothing more, nothing less. Each action leads directly to the next with no explanation necessary and every action within the plot happens at a very specific moment. Lüthi goes on to claim that the fairy

tale unfolds with events and actions that are essential to its plot; nothing is stated if it will not enhance the plot. Despite the basic plot structure, nothing feels left out. Lüthi states, "Not only moments of time are marked out with the utmost precision. The hero, antihero, subordinate characters, and props also precisely accomplish or fail to accomplish the specific narrative task that is assigned to them. Objects and situations fit together to a T" (32). Rumpelstiltskin arrives to help the miller's daughter just as she cries out that she does not know how she will spin the straw into gold. He arrives a second and third time at the same exact moment to fulfill his task; his presence before or after this event is unnecessary and does not belong in the plot.

Adding to the *abstract style* are the concepts of sharpness and symmetry. The sharp and symmetrical character outlines enhance the sharply divided stages that Lüthi argues make up the fairy tale's plot. Objects such as swords and rings are distinguished by their sharp contours. Furthermore, houses are sharply set off from their surroundings. Rumpelstiltskin's house is described as a "little house" isolated upon a "high mountain at the end of the forest." Additionally, characters are dismembered or cut themselves into symmetrical parts; there is no blood oozing out of their wounds therefore, they do not lose their sharp precision and their form. At the very end of the tale the little manikin cried out "and in his anger he plunged his right foot so deep into the earth that his whole leg went in; and then in rage he pulled at his left leg so hard with both hands that he tore himself in two." He exerts the same power on both his legs proving that his actions are symmetrical and then tears himself into two equal parts. There are no known wounds to his body and it is assumed that he survives this incident.

Lüthi also argues that the colors within the fairy tale are just as sharp and defined as Rumpelstiltskin. The fairy tale uses clear and pure colors such as gold, silver, red, white and black. These colors are subtle and do not attract attention. They are also very simple which correlates with the simplicity of the fairy tale plot. The only color in "Rumpelstiltskin" is gold; Rumpelstiltskin spins all the miller's daughter's straw into gold. Objects and surroundings are also sometimes described using metallic or mineral terms; in other fairy tales there are shoes made of stone, golden geese, iron bridges, and silver pears. The color scheme coincides with the number scheme within fairy tales. Fairy tales have fixed numbers that they use repeatedly such as, one, two, three, seven and twelve. Lüthi argues that these are "numbers of firm definition." Numbers have a significant role in the plot and the structure of fairy tales. There are repeated sequences that occur in fairy tales, and sentences and paragraphs are repeated more than once in certain situations. Rumpelstiltskin helps the miller's daughter three times and each time he arrives at her door he asks "what will you give me?" After their third encounter, the miller's daughter marries the King and becomes Queen, indicating that it only took three times for an event to be fully played out. The number three appears yet again when the manikin gives the Queen three days to find out his name. The Queen then sends out her messenger three times to try and find the manikin's secret name and on the third day the messenger discovers Rumpelstiltskin's name and the Queen is victorious. Each event, each adjective and each character are symmetrically isolated as well.

Developing from the abstract style is the trait of *isolation*. Everything and everyone within the fairy tale is isolated. Lüthi argues that even the plot is isolated; a story line is provided but a setting is not experienced. I analyze the trait of *isolation* using

the fairy tale "Hansel and Gretel." The tale begins with "Hard by a great forest dwelt a poor wood-cutter with his wife and his two children." The setting is a great forest but there is no description of it. The forest is mentioned again when the wood-cutter and his wife are discussing leaving the children there. Lüthi also states that events happen with no explanation and each event and action is an isolated occurrence. When Hansel hears that his father and wife want to abandon them in the forest, he goes outside to collect pebbles and puts them in his pocket while assuring his sister that everything will work out. Not until later on in the tale does it become clear that Hansel collected the pebbles in order to lay them out and remember his way home.

Furthermore, Lüthi claims characters are disconnected from one another, relationships are rare, and the characters show a general disinterest. Characters are presented as distinct beings and go forth to act in isolation with no regards as to how their actions will affect others. They make their decisions based off of a single isolated event rarely thinking about past events. Characters also fail to learn from other characters and they gain no experience. Although the wood-cutter expresses worry for his children, there does not seem to be a solid relationship or connection between father and children; his wife coerces him to lie to his children and abandon them in the woods. The wood-cutter states, "But I feel very sorry for the poor children, all the same," yet he still goes along with the plan to leave them in the forest because it would benefit him to do so. The first time they abandon Hansel and Gretel, Hansel laid a path made of pebbles and was able to lead himself and his sister back home. The wood-cutter and his wife decide to try and abandon the children a second time. Yet again, the wood-cutter proves that he is isolated and disconnected from his children because he does not make any attempts to stop his

wife from taking them out to the forest again. The second time, Hansel is unable to find his way home and he and Gretel remain alone in the forest.

Lüthi correlates *isolation* with *universal interconnection*; because everything is isolated, relationships with unfamiliar figures can be established. These connections are ultimately the outcome of character encounters and the giving of gifts.¹⁵ Hansel and Gretel's isolation in the forest leads them to discovering a bird which indirectly guides them to a house "built of bread and covered with cakes" and windows made of sugar. Although their encounter with the bird was not a direct connection, the bird did bestow upon them the gift of leading them to the house. Within the house lays the villain, the witch who lures in Hansel and Gretel and wishes to fatten them up and eat them. It is Gretel however, who comes to her brother's aid, defeats the witch and helps them escape from the house in the forest. They arrive at a body of water which they cannot pass through. Gretel spots a duck and cries to it for help. The duck's isolation allows for a relationship to be built between the duck and the children. The duck, like the bird, gifts them by carrying each of the children over the water and therefore helping them find their way home. Lüthi states:

It [the gift] is attached to nothing, and yet it has a capacity for establishing any kind of relationship; it is the purest manifestation of the principles of *isolation and universal interconnection* that animate the folktale from beginning to end.¹⁶

Just like the characters, each gift is isolated and is used only for a specific task. Characters, specifically heroes, remain dependent on the connections they establish with the donor. The gifts they receive help them to accomplish the tasks that are presented to

them and they propel the plot forward. Both gifts Hansel and Gretel receive enhance the plot and allow for a universal interconnection. Hansel and Gretel relied on the bird and the duck to help them on their journey. The gifts from the bird and the duck are isolated gifts given to the children by isolated animals for an isolated event; and when they are no longer of use, both the animals and their gifts disappear.

Isolation and *universal interconnection* pave the way to the fifth and final fairy tale trait, sublimation. *Sublimation* is the ability to transform socially unacceptable impulses into socially acceptable actions and behaviors. I have used the tale "Sleeping Beauty" to illustrate the ideas that Lüthi presents for the trait of sublimation. The fairy tale sublimates "dark psychological processes into brightly lit images that figure in the plot" (73). Lüthi claims that psychological meanings cannot be derived from fairy tales because there should be no meaning behind the words; everything is presented clearly in the narrative. The tale of Sleeping Beauty begins with a King and Queen who are unable to have a child, the reasons they cannot are unknown. They express a desire to have a child but they do not appear to be psychologically distressed by the fact that they cannot. A frog appears and informs the Queen that she will have a daughter within the year and when the frog's prophecy came true the Queen and King were filled with joy.

Lüthi argues that everything, every action, every behavior, happens effortlessly. Everything is presented very clearly yet nothing is typical; roles are interchangeable and actions can alter instantly. The King decides without contemplating the situation that one of the Wise Women in his palace will not be invited to dinner and she must stay home. This Wise Woman cries out that the King's daughter, Briar Rose, will be cursed on her fifteenth birthday and have to sleep for a hundred years. On her fifteenth birthday, Briar

Rose approaches an old woman with a spindle and decides to spin too. The moment she touches the spindle the entire palace falls into a deep sleep for a hundred years. When a Prince hears that a beautiful princess lays within the palace he decides immediately that he will go to rescue her. As soon as his lips touch hers, she awakens and the tale ends shortly after with their marriage. The actions in this tale are spontaneous and instantaneous. The character actions, which are straightforward and clear, do not require thought. Their actions are atypical and anything can happen within the blink of an eye. The quick pace and change of actions in the narrative does not allow for the characters to feel anything on a deep emotional and psychological level. This is most apparent when the Prince kisses Briar Rose; her awakening is a result of his quick action and therefore, it only makes sense for their marriage to happen with or without an emotional attachment.

Lüthi believes that Propp's structural analysis and his own stylistic and literary analyses are enough to uncover the secret of the fairy tale's immortality, universality and fame.¹⁷ Both the structuralist and literary approaches prove that as long as the structure and form remain intact, the individual units are replaceable.¹⁸ Readers recognize fairy tales based on their structure and form. They learn that following an initial situation there will be varying obstacles which eventually lead to the hero achieving his happy ending. Readers also expect the hero to become isolated at some point before he encounters an obstacle, figure or event three different times. Without thinking about the deeper meanings of the tales, the reader can escape from reality and enter the enchanted fairy tale world where they have some kind of vision of what will happen and how they might go forth reaching their happy ending. Lüthi's and Propp's analyses have the advantage of simplicity and although simplicity is beneficial at times, their empirical work leaves

much to be questioned. They do not explain why fairy tales are written following this structure nor do they delve into the meanings and morals that the tales offer. Fairy tales are universally known for the lessons they teach children and the mysterious enchantment they seem to have upon readers of all ages. Neither Propp nor Lüthi discuss why fairy tales affect the reader so much. Fairy tale analysis cannot depend entirely upon these two approaches. Therefore, it is important to study fairy tales using several approaches.

Psychoanalysts prove that fairy tales need to be studied and analyzed individually. Tales have different symbols and characteristics that have meanings beyond the written word on the page. Beyond the structure of "Little Red Riding Hood" lies the symbolic red cap, the wolf as an unconscious desire, and the anxiety of a child being out on their own.

Propp and Lüthi do not acknowledge any of these highly significant factors.

Psychoanalysis helps to further explain why fairy tales enchant readers.

Chapter Two

Freudian and Jungian Analysis of Grimms' Fairy Tales

Structuralists and literary scholars provide an incomplete analysis in discussing literary fairy tales. The structuralist and literary approaches disregard the meanings and symbols contained within fairy tales. Psychoanalysts critique the work of their structuralist and literary peers and argue that readers are attracted to fairy tales because of the meanings that they can derive from the tales. Readers connect with characters on an emotional level and embark on a journey with them. They also use fairy tales to solve their own personal problems. The study of fairy tales has led to a variety of psychoanalytic interpretations. Despite the many different psychological approaches to studying fairy tales, most agree with the fact that fairy tales are symbolic expressions of the human mind and emotional experiences. Psychological approaches move further away from the tales' socio-historical realities, structure and style and focus instead on the plots, motifs and symbols which provide insight into human behavior. There are two psychological approaches to studying fairy tales: the Freudian and the Jungian. Freudian psychologists argue that fairy tales express each individual's development in stages. Jungian psychologists have a more analytic perspective and concentrate on the human psyche and an individual's collective unconscious processes. Although both approaches share similar methodologies and are focused on analyzing and interpreting the content of fairy tales, Freudians and Jungians differ in how they study the individual and his reaction to fairy tales.

Sigmund Freud, founder of Freudian psychology, believed that fairy tales were especially helpful in illustrating theories of the mind because they were similar to dreams. Like dreams, fairy tales contain symbols that express conflicts, anxieties and desires that humans tend to repress into their unconscious.¹⁹ Freudian psychologist, Bruno Bettelheim, differentiates between dreams and fairy tales in his book *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (1975); in dreams the wish fulfillment is disguised, however in fairy tales, desires and fantasies are openly expressed. Furthermore, the fairy tale has a consistent structure with a plot that propels the characters from a sticky initial situation to a satisfying end. Bettelheim states:

We cannot control what goes on in our dreams. Although our inner censorship influences what we may dream, such control occurs on an unconscious level. The fairy tale, on the other hand, is very much the result of common conscious and unconscious content having been shaped by the conscious mind, not of one particular person, but the consensus of many in regard to what they view as universal human problems, and what they accept as desirable solutions. If all these elements were not present in a fairy tale, it would not be retold by generation after generation.²⁰

In several of his studies, Freud declared that these symbols are contained within the language of the tale. To understand why fairy tales are similar to dreams, the conscious and unconscious desires of the id, ego and superego must be regarded.

Freud believed that the human psyche was split into three different parts: the id, ego and superego. Coincidentally, the number three is symbolic in fairy tale literature and is used on countless occasions and in numerous tales. The number three can therefore

indicate these three different parts of the psyche. Fairy tales sometimes chose to represent the id, ego and superego within the same person. Other times, the id, ego and superego are presented as different fairy tale figures, emphasizing the role of each one. Here I have applied the tale "Little Red Riding Hood" in which the id, ego and superego are presented as three separate beings. The id is the primitive and instinctive component of the personality which operates primarily on the pleasure principle. The id demands to be pleased immediately with no regards to the consequences that might ensue. The wolf operates according to the pleasure principle that governs the id. Bettelheim states that dangerous animals "symbolize the untamed id, not yet subjected to ego and superego control, in all its dangerous energy" (76). The wolf gives in to temptation and eats both the grandmother and Little Red Riding Hood without thinking about repercussions. Little Red Riding Hood represents the mediating ego. The ego develops as a way to conciliate between the unrealistic impulses of the id and the expectations of the external world. The ego operates according to the reality principle and tries to accommodate the id by rationalizing and reaching a satisfying outcome. Before running off the path Little Red Riding Hood thinks about what might happen. She figures it would be okay to run off the path for just a few moments to collect flowers because they would please her grandmother; this would satisfy both the pleasure and realistic impulses. The superego combines the functions of the aggressive id and rational ego. The superego controls the id's sexual impulses while helping the ego find more moralistic goals rather than simply realistic ones. However, those functioning based on the superego do not take into account the pleasure principal. Little Red Riding Hood's grandmother and mother represent the superego; they are overly worried that something bad might happen to Little Red Riding

Hood if she runs off the path. Their worry leads to the moral of the story which is determined to be listen to your elders and do not talk to strangers.

Fairy tales help children to develop by understanding the concepts of the id, ego and superego in simplistic and symbolic ways. Bettelheim believes that "fairy tales depict an ego integration which allows for appropriate satisfaction of id desires" (41). Further on, children must learn to externalize their inner processes in order to gain control of them. They must think of their unconscious desires as external and irrational properties. They must distance themselves from these irrational desires in order to understand how to take control of them. Fairy tales address the problem that life presents to us as children: should we be governed by our emotions or by our rationality. Aside from this childhood dilemma, each developing part of the personality also comes with its own conflicts. By reading, listening to and understanding fairy tales, children can learn to overcome certain conflicts and reach new phases of their development. Children learn to project their unconscious fears and desires into conscious fantasies which enable them to deal with certain situations. It is a difficult deed for a child to learn to cope and apply the lessons he learns from fairy tales to his own personal situations.

In order for a child to procure an accurate meaning from a fairy tale requires a great deal of effort. Bettelheim believes that children need to be exposed to the same fairy tale numerous times and have ample time to reflect on the tale and contemplate its meaning. Children are often times introduced to a variety of fairy tales all at once and this dilutes the impression the previous fairy tale had on the child. Likewise, illustrations are not beneficial; they are distracting and do not allow for the child to envision his own

experience. Only when a child becomes familiar with a single fairy tale can he understand that the tale speaks to him symbolically rather than realistically.

Bettelheim argues that fairy tales simplify all situations and this is why children are enamored by and are capable of understanding their meanings. In his book,²¹ Bettelheim discusses how at each age, children seek and must be able to find some meaning that is congruent with how their minds and understanding has developed. Bettelheim states, "Fairy tales, unlike any other form of literature, direct the child to discover his identity and calling, and they also suggest what experiences are needed to develop his character further" (24). Although the events that occur in fairy tales are unfamiliar and unlikely, they are presented as ordinary and common within the context of the tale. Therefore, a child can insert himself within the story and experience it in his own personal way while understanding that it is unrealistic.

The fairy tale reminds the child continuously that it is not real. Most tales begin with "once upon a time" or some variation of the same sort. The fairy tale "Hans the Hedgehog" begins with "there once was a countryman who had money and land in plenty." No matter how it begins, there is a clear indication that it did not occur in the recent past nor will it happen in the future. The fairy tale land is also not somewhere within reach; it is unfamiliar and foreign. It is important to note that although fairy tales are unrealistic, they are not untrue. The realness of the fairy tale must be understood as a personal experience and the child must be able to envision himself in the role of one of the characters, whether it be the hero of the same or opposite sex or of the villain.²² By doing so fairy tales allow children to find their own solutions to their problems; children know that the characters are imaginary figures and can therefore recognize what

motivates the characters and allow a connection on an emotional level. Being told by a real person what is expected of them arouses feelings of anxiety and the child feels forced into feeling a certain way. I have interpreted the tale "Hans my Hedgehog" to show how it can affect a child. Hans was a child "that was a hedgehog in the upper part of his body, and a boy in the lower." His parents were terrified and they kept him hidden behind the stove in a little straw bed. A child can find many ways to relate to Hans; a child with a deformity either physically or mentally, will view Hans' spikes as a deformity and therefore identify with him. Children may also relate if they feel that their parents hate them and they feel unwanted. Hans greets a King in the forest and willingly helps him even though the King thinks he is incompetent. When he meets his daughter he pricks her as a punishment towards the King for being unkind and false. Hans encounters a second King whom treats him with the utmost respect. Although his daughter was terrified she accepted Hans who in turn shed his hedgehog skin and became a real man. A child will ultimately understand that respect goes a long way and their deformities can prove to be a positive asset. It is entirely up to the child if he wishes to apply any of the morals he learns from fairy tales to his actual life problems. Fairy tales permit children to feel that their emotions are justified and if they work hard to find a mature solution to their problems they will have a bright future ahead of them. Often times, adults need to pay attention to their children's emotions and work with them while the child strives to reach maturation and overcome their fears.

Bettelheim discusses the different relationships children have with their parents and how they are taught by fairy tales to understand and treat these relationships. Children often times feel that they are "cast out" by their parents.

Being 'cast out' can unconsciously be experienced either as the child wishing to be rid of the parent, or as his belief that the parent wants to be rid of him. The child's being sent out into the world, or deserted in a forest, symbolizes both the parent's wish that the child become independent and the child's desire for, or anxiety about, independence.²³

Hans the hedgehog felt that his parents wanted to get rid of him and his relationship with them led to him desiring independence. There are two ways children get cast out in fairy tales; pre-pubertal children like Hans, who are in some way forced to leave their home or are deserted, and pubertal or adolescent children who are handed over to a servant in order to be killed but end up being spared. Hans was forced to leave because he felt unwanted. I have applied two fairy tales to illustrate the ways in which children get cast out. In "Hansel and Gretel," the parents desert their children which leads to them feeling anxious and worried about being independent. They end up maturing independently and help each other find their way home. The second way of being cast out is depicted in "Snow-White and the Seven Dwarfs." Snow-White's stepmother becomes angry when her mirror declares Snow-White the fairest in all the land. She says to a huntsman, "Take the child away into the forest; I will no longer have her in my sight. Kill her, and bring me back her heart as a token." The huntsman takes pity on the young girl once they are out in the forest and allows her to run away. Bettelheim suggests children understand that it is the parent's fault and not the servants that was ordered to kill them therefore, their conflict is with their parents and not adults in general. The topic of child and parent conflicts is very controversial.

Maria Tartar, Freudian psychologist, and author of *The Hard Facts of the Grimms' Fairy Tales* (1987), also discusses the conflicts between parent and child. She believes that the fairy tale is set up in a way that always pits the adult up against the child. "Reduced to its essential components, it mounts a struggle between any two entities with competing interests" (51). Additionally, characters are defined by their relationship to the protagonist, "each belonging unambiguously to the camp of good or of evil" (61). Tartar believes that the relationship between good and evil, hero and villain, parent and child, are what move the fairy tale plot forward. In the story of "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," the powerful and evil adult, Snow-White's stepmother, is up against Snow-White, the good and innocent child. Tartar also claims that the evil stepmother in fairy tales will more often than not act in a psychologically predictable manner; Snow-White's stepmother entrusts the huntsman with killing Snow-White. It is the huntsman however, who proves to be a character denoting symbolic significance; he spares the life of Snow-White. Tartar's views enforce the parent versus child conflict that Bettelheim raises.

Further on, Bettelheim states:

The child not only survives the parents but surpasses them. This conviction, when built into the unconscious, permits the adolescent to feel secure despite all the developmental difficulties from which he suffers, because he feels confident about his future victory.²⁴

Hans leaves his parents' home, goes out on his own, marries a King's daughter and sheds his hedgehog skin. At the very end he returns to his father's home, makes his true identity known and "the old father rejoiced and went with him to his kingdom." Hansel and Gretel return to their father, find out his wife died, and "they lived together in perfect

happiness." Snow-White is rescued by the King's son and marries him. Snow-White's stepmother who is outrageously angered that Snow-White is still the fairest in the whole kingdom was "forced to put on the red-hot shoes and dance until she dropped down dead." In all three tales, the children overcome their parental difficulties and live happily ever after. The endings give hope to children who feel mistreated by their parents. Fairy tales offer relief to children and reinstate that in due time they will have a brighter future.

Fairy tales in which children are able to overcome their parental difficulties must not be confused with revenge fantasies. Bettelheim argues that most children entertain the idea of taking revenge on a parent but they also consider that their parents provide them with all they need to survive. The need for revenge manifests within the child once they realize they do not have to be entirely dependent on their parents. Bettelheim believes that children need not repress their revenge fantasies; children can be guided to direct their fantasies of revenge onto a being that is "close enough to the true parent but clearly not his parent" (134). Children can direct their vengeful thoughts towards the fairy tale's evil step parent. By projecting their revenge fantasies on the fairy tale's step-parent they can feel relief without feeling guilty and disrespectful to their true parent. Sometimes, children feel the need to take revenge when they feel they have been mistreated by a parent.

In some fairy tales, a parent thinks very little of one of his children, usually the youngest. This child is called Simpleton and as the story proceeds, he proves to his parent that he has the wrong conception of him. Bettelheim argues, "no traditional fairy tale would rob the child of the needed security he gets from the knowledge that the parent knows better, with one crucial exception: when the parent turns out to have been in error

about the child's abilities" (135). Here we can look at the fairy tale "The Three Feathers." "The Three Feathers" begins with "There once on a time was a King who had three sons, of whom two were clever and wise, but the third did not speak much, and was simple, and was called the Simpleton." The King sends his sons on three missions, each mission promising the kingdom as a reward to the son who performs best.²⁵ Simpleton is under the impression that he does not have what it takes to compete against his brothers. His father has treated him as inferior and this thought was drilled into his mind. At first Simpleton is saddened by the thought that he will not do better than his brothers but he meets a toad who is willing to help him with all three missions.²⁶ The King and his two eldest sons are amazed that the simple minded youngest son was able to surpass their expectations; his brothers "said that it was impossible that Simpleton, who in everything lacked understanding, should be King." In the end however, he receives the crown and rules the kingdom. Tartar claims that in tales of this sort not only does the child need to prove his parents wrong, but he is also faced with the fact that his siblings have allied with the parent. Tales such as "The Three Feathers" encourage children to want to develop their abilities in order to correct their parents' and siblings' low expectations.

Fairy tales such as "The Three Feathers", "Hans the Hedgehog", and "Snow-White and the Seven Dwarfs" promote autonomy; children learn to be independent. Bettelheim argues that children can only overcome their weaknesses when they are forced to deal with them on their own. Although the three previous tales teach children the importance of autonomy, they do not emphasize the difficult journey a child undergoes before achieving his or her happy ending. Let us look at the fairy tales "Hansel

and Gretel" and "Little Red Riding Hood" which exhibit the journey toward independence and maturity that children experience.²⁷

"Hansel and Gretel" begins with a realistic situation; a poor wood-cutter and his wife are having a difficult time providing food for their children. The wife suggests to the woodcutter to take Hansel and Gretel out into the forest and leave them there. The woodcutter at first rejects the idea but his wife pesters him until he consents. The children overhear their parents' conversation and develop anxious thoughts. "A small child, awakening hungry in the darkness of the night, feels threatened by complete rejection and desertion, which he experiences in the form of fear of starvation" (Bettelheim 159). The father becomes a figure in the shadows, while the mother symbolizes an evil being. The mother is responsible for keeping her children alive and loved but when she cuts off their source of food a child feels deep disappointment and anxiety. The woodcutter's wife assumes the role of the mother figure and causes the misfortunes that plague the young children.

The first time the parents abandon their children in the forest, Hansel leaves a path of pebbles and is able to lead himself and his sister back home. Their return home does not solve anything, it merely reinstates that the children need their parents for their survival. The woodcutter's wife does not accept their return and insists yet again that they must be abandoned. The second time the children are left out in the forest, Hansel relies on the path of bread crumbs to lead him back home. The path of pebbles indicate Hansel's intelligence however, the path of bread crumbs indicates a regression in his development and his return to primitiveness. "The child must learn that if he does not free himself of [his primitive desires], his parents or society will force him to do so against his will"

(Bettelheim 160). Hansel and Gretel are forced into being independent and this leads to an even further regression when they find the gingerbread house.

A bird eats the path of bread crumbs that Hansel leaves on the ground. This should serve as a warning to Hansel and Gretel to be careful what they eat. Coincidentally, it is also a bird that leads the siblings to the gingerbread house. The bird is a symbolic representation of the child's dependence on another figure to lead them to a safe place. Unfortunately for the children the bird leads them right to the temptation to return to their primitive and infant-like desires. The gingerbread house represents greediness but it can also symbolize the mother's body.

A gingerbread house, which one can 'eat up', is a symbol of the mother, who in fact nurses the infant from her body. Thus, the house at which Hansel and Gretel are eating away blissfully and without a care stands in the unconscious for the good mother, who offers her body as a source of nourishment.²⁸

The witch who inhabits the gingerbread house at first represents a perfect and caring mother. She feeds the children and gives them a comfortable place to sleep. The next morning however, she forces them awake and locks Hansel away in a stable to fatten him up and eat him when he is of a decent size. The witch personifies the "destructive aspects of orality" (Bettelheim 162). The witch and her house force the children to recognize the dangers of greed and dependence. In order to defeat the witch and mature enough to surpass the stage of orality and find their way back to their true home, Hansel and Gretel must develop a certain skill set including intelligent planning and acting. Goal-directed behavior indicates developmental progression. Gretel is the first of the siblings to mature

and tricks the witch into crawling in the oven where she is burned to death. Gretel sets her brother free and they both collect the witch's jewels before making their way home.

On their way home, Hansel and Gretel encounter a body of water that they cannot cross over. Gretel spots a duck and asks if it is willing to help them cross over. Gretel determines that the duck can only carry one child at a time and the duck complies and helps them cross. This is the third bird the siblings meet while out in the forest. Birds are symbols of a superior guiding and protective force. "The different birds offer a clue to the path the children must follow to gain their reward" (Bettelheim 163). Moreover, this is the first body of water the children come across and Bettelheim argues that the body of water symbolizes a transition into maturity. This is also the first time the children must separate indicating that children at some point need to be entirely self-reliant and achieve a personal uniqueness.

After having crossed the water, they arrive at the other shore as more mature children, ready to rely on their own intelligence and initiative to solve life's problems. As dependent children they had been a burden to their parents; on their return they have become the family's support, as they bring home the treasures they have gained.²⁹

On their return home, the children are greeted by just their father, his wife having died. At no point within the fairy tale is Hansel and Gretel's father's wife called their mother; she is referred to as "the wood-cutter's wife" or "the woman." This indicates that there is no real mother persona in this tale. While the siblings are out on their adventure, they are constantly searching for a mother figure to help them find their independence and come into their maturity. The birds, gingerbread house and witch all symbolize the

mother that Hansel and Gretel so longingly desire. These figures provide the children with guidance and nurturing until they gain their independence and prove that they no longer need a mother. Tatar states, "To some extent, the female villains of fairy tales have a dual identity. As stepmothers, evil servants, and hostile mothers-in-law, they remain firmly anchored in the world of family life and figure among the facts of everyday life" (144). Tatar also claims that female villains appear in three distinct "arenas of action that emerge in chronological sequence" (145). The first time she appears is in the initial situation as the woodcutter's wife wanting to get rid of the children. The female villain appears a second time in the forest as the witch where she deceives the children. Lastly, she appears or is mentioned (as dead) in the final scene.

Females in fairy tales often receive a bad reputation. Incidentally, it is the females who try to destroy the family and scare the children into thinking that females (especially mothers) are evil. However, Gretel alters this view and proves that females can also be the rescuers. Gretel's maturity and intelligence are what help the children escape the witch and find their way home in the end. The important role of a positive female is emphasized more in "Little Red Riding Hood."

"Little Red Riding Hood" and "Hansel and Gretel" share a common theme: the threat of being devoured. "Hansel and Gretel" expresses the anxieties and difficulties children face when independence is forced upon them. "Little Red Riding Hood" conveys the story of a young girl beginning the process of sexual maturation and the conflict between the pleasure and the reality principles. Unlike Hansel and Gretel, Little Red Riding Hood leaves her house willingly to deliver some goods to her grandmother. Her

mother commands her to remain on the path and go directly to her grandmother's house.

Little Red Riding Hood:

is not afraid of the outside world, but recognizes its beauty, and therein lies a danger. If this world beyond home and duty becomes too attractive, it may induce a return to proceeding according to the pleasure principle - which, we assume, [Little Red Riding Hood] had relinquished due to her parents' teachings in favor of the reality principle- and then destructive encounters may occur.³⁰

Little Red Riding Hood for the most part acts according to the reality principle. She strays only when the wolf convinces her to look around the woods at the pretty flowers. The wolf is a symbol of the "badness the child feels when he goes contrary to the admonitions of his parents and permits himself to tempt, or be tempted" (Bettelheim 177). The pleasure principle overcomes the young girl until she realizes she has picked enough flowers and it no longer seems like an enjoyable activity. Little Red Riding Hood's struggle between reality and pleasure occurs because she has yet to master her budding sexuality.³¹

Little Red Riding Hood directs the wolf to her grandmother's house indicating that she is not yet mature enough to handle the situation but her grandmother is. The grandmother however, in giving Little Red Riding Hood her symbolic red cap is transferring the sexuality to her granddaughter. This sexual transference is premature and this causes Little Red Riding Hood to regress and send the wolf off to her grandmother. The wolf oddly does not devour Little Red Riding Hood out in the woods but runs to eat up her grandmother first. Bettelheim argues that as long as the grandmother is around he

cannot have Little Red Riding Hood because she is controlled by a superior force (the grandmother). Little Red Riding Hood's repressed desires will be free once the grandmother is gone. Each figure Little Red Riding Hood encountered up until this point represents a separate part of the human psyche. The huntsman is the only figure to enter the tale as a fully developed adult and this is represented in the way he chooses to act.

The huntsman's first inclination is to kill the wolf that he has long been searching for. "But his ego (or reason) asserts itself despite the prodding's of the id (anger at the wolf), and the hunter realizes that it is more important to try to rescue grandmother than to give in to anger by shooting the wolf outright" (Bettelheim 177). He acts according to both the reality and pleasure principle indicating he has a fully developed rationality. Furthermore, the huntsman can also be viewed as a father figure. Bettelheim claims that young girls expect their fathers to rescue and protect them and since no father is present, the huntsman assumes that position. Little Red Riding Hood collects pebbles to put inside the wolf after the huntsman frees them. Her goal-oriented thinking indicates that she has matured and overcome her primal urge to regress into the stage of pleasure (which was proved to be her weakness). Putting pebbles in the wolf's stomach also illustrates that oral greediness is detrimental; the wolf was greedy and wanted to eat both grandmother and Little Red Riding Hood therefore, it is only fitting for him to die because of a full and heavy stomach. It would make sense for the tale to end with the young girl overjoyed by the fact that she helped kill the wolf and living happily ever after. However, there is more to this tale proving that Little Red Riding Hood has yet to reach her full development.

The tale of Little Red Riding Hood continues with the young girl traveling to her grandmother's house a second time and encountering another wolf. This time, Little Red

Riding Hood does not give into her desire for pleasure and rushes off to her grandmother. After her first encounter, Little Red Riding Hood realizes that she is not mature enough to deal with the wolf on her own and she feels she needs to form an alliance with her grandmother to defeat the wolf. Little Red Riding Hood needs this alliance with a parent (or grandparent) of the same sex so that they can look up to them as a role model and identify with them.³² Further on, it was necessary for Little Red Riding Hood to deviate and defy her mother the first time because this helped her accomplish a higher state of personality organization. She learned from her mistakes and this helped her to mature.

Both "Hansel and Gretel" and "Little Red Riding Hood" depict children striving to gain independence. While Hansel and Gretel are forced out into the world on their own, Little Red Riding Hood willingly leaves home. These two fairy tales show variations in the way children mature. Bettelheim, Tatar and Freudian psychologists believe that individuals gain skills and maturity in stages depending on how developed their id, ego and superego are. Children understand and cope with their development by reading fairy tales. At each stage in their life, they read the fairy tale with a different perspective. Children are attracted to fairy tales because at each age they can also find a different tale that helps them with any problems they might have. Adults are in turn tempted to read fairy tales to their children knowing that if they cannot get through to their child, a tale by the brothers Grimm might be able to convey some important life lesson. Freudian psychology focuses primarily on childhood development and the different ways in which maturity is achieved. Jungians on the other hand, shift their focus away from children and discuss the ways in which the fairy tale can help someone

achieve "Self." "Self" is achieved when the consciousness and unconsciousness unite and represent the psyche as a whole. Let us move on to the practice of Jungian psychology.

Carl Jung, disciple of Freud, expanded on Freud's initial approach and developed what is known to be Jungian psychology. Although Jungian psychology is similar to Freudian psychology, there are a few instances when applied to fairy tales that these two approaches differ. Jung believes that there exists a collective unconscious which is shared by all. Individuation forms through each individual's unconscious by means of the unconscious being brought into consciousness through dreams and an active imagination. Jung "went on to formulate the concepts for which he is now well-known: the polarity of introversion and extraversion; the collective unconscious with its archetypes; the psyche as composed of persona (the social mask) and shadow (the person's hidden aspects), anima (the feminine in men), animus (masculine in women), and self (a person's inmost core)."³³

Jungian psychologist, Marie-Louise von Franz, in her book *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales* (1970), applies Jung's psychology to fairy tales. von Franz states:

By attending to one's dreams for a long time and by really taking them into consideration, the unconscious of modern man can rebuild a symbolic life. But that presupposes that you do not interpret your dreams purely intellectually and that you really incorporate them into your life. Then there will be a restoration of the symbolic life, no longer in the framework of a collective ritualistic form but more individually colored and shaped.³⁴

The fairy tale takes its reader into a dream-like world belonging to the collective unconscious and ends in a way that brings the reader back into reality. Within the dream-like fairy tale world, the shadow, anima and animus are often times encountered. von Franz claims that in fairy tales, the shadow belongs only to the collective unconscious. The shadow of the hero for example, appears "more primitive and more instinctive than the hero but not necessarily more inferior" (114). Let us take for example the fairy tale "Ferdinand the Faithful." The hero figure, Ferdinand the Faithful, is depicted with his shadow taking the form of the white horse. Ferdinand the Faithful receives a gift of a castle with a white horse from his godfather. He mounts the horse and decides he will travel. He travels alone and enters an unfamiliar area indicating that he is journeying deeper into his unconscious. He meets Ferdinand the Unfaithful who proves to be his negative shadow. von Franz argues that in certain fairy tales there is a positive and negative shadow; the positive, the white horse, "is intimately bound up with the hero." The negative shadow, Ferdinand the Unfaithful, "is separable and transient." The negative shadow is responsible for the impossible tasks the hero must endure; Ferdinand the Unfaithful tells the King to send Ferdinand the Faithful to rescue the princess and bring her back to the castle. The tasks that Ferdinand the Faithful must surpass demonstrate his journey to civilization and reality. They do prove to be very difficult tasks and this causes Ferdinand the Faithful to grow weary and anxious. It is at this moment that the shadow comes to the hero's aid.

The white horse, reveals that it can speak, and reminds Ferdinand the Faithful that he will find help from the giants and birds that he assisted previously. Ferdinand the Faithful and the white horse become allies in the quest to save the princess and Ferdinand

the Faithful begins to acquire his positive shadow's instincts. Gradually, Ferdinand the Faithful accomplishes his tasks and progresses into a full representation of the Self. At the end of the tale, Ferdinand the Faithful marries the princess he rescued and the white horse transformed into a King's son. von Franz states, "When symbolic factors are repressed, they glut the instincts, and therefore they must be separated out so that the genuine instincts can function without being overloaded" (134). A shadow figure is part of the psyche and forms in order to guide the hero to attaining Self and allowing the ego to rule its own fate. The shadow kills itself in the end and comes back as a transformed human being. Without the help of the shadow, the hero lacks the qualities and instincts required for survival. In some fairy tales, the shadow is replaced with the anima (for males) or the animus (for females). The anima or animus appears after the hero has left for his journey.³⁵

I will now discuss the role of the animus in the fairy tale "Clever Hans." Hans' anima appears as Grethel. Hans travels to see Grethel and asks her if she has a gift for him. Each time he does this, she offers him a different gift that he takes home to his mother who scolds him when he returns. Although Grethel is nothing but friendly to him, he takes her and ties her to a rack and throws calf and sheep eyes at her face. Grethel becomes angry and runs away but then she becomes the bride of Hans. von Franz argues that the anima "is trapped because a process in the unconscious is not understood" (147). Grethel is trapped in a metaphorical and a physical sense; she is trapped in Hans' unconscious because as long as his mother dictates what is right and wrong for him, he cannot solve his own problems and reach his true identity. Furthermore, the anima requires help from the consciousness in order to find her position in the psyche. Hans'

mother is his conscience, and for every task he performs she informs him that he did not perform well. The anima, Gretel, is released once she decides she no longer has to offer herself to Hans and escapes from his attack. von Franz states, "she [the anima] is released when the hero lives up to his name, and then she guides him to higher consciousness" (148). Hans was only doing what his mother told him to do, therefore he accomplished what she requested of him and the fairy tale ends with the marriage of the hero and his anima. The animus functions quite differently than the anima.

A woman's positive animus helps her serve life (have children, care for them, maintain the household). However, in its negative form, the animus "draws woman away from life and murders life for her" (von Franz 170). The woman feels tortured and disconnected from life. von Franz states, "The animus can either lame one or make one very aggressive. Women either become masculine and assertive or they tend to be absent-minded, as if they are not fully present" (171). Similar to the anima sometimes appearing as a mother figure, the animus may appear as a father figure. I have applied here the fairy tale "King Thrusbeard." The King attempts to marry off his daughter to various upper-class men (including kings, princes, and barons). The King's spoiled daughter ridicules all her suitors, including King Thrusbeard with the crooked chin. In his anger and disappointment with his daughter, the King betroths her to the first beggar-man that approaches his castle. This beggar-man assumes the role of the King's daughter's animus. She marries the beggar-man and goes off to his house in the forest which is detached from the rest of society. The farther the beggar-man takes her away from her father's castle, the unhappier she becomes and the more she wishes she had accepted King Thrusbeard's hand in marriage.

The beggar-man takes control of his wife and attempts to employ her. At her first job selling pots, a drunken hussar gallops along and destroys all her pots leading the King's daughter to weep. von Franz argues that breaking the pots indicates an emotional outburst and the woman must continue suffering through the animus before she can attain Self. Therefore, the beggar-man employs her at King Thrushbeard's castle as a kitchen-maid causing her to suffer even more so. While preparing for an event, the King's daughter drops the pots that were in her pockets which arouses the party guests who in turn laugh at her. She tries to run away and King Thrushbeard catches her and reveals himself to be the beggar-man. The animus has revealed itself and the King's daughter attains her Self because she has finally felt the embarrassment that she belied upon her suitors in the beginning. Throughout the tale, she listens to her husband, provides for her husband and household by working, and learns to maintain the kitchen while at the castle, all of which are typical feminine activities.

The shadow, anima and animus are only engaged in certain parts of the fairy tale. von Franz directs her full psychological analysis of each stage to one particular tale, "The Three Feathers." The tale begins with a father and his three sons; the King represents the dominant symbolic content, his two eldest sons represent intelligence and Simpleton represents inferiority. The reader assumes there are three competing males, not paying attention to the fourth male element, the King. The King represents a divine principle and "the dominant and most central symbol in the contents of the collective unconscious" (von Franz 54).³⁶ Moreover, there is a missing female element which leads to the hero, Simpleton, being helped by the toad who assumes the role of a female. Simpleton's marriage in the end also balances out the female and male elements. Simpleton, the hero

of this tale, represents the Self with all its emotions and feelings. Simpleton wins over his brothers in the end because of his emotional connection with the female element.

Aside from the content of the narrative, von Franz argues that "The Three Feathers" beholds a variety of symbols laced with meaningful interpretations. The feathers that the father releases represent thoughts and fantasies that are wandering out of the unconscious. The trap door Simpleton finds constitutes a descent into the unconscious which contains our instincts. It is only befitting that Simpleton encounter a toad in his unconscious. The toad is a symbol of instinctual behaviors and desires. Furthermore, the toad represents femininity and stands along with her baby toads. Further on, the carpet Simpleton acquires is meant to protect him from foreign soil and the golden ring is a symbol of unity, connectedness and preciousness. The carrot carriage is a phallic symbol indicating that Simpleton could be encompassed in a sexual fantasy while the mice indicate gnawing and anxious and obsessive thoughts. Lastly, because the women need to aim to jump through the middle of the ring, the ring represents finding the inner center of the personality. Each fairy tale has its own symbols which add meaning to the content.

Psychoanalysts argue "that meaning exists independent of form and structure and can be directly apprehended, regardless of the linguistic, narrative, and cultural structures and conventions used to encode it."³⁷ Children and adults are drawn to fairy tales not because of their simple structure. They are enchanted by the meaning contained within the narrative. Although fairy tales share the same themes and motifs, the morals and lessons differ from tale to tale. This allows for each reader to interpret the fairy tale in their own way. Fairy tales are a way to escape from reality and enter a world in which animals can speak, houses are made out of gingerbread and everybody has the chance to

live happily ever after. Fairy tale psychoanalysts however, disregard the social and historical contexts from which the tales developed. They assume that meanings are universal and will continue to remain the same regardless of historical changes.

Psychoanalysis alone provides an incomplete analysis of fairy tales. Historicists and sociologists prove that the psychoanalytic approach is lacking. Historicists discuss the socio-historical context from which the Grimms' tales first developed. Sociologists analyze fairy tales from different time periods and show how the tales have been revised in order to be accepted by society.

Chapter 3

The Socio-Historical Context from which the Grimm tales Developed and Evolved

Historicists and sociologists view fairy tales as reflecting social and historical conditions.³⁸ Unlike structuralists and psychoanalysts, historicists return to the 1800s and discuss how Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm first came up with the idea for their collection. They examine Germany as it was recovering and prospering from the previous decades. They also investigate and prove that fairy tales have been revised continuously throughout the years with each revision reflecting the changing social and cultural conditions. The historical and sociological approaches attempt to extrapolate social conditions and values from literary texts.³⁹ This approach proves to be controversial; by placing the fairy tale within a social context, scholars are assuming a relationship between literature and reality. For fairy tales to maintain their position in an enchanted world, scholars must be aware of how they choose to discuss the social contexts of the tales. This is done by revisiting tales from different time periods and comparing the ways in which they were revised. Further on, historicist Jack Zipes attempts to answer the age old question, "Why do fairy tales stick?" He applies the study of memetics to fairy tales and empirically explains why fairy tales have been so openly received by everyone. Before we get caught up in the how's and why's of memetics and the influence fairy tales have on modern day, American societies, lets return to Germany in the 1200s.

Around the year 1200, Germany was prospering with some of the greatest writers of German literature. However, as the great writers began to die off, Germany entered a

period of cultural poverty which lasted until 1800.⁴⁰ As German literature was decaying, the literatures of France, England and Italy were prospering and entering their Renaissance periods. John M. Ellis, author of *One Fairy Story too Many* (1983), argues that it is difficult to pinpoint the exact reason German literature was failing but he attributes it to several historical circumstances. While most other European powers were undergoing unification, Germany remained "a hodgepodge of small independent states" until the late nineteenth century. Due to the late unification, Germany lacked a single, dominant cultural center. Moreover, "no standard language emerged until the end of the Middle Ages, and so for a long time there was no linguistic vehicle for the formation of a national literature" (2). Yet another contributing factor was the devastation the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) had on Germany. Although many European countries participated in this war, it was fought primarily on German soil. "The line of battle went up and down Germany and then back again, so that the same area was devastated again and again at intervals of a few years, as one side advanced and then retreated over it" (3).

Germany spent the next hundred years or so recuperating from the war. In the mid-eighteenth century, German literature and culture finally began to recover and transform. Ellis argues that German culture could have developed in two ways. First, Germany could have looked to other European countries for support; to borrow ideas and to eventually rise up to the European standard that had already been set rather high. Second, Germany could have stressed its uniqueness and developed its own character with its own laws, rules, standards and goals. The beginning of German classicism exhibited a development based on the second path. However, this proved to be too narrow a viewpoint for certain authors and "the emphasis shifted to a broader concern

with mankind and literature in general, rather than the narrower preoccupations with the characteristic quality of German culture" (Ellis 4). The classical period did not last long before the romantics began to appear with their utmost sense of patriotism. "With the romantics came a sudden, heady sense of the brilliance of German culture; a nation which had been a poor relation in Europe suddenly revealed not in equality but in preeminence" (Ellis 5).

With the rise of romanticism in Germany, there was a greater interest in Germanic folklore, folk songs, legends, and a general desire to rediscover the past. Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm were very active participants in the rise towards German nationalism. Ellis writes:

they made contributions to the study of German culture apart from their fairy tale collection: notably, a collection of German legends, their famous dictionary of the German language, and Jacob's historical work on the German language. [...] And all of this was done quite consciously in a spirit of devotion to their fatherland, as countless passages in the brothers' letters make clear.⁴¹

Their great interest and devotion to German nationalism was due in part to their own personal historical background and upbringing.

Jacob and Wilhelm's father was a magistrate for the German Calvinist ruler of Hesse-Cassel. German Calvinists, otherwise known as the German Reformed, at the time were considered to be educationally and socially superior to the Lutherans. While their father was still alive, Jacob and Wilhelm were well taken care of. However, in 1796, with

their father's passing, the family suffered great despair. The brothers were sent to Cassel to pursue their studies and were just barely admitted to the University of Marburg, a university primarily for people of noble descent. While pursuing degrees in law, Jacob and Wilhelm met Professor Friedrich von Savigny and it was in Savigny's personal library that the brothers found their lifework.⁴² Jacob and Wilhelm abandoned their studies in law and became librarians for the Margrave of Cassel. The pay they received as librarians was just enough to feed and house their family. However, in the early 1800s, Napoleon invaded Germany and Jacob was appointed by the King to serve as secretary of a war-related commission.⁴³ In 1808, Jacob was awarded the royal librarianship which he held until 1813; this librarianship helped the Grimm family financially and allowed them to continue working with literature.

Beginning 1806, both brothers began collecting fairy tales for their first edition of *Children's and Household Tales*. It is important to note that the tales were collected and not originally written or thought of by the brothers. Controversy has surrounded Grimms' fairy tales with critics arguing about the way in which the tales were collected. Folklorist and author of *The Brothers Grimm* (2002), Jack Zipes, states:

For a long time it was believed that they had wandered about Germany and gathered their tales from the lips of doughty peasants and that all their tales were genuinely German. Although much of what had been believed has been disproved by recent scholarship, new rumors and debates about the Grimms kept arising. For instance, one literary scholar has charged them with manufacturing the folk spirit of the tales in order to dupe the general public in the name of nationalism.⁴⁴

Contrary to this popular belief, the Grimms did not travel around Germany and gather tales from peasants. Rather, they invited storytellers to their home, listened to them recite the tales orally several times, and then wrote them down. The storytellers were also not peasants, most were educated young women belonging to the middle class or aristocracy. In some of his earliest manuscripts, Wilhelm made notes about who he heard the tales from.

Ruth B. Bottigheimer, author of *Fairy Tales: A New History* (2009), discusses the various storytellers that contributed to *Children's and Household Tales*. It is believed that Wilhelm hid the true identity of his informants; referring to them in his notes, he listed the geographical areas in which they belonged. Historians however, were able to uncover some of their true identities and give them the proper credit. One of the youngest informants was fourteen year old Dortchen Wild⁴⁵, daughter of an apothecary that lived across the street from the Grimms. Along with her sister Gretchen and their mother, the women told Wilhelm several tales including "The Frog Prince" and "The Six Swans." Jacob collected tales from Marie, Jeanette, and Amalie Hassenpflug, "daughters of a socially elevated and politically conservative banking family" (29). Their ages varied but they provided Jacob with some of the most well-known fairy tales including, "The Seven Ravens", "Little Red Riding Hood", "Sleeping Beauty", "Snow White" and "King Thrushebeard." Friederike Mannel and Julia and Charlotte Ramus also contributed quite a few tales to the collection. The Ramus sisters significant contribution however, was not the tales they recited but the introduction of Dorothea Viehmann (1755-1815)⁴⁶ to the brothers. Unlike the previously mentioned women, Dorothea Viehmann "seemed to have genuine non-bourgeois credentials: she was a dover's daughter and a tailor's wife" (29).

The tales she told Wilhelm and Jacob dominated the second volume of their collection. Volume two also incorporated several stories that were sent to the brothers from Anna Haxthausen and her siblings, August and Ludowine. In his notes, Wilhelm also credited some of the stories to Old Marie.

The figure of Old Marie remains a mystery for fairy tale historians. At first it was assumed that Marie was Marie Hassenpflug, but Wilhelm's son, Herman Grimm, identified "Marie" in an essay he published about his father in 1895.⁴⁷ Marie Muller was an old servant woman in the Wild household. Ellis argues, if she truly existed as a servant, she would be "uncontaminated by book learning and thus could be considered an unspoiled member of German [folk]" (29). It would then be assumed that the storytellers from the Wild household heard their tales from Old Marie. Ellis however questions why the brothers would collect the tales from the Wild women if they could have had direct access to their servant. Ellis argues that Old Marie was a fictitious figure and the only one that deserves credit for their stories is Dorothea Viehmann.

Despite the evidence that proves Wilhelm and Jacob received their tales from the aforementioned contributors, fairy tale historians argue that all the credited storytellers in turn received the tales from other sources, specifically their household servants.

Bottigheimer states:

Nearly every household in Germany's middling classes had servants, and for decades tradition-minded scholars pounded on the possibility that domestics in the Wild, Hassenpflug, and Ramus households stood behind the sisters, daughters, and wives who provided folk and fairy tales to the Grimm brothers.⁴⁸

Unlike volume one, volume two of *Children's and Household Tales*, credits the servants and maids from whom the tales were collected. Scholars were in the process of uncovering the folk sources from Germany's archives however, bombings from World War II destroyed Cassel's municipal records and their work became impossible to complete.

The true identity of the storytellers is not the only problem historians have with the authenticity of the Grimms tales. Not only did the storytellers combine themes and motifs from both the oral and literary traditions but most of them were not true German tales. Fairy tales began spreading in France in the mid 1700s.⁴⁹ Fairy tales then travelled to Germany and the Germans saw this as a way to publicize their own culture and customs. It was discovered that most tales in the Grimms collection happened to have French origins. In his book *When Dreams Came True* (2007), Jack Zipes states, "Many of the tales the Grimms recorded had French origins because the Hassenpflugs were of Huguenot ancestry and spoke French at home" (74). The tales the Hassenpflugs were told were most likely in French and translated by them in German. Aside from the tales' authenticity as depicting German customs and traditions, Wilhelm and Jacob worked to edit these tales and make them acceptable for various audiences.

Jacob established the framework for the revisions of the tales and Wilhelm edited them. The first publication of *Children's and Household Tales*, was not geared toward a child audience. They were not deemed acceptable reading material for children and were not considered healthy for the developing minds of children.⁵⁰ The versions of the tales from 1819 and on were much more suitable for children. Wilhelm and Jacob:

eliminated erotic and sexual elements that might be offensive to middle-class morality, added numerous Christian expressions and references, emphasized specific role models for male and female protagonists according to the dominant patriarchal code of that time, and endowed many of the tales with a 'homey' flavor by the use of diminutives, quaint expressions, and cute descriptions.⁵¹

Through their countless revisions, Wilhelm and Jacob created an ideal type for the literary fairy tale, incorporating not just relevant themes but structural and psychological motifs as well. The Grimm brothers hoped their collection would serve as an educational manual for the Germans and in the nineteenth century, their dreams came true.

Germany's educational system in the nineteenth century began incorporating the Grimm fairy tales into their curriculum. The fairy tales proved to be prime examples of the Germanic spirit. "First year pupils were memorizing the simpler tales and older pupils were explicating the longer and more complex ones" (Bottigheimer 40). In 1945 after World War II, the Allied Forces banned the Grimm tales from schools believing that the tales would impart "Germaness" to the German nation. While in the process of banning the tales in Germany, the Allied Forces also "removed copies of the tales from school and library shelves, and shipped them abroad, many to American municipal and university libraries" (Bottigheimer 41). This helped the promotion of the tales in America and established a fairy tale craze. Zipes states:

Since the 1970s and up through the present, the fairy tale has become more aggressive, aesthetically more complex and sophisticated, and more

insistent on not distracting readers but helping them focus on key social problems and issues in their respective societies.⁵²

From a historical perspective, it is still unclear why these tales have such a magical hold on their readers. In his book *Why Fairy Tales Stick* (2006), Zipes attributes the fairy tale phenomenon to the study of memetics. He discusses the reception of fairy tales from an evolutionary standpoint. The meme, like the gene, is an informational pattern (such as a tune, idea or catch-phrase) installed within the mind and having the capability of reproducing itself and entering another person's mind through imitation. Take for example a young mother who reads her daughter the fairy tale "Little Red Riding Hood" for the first time. The little girl becomes enchanted by the story and wants to listen to it every night before bed time. A movie comes out and the little girl wants to have a movie night with her friends from school. All her friends go home and want their parents to read them the story of "Little Red Riding Hood." The parents in turn, recite to their children the same story with their own little twist. The young children grow up and when they have children of their own, they read to them the version of "Little Red Riding Hood" (with a twist) they learned as a child. The fairy tale would be considered the meme and it evolves through the process of repetition. Zipes argues that a meme can only exist if it exhibits three major characteristics: fidelity, fecundity, and longevity.

A meme must be capable of being copied in a faithful way; it must be shaped or formed in such a way that many copies can be made; and it must be able to survive a long time so that many copies will be disseminated. In time some memes form a memplex, which is a group of memes that facilitates replication and can be likened to a genre.⁵³

This would not only explain how fairy tales have survived and evolved, but also how they formed their own literary genre. Fairy tales are not just stories, they are forms of communication using symbols and words that impart meaning that helps them remain within the mind.

Fairy tales as memes evolve and replicate through two ways: communication and imitation. Zipes stresses that imitation is not just a copying mechanism. The process of imitation requires that the brain acquire a stimulus and remember, interpret, adopt and reproduce that stimulus. That stimulus will not be communicated as the same stimulus that was first acquired by the brain; it will be a similar version of it. Its success in an individual culture would ultimately be determined by how relevant the stimulus, fairy tale, is to that specific social context and how well it could convey and preserve that culture's values and beliefs. Furthermore, stability is important in "understanding why fairy tales stick." The original form of a fairy tale will not remain fixed in the brain nor will it last forever.⁵⁴ "Its condition is relative and determined culturally and biologically in a historical evolutionary process that reveals how we value things through mental and public representation" (Zipes 12). "Little Red Riding Hood" was first recognized by its distinguishing features: the red hood, the wolf, the path to grandmother's house, the devouring of the girl. As the tale was repeated, reprinted, and reproduced it gained a cultural significance. This same fairy tale was then recognized not by its original distinguishing features but by its various reproductions. The 1812 version of *Children's and Household Tales*, is not easy to find nowadays; the tales from that very first edition evolved along with people, culture and society and they will forever continue to evolve.

There is more however, to understanding why fairy tales "stick." Zipes argues that language and speech acts drastically helped the evolution of the fairy tale.

Zipes states that fairy tales act through language to depict cultural and social conflicts. He refers to Bakhtin, Todorov, and Stock to claim that language is influential in the development of the fairy tale. According to Bakhtin, the literary fairy tale is a secondary speech act because it has absorbed everyday speech (a primary speech act), preserved its elements and transformed into a more complex dialogue. Todorov expands on Bakhtin's work and believes that the fairy tale "genre begins as a speech act and undergoes various transformations before becoming institutionalized" (Zipes 19). Further on, Stock argues that there must be a textual community to receive, cultivate and institutionalize the fairy tales. It is with the emergence of textual communities that the fairy tale genre formed and emerged. Textual communities also made the memetics of fairy tales possible. Zipes states:

As memes (cultural replicators or public representations) particular fairy tales were endowed with and recognized as having great value in communities and societies. Their memetic value resides in their potential to assist human beings to become more alert to particular signs, to improve their situations, and to adapt more successfully in a changing environment.⁵⁵

Often times, fairy tale readers do not take into account that they are reading an updated version of a fairy tale. Adult readers and scholars must consider the original versions of fairy tales to understand the influence that they have had on our changing society. In writing this thesis, I have worked with one of the most recent editions of Jacob

and Wilhelm's collections. It is the edition that is approved by the society in which I live and the edition which has been produced, promoted and sold at my local bookstore. It is also the edition which many children will grow up to read and love. The edition I own was published in 2012 and is titled *Grimm's Complete Fairy Tales*. There is no preface to this edition explaining who the Grimm brothers are and how much they have accomplished in the literary fairy tale field. There is no indication that the tales have German (or even French) descent. It does provide several black and white illustrations which do not do the stories much justice. However much this edition lacks, it did provide me with the tales I needed for my structural and psychological analyses. I also came across a version from the 1970s that closely resembles my 2012 version. The print has a rustic appearance and there are much less illustrations. In order to emphasize the social effect these tales have had on American society I will compare the 1812 version of "Hansel and Gretel" to the 1970 and 2012 versions.

1812 Version - "Next to a great forest there lived a poor woodcutter who had come upon such hard times that he could scarcely provide daily bread for his wife and his two children, Hansel and Gretel. Finally he could no longer even manage this, and he did not know where to turn to for help."

1970s Version - "Close to a large forest there lived a woodcutter with his wife and his two children. The boy was called Hansel, and the girl Grethel. They were always very poor, and had very little to live on; and at one time, when there was famine in the land, he could no longer procure daily bread."

2012 Version - "Hard by a great forest dwelt a poor wood-cutter with his wife and his two children. The boy was called Hansel and the girl Gretel. He had little to bite and to

break, and once when great scarcity fell on the land, he could no longer procure daily bread."

Wilhelm first recorded this fairy tale between 1808 and 1810 as told to him by Dortchen Wild. It was first titled "The Little Brother and the Little Sister" and in the very first manuscript, "the children are not named; their mother is their biological mother; there are no references to God; the children survive on their own, manage to kill the witch, find jewels, and do not need a dainty duck to carry them anywhere" (Zipes 197). Wilhelm revised the tale drastically before it was included in the 1812 version.

In the 1812 version of the initial situation, there is no mention of the woodcutter's wife. This procures an image of a father and his children missing a central figure: the mother. The woodcutters wife is inserted into the initial situation of the 1970 and 2012 version and has a more dominant role; she is a part of the family. Although it is never stated, she takes on the role of the mother figure just by being present in the introduction. Additionally, there is no explanation as to why the woodcutter cannot provide for his family in the 1812 version. Simply put, he was having a hard time. The 1970s revisions make it clear that there was a famine that kept him from procuring bread. Famines in the previous year's resulted in despairing emotions amongst societies. In the 2012 version, again it is not entirely clear why he cannot provide food but "a great scarcity on the land" takes the blame away from him and instead it places it on the society. The three versions indicate the different social contexts in which the tales were received and revised.

Further on in the 1812 version, Hansel and Gretel sat awake in the forest until night time when they grew anxious. When they found their way home, "the father was overjoyed when he saw his children once more" while the woman pretended to be happy.

In the 1970 and 2012 versions, they grew tired and fell asleep in the woods. When they awoke, they made their way home, knocked on the door and the woodcutters wife opened it. She scolds the children for having remained in the forest, once again taking on more of a significant role. Just like famines in the land, the dynamics of the family have undergone changes throughout the years. It appears that in 1812, women and mothers did not have a central or authoritarian role. As the role of the mother became more important in later years, the woodcutters wife became a significant figure and interacted with the children as a (villainous) mother.

The differences between the two versions continue even further. The 1812 version does not describe the witch inside the gingerbread house. The 1970 version states, "Witches have red eyes, and can't see very far, but they have keen scent like animals, and can perceive the approach of human beings." The 2012 version is similar but the word "animals" is changed to "beasts." Considering the children were helped by animals, it would be confusing for them to associate animals with witches. Beasts however, are thought to be terrifying animals and are more likely to be associated with witches. There is also no mention of a duck that helps Hansel and Gretel find their way home in the 1812 version. The inclusion of the helpful duck in the later versions reminds the reader that Hansel and Gretel are just children and children sometimes need help from other sources. The duck aids in their development and helps them reach their home.

The children's return to their father is similar in all three versions. The 1812 version ends with the father being overjoyed and the final statement "However, the mother had died." This is the first time in all three versions that the woodcutter's wife is referred to as Hansel and Gretel's mother. Her death ends the tale with a loss rather than

the positive implication that they will enjoy the rest of their lives being happy. Both the 1970 and 2012 version also mention the passing of the woodcutters wife but their main ending states that the children lived happily ever after. The wife's death is not given the same significance as the 1812 version. The evolving societies would not place significance on the wife's death because it is better for a child to imagine a happy life rather than a life without a mother.

Wilhelm continued to revise "Hansel and Gretel" for forty-seven years. It is a tale that will continuously be revised. The problems raised in "Hansel and Gretel" such as hunger, poverty, abandonment and villainous stepmothers have not been resolved in reality. Therefore, revisions are necessary because the reader needs to relate to the narrative within the context of their current culture. Nowadays, it would not make much sense to relate famine to a father's inability to feed his children. Mothers and villainous stepmothers have a highly relevant position in a family and children are not capable of maturation without the help and guidance of another figure. "Hansel and Gretel" is but one fairy tale in the ever-changing collection of the brothers. Just like there is no definitive ending to the fairy tale, there is no definitive end to the revisions.

Zipes states that a fairy tale ending is a true beginning; a beginning that implies a future bound with happiness. Readers are attracted to fairy tales for many reasons other than the happy ending. Zipes argues that fairy tales are attractive to us as the readers because they resonate as survival stories with hope; hope for change, hope for a better future and hope that we can overcome any difficult obstacles in our way. They have arisen as a way to help us adapt to unusual situations; to alert us of the dangers lurking in the woods; to reveal what might happen if we take advantage of the objects presented to

us in a time of need. They communicate optimism and positivity. This is why fairy tales "stick."

Critics of the historicist approach to studying fairy tales would determine that the past does not change. Sociologists on the other hand, have more to work with considering society always changes. Paired together, they provide for an in depth analysis of how fairy tales developed and evolved throughout the years. The structuralist, literary, psychoanalytic, historicist and sociological approaches, when combined, offer a complete study of the literary fairy tales. Together, they explain why fairy tales have an enchanting hold on us; the simplicity of the structure; knowing what will happen next; identifying with a character; feeling each emotion; understanding changes in society. These are all reasons why fairy tales have had such a considerable and universal effect.

Notes

Introduction

- ¹ Jack Zipes, *When Dreams Came True* (New York: Routledge, 2007).
- ² Jack Zipes, *When Dreams Came True* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 75.
- ³ Jack Zipes, *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).
- ⁴ Jack Zipes, *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000) xv.
- ⁵ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (New York: Vintage, 1989).
- ⁶ Jack Zipes, *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 369.
- ⁷ Maria Tatar, *The Hard Facts of the Grimms' Fairy Tales* (New Jersey: Princeton, 1987).
- ⁸ Jack Zipes, *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 369.
- ⁹ Ruth B. Bottigheimer states, "literary fairy tales came to be seen as contaminations of what was considered to have been a pure oral tradition." *Fairy Tales: A New History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009), 42.
- ¹⁰ Jack Zipes, *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Chapter One

- ¹¹ Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1996) 82.
- ¹² Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968) 22.
- ¹³ Jack Zipes, *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000) 18.
- ¹⁴ Jack Zipes, *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000) 18.
- ¹⁵ Lüthi argues, "The gift is a central motif of the folktale. Since folktale characters lack an inner world of their own and as consequence cannot really make any decisions of their own, the narrative must seek to propel them on their way through external impulses." *The European Folktale: Form and Nature* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1982) 56.
- ¹⁶ Max Lüthi, *The European Folktale: Form and Nature* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1982) 59.
- ¹⁷ Lüthi states, "Although in many ways, like everything human, the folktale is to be interpreted historically, I have preferred to search for its lasting truths. Today more than ever I am convinced that, despite increased interest in the function of tales and in what has been called folktale biology, the tales themselves merit the greatest attention, just as always [...] Only a small part of the secret and the fascination of folktales can be grasped by research into present-day context of their performance or by reconstruction of the context of their performance or by reconstruction of the context of their performance in days past. This secret of the folktale resides essentially in its message, structure, and style." *The European Folktale: Form and Nature* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1982)

¹⁸ Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1996) 83.

Chapter Two

¹⁹ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (New York: Vintage, 1989) 6.

²⁰ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (New York: Vintage, 1989) 36.

²¹ Uses of Enchantment is split into two parts. In the first part of the book, Bettelheim discusses different problems that children endure and the way fairy tales teach children to cope with their problems. In the second half, Bettelheim analyzes several different tales and discusses their psychological meanings.

²² Imagining himself as another character is made possible because of the trait of one-dimensionality discussed in chapter one. Children can connect with characters who display only one emotion or trait. Children cannot comprehend both the good and bad within the same character. Therefore, a child can only connect with a one-dimensional character.

²³ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (New York: Vintage, 1989) 98.

²⁴ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (New York: Vintage, 1989) 99.

²⁵ Bettelheim states that in tales about Simpleton's, the parental figure is split into two figures; the parent who thinks little of his child and the another figure, usually a wise animal or old man who is willing to help the child. This second figure aids the child in defeating his siblings rather than his parents. Such is the toad's purpose in "The Three Feathers."

²⁶ Tatar states, "the simpletons in the Grimm's fairy tales possess one character trait that sets them apart from their fraternal rivals: compassion" (88). Help comes to the Simpleton only when he proves himself worthy of assistance by displaying compassion. Simpleton in "The Three Feathers" encounters the toad with warmth and friendliness. His lack of disgust prove that he is worthy of the help he receives.

²⁷ Bettelheim psychologically analyzes these two stories in depth in the second part of his book.

²⁸ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (New York: Vintage, 1989) 161.

²⁹ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (New York: Vintage, 1989) 163.

³⁰ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (New York: Vintage, 1989) 170.

³¹ Bettelheim states, "The person who is psychologically ready to have sexual experiences can master them, and grow because of it. But a premature sexuality is a regressive experience, arousing all that is still primitive within us and that threatens to swallow us up" (173).

³² "The child needs to form a strong working alliance with the parent of the same sex, so that through identification with the parent and conscious learning from him, the child will grow successfully into an adult" (Bettelheim 174).

³³ Goleman, Daniel and Kathleen Riordan Speeth, ed. *The Essential Psychotherapies*. (New York: New American Library, 1982) 76.

³⁴ Marie Louise von Franz, *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1996) 96-97.

³⁵ von Franz claims that the fairy tale is split into four sections, each leading the hero deeper into the unconscious. Beginning stage two, the hero embarks on a journey. Beginning stage three and leading into stage four, the shadow guides the hero. Stage four ends with all evil elements disappearing, latent desires fulfilled and the hero attaining his Self.

³⁶ The Queen is not present in "The Three Feathers" but in fairy tales in which she is present, she represents the King's "accompanying feminine element - the emotions, feelings, the irrational attachments to [the King's] dominant content" (von Franz 54).

³⁷ Jack Zipes, *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 19.

Chapter Three

³⁸ Jack Zipes, *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 19.

³⁹ Jack Zipes, *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 19.

⁴⁰ John M. Ellis, *One Fairy Story Too Many* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 2.

⁴¹ John M. Ellis, *One Fairy Story Too Many* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 5-6.

⁴² Ruth B. Bottigheimer, *Fairy Tales: A New History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009), 43.

⁴³ Bottigheimer states, "It was around Napoleon's invasion of the Germanies that a German national consciousness coalesced" *Tales: A New History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009), 44.

⁴⁴ Jack Zipes, *The Brothers Grimm* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 1.

⁴⁵ Dortchen Wild married Wilhelm Grimm.

⁴⁶ Ellis states, "With the single exception of Dorothea Viehmann, the Grimms gave very little information about their informants." *One Fairy Story Too Many* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 26.

⁴⁷ John M. Ellis, *One Fairy Story Too Many* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 29.

⁴⁸ Ruth B. Bottigheimer, *Fairy Tales: A New History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009), 31.

⁴⁹ Jack Zipes, *When Dreams Came True* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 17.

⁵⁰ Jack Zipes, *When Dreams Came True* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 19.

⁵¹ Jack Zipes, *When Dreams Came True* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 78.

⁵² Jack Zipes, *When Dreams Came True* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 25.

⁵³ Jack Zipes, *Why Fairy Tales Stick* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 5.

⁵⁴ Jack Zipes, *Why Fairy Tales Stick* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 12.

⁵⁵ Jack Zipes, *Why Fairy Tales Stick* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 22.

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