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MW 3:20-4:40 p.m., Rutgers Cinema 1, Livingston Campus
Spring 2016
Professor Martha Helfer
Office: 172 College Ave, Room 204
Office hours, M 2-3 p.m. and by appointment
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Fairy Tales Then and Now

Course description:

This course analyzes the structure, meaning, and function of fairy tales and their enduring influence on literature and popular culture. While we will concentrate on the German context, and in particular the works of the Brothers Grimm, we also will consider fairy tales drawn from a number of different national traditions and historical periods, including the American present. Various strategies for interpreting fairy tales will be examined, including methodologies derived from structuralism, folklore studies, gender studies, and psychoanalysis. We will explore pedagogical and political uses and abuses of fairy tales. We will investigate the evolution of specific tale types and trace their transformations in various media from oral storytelling through print to film, television, and the stage. Finally, we will consider potential strategies for the reinterpretation and rewriting of fairy tales. **This course has no prerequisites.**

Core certification:

Satisfies SAS Core Curriculum Requirements AHP, WCd
Arts and Humanities Goal p: Student is able to analyze arts and/or literature in themselves and in relation to specific histories, values, languages, cultures, and/or technologies.
Writing and Communication Goal d: Student is able to communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry.

Required readings:

The following texts are available for purchase at the bookstore:

The Complete Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm, tr. Jack Zipes, 3rd ed. (Bantam, 0553382160)
Spiegelman, *Maus I and Maus II* (Pantheon, 0679748407)
Grimm/Sendak, *Dear Mili* (Farrar Straus Giroux, 9781250035127)
Fouqué, *Undine*, tr. F.E. Bunnett (Wildside Press, 1-58715-689-x [note: also available in Kindle edition])

The following title is available as a free download from Amazon:

Lessing, *Nathan the Wise*

All other readings will be made available via Sakai or on reserve at Alexander Library.

Required films:

We will be discussing the following films (streaming available via Sakai course site):

Beauty and the Beast (Disney)

The Little Mermaid (Disney)

Cinderella (Disney)

Snow White (Disney)

Mulan (Disney)

The Lion King (Disney)

Into the Woods (Sondheim musical, 1991 Broadway version)

In addition, we will be discussing Jean Cocteau's film *Beauty and the Beast* (1946), available for rent via Amazon, and readily available at local libraries.

Course requirements and grading:

Regular class attendance, careful preparation of assigned readings and viewings, active class participation, and successful completion of **all** assignments are required to receive a passing grade in this course. Periodic unannounced quizzes may be given on assigned readings. There will be an in-class midterm exam and one announced in-class quiz. There will be two 5-page essay assignments and one 8-page essay assignment; the essay assignments are designed to test course content and to develop critical reading and writing skills.

IMPORTANT: EXCEPT IN CASES OF VERIFIABLE ILLNESS OR FAMILY EMERGENCY, NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED. QUIZZES AND EXAMS MUST BE COMPLETED AT THE ASSIGNED DATE AND TIME!

Course learning goals:

Students will: Acquire an understanding of the structure, meaning, and function of fairy tales and their enduring influence on literature and culture; ground this understanding in historical, cultural, and theoretical contexts; hone analytical skills in written interpretation; be able to propose an argumentative thesis and support it with appropriate evidence. Assessment will be based on evaluation of assigned written work.

Grades will be based on the following formula:

Quizzes	15%
Midterm exam	20%
2 5-page essays (20% each)	40%
1 8-page essay	25%

Grade distribution:

A=90-100%; B+=85-89; B=80-84; C+=75-79; C=70-74; D=65-69; F=64 and below.

Note: The professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, including assignment due dates, when unforeseen circumstances occur. These changes will be announced as early as possible so that students can adjust their schedules.

Syllabus:

Introducing Little Red (yes, that's Riding Hood!)

To what degree do fairy tales raise timeless and universal issues and to what extent are they specific to a single time and place? We'll consider the special place of fairy tales between the oral and written traditions of narrative, and the differences between fairy tales and related genres such as myths and folktales. We'll also study the origins and development of the Grimms' *Tales*. A comparison of the Grimms' version of "Little Red Riding Hood" with Angela Carter's "The Company of Wolves" and Tanith Lee's "Wolfland" will serve to introduce many of the themes of the course.

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| 1/20 | "Little Red Cap" (The Brothers Grimm) |
| 1/25 | Charles Perrault, "Little Red Riding Hood" |
| | Robert Darnton, "Peasants Tell Tales" |
| | Rudolf Schenda, "Telling Tales – Spreading Tales" |
| | Ruth Bottigheimer, "The Ultimate Fairy Tale" |
| | Marina Warner, "The Old Wives' Tale" |
| 1/27 | Grimm, Prefaces I and II |
| | Jack Zipes, "Once There Were Two Brothers Named Grimm" |
| 2/1 | Angela Carter, "The Company of Wolves" |
| | Tanith Lee, "Wolfland" |
| | Karen Rowe, "Feminism and Fairy Tales" |
| 2/3 | Review, writing workshop |
| 2/8 | ESSAY ONE DUE! |

Praising Boys, Punishing Girls

We'll consider the disciplinary edge to many fairy tales, especially with regard to the inculcation of gender expectations for girls and boys. The focus will be on fairy tales depicting transgressive behavior and the different consequences of disobeying commands for male and female protagonists

- 2/8 Grimm, “Frau Trude,” “Snow White,” “Robber Bridegroom” (43, 53, 40)
 Maria Tatar, ““Teaching Them a Lesson’: The Pedagogy of Fear in Fairy
 Tales” (*Off with their Heads!*, pp. 22–50) **ESSAY ONE DUE!**
- 2/10 Grimm, “White Snake,” “The Table, Ass, and Stick,” “Iron Hans,” “King
 Thrushbeard,” “The Golden Bird,” “The Youth who went forth,” “Brier Rose,”
 “Brother and Sister”(17, 36, 136, 52, 57)

Grimm-ly Violent

Why is violence such a prevalent ingredient in the stories read to children, and what effect do violent stories have on children? What forms of violence are most likely to pervade fairy tales, and to what purpose is violence put: retaliation, demeaning cruelty, cathartic pleasure?

- 2/15 Grimm, “Rapunzel,” “The Juniper Tree,” “Allerleirauh,” “The Maiden without
 Hands,” “Hansel and Gretel,” “Cinderella” (12, 47, 65, 31, 15, 21)
- Recommended reading: Maria Tatar, “Sex and Violence: The Hard Core of Fairy
 Tales” (*Hard Facts*, pp. 3–38)
- 2/17 Grimm, “Fitcher’s Bird” (46)
 Perrault, “Bluebeard”
 Margaret Atwood, “Bluebeard’s Egg”

Animal Spirits

We’ll analyze ways in which fairy tales explore the demarcation between humans and animals. Many tales use animals and anthropomorphized creatures to give voice to existential experiences like sexuality, violence, and injustice. After examining several Grimm tales, we’ll consider the transformation of a single tale type by tracing the evolution of the topos of “Beauty and the Beast” in literature and film. Our goal is to understand something of the process by which tales both persist and change across different times and cultures; we will also continue our discussion of the ways in which curiosity, disobedience, and violence figure in the tales, and the lessons conveyed about appropriate gender behavior.

- 2/22 Grimm, “The Frog-King,” “Rumpelstiltskin,” “The Six Swans,” “The
 Seven Ravens,” “Snow White and Rose Red” (1, 55, 49, 25, 161)
- 2/24 Apuleius, “Cupid and Psyche”
 Madame de Beaumont, “Beauty and the Beast”
- Recommended reading:
 Maria Tatar, “Beauties and Beasts: From Blind Obedience to Love at First Sight”
 (*Off with their Heads!*, pp. 140–162)

2/29 Jean Cocteau, *Beauty and the Beast*
Disney Studios, *Beauty and the Beast*

3/2 review

3/7 MIDTERM EXAM (in class)

The Uses of Enchantment

We'll consider several widely influential approaches to the interpretation of fairy tales, with a special focus on psychoanalysis. Our examination of the role of magic in fairy tales and fantasy will include a not-to-be missed discussion of *Harry Potter*!

3/9 Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale* (excerpt)
Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment* (Introduction: "The Struggle for Meaning")
Freud, "The Occurrence in Dreams of Material from Fairy Tales"

SPRING BREAK!

Fairy Tales and the Transmission of Prejudice; the Anti-Fairy Tale

After analyzing Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's great Enlightenment play about religious tolerance, *Nathan the Wise*, with its famous "ring parable" (introduced as a "fairy tale"), we'll read three Grimms' tales about Jews and explore how they contribute to the construction of the rhetoric of anti-Semitism in 19th-century German culture. We'll then read Art Spiegelman's graphic narrative *Maus*, with its ironic "Happy, Happy Ever After" ending, as an anti-fairy tale. We'll conclude by considering Maurice Sendak's hauntingly beautiful illustrations for the Grimm tale *Dear Mili*.

3/21 Lessing, *Nathan the Wise*

3/23 Grimm, "The Good Bargain," "The Clear Sun Will Bring it To Light," "The Jew in Thorns" (7, 115, 110)
Spiegelman, *Maus I*

3/28 Spiegelman, *Maus I*, *Maus II*

3/30 Spiegelman, *Maus I*, *Maus II*
Sendak/Grimm, *Dear Mili*

Fairy Tales and Literature, Fairy Tales in Literature, Fairy Tales as Literature

We'll consider the differences between fairy tales deriving from an anonymous oral culture and literary fairy tales written by a known author, with a more general focus on the boundaries separating and joining the realms of folklore and literature.

4/4 Modern fairy tales, Romantic style:
Ludwig Tieck, "The Fair-Haired Eckbert"

4/6 Mermaids and Other Merpeople:
Hans Christian Andersen, "The Little Mermaid"
Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué, *Undine*

4/11 ESSAY TWO DUE!

Fairy Tales on Stage and on the Screen

We'll use the critical reading skills honed in this course to attempt to analyze the most dominant forms of fairy tale production in contemporary American culture, with a special focus on Disney Studios animated films. We'll also consider Stephen Sondheim's dark musical, *Into the Woods*.

4/11 Disney Studios, *The Little Mermaid* **ESSAY TWO DUE!**

4/13 Disney Studios, *Cinderella*, *Snow White*

4/18 Disney Studios, *The Lion King*, *Mulan*

4/20 Stephen Sondheim, *Into the Woods*

Writing Anew: Inventing and Reinventing Fairy Tales (Writing Workshop)

Using Pulitzer-Prize winner Michael Cunningham's brilliant rewriting of Hans Christian Andersen's "The Wild Swans" as an example, we'll discuss strategies for inventing and reinventing modern fairy tales, and try our hand at writing tales of our own!

4/25 **IN-CLASS QUIZ**
Hans Christian Andersen, "The Wild Swans"

4/27 Michael Cunningham, "A Wild Swan"

Once Upon a Time; Happily Ever After

5/2 Review

5/4 ESSAY THREE due

Departmental policies

Attendance: All students must attend regularly and arrive prepared; if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me. Note: It is the responsibility of students who have been absent (for any reason) to find out what they have missed and obtain materials that may have been handed out.

Photocopies: Department photocopying fees add up quickly and impressively; we will therefore need to collect from each student 5 cents per page toward the cost of handouts other than quizzes and tests.

Disability Support Services: Students who may be requesting accommodations due to disabilities are encouraged to familiarize themselves with procedures and policies regarding disability support services at the following website: <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>. It is recommended that students seeking accommodations begin filing paperwork as soon as possible as the documentation review process may take up to 30 business days. Students are encouraged to speak with instructors about these issues at the beginning of the term. All such conversations will be kept strictly confidential.

Academic Integrity: Violations of academic integrity are an extremely serious matter, and can lead to a student's failing the course and being referred to the University's Office of Student Conduct for disciplinary action. When referring to ideas other than your own, always acknowledge your sources clearly and completely, whether you are quoting or paraphrasing. Note also that use of online translation services is not permitted as a tool for generating work that you submit for course credit. Please see the University's policies on academic integrity at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>, and discuss with your instructor any questions you may have about this and related issues.

Student-Wellness Services:

Just In Case Web App

<http://codu.co/cee05e>

Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)

(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / www.vpva.rutgers.edu/

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

Disability Services

(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

Scarlet Listeners

(732) 247-5555 / <http://www.scarletlisteners.com/>

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.