

English 4577.02 (Folklore II: Genres, Form, Meaning, and Use)

THE FAIRY TALE AND REALITY

Spring 2015 18549
WF 11:10-12:30
206 Denney Hall

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This course examines the history and uses of the fairy tale in the modern Western world. While most of us associate the fairy tale with magic and fantasy, here we consider the many ways in which fairy tales call us back to the "real" world. We'll see the fairy tale as a space through which subordinate actors (such as women, children, and poor people) negotiate dominant cultural constructions of reality, especially those relating to family life and economic success. We'll look first at the oral wonder tale as the peasant's guide to survival in a world where the rules are both imposed from above and unreliable. Next, we'll see how oral tales are reworked in print and later media for diverse ideological and commercial purposes, creating prominent models of selfhood and success along the way. In turn, we'll see that artistic appropriations of the fairy tale provide an opportunity to denaturalize, even break cultural scripts. In all these transformations, fairy tales explore the tension between three ways individuals can respond to the promise of modern society: playing the game to win, escaping it, and changing the rules. But what happens when the rules of the game are no longer clear or certain? In a group project we'll survey what has been happening lately to the fairy tale plot in popular culture.

Course goals:

1. To demonstrate the distinctive character and social uses of formulaic narrative.
2. To trace the interactions of cultural genres and social history.
3. To help you examine the taken-for-granted cultural scripts that influence your own formulation of life goals and plans.

This course counts as an elective in the Folklore Minor and the Folklore Concentration, both offered through the Department of Comparative Studies: see cfs.osu.edu/programs for more information.

READINGS

The following books have been ordered at SBX only, and are required:

Tatar, Maria ed. *The Classic Fairy Tales: A Norton Critical Edition*. New York: W.W. Norton. 1999.

Alger, Horatio. *Ragged Dick and Struggling Upward*. Harmondsworth: Penguin. 1986.

Rushdie, Salman. *The Wizard of Oz*. London: British Film Institute. 1992.

In addition, I have ordered a few copies of the following book, but you may also download it in PDF chapters through the library catalogue:

Mathias, Elizabeth, and Richard Raspa. *Italian Folktales in America. The Verbal Art of an Immigrant Woman*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press. 1985.

The remainder of the readings listed on the syllabus are available online. Those marked "Carmen" will be under Content on the course site. Those marked "Library" can be found online through the library catalogue by searching the journal title. (Note that journals are sometimes in multiple repositories depending on the article's publication year.)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

All requirements must be completed for a passing grade.

Showing up-preparing-participating 20%

Pop quizzes and pre-class writings 25%

Class wiki participation and group presentation 25%

Paper 30%

Showing up. You won't pass without doing so. If you must miss a class, you should arrange to get the notes from a fellow student. You may not make up work missed due to absence except in documented cases of illness, etc. *Four unexcused absences automatically result in a final grade of F.*

Preparing. You're responsible for reading this syllabus and for checking both Carmen and your OSU email regularly. I will post updates for each session under Discussions in Carmen before each class, including advice on accessing the readings and a general précis of what we'll be doing. Note that schedules and readings are subject to modification. Readings marked "Extra" are optional, for those of you wishing to pursue a topic further.

The Ohio Board of Regents prescribes a 2:1 ratio of out-of-class work to formal instructional time. In other words, you should expect to devote an average of 5 1/2 hours a week of study time to this course. Give the readings adequate time: some may be deceptively simple, but the details matter, and some are more opaque. Please also give regular attention--say once a week--to the course wiki. Given the complex timetables we all observe under semesters, it would be an excellent idea to schedule regular blocks of time to study for this course.

You will need to *bring the texts to class*, either in hard copy or on an easily manageable device. You'll also need pen and paper in case we decide to write something.

Participating. Class time under semesters is precious. You need to be on time. (If you have a tight connection between classes, please let me know this so I can bear it in mind.) You need to be awake. You need to be engaged. It is advisable to take notes both on the readings and on class discussion!

A successful course is a group effort. Students in this course come from a wide range of majors and backgrounds and have a variety of insights to offer. Feel free to speak up from your own experience and/or disciplinary perspective. Many students will have no previous experience with folklore courses: thus if you are confused, other people undoubtedly are too. *There are no stupid questions.*

Pop quizzes and short writings. These will be graded ✓ or plus or minus. I am trying out this approach in lieu of the previous midterm and final exams, in the hopes that it will be sufficient to keep you reading and thinking.

Class wiki and group presentation. We will work together to locate the fairy tale plot in the culture around us, in both obvious and less obvious places. All through the semester you'll be asked to contribute your observations to a class wiki. Once we come up with a general classification of the contemporary forms of the fairy tale plot, we'll work in small groups to describe them further. Expect to check in with the wiki about *once a week*.

Paper. In connection with the class project, you'll write a paper (about ten pages) on some interesting case of the fairy tale plot in contemporary culture.

Note: The classroom wiki, any powerpoints or handouts from the group presentations, and your individual papers will be deposited in the [OSU Folklore Archives](#) and made available to researchers as part of an ongoing project on the transformations of the fairy tale in contemporary society. Your name will be recognized and you'll be making a contribution to scholarship.

SCHEDULE

Jan 14	Introduction. Paying attention to the taken-for-granted
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PART ONE: ORAL STORYTELLING IN PEASANT COMMUNITIES

Jan 16	What are fairy tales about? A first look
Read	Mathias and Raspa, Introduction, 3-20 Mathias and Raspa, Märchen: read the tales "Barbarina and the Black

	Snake," "The Cats Under the Sea," "The Ducks That Talked," and "Margherita."
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Jan 21	The fairy-tale formula: Propp's functions
Read	Propp, Vladimir. From <i>The Morphology of the Folktale</i> , 1928. In Tatar 382-387. AND bring the Mathias and Raspa tales in again.
Extra	Holbek, Bengt 1989. "The Language of Fairy Tales." In Kvideland, Reimund, and Henning K. Sehmsdorf, eds. <i>Nordic Folklore: Recent Studies</i> , 40-62. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. Carmen.

Jan 28	Performance, transmission and oral form
Read	Falassi, Alessandro. "Cinderella in Tuscany," 1980. Carmen.

Jan 30	Men and women in context: Appalachia
Read	Sobol, Joseph Daniel. "Jack in the Raw: Ray Hicks," 1994. Carmen. Lindahl, Carl. "Two Versions of "Rawhead and Bloodybones" from the Farmer-Muncy Family." <i>Journal of Folklore Research</i> 38(2001, 1/2): 55-67. Carmen.
Extra	Lindahl, Carl. "The Uses of Terror: Appalachian <i>Märchen</i> -Telling, Folklore Methodology, and Narrator's Truth." <i>Fabula</i> 47 (2006): 1-13. Carmen.

Feb 4	Circulation, variation, and ecotypes
Read	Tatar 101-137: Cinderella versions Mills, Margaret. "Sex Role Reversals, Sex Changes, and Transvestite Disguise in the Oral Tradition of a Conservative Muslim Community in Afghanistan," 1985. Carmen.

Feb 6	Scarcity and abundance
Read	Grimms, "Clever Gretel." Carmen Del Giudice, Luisa. "Mountains of Cheese and Rivers of Wine: Paesi di Cuccagna and Other Gastronomic Utopias," 2001. Carmen. Pellegrini, Angelo. "The Discovery of Abundance." From <i>The Unprejudiced Palate</i> , 1948. Carmen.

Feb 11	Getting ahead and getting away: mobility and migration
Read	Grimms, "Godfather Death." Carmen. Mathias and Raspa, Märchen: "The Gourd of Blood" and "The Three Brothers and the Fig Tree"
Browse	Mathias and Raspa, part I, "Background" and part III, "Narratives of Personal Experience"

Feb 13	Solidarity and social conflict
Read	"The Green Bird," "Giuseppinu," "The Virgin Mary's Child." 2004. In Zipes, Jack, ed./tr. <i>Beautiful Angiola: The Great Treasury of Sicilian Folk and Fairy Tales Collected by Laura Gonzenbach</i> . New York and London: Routledge. Carmen. Mangione, Jerre. "Annicchia and the Baron." From <i>Mount Allegro</i> , 1942. Carmen.
Extra	Schneider, Jane 1989. "Rumpelstiltskin's Bargain: Folklore and the Merchant Capitalist Intensification of Linen Manufacture in Early Modern Europe." In Weiner, Annette and Jane Schneider, eds. <i>Cloth and Human Experience</i> , 177-213. Washington, DC: Smithsonian. Carmen.
Due	1-page reflection on the Sicilian tales

Feb 18	Storytelling and social power
Read	"The Man Who Had No Story." Two Irish versions: from County Cork, 1933, and from County Donegal, 1965. Carmen. Ramanujan, A.K. "Towards a Counter-System: Women's Tales," 1991. Carmen.

Feb 20	TOLKIEN DAYS No class, but please attend what you can of "There and Back Again: Tolkien in 2015," organized by the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies and running all day Friday and Saturday.
Extra credit	Write a brief commentary on what you saw and heard at the Tolkien conference. What does any of it seem to have to do with the fairy tale as we know it so far? Due by Feb 27.

PART TWO: CONSCRIPTING AND DISCIPLINING THE FAIRY TALE

Feb 25	Rejecting adventure: how the Bible revises the riddle tale
Read	ATU 851, "The Princess Who Cannot Solve the Riddle." Carmen. ATU 927 "Out-riddling the Judge." Carmen. Judges 13-16 (the story of Samson). Carmen.
Due	1 page on how the Samson story compares to the folktales

Feb 27	The invention of childhood--and how actual children tell stories
Read	"Little Red Riding Hood." Tatar 3-24, but concentrate on the first three versions. Zohar Shavit, "The Concept of Childhood and Children's Folktales: Test Case-'Little Red Riding Hood,'" 1983. Tatar. And now for something completely different: Brian Sutton-Smith, "The Origins of Fiction and the Fictions of Origin." 1984. Carmen.

Mar 4	Manners and the civilizing process in old regime France
Read	Perrault, Charles. "Riquet of the Tuft," "Puss in Boots," 1697. Carmen. Leprince de Beaumont, Jeanne-Marie. "Beauty and the Beast," 1756. Tatar. L'Héritier, Marie-Jeanne de. "Ricdindon," 1696. Carmen.

Mar 6	Middle-class fairy tales
Read	Zipes, Jack "Once There Were Two Brothers Named Grimm," 1992. Carmen. Grimms, "The Three Spinners." Online. Grimms, "Hansel and Gretel," "The Juniper Tree," "Red Riding Hood." Tatar. Tatar, Maria. "Sex and Violence: The Hard Core of Fairy Tales," 1987. Tatar.

Mar 11	Repression and transcendence
Read	Andersen, Hans Christian, selections in Tatar 212-245.
Mar 13	Rags to riches: the fairy tales goes to America
Read	Alger, <i>Ragged Dick</i> (1868) and <i>Struggling Upward</i> (1890)
Due	1 page on Alger: What looks like Andersen here? What's different?

Spring break 16-20

Mar 25	The Disney barometer: from worker discipline to consumer education
Read	Zipes, "Breaking the Disney Spell," 1995 (Tatar) Bendix, Regina "Seashell Bra and Happy End: Disney's Transformations of 'The Little Mermaid,'" 1993. Carmen.
In class	Excerpts from "Snow White," dir. Walt Disney, 1936, and "The Little Mermaid," Disney Studios, 1989. "Sleeping Beauty," from "Bullwinkle and Rocky," dir. Jay Ward, 1960
Mar 27	Growing up socialist
Read	Lazar Lagin, "The Old Genie Khottabych: A Story of Make-Believe," 1938. Carmen. Marina Balina, "Fairy Tales of Socialist Realism: Introduction." In Balina, Goscilo, and Lipovetsky, eds. <i>Politicizing Magic</i> , 2005. Carmen.
In class	Excerpt from <i>Das kalte Herz</i> (Heart of Stone). Dir. Paul Verhoeven, German Democratic Republic, 1950.

PART THREE: FRACTURED FAIRY TALES

Apr 1	Love, ambition, money--for men
Read	Hoffmann, E.T.A. "The Mines of Falun," 1819. Carmen.
Due	1 page. What can you make of this? Why mining?

Apr 3	Love, ambition, money--for women
Read	Carter, Angela. "The Tiger's Bride," 1993. Tatar.

Apr 8	Faith in wizardry
Read	Rushdie 1992
In class	Excerpt from "The Wizard of Oz," dir. Victor Fleming, US, 1939

Apr 9?	FILM SHOWING-EARLY EVENING (we'll work out the best time available this week and I'll order pizza)
	"Little Otik," dir. Jan Svankmajer, Czech Republic, 2000

Apr 10	After abundance
	Discussion of Little Otik followed by discussion of class project

PART FOUR: WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Apr 15	Class presentations
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Apr 17	Class presentations
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Apr 22	Conclusion: is Propp played out?
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Apr 30	Final papers due in Carmen Dropbox
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AND SOME MORE DETAILS

Courtesy. Your behavior affects those around you. The banging doors, shuffling in, and settling down of late arrivals are disruptive. Texting and surfing distract your neighbors and are rude to everyone who is making an effort to contribute; they also waste your tuition money. Remember also that we will sometimes be talking about difficult issues on which reasonable people can disagree. Let's do our best to engage respectfully.

Seeking my help when you need it. Stuff happens: if you need accommodation owing to personal upheavals, let me know--sooner rather than later--and we will find a way to help you manage the course. If I hear on the last day of class that you've been in crisis, there is nothing I can do.

More generally, if you find yourself confused or concerned about material in the course, approaches and assignments, my feedback, or my intermittently legible handwriting, please come to office hours or approach me after class--again, sooner rather than later. Often a few words can clarify the situation and keep a small problem from ballooning. Of course you are also welcome to come talk further about issues that interest you!

A day at the opera. The Lennox theaters do live digital broadcasts from the Metropolitan Opera in New York on many Saturday afternoons. These are world-class performances close up, with subtitles, well-acted, sexy, and much cheaper than in the opera house. If you like fairy tales, you'll like opera: it offers another subjunctive world more intense, sharper in outline, and deeper in resonance than our own. Tickets are \$22 but *I will buy your ticket the first time!* The operas are

Jan 31, The Tales of Hoffman (Offenbach).

Feb 14, Two one-acters: Iolanta (Tchaikovsky) and Bluebeard's Castle (Bartók)

March 14, La Donna del Lago/The Lady of the Lake (Rossini)

April 25, Two more one-acters: Cavalleria Rusticana (Mascagni)/Pagliacci (Leoncavallo)

For more information and previews see [here](#); more details to come on Carmen.

Office hours and office contact info. Monday 11-1 and Thursday 1-3, Mershon Center 104A, 1501 Neil Ave. (corner of 8th). Email will reach me most quickly; you can also call the main desk of Mershon at 292-1681 if there's something urgent. If the office hours are impossible we can make other arrangements by email. I occasionally need to cancel scheduled hours, so do check the News page on Carmen before coming. I am always happy to make time for you!

Disability resources. Students with documented disabilities who have registered with the Office of Student Life Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. SLDS is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; Tel.: 614-292-3307; VRS: 614-429-1334; Email: slds@osu.edu; Web: slds.osu.edu

Plagiarism. Plagiarism is the representation of another's works or ideas as one's own: it includes the unacknowledged word for word use and/or paraphrasing of another person's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas. In accordance with university rules, all cases of suspected plagiarism will be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. Be careful to credit your sources appropriately, especially when doing research on the Internet (come to me if you are not certain how to do this). And bear in mind that it is far less work to write the thing yourself than to plagiarize convincingly.

Class Cancellation. In the unlikely event of class cancellation due to emergency, I will contact you via email and request that a note on department letterhead be placed on the door. In addition, I will contact you as soon as possible following the cancellation to let you know what will be expected of you for our next class meeting.